

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 315

Sponsor: SENATOR ROTHMAN

Printer's No. 1226

1 Amend Bill, page 2, lines 6 through 38, by striking out all
2 of said lines and inserting
3 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
4 act relating to the public school system, including certain
5 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
6 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
7 laws relating thereto," in preliminary provisions, further
8 providing for Special Education Funding Commission and for
9 minimum number of days or hours; in duties and powers of
10 boards of school directors, providing for admission fees for
11 school-sponsored activities; in intermediate units, further
12 providing for staff; in certification of teachers, further
13 providing for certificates qualifying persons to teach and
14 for instructional certificate grade spans and age levels and
15 duties of department, providing for instructional certificate
16 grade spans and age levels and for State certificate fee
17 reduction, further providing for standard employment
18 application, for career and technical instructional
19 certificate, for program of continuing professional and
20 paraprofessional education and for postbaccalaureate
21 certification, providing for assessment of basic skills,
22 further providing for professional educator discipline fee
23 and providing for career and technical administrative
24 director certification flexibility; in pupils and attendance,
25 further providing for attendance policy at charter, regional
26 charter and cyber charter schools, for procedure when child
27 is truant, for procedure by school when child habitually
28 truant, for procedure upon filing of citation, for penalties
29 for violating compulsory school attendance requirements and
30 for study of truancy procedure, providing for department
31 supports to prevent truancy and further providing for reports
32 to Superintendent of Public Instruction and for exceptional
33 children and education and training; in student supports,
34 further providing for definitions; in school safety and
35 security, further providing for definitions, for School
36 Safety and Security Committee, for school safety and security
37 assessment providers, for School Safety and Security Grant
38 Program, for school safety and security coordinator and for

1 school safety and security training, providing for school
2 safety and mental health grants for 2025-2026 school year and
3 further providing for reporting and memorandum of
4 understanding; in school security, further providing for
5 training, for school resource officers, for school security
6 guards and for duties of commission; in Safe2Say Program,
7 further providing for intent, for definitions, for Safe2Say
8 Program and for annual report; in threat assessment, further
9 providing for definitions, for threat assessment teams and
10 for threat assessment guidelines, training and information
11 materials; in Drug and Alcohol Recovery High School Program,
12 further providing for scope of program and selection of
13 students and for enrollment of students; in evidence-based
14 reading instruction, further providing for definitions and
15 providing for school entity duties related to evidence-based
16 reading instruction, for school entity duties related to
17 reading screening, for reading deficiency identification and
18 parental notification, for reading intervention plans, for
19 grant program, for funding, for reporting, for accountability
20 and for construction; in high schools, further providing for
21 attendance in other districts and providing for Free
22 Application for Federal Student Aid; in interscholastic
23 athletics accountability, further providing for council
24 recommendations and standards; in charter schools, further
25 providing for funding for cyber charter schools, for
26 enrollment and notification and for enrollee wellness checks;
27 in career and technical education, further providing for
28 capital reserve fund for approved purchases of equipment and
29 facility maintenance, for career and technical education
30 equipment grants, for Cosmetology Training through Career and
31 Technical Center Pilot Program and for Barber Training
32 through Career and Technical Center Pilot Program; providing
33 for Nursing Shortage Assistance Program; in community
34 colleges, further providing for financial program and
35 reimbursement of payments; in the State System of Higher
36 Education, further providing for definitions and for Grow
37 Pennsylvania Merit Scholarship Program; in educational tax
38 credits, further providing for limitations; in higher
39 education accountability and transparency, further providing
40 for exit counseling; in miscellaneous provisions relating to
41 institutions of higher education, repealing provisions
42 relating to State-related university performance-based
43 funding model, further providing for prohibition on
44 scholarship displacement at public institutions of higher
45 education and providing for cooperation and for State
46 scholarship renewals; in institutions of higher education,
47 further providing for powers and duties of State Board of
48 Higher Education, for definitions, for Performance-based
49 Funding Council and for public institution of higher
50 education reporting, providing for State-related University
51 Performance Fund, for performance-based funding formula and

for public accountability and further providing for agency duties, for grant priority and for report; in Ready-to-Succeed Scholarship, further providing for agency; in funding for public libraries, providing for State aid for fiscal year 2025-2026; in reimbursements by Commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for student-weighted basic education funding beginning with 2023-2024 school year, for extraordinary special education program expenses, for assistance to school districts declared to be in financial recovery status or identified for financial watch status and for Ready-to-Learn Block Grant; in construction and renovation of buildings by school entities, further providing for applicability; abrogating regulations; and making an editorial change.

Amend Bill, page 2, lines 41 through 46; pages 3 through 30, lines 1 through 30; page 31, lines 1 through 15; by striking out all of said lines on said pages and inserting

Section 1. Sections 122(k)(3) and (m.1) and 133(b) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, are amended to read:

Section 122. Special Education Funding Commission.--* * *

(k) * * *

(3) The commission shall be reconstituted January [15, 2026] 25, 2027, in accordance with subsection (c) and shall meet and hold public hearings to review the operation of the special education funding provisions of this section, and shall make a further report and shall issue the report to the recipients listed in subsection (i)(5) no later than November 30, [2026] 2027. When in receipt of the report recommending changes to the special education funding formula, the General Assembly shall consider and take action to enact the formula into law in accordance with subsection (j).

* * *

(m.1) The Independent Fiscal Office shall complete a survey of school district, charter school, regional charter school and cyber charter school special education student cost distribution in conjunction with each reconstitution of the Special Education Funding Commission.

* * *

Section 133. Minimum Number of Days or Hours.--* * *

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to [supersede];

(1) Supersede or preempt a provision of a collective bargaining agreement entered into between a school employer and an exclusive representative of the employees under the act of July 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the "Public Employee Relations Act," prior to the effective date of this section.

(2) Apply to the length of the school year for school

1 employees, except that the school year for school employees must
2 meet both of the minimum requirements under subsection (a).

3 * * *

4 Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

5 Section 511.1. Admission Fees for School-Sponsored
6 Activities.--(a) If a school entity, nonpublic school or
7 association collects a fee for admission to a school-sponsored
8 activity, cash shall be accepted as a form of payment for
9 admission.

10 (b) In addition to accepting cash as payment for admission,
11 a school entity, nonpublic school or association may accept
12 other payment methods for admission to the school-sponsored
13 activity.

14 (c) A school entity, nonpublic school or association may
15 refuse to accept payment for admission that is in a denomination
16 that significantly exceeds the amount of the fee under
17 subsection (a). For events sanctioned by the association, if
18 payment is made in cash, the admission fee must be paid in the
19 exact amount.

20 (d) If electronic ticketing is the sole method of admission,
21 a school entity, nonpublic school or association shall provide
22 alternative methods of payment and designated entry points for
23 individuals who pay in person for the purpose of assisting and
24 facilitating entry into the school-sponsored activity. The
25 school entity, nonpublic school or association may accept any
26 form of payment, including cash, at the designated entry points.
27 The school entity, nonpublic school or association shall make
28 available a support person to assist individuals who experience
29 difficulty using electronic payment systems.

30 (e) A school entity, nonpublic school or association may not
31 impose a surcharge or any other additional fee in excess of the
32 admission fee under subsection (a) for accepting cash as payment
33 for admission to a school-sponsored activity.

34 (f) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
35 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
36 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

37 "Association" shall mean the Pennsylvania Interscholastic
38 Athletic Association.

