

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 597 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY GILLESPIE, DIAMOND, TALLMAN, MENTZER, LAWRENCE,
ZIMMERMAN, BENNINGHOFF AND MURT, MARCH 24, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 24, 2015

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in grounds and buildings, providing
6 for a prototypical school facility design clearinghouse.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a
11 section to read:

12 Section 732.2. Prototypical School Facility Design
13 Clearinghouse.--(a) (1) The Department of Education shall
14 establish a central clearinghouse of prototypical school
15 facility designs for access by school entities.

16 (2) In order to receive the State reimbursement factor
17 provided for in section 2574, a school entity must use a
18 prototype design in the construction of school facilities.

19 (3) The department may exempt a school entity from
20 participating in the program for a particular project, if the

1 school entity demonstrates that:

2 (i) the designs in the clearinghouse are not feasible for
3 that particular project due to specific geographic or other
4 limitations of that area; or

5 (ii) the project involves remodeling, rehabilitating or
6 expanding an existing structure.

7 The department shall provide notice to a school entity that is
8 exempt from using a design in the clearinghouse under this
9 paragraph. The notice shall also be made available to the public
10 by the school entity.

11 (4) The Department of Education shall compile necessary
12 publications and a computer database to make the information on
13 prototype designs available for review to school entities and
14 the public at large.

15 (5) For purposes of this section, the Department of
16 Education shall divide this Commonwealth into the following
17 regions: northwest, northeast, southeast, southwest, north
18 central and south central. The department shall designate which
19 counties are in which region by grouping counties together based
20 on geographic proximity.

21 (b) Design professionals registered in this Commonwealth may
22 submit plans for inclusion in the computer database that have
23 been submitted and approved by the Department of Education in
24 accordance with section 731. The original design professional of
25 record shall retain ownership of a prototype design.

26 Prototypical school facility designs submitted shall include
27 information that the Department of Education determines is
28 necessary and appropriate to facilitate this section.

29 (c) The Department of Education shall review and evaluate
30 plans submitted pursuant to this section for inclusion in the

1 clearinghouse using standards which promote the following:

2 (1) The use of design principles to achieve the highest
3 standards of health, safety, accessibility, environmental
4 protection and energy efficiency.

5 (2) The academic and technological needs of students.

6 (3) The use of cost-effective design and construction
7 techniques, including the use of straight-line, right-angle
8 design principles and avoiding the use of curved and
9 nonsymmetrical design.

10 (4) The use of design principles that allow for expansion of
11 school facilities to accommodate future growth in student
12 population.

13 (5) The use of durable materials in construction.

14 (6) The preservation of open space.

15 (d) The department shall group the designs accepted for the
16 clearinghouse by the regions established under subsection (a)
17 (5), based on energy needs for heating and cooling, building
18 size, average school entity population in the region, layout of
19 the building, whether one story or multiple stories, and
20 structural requirements due to climatic or geographic
21 difficulties.

22 (e) The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee shall
23 conduct a study of the department's program to determine the
24 savings incurred by school entities that have participated in
25 the program. The study shall be conducted at the conclusion of
26 the fifth year of operation and shall include program
27 participation for the five-year period from inspection until its
28 fifth anniversary. The study shall be presented within six
29 months of its commencement to the chairman and minority chairman
30 of the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairman and

1 minority chairman of the Education Committee of the House of
2 Representatives.

3 (f) The Department of Education shall adopt rules necessary
4 to implement this section.

5 (g) As used in this section, the term "school entity" means
6 a school district, intermediate unit, area vocational-technical
7 school or charter school operating within this Commonwealth
8 under provisions of this act.

9 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 180 days.