39 "Cash" shall mean all coins and currencies recognized as
40 legal tender under 31 U.S.C. § 5103 (relating to legal tender).

41 "Interscholastic athletic activity" shall mean an athletic
42 contest or competitions conducted between or among school
43 entities or nonpublic schools located in this Commonwealth.

44 "Nonpublic school" shall mean as defined in section 923.3-
45 A(b).

46 "School entity" shall mean a school district, intermediate
47 unit, area career and technical school, charter school, cyber
48 charter school or regional charter school.

49 "School-sponsored activity" shall mean an assembly, field
50 trip, class trip, graduation ceremony, interscholastic athletic
51 activity, extracurricular activity, club, group, team or any

1 activity sponsored, held or approved by a school entity or
2 nonpublic school.

3 Section 3. Sections 913-A(b) and (c), 1201 and 1202.1
4 heading and (b)(1)(i) of the act are amended to read:

5 Section 913-A. Staff.--* * *

6 (b) An executive director shall be appointed by each
7 intermediate unit board of directors for a term of four years:
8 Provided, That the initial term shall commence July 1, 1971 and
9 terminate June 30, 1974: And, provided further, however, That
10 each intermediate unit planning committee may employ an
11 executive director-elect to serve prior to July 1, 1971. An
12 executive director shall hold [a commission issued by the
13 Superintendent of Public Instruction, in accordance with
14 regulations adopted by the State Board of Education.], at the
15 time of appointment, either a letter of eligibility or a
16 commission qualification letter issued by the Department of
17 Education under the educational and experience criteria
18 specified in section 1003(b). An intermediate unit executive
19 director shall be commissioned by the Secretary of Education.

20 (c) Assistant executive directors may be appointed by each
21 intermediate unit board of directors upon recommendation of the
22 executive director for a term of four years: Provided, That the
23 initial term shall commence July 1, 1971, and terminate June 30,
24 1974: And provided further, however, That each intermediate unit
25 planning committee may employ assistant executive directors-
26 elect upon recommendation of the executive director-elect to
27 serve prior to July 1, 1971. An assistant executive director
28 shall hold [a commission issued by the Superintendent of Public
29 Instruction, in accordance with regulations adopted by the State
30 Board of Education.], at the time of appointment, either a
31 letter of eligibility or a commission qualification letter
32 issued by the Department of Education under the educational and
33 experience criteria specified in section 1003(b). An assistant
34 intermediate unit executive director shall be commissioned by
35 the Secretary of Education.

36 * * *

37 Section 1201. Certificates Qualifying Persons to Teach.--
38 Only those persons holding one of the following certificates
39 shall be qualified to teach in the public schools of this
40 Commonwealth--(1) Permanent college certificate, (2) provisional
41 college certificate, (3) normal school diploma, (4) normal
42 school certificate, (5) special permanent certificate, (6)
43 special temporary certificate, (7) permanent State certificate,
44 (8) residency certificate, (9) [intern] experience-based
45 certificate, (10) instructional certificate, (11) career and
46 technical experience-based certificate, (12) career and
47 technical instructional certificate, (13) certificates which are
48 permanent licenses to teach by virtue of the provisions of
49 section one thousand three hundred eight of the act, approved
50 the eighteenth day of May, one thousand nine hundred eleven
51 (Pamphlet Laws 309), as amended, which is repealed hereby, or

1 [(11)] (14) such other kinds of certificates as are issued under
2 the standards prescribed by the State Board of Education. The
3 State Board of Education shall also provide for issuance of
4 certificates by district superintendents to meet such
5 emergencies or shortage of teachers as may occur.

6 Section 1202.1. [Instructional] Special Education
7 Certificate Grade Spans and Age Levels and Duties of
8 Department.--* * *

9 (b) The Department of Education shall have the following
10 duties:

11 (1) Within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this
12 subsection:

13 (i) (A) Notify all teacher preparation programs approved by
14 the Department of Education, all individuals enrolled in these
15 programs and all individuals holding an early childhood
16 certificate under 22 Pa. Code § 49.85(b)(1) that an individual
17 holding or seeking an early childhood certificate may, by
18 attaining qualifying scores on the assessment made available by
19 the Department of Education, extend the grade span for the
20 individual's early childhood certificate to include grades five
21 and six and include and maintain notice of the availability of
22 the assessment on the publicly accessible Internet website of
23 the Department of Education with other information describing
24 certification requirements.

25 (B) This subparagraph shall expire July 1, 2028.

26 * * *

27 Section 4. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

28 Section 1202.2. Instructional Certificate Grade Spans and
29 Age Levels.--(a) Notwithstanding 22 Pa. Code § 49.85 (relating
30 to limitations), the grade spans and age levels for
31 instructional certificates shall be as follows:

32 (1) Primary - prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one
33 through six or ages three (3) through eleven (11).

34 (2) Secondary - grades seven through twelve or ages eleven
35 (11) through twenty-one (21).

36 (3) Specialized areas - prekindergarten through grade twelve
37 or ages three (3) through twenty-one (21).

38 (b) Certificates issued in accordance with 22 Pa. Code §
39 49.85(a), (b) and (d) shall remain valid for the term of the
40 certificate.

41 (c) An individual holding an Elementary/Middle Instructional
42 Certificate issued in accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 49.85(b)(2)
43 or (d)(2) shall have two pathways developed by the Department of
44 Education to expand the scope of the individual's certificate to
45 meet the grade levels covered under subsection (a)(2), which
46 shall be limited to either completing continuing education
47 credits for a specific certification level or attaining
48 qualifying scores on the assessment made available by the
49 Department of Education.

50 (d) Notwithstanding subsection (a), an approved educator
51 preparation program may permit an individual enrolled in a

1 program prior to July 1, 2028, and remaining continuously
2 enrolled to complete the program for the grade level limitations
3 provided under 22 Pa. Code § 49.85(d). The Department of
4 Education shall issue the appropriate certificates to an
5 applicant who completes the program and meets all other
6 certification requirements. No later than July 1, 2028, an
7 educator preparation program may not accept new candidates
8 seeking a certificate under 22 Pa. Code § 49.85(d).

9 (e) (1) Notwithstanding 22 Pa. Code § 49.85, an educator
10 holding an early childhood certificate issued under 22 Pa. Code
11 § 49.85(b)(1) or (d)(1) may teach fifth and sixth grade. An
12 educator holding a secondary school certificate may teach sixth
13 grade in the subject area for which the secondary certificate is
14 endorsed.

15 (2) The Secretary of Education may issue guidelines as
16 necessary to implement this subsection.

17 (f) The Secretary of Education may grant exceptions to the
18 grade and age level limitations specified in this section or for
19 those issued in accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 49.85. The
20 secretary shall issue guidelines that outline the circumstances
21 under which exceptions shall be granted.

22 (g) An approved educator preparation program shall:

23 (1) Require individuals enrolled in a program who are
24 pursuing an instructional certificate under subsection (a)(1) to
25 complete a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours of early
26 childhood coursework. Coursework shall include, but not be
27 limited to, the following topics focused on early childhood:

28 (i) development stages;

29 (ii) learning theories;

30 (iii) curriculum development;

31 (iv) instructional strategies;

32 (v) content knowledge;

33 (vi) learning environments;

34 (vii) observation and assessment methods; and

35 (viii) family and community partnerships.

36 (2) Establish pathways for observation, research and student
37 teaching which focus on specific child ages and grades within
38 programs for individuals pursuing an instructional certificate
39 under subsection (a)(1).

40 (3) Allow individuals enrolled in a program who are pursuing
41 an instructional certificate under subsection (a)(1) to complete
42 their fieldwork and student teaching in early childhood
43 settings, including at their employment site, provided the
44 employment site meets field placement criteria and ensures that
45 the cooperating teacher is a certified educator.

46 (h) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
47 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection:

48 "Early childhood" shall mean pre-kindergarten, kindergarten
49 and grades one through three or ages three (3) through eight
50 (8).

51 Section 1203.1. State Certificate Fee Reduction.--

1 Certificate fees assessed by the Department of Education related
2 to the review of certificate eligibility for issuance of
3 certificates under section 1201 may not be more than fifty
4 dollars (\$50).

5 Section 5. Section 1204.1(a) of the act is amended to read:

6 Section 1204.1. Standard Employment Application.--(a) The
7 Secretary of Education, in consultation with organizations
8 representing school administrators, including personnel
9 administrators, teachers and school boards, shall develop a
10 standard employment application form for use by individuals
11 eligible for or in possession of instructional, career and
12 technical instructional, [intern] instructional experience-based
13 or career and technical [intern] experience-based teaching
14 certificates in making application for employment with school
15 districts within this Commonwealth.

16 * * *

17 Section 6. Section 1204.2(b) introductory paragraph of the
18 act, amended July 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), is amended and the
19 section is amended by adding subsections to read:

20 Section 1204.2. Career and Technical Instructional
21 Certificate.--* * *

22 (b) In addition to other requirements promulgated by the
23 State Board of Education, the Department of Education shall
24 issue a Career and Technical [Intern] Experience-Based
25 Certificate under 22 Pa. Code § 49.151 (relating to eligibility
26 and criteria) to an individual seeking a position with the
27 primary responsibility of teaching occupational skills in State-
28 approved career and technical education programs in the public
29 schools of this Commonwealth if the individual presents any of
30 the following:

31 * * *

32 (b.2) The Career and Technical Experience-based Certificate
33 shall be issued for the period of time needed by an individual
34 to complete eighteen (18) credit hours in an approved career and
35 technical educator preparation program, but in no case may the
36 period of time exceed five (5) years from the date of issuance.

37 (b.3) In addition to any other requirement promulgated by
38 the State Board of Education, the Department of Education shall
39 issue a Career and Technical Experience-Based Certificate under
40 22 Pa. Code § 49.151 to an individual securing recognition of
41 occupational competency upon the basis of credential review and
42 adequate work experience beyond the learning period as
43 established by the department in a competency area regardless of
44 whether an occupational competency examination exists.

45 (b.4) In addition to any other requirement promulgated by
46 the State Board of Education, the Department of Education shall
47 issue a Career and Technical Instructional I Certificate under
48 22 Pa. Code § 49.142 to an individual securing recognition of
49 occupational competency upon the basis of credential review and
50 adequate work experience beyond the learning period as
51 established by the department in a competency area, regardless

1 of whether an occupational competency examination exists.

2 * * *

3 Section 7. Section 1205.2(k) introductory paragraph and (2)
4 of the act are amended, the subsection is amended by adding a
5 paragraph and the section is amended by adding a subsection to
6 read:

7 Section 1205.2. Program of Continuing Professional and
8 Paraprofessional Education.--* * *

9 (k) A professional educator who is not employed by a school
10 entity as a professional or temporary professional employe may
11 apply to the department for inactive certification[.], which
12 shall be granted by the department at no cost to the
13 professional educator. Inactive certification shall:

14 * * *

15 (2) Except as provided under [paragraph] paragraphs (2.1)
16 and (2.2), be removed by the department upon the application of
17 the professional educator and evidence of the completion of
18 thirty (30) hours of continuing professional education within
19 the immediate preceding [twelve (12)] eighteen (18) months. The
20 department shall establish guidelines to approve courses that
21 will authorize the removal of inactive certification.

22 * * *

23 (2.2) Be removed by the department upon the application of
24 the professional educator and evidence that the professional
25 educator has received an offer of employment from a school
26 entity that has committed to provide and ensure that the
27 professional educator completes thirty (30) hours of in-service
28 continuing professional education within the professional
29 educator's first two years of employment.

30 * * *

31 (k.2) (1) Upon the removal of inactive certification under
32 subsection (k) (2.1) or (2.2), a professional educator shall have
33 the same number of hours of continuing professional education
34 and the same amount of time in which to complete the hours as
35 existed for the professional educator at the time inactive
36 certification was granted.

37 (2) In the case of a professional educator whose certificate
38 was placed on inactive status for the first time by the
39 department due to the expiration of the professional educator's
40 compliance period, the professional educator shall begin a new
41 five-year compliance period to satisfy the requirements of
42 subsection (a).

43 * * *

44 Section 8. Section 1207.1(a) (1) and (c) of the act are
45 amended to read:

46 Section 1207.1. Postbaccalaureate Certification.--(a)
47 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the
48 Secretary of Education shall have all of the following powers
49 and duties with regard to postbaccalaureate certification
50 programs:

51 (1) Evaluate and approve, in accordance with this section,

1 all postbaccalaureate certification programs, including
2 accelerated programs, leading to the certification of
3 professional personnel including [intern] experience-based
4 certification programs, residency certification programs and
5 administrative certification programs.

6 * * *

7 (c) (1) Postbaccalaureate instructional [intern]
8 experience-based certification programs shall provide flexible
9 and accelerated pedagogical training to teachers who have
10 demonstrated subject matter competency in a subject area related
11 to their certification.

12 (2) The Secretary of Education may make a one-time issuance
13 of a postbaccalaureate instructional [intern] experience-based
14 certificate for service in a specific area of instruction to
15 candidates who, in addition to meeting the requirements of
16 section 1209, present evidence of satisfactory achievement on
17 the department-prescribed subject matter assessments related to
18 the area of certification and hold a bachelor's degree from an
19 accredited college or university. This certificate shall require
20 continuing enrollment in an approved postbaccalaureate
21 instructional [intern] experience-based certification program.

22 (3) A postbaccalaureate instructional [intern] experience-
23 based certificate shall be valid for [three (3)] five (5) years
24 of teaching in the public schools of this Commonwealth and may
25 not be renewed.

26 (4) A candidate shall be issued an Instructional I
27 Certificate upon successful completion of the approved
28 postbaccalaureate instructional [intern] experience-based
29 program provided that the candidate has satisfied the
30 requirements of section 1209.

31 * * *

32 Section 9. The act is amended by adding a section to read:
33 Section 1207.5. Assessment of Basic Skills.--An assessment
34 of basic skills as defined in 22 Pa. Code § 49.1 (relating to
35 definitions) shall not be permitted for admission into a
36 Commonwealth educator preparation program or required for
37 issuance by the Department of Education for a certificate type
38 or area, including an instructional, career and technical,
39 education specialist, experience-based or administrative
40 certificate.

41 Section 10. Section 1216.1(d) of the act is amended to read:

42 Section 1216.1. Professional Educator Discipline Fee.--* * *

43 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or
44 regulation, an individual who is a member of the United States
45 Armed Forces, including a reserve component or National Guard,
46 or a veteran, or the spouse of the member of the United States
47 Armed Forces or the spouse of the veteran, [shall] may not be
48 required to pay [only the following fees] a fee to the
49 department with respect to the individual's certification[:
50 (1) A certification fee not to exceed ten dollars (\$10).
51 (2) A professional educator discipline fee not to exceed

1 twenty-five dollars (\$25)].

2 * * *

3 Section 11. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

4 Section 1221. Career and Technical Administrative Director
5 Certification Flexibility.--(a) A school entity may employ an
6 educator who has been issued a superintendent's letter of
7 eligibility to fill a director of career and technical education
8 administrator vacancy if the educator meets one of the following
9 requirements:

10 (1) Has a minimum of three (3) years of relevant
11 professional experience, including serving as a career and
12 technical center superintendent of record, in a career and
13 technical school or secondary school offering at least three (3)
14 career and technical education programs approved by the
15 Department of Education.

16 (2) Completed a postbaccalaureate program under section
17 1207.1 that is approved by the Department of Education and
18 prepares the educator to direct, operate, supervise and
19 administer career and technical education in a school entity.

20 (3) Agrees to complete a career and technical education
21 leadership program approved by the Department of Education that
22 meets the Pennsylvania school leadership standards under section
23 1217 within three (3) years of employment as a career and
24 technical administrative director in accordance with this
25 section.

26 (b) Notwithstanding section 1207.1(d) and 22 Pa. Code §
27 49.163 (relating to Career and Technical Administrative
28 Director), the Department of Education shall issue a career and
29 technical administrative director certificate to an educator who
30 has fulfilled three (3) full and consecutive academic years of
31 employment at the school entity as a career and technical
32 administrative director in accordance with this section and
33 meets one of the following requirements:

34 (1) Meets the eligibility requirements in accordance with
35 subsection (a)(1) or (2).

36 (2) Provides the Secretary of Education with evidence of
37 successfully completing the career and technical education
38 leadership program in accordance with subsection (a)(3).

39 (c) The Department of Education may not impose a requirement
40 based on the amount of time or percentage of the assignment
41 related to supervising career and technical education programs.

42 (d) The period of employment as a career and technical
43 education administrative director under a valid Pennsylvania
44 career and technical emergency permit shall be counted by the
45 Department of Education toward fulfilling the relevant
46 professional experience requirement under subsection (a)(1).

47 (e) An educator employed as a career and technical
48 administrative director in accordance with this section may not
49 serve as a superintendent at the same time.

50 (f) As used in this section, the term "school entity" is
51 defined as an area career and technical school or school

district, charter school or intermediate unit offering at least three (3) career and technical education programs approved by the Department of Education.

Section 12. Section 1327.2 of the act is amended to read:

Section 1327.2. Attendance Policy at Charter, Regional Charter and Cyber Charter Schools.--(a) Each charter, regional charter and cyber charter school shall establish an attendance policy designed to accurately determine when a child who is enrolled in a charter, regional charter or cyber charter school has an unexcused or excused absence or is present for instruction, which may differ from the policy of the school district in which the child resides. The policy must conform to the provisions of this act relating to compulsory attendance.

(a.1) In addition to the requirements of subsection (a), a cyber charter school shall include in its attendance policy the following:

(1) A policy to determine when a child has an unexcused or excused absence or is present for synchronous instruction. To be present for synchronous instruction, a child must be present and visible to the teacher on camera during each synchronous instructional period for each course.

(2) A prohibition specifying that a cyber charter school administrator or chief administrator may not alter an attendance record taken by a teacher, unless the alteration corrects an error.

(3) A policy to determine when a child has an unexcused or excused absence or is present for asynchronous instruction. To be present for asynchronous instruction, a child must complete weekly benchmarks. The following requirements shall apply to the weekly benchmarks:

(i) A cyber charter school shall establish weekly benchmarks for students participating in asynchronous instruction and shall submit the weekly benchmarks to the department for approval by June 30 of each year for the following school year. If the department has not approved, denied or returned the weekly benchmarks within 45 days, the weekly benchmarks shall be deemed approved for the following school year.

(ii) The weekly benchmarks must be sufficient to demonstrate the student is making adequate and consistent progress toward completion of each course in which the student is enrolled. The cyber charter school's attendance policy shall define adequate and consistent progress and include the consequence for failure to make adequate and consistent progress.

(iii) If a student does not complete the weekly benchmark, the student shall receive an absence or other consequence in accordance with the policy under this paragraph.

(b) Notwithstanding section 1333.2(a), in the case of a child enrolled in a cyber charter school the venue for the filing of a citation under section 1333.1 shall be based upon the residence of the child. A cyber charter school may participate in a proceeding under sections 1333.1, 1333.2 and

1333.3 in person, by telephone conferencing, by video conferencing or by any other electronic means.

(c) (1) Charter, regional charter and cyber charter schools shall report all unexcused absences directly to the department annually through the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

(2) In addition to the reporting requirements under paragraph (1), cyber charter schools shall submit information related to the completion of the weekly benchmarks established under subsection (a.1)(3) annually through PIMS and the department shall post the information on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

(3) For students who have been found to be truant or habitually truant, cyber charter schools shall report the information required under paragraphs (1) and (2) directly to the department monthly through PIMS.

Section 13. Section 1333(a) of the act is amended by adding paragraphs and the section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

Section 1333. Procedure When Child is Truant.--(a) When a child is truant, the school shall notify in writing the person in parental relation with the child who resides in the same household as the child of the child's violation of compulsory school attendance within ten (10) school days of the child's third unexcused absence. The notice:

* * *

(2.1) shall include notice to the person in parental relation that a child who is habitually truant may not transfer, during the school year, to a cyber charter school unless a judge determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the child;

(2.2) shall include resources available to assist the child and the person in parental relation with returning the child to compliant compulsory school attendance and opportunities for further academic recovery in response to the truant behavior;

* * *

(c.1) A child who is habitually truant may not transfer, during the school year, to a cyber charter school unless a judge determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the child.

* * *

Section 14. Sections 1333.1, 1333.2 and 1333.3 of the act are amended by adding subsections to read:

Section 1333.1. Procedure by School When Child Habitually Truant.--* * *

(d.1) An educational entity in which the child is enrolled shall provide the child with a school attendance improvement plan and shall continue to pursue remedies to the child's habitual truancy until the child is no longer truant or is no longer of compulsory school age, regardless of whether the child was enrolled at the current educational entity or another

1 educational entity at the time of truancy.

2 * * *

3 Section 1333.2. Procedure Upon Filing of Citation.--* * *

4 (i) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the
5 ability of a judge to enter a sentence after the completion of
6 the school year in which the child was habitually truant,
7 provided that the penalties for a sentence shall be limited to
8 those specified in section 1333.3(a)(2) and (3).

9 Section 1333.3. Penalties for Violating Compulsory School
10 Attendance Requirements.--* * *

11 (i) At the time of conviction of a child for a violation of
12 the requirements of compulsory school attendance under this
13 article, the court shall make a determination on the ability of
14 the child to transfer to a cyber charter school in accordance
15 with section 1333(c.1).

16 (j) The court shall retain jurisdiction of the matter
17 insofar as it relates to the completion of community service, a
18 course, program or plan by the student as provided in subsection
19 (a)(2) or (3) or (b), if applicable. Upon completion of the
20 community service, course, program or plan, the court's
21 jurisdiction is relinquished.

22 Section 15. Section 1333.4 of the act is amended to read:

23 Section 1333.4. Study of Truancy Procedure.--(a) Five (5)
24 years after commencement of the first school year to which
25 section 1333 applies, and at regular intervals not to exceed
26 every five (5) years thereafter, the Joint State Government
27 Commission shall undertake a study of the procedures for how a
28 school handles children who are truant and habitually truant and
29 evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures in improving school
30 attendance and whether the procedures should be revised,
31 including to require court involvement sooner in certain truancy
32 cases[.] and a summary of changes in truancy procedure and
33 practice within this Commonwealth since the previous report
34 issued by the Joint State Government Commission.

35 (b) The Joint State Government Commission shall establish an
36 advisory committee that may include representatives of the
37 Department of Education, educational entities and organizations,
38 including cyber charter schools, the judiciary, district
39 attorneys, law enforcement, public organizations involved in
40 truancy issues, representatives of county children and youth
41 agencies and juvenile justice agencies and other organizations
42 selected by the Joint State Government Commission to consult
43 with the Joint State Government Commission in conducting the
44 study.

45 (c) The Joint State Government Commission shall hold
46 informational meetings to receive testimony from professionals
47 or organizations with expertise in truancy and truancy
48 prevention.

49 (d) The Joint State Government Commission shall issue a
50 report of its findings and recommendations to the Education
51 Committee of the Senate and the Education Committee of the House

1 of Representatives not later than twelve (12) months after
2 undertaking [the] each study.

3 Section 16. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

4 Section 1333.5. Department Supports to Prevent Truancy.--The
5 department, in coordination with the Department of Human
6 Services, shall develop best practices for student supports to
7 prevent truancy and habitual truancy.

8 Section 17. Section 1339 of the act is amended to read:

9 Section 1339. Reports to [Superintendent of Public
10 Instruction.--Every school district] Secretary of Education.--

11 (a) Every educational entity shall report to the
12 [Superintendent of Public Instruction upon the] Secretary of
13 Education information related to student attendance and
14 enforcement of the provisions for compulsory attendance and the
15 cost thereof, in such detail as [said Superintendent of Public
16 Instruction shall request.] requested by the department. The
17 department shall post quarterly reports on its publicly
18 accessible Internet website, related to the enforcement of
19 compulsory attendance, which shall contain all the information
20 required to be provided to the department under this article.
21 Information shall be reported and posted in a manner consistent
22 with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
23 (Public Law 90-247, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g).

24 (b) A school administrator, employe or representative of an
25 educational entity who knowingly falsifies a report or data
26 submitted to the department under subsection (a) shall be guilty
27 of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

28 Section 18. Section 1372(8) of the act is amended by adding
29 a subparagraph to read:

30 Section 1372. Exceptional Children; Education and
31 Training.--* * *

32 (8) Reporting of Expenditures Relating to Exceptional
33 Students.

34 * * *

35 (vi) For purposes of reporting expenditures under this
36 section and for calculating the costs for educating a special
37 education student, costs shall be in accordance with Department
38 of Education guidance and shall include the following:

39 (A) Eligible instruction costs per special education student
40 when specified in the student's individualized education program
41 shall include:

42 (I) Prorated salary and benefits for a classroom special
43 education teacher.

44 (II) Prorated salary and benefits for a classroom aide, if
45 the aide is assigned to a group of students.

46 (III) Total cost of salary and benefits if a
47 paraprofessional or one-on-one aide is assigned to the student.

48 (B) Eligible related services costs per special education
49 student when specified in the student's individualized education
50 program shall include:

51 (I) Prorated transportation cost if the vehicle is

transporting multiple students at one time.
(II) Total transportation cost if the vehicle is
transporting only the student receiving services.
(III) Prorated cost of speech and language services if
services are provided to a group of students.
(IV) Total cost of speech and language services if services
are provided to the student receiving services.
(V) Total cost of individual services, including
occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision services, hearing
services, orientation and mobility and related services.
(VI) Prorated cost of school nursing services if services
are provided to a group of students.
(VII) Total cost of a one-on-one nurse if the nurse is
assigned to a student receiving services.
(C) Eligible specialized equipment costs per special
education student when specified in the student's individualized
education program shall include:
(I) Total cost of braille materials for the student
receiving services.
(II) Total cost of assistive technology for the student
receiving services.
(III) Total cost of other equipment for the student
receiving services.
(D) Ineligible costs that may not be used in the calculation
include:
(I) Administrative costs.
(II) Nonspecialized transportation costs.
(III) General education costs, which are not applicable to
special education services.

Section 19. The definition of "chief school administrator"
in section 1301-A of the act is amended to read:

Section 1301-A. Definitions.--As used in this article,
"Chief school administrator" shall mean the superintendent of
a public school district, superintendent of an area career and
technical school, executive director of an intermediate unit or
chief [executive officer] administrator of a charter school.

* * *

Section 20. The definition of "chief school administrator"
in section 1301-B of the act is amended to read:

Section 1301-B. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this article
shall have the meaning given to them in this section unless the
context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Chief school administrator." The superintendent of a public
school district, superintendent of an area career and technical
school, executive director of an intermediate unit or chief
[executive officer] administrator of a charter school.

* * *

Section 21. Section 1302-B(i) and (j)(1)(i) of the act are
amended and subsection (b) is amended by adding a paragraph to
read:

1 Section 1302-B. School Safety and Security Committee.

2 * * *

3 (b) Composition.--The committee shall consist of a
4 chairperson and the following members:

5 * * *

6 (13) A recognized subject matter expert in cyber
7 security appointed by the Governor from three names submitted
8 jointly by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the
9 Speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall be
10 nonvoting.

11 * * *

12 (i) Cooperation.--[The] In cooperation with the committee,
13 the commission shall [cooperate with the committee to] establish
14 an Office of School Safety and Security and shall select staff
15 to be employed by the commission and assigned to assist the
16 committee in carrying out its duties.

17 (j) Executive committee.--

18 (1) The committee shall establish an executive committee
19 which shall meet, at a minimum, every two months to identify
20 and review current and emerging school safety issues,
21 including, but not limited to:

22 (i) data on issues and incidents reported through
23 the Safe2Say Something Program;

24 * * *

25 Section 22. Section 1304-B of the act is amended by adding
26 subsections to read:

27 Section 1304-B. School safety and security assessment
28 providers.

29 * * *

30 (d) Review of registered assessment providers.--Annually,
31 the committee shall select a sample of active registered school
32 safety and security assessment providers to submit a completed
33 assessment for review. The committee shall ensure that all
34 registered school safety and security providers are reviewed
35 every three years. The registered provider may be required to
36 correct deficiencies identified in assessment materials.

37 (e) Removal.--Registered providers may be removed from the
38 registered provider list if the assessors are unresponsive or
39 inactive or if the assessment materials are determined to be
40 inconsistent with the approved assessment criteria under section
41 1303-B.

42 Section 23. Section 1306-B(h) (4) of the act is amended and
43 subsections (h) and (j) are amended by adding paragraphs to
44 read:

45 Section 1306-B. School Safety and Security Grant Program.

46 * * *

47 (h) School Safety and Security Fund.--

48 * * *

49 (4) The fund may only be used for the grant programs
50 authorized under this article and no money in the fund may be
51 transferred or diverted to any other purpose by

administrative action[.], except that the committee may annually authorize the use of unexpended, uncommitted or unencumbered money in the fund to be used for administrative costs of the commission associated with carrying out the duties under this article, including fulfilling training requirements under this article and Articles XIII-C and XIII-E.

* * *

(14) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during the 2025-2026 fiscal year, money in the fund shall be used as follows:

(i) One hundred million dollars shall be used for school safety and mental health grants under section 1314.2-B.

(ii) Twenty million seven hundred thousand dollars shall be used for targeted school safety grants under section 1306.1-B.

* * *

(j) Specific purposes.--The committee shall provide grants to school entities for programs that address school mental health and safety and security, including:

* * *

(32) Establishing, enhancing or promoting cybersecurity measures, including:

(i) Internal and external penetration testing.

(ii) Enhancing programs aimed at cybersecurity and risk management.

(iii) Coordinating or enhancing partnerships with local law enforcement agencies.

(iv) Forming cybersecurity breach reaction plans in accordance with Federal, State and local cybersecurity and data security guidelines.

(v) Collaboration with approved third-party vendors in conducting cybersecurity protection, internal and external penetration testing and vulnerability assessment.

(vi) Establishment of cybersecurity protocols associated with the use of third-party providers.

(vii) Other recommendations made to remedy cybersecurity vulnerabilities found by third-party providers.

* * *

Section 24. Section 1309-B(d) of the act is amended, subsection (c) (5.1) (iii) is amended by adding a clause and subsection (c) is amended by adding a paragraph to read:
Section 1309-B. School safety and security coordinator.

* * *

(c) Specific duties.--The school safety and security coordinator shall:

* * *

(3.1) Coordinate school safety and security meetings

1 with school and building leadership, at least quarterly.

2 * * *

3 (5.1) No later than June 30, 2025, and each June 30
4 thereafter, make a report to the school entity's board of
5 directors on the school entity's current school security
6 personnel. The following apply:

7 * * *

8 (iii) Each report shall include:

9 * * *

10 (F) Beginning June 30, 2026, and each June 30
11 thereafter, an attendance report of school and
12 building personnel present at school safety and
13 security meetings, including yearly attendance
14 totals.

15 * * *

16 (d) Training required.--

17 (1) School administrators appointed as school safety and
18 security coordinators shall complete the seven hours of
19 training required under section 1316-B within one year [from
20 the time the first trainings that meet the criteria are
21 posted by the committee] of appointment.

22 (2) School administrators appointed as safety and
23 security coordinators [after trainings are posted shall
24 complete the training within one year of appointment] shall
25 complete any additional continuing education requirements as
26 adopted by the committee.

27 Section 25. Section 1310-B(a) introductory paragraph of the
28 act is amended and the section is amended by adding a subsection
29 to read:

30 Section 1310-B. School safety and security training.

31 (a) School entity duties.--School entities, in consultation
32 with the school safety and security coordinator, shall provide
33 their employees with mandatory training on school safety and
34 security subject to the following based on the needs of the
35 school entity:

36 * * *

37 (a.2) Input.--Annually, the school safety and security
38 coordinator shall meet with school employees for input on the
39 training for the school entity under subsection (a).

40 * * *

41 Section 26. The act is amended by adding a section to read:
42 Section 1314.2-B. School safety and mental health grants for
43 2025-2026 school year.

44 (a) Funding.--For the 2025-2026 school year, the money under
45 section 1306-B(h)(14)(i) shall be used by the committee to award
46 school safety and mental health grants to school entities in
47 accordance with this section.

48 (b) Purpose of grants.--

49 (1) A school entity shall be eligible for school safety
50 and mental health grants to meet the level 1 baseline
51 criteria for physical security or behavioral health and

school climate criteria established by the committee.

(2) If a school entity has met the level 1 baseline criteria for physical security, the school entity shall be eligible to expend funding for activities outlined in section 1306-B(j)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (7), (8), (9), (11), (12), (13), (14), (16), (18), (22), (23) and (32).

(3) If a school entity has met the level 1 baseline criteria for behavioral health and school climate, the school entity shall be eligible to expend funding for activities outlined in section 1306-B(j)(6), (10), (15), (17), (19), (20), (21), (23), (24), (25), (26), (27), (28), (29), (30) and (31).

(c) Amount of grants.--The committee shall award school safety and mental health grants to each school entity that submits an application in the following amounts:

(1) A school district shall receive:

(i) \$100,000; and

(ii) the amount determined under paragraph (3).

(2) An intermediate unit, area career and technical school, charter school, regional charter school and cyber charter school shall receive \$70,000.

(3) An amount determined as follows:

(i) Multiply the 2023-2024 adjusted average daily membership for each school district by the difference between the amount allocated in subsection (a) and the sum of the amounts distributed under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(ii) Divide the product from subparagraph (i) by the 2023-2024 adjusted average daily membership for all school districts.

(d) Availability of applications.--The committee shall make an application for grants under this section available to school entities no later than 45 days after the effective date of this subsection. The application requirements shall be limited to the school entity's contact information, the specific purpose of the grant based upon the categories specified in subsection (b), with boxes on the application for the applicant to indicate the school entity's anticipated use and certification by the applicant that the money will be used for the stated purpose.

(e) Effect of revenue received.--Grant money received under this section may not be included when calculating the amount to be paid under section 1725-A.

(f) Audit and monitoring.--The committee shall randomly audit and monitor grant recipients to ensure the appropriate use of grant money and compliance with provisions of the grant program.

(g) Definition.--As used in this section, the term "school entity" means a school district, area career and technical school, intermediate unit, charter school, regional charter school and cyber charter school.

Section 27. Section 1319-B(f) of the act is amended and

subsection (d) is amended by adding a paragraph to read:
Section 1319-B. Reporting and memorandum of understanding.

* * *

(d) Advisory committee.--A chief school administrator shall form an advisory committee composed of relevant school staff, including, but not limited to, principals, security personnel, school safety and security coordinator, emergency services personnel, school security personnel, guidance counselors and special education administrators to assist in the development of a memorandum of understanding under this section. In consultation with the advisory committee, the chief school administrator shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction over school property of the school entity. The chief school administrator shall submit a copy of the memorandum of understanding to the department by June 30, 2024, and biennially update and re-execute a memorandum of understanding with law enforcement and file the memorandum with the department on a biennial basis. The memorandum of understanding shall be signed by the chief school administrator, the chief of police of the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the relevant school property and principals of each school building of the school entity. The memorandum of understanding shall comply with the regulations promulgated under section 1306.2-B and shall also include:

* * *

(4) A procedure for timely coordination between the school entity's threat assessment team and the law enforcement agency, if necessary, pursuant to section 1302-E.

* * *

(f) Noncompliance.--If a school entity or law enforcement agency fails to comply with the provisions of this section, the school entity or law enforcement agency may not be awarded any grant administered by the committee until such time as the school entity or law enforcement agency has complied with this section. No later than September 1 of each year, the department shall provide the committee with a list of school entities that have not reported information under this section to the department.

* * *

Section 28. Sections 1305-C(a)(2)(i), 1313-C(a.1)(1), 1314-C(b)(1) and 1315-C(1), Article XIII-D heading and section 1301-D(3), (4), (5) and (6) of the act are amended to read:
Section 1305-C. Training.

(a) General rule.--A school police officer who has been granted powers under section 1306-C(a)(3) or (b) or has been authorized to carry a firearm must, before entering upon the duties of the office, satisfy the following:

* * *

(2) (i) Successfully complete [the Basic School Resource Officer Course offered by the National Association of School Resource Officers or an equivalent

1 course of instruction approved by the commission.]
2 training for school security personnel in accordance with
3 the standards approved by the commission and with a
4 provider approved in accordance with section 1315-C.

5 * * *

6 Section 1313-C. School resource officers.

7 * * *

8 (a.1) Training.--

9 (1) Prior to entering upon the duties of the office, a
10 school resource officer shall successfully complete [the
11 Basic School Resource Officer Course offered by the National
12 Association of School Resource Officers or an equivalent
13 course of instruction approved by the commission.] training
14 for school security personnel in accordance with the
15 standards approved by the commission and with a provider
16 approved in accordance with section 1315-C.

17 * * *

18 Section 1314-C. School security guards.

19 * * *

20 (b) Training.--The following shall apply:

21 (1) Prior to entering upon the duties of the office, a
22 school security guard shall successfully complete [the Basic
23 School Resource Officer Course offered by the National
24 Association of School Resource Officers or an equivalent
25 course of instruction approved by the commission.] training
26 for school security personnel in accordance with the
27 standards approved by the commission and with a provider
28 approved in accordance with section 1315-C.

29 * * *

30 Section 1315-C. Duties of commission.

31 The commission shall have the following duties under this
32 article:

33 (1) [In conjunction with the department and the
34 Pennsylvania State Police, periodically reassess the training
35 requirements for all school security personnel, including the
36 Basic School Resource Officer Course offered by the National
37 Association of School Resource Officers.] The following:

38 (i) In consultation with the Department of Education
39 and the Pennsylvania State Police, adopt minimum
40 standards for training of school security personnel who
41 will provide school security services in school entities
42 and nonpublic schools. The standards shall incorporate
43 the subjects included in the Basic School Resource
44 Officer Course offered by the National Association of
45 School Resource Officers and subjects specific to
46 Pennsylvania law. The commission may approve groups,
47 organizations or other entities to provide training under
48 this paragraph.

49 (ii) The commission, in conjunction with the
50 Department of Education and the Pennsylvania State
51 Police, shall periodically reassess the standards and

1 training requirements for all school security personnel.

2 * * *

3 ARTICLE XIII-D

4 SAFE2SAY SOMETHING PROGRAM

5 Section 1301-D. Intent.

6 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

7 * * *

8 (3) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the
9 Safe2Say Something Program be a one-stop shop for students,
10 teachers and community members to report behavior perceived
11 to be threatening to an individual or a school entity.
12 Reports made through the anonymous reporting system will be
13 referred to local schools, law enforcement and/or
14 organizations.

15 (4) The intent of the General Assembly is for the
16 Safe2Say Something Program to supplement, not replace, 911
17 services. The Safe2Say Something Program is intended to
18 facilitate increased communication between law enforcement,
19 school districts and organizations.

20 (5) It is not the intent of the General Assembly that
21 the Safe2Say Something Program be used as a disciplinary tool
22 for school employees. However, there may be instances where
23 information obtained through the program may be shared with
24 and used by school officials.

25 (6) The Safe2Say Something Program is not meant to be a
26 tool for law enforcement. However, there may be instances
27 where information obtained through the program may be shared
28 with and used by law enforcement.

29 Section 29. The definition of "program" in section 1302-D of
30 the act is amended to read:

31 Section 1302-D. Definitions.

32 The following words and phrases when used in this article
33 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
34 context clearly indicates otherwise:

35 * * *

36 "Program." The Safe2Say Something Program established under
37 section 1303-D(a).

38 * * *

39 Section 30. Section 1303-D heading, (a) and (d) of the act
40 are amended, subsection (c) is amended by adding paragraphs and
41 the section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

42 Section 1303-D. Safe2Say Something Program.

43 (a) Establishment.--The Safe2Say Something Program is
44 established within the office.

45 * * *

46 (c) Program requirements.--Beginning January 14, 2019, the
47 program shall be responsible for the following:

48 * * *

49 (11) To develop a training program for school personnel
50 on the program which, at a minimum, should include training
51 on receiving, responding to and disposing of a report. The

1 office may partner with a third party to develop the training
2 program. The training program shall be made available to
3 school entities at no charge to the school entity.

4 (12) To provide technical assistance and support to the
5 program, as needed.

6 (13) To follow up and determine the outcome of a report
7 made to the program, including actions taken on the report.

8 (d) School entity.--Each school entity shall [develop]:

9 (1) Develop procedures for assessing and responding to
10 reports received from the program.

11 (2) (i) Except as provided under subparagraph (ii),
12 provide, in a form and manner determined by the office,
13 for a final disposition of each report received by the
14 school entity within 30 days of receipt of a report from
15 the program.

16 (ii) For a life safety event, provide for a final
17 disposition within 48 hours of the receipt of a report
18 from the program.

19 (e) Noncompliance.--The following shall apply to a school
20 entity that fails to submit final dispositions to the office:

21 (1) The office shall post on its publicly accessible
22 Internet website a list of each school entity that has not
23 submitted final dispositions to the office.

24 (2) The office shall report to the School Safety and
25 Security Committee the school entities that have not
26 submitted final dispositions to the office.

27 (3) The School Safety and Security Committee may not
28 award any grant administered by the committee to a school
29 entity that has not submitted final dispositions to the
30 office until the school entity has submitted final
31 dispositions to the office.

32 Section 31. Section 1307-D(b) of the act is amended by
33 adding paragraphs to read:
34 Section 1307-D. Annual report.

35 * * *

36 (b) Contents of report.--The report shall, at a minimum,
37 include:

38 * * *

39 (7.1) The total number of trainings received by school
40 entities from the office or a partner of the office.

41 (7.2) The total number of trainings of school personnel
42 on the program, including training on how to receive, respond
43 and dispose of reports from the program.

44 (7.3) A list of school entities that have not yet
45 completed training on how to receive, respond and dispose of
46 reports from the program.

47 * * *

48 Section 32. The definitions of "chief school administrator"
49 and "Safe2Say Program" in section 1301-E of the act are amended
50 to read:

51 Section 1301-E. Definitions.

1 The following words and phrases when used in this article
2 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
3 context clearly indicates otherwise:

4 * * *

5 "Chief school administrator." A superintendent of a school
6 district, executive director of an intermediate unit,
7 administrative director of an area career and technical school
8 or chief [executive officer] administrator of a charter school,
9 regional charter school or cyber charter school.

10 * * *

11 "Safe2Say Something Program." The Safe2Say Something Program
12 established under Article XIII-D.

13 * * *

14 Section 33. Section 1302-E(b)(1)(ii)(B)(IV) and (iv) of the
15 act are amended and subsection (b)(1)(ii)(B) is amended by
16 adding a subclause to read:

17 Section 1302-E. Threat assessment teams.

18 * * *

19 (b) Team requirements.--The following shall apply to teams
20 established under subsection (a):

21 (1) Each team shall:

22 * * *

23 (ii) Include:

24 * * *

25 (B) Other school staff or community resources
26 who may serve as regular team members or be consulted
27 during the threat assessment process, as appropriate,
28 and as determined necessary by the team, including:

29 * * *

30 (IV) The individual identified by the school
31 entity to receive reports from the Safe2Say
32 Something Program.

33 * * *

34 (VII) An individual who serves on a local or
35 county threat assessment team, if applicable.

36 * * *

37 (iv) Be responsible, at a minimum, for the
38 following:

39 (A) Making age-appropriate informational
40 materials available to students regarding recognition
41 of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a
42 threat to the student, other students, school
43 employees, school facilities, the community or others
44 and how to report their concerns, including through
45 the Safe2Say Something Program.

46 (B) Making informational materials available to
47 school employees regarding recognition of threatening
48 or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the
49 student, other students, school employees, school
50 facilities, the community or others and how to report
51 their concerns, including through the Safe2Say

1 Something Program.

2 (C) Ensuring that school employees are aware of
3 the staff members who are appointed to the team and
4 how to report threatening or at-risk behavior,
5 including through the Safe2Say [program] Something
6 Program.

7 (D) Assisting in assessing and responding to
8 reports received through the Safe2Say Something
9 Program. Where a school entity has only one team,
10 that team may also serve as the school entity's team
11 for assessing and responding to reports received
12 through the Safe2Say Something Program.

13 (E) Assessing and responding to reports of
14 students exhibiting self-harm or suicide risk factors
15 or warning signs as provided for under section 1526.

16 (F) Assessing, responding and making appropriate
17 determinations and referrals under subsection (c)
18 based on the information available to the team. The
19 team, when appropriate, may coordinate with the
20 student assistance program.

21 (G) Providing required information to the chief
22 school administrator or designee to make the report
23 provided for under subsection (a) (2) (v).

24 (H) Establishing protocols for timely
25 consultation between the team and law enforcement,
26 juvenile justice agencies, county agencies, health
27 care providers or behavioral service providers, as
28 appropriate, to refer students whose behavior
29 indicates a potential threat for additional
30 interventions or supports, including the exchange of
31 relevant information in accordance with Federal and
32 State law.

33 * * *

34 Section 34. Sections 1303-E(a) (3) (ii), 1403-A(a) and 1403.1-
35 A(a) (2) of the act are amended to read:

36 Section 1303-E. Threat assessment guidelines, training and
37 information materials.

38 (a) Duties of committee.--No later than 180 days from the
39 effective date of this section, the committee shall:

40 * * *

41 (3) Develop model procedures and guidelines that school
42 entities may use in implementing this article. The model
43 procedures and guidelines shall, at a minimum:

44 * * *

45 (ii) Reflect best practices in identifying,
46 reporting, assessing and responding to threats, including
47 threats reported through the Safe2Say Something Program,
48 and coordinating with stakeholders.

49 * * *

50 Section 1403-A. Scope of program and selection of students.

51 (a) Maximum participation.--

1 (1) Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, a maximum of
2 20 students in grades 9 through 12 may be enrolled in the
3 recovery high school under the program at any one time.

4 (2) Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, a maximum of
5 35 students in grades 9 through 12 may be enrolled in the
6 recovery high school under the program at any one time.

7 * * *

8 Section 1403.1-A. Enrollment of students.

9 (a) Conditions.--A student may enroll in the recovery high
10 school under the program established in section 1402-A if the
11 following apply:

12 * * *

13 (2) If fewer than [20 students] the maximum number of
14 students that may be enrolled under subsection 1403-A
15 residing in a school district of the first class enroll in
16 the recovery high school under the program at any time, a
17 student who resides in a school district other than a school
18 district of the first class may enroll in the recovery high
19 school under the program if the student's parent or guardian
20 has applied for enrollment in the recovery high school on the
21 student's behalf.

22 * * *

23 Section 35. Section 1501-N of the act is amended by adding a
24 definition to read:

25 Section 1501-N. Definitions.

26 The following words and phrases when used in this article
27 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
28 context clearly indicates otherwise:

29 * * *

30 "Parent." An individual who has legal custody or
31 guardianship of a student.

32 * * *

33 Section 36. The act is amended by adding sections to read:
34 Section 1503-N. School entity duties related to evidence-based
35 reading instruction.

36 (a) Duties of school entity.--A school entity shall do all
37 of the following no later than the beginning of the 2027-2028
38 school year:

39 (1) Adopt an evidence-based reading instruction
40 curriculum.

41 (2) Identify an educator responsible for assisting each
42 school with the implementation of the curriculum adopted
43 under paragraph (1).

44 (3) Approve a professional development training program
45 from a list developed by the department in consultation with
46 the council, which satisfies the requirements under section
47 1205.8(c) for educators.

48 (4) Demonstrate that each educator is in the process of
49 completing approved professional development under paragraph
50 (3).

51 (b) Completion of training.--An educator must complete

approved professional development training under subsection (a)
(3) no later than the beginning of the 2028-2029 school year.

(c) Reporting.--

(1) By March 31, 2026, each school entity shall report
to the department the reading instruction curricula in use by
the school entity during the 2025-2026 school year.

(2) By July 31, 2027, and each year thereafter, each
school entity shall report to the department the following:

(i) The evidence-based reading instruction curricula
adopted by the school entity under subsection (a)(1).

(ii) The number of educators in the school entity
who have received professional development under section
1502-N(b)(3) and the type of professional development
received.

Section 1504-N. School entity duties related to reading
screening.

(a) General rule.--A school entity shall, no later than the
beginning of the 2027-2028 school year, screen each student
enrolled in kindergarten through third grade for reading
competency three times each school year, once at the beginning
of the school year, once during the middle of the year and once
at the end of the school year. In conducting the screening, the
school entity shall use a universal reading screener chosen from
the list of approved universal reading screeners under section
1502-N(b).

(b) Exception.--Students with limited English proficiency,
students with disabilities and gifted students are subject to
the requirements of this section, unless the assessment would
conflict with the educational program, plan or service agreement
provided in accordance with Federal or State law and regulation.
Section 1505-N. Reading deficiency identification and parental
notification.

(a) Student.--A student in kindergarten through grade three
shall be identified as having a reading deficiency if an
approved universal reading screener administered under section
1504-N identifies the student at risk for reading failure.

(b) Reading deficiency.--A student who is identified as
having a reading deficiency under subsection (a) shall remain
identified as having a reading deficiency until the student
performs at or above an identified threshold level using at
least three data points, which may include:

(1) results on a universal reading screener;

(2) the educator's professional judgment on a student's
performance;

(3) progress monitoring outcomes;

(4) diagnostic assessments;

(5) benchmark assessments; and

(6) formative or summative assessments.

(c) Parental notification.--A school entity shall notify, in
writing or electronically:

(1) Each parent of a kindergarten student who exhibits a

1 deficiency in reading in the third screening at the end of
2 the school year.

3 (2) Each parent of a first through third grade student
4 who exhibits a deficiency in reading during the school year
5 after the identification of the reading deficiency, including
6 periodic updates three times per year regarding the student's
7 progress.

8 (d) Construction.--Nothing under this section shall be
9 construed to prohibit a school entity from identifying a student
10 in another grade level as being in need of reading
11 interventions.

12 Section 1506-N. Reading intervention plans.

13 (a) Duty of school entity.--A school entity shall provide a
14 reading intervention plan to each student in kindergarten
15 through grade three who is identified as having a reading
16 deficiency under section 1505-N with the goal of ensuring that
17 the student can read at or above grade level by the end of grade
18 three.

19 (b) Development.--The reading intervention plan shall be
20 developed by an educator.

21 (c) Contents.--The reading intervention plan shall, at a
22 minimum, include reading intervention approaches and be provided
23 in addition to:

24 (1) instruction provided to each student in the general
25 education classroom; and

26 (2) evidence-based instruction curriculum.

27 Section 1507-N. Grant program.

28 (a) Establishment.--Contingent upon available funding, the
29 department may establish a grant program to aid school entities
30 with costs associated with implementation of this article. The
31 total amount of grants awarded shall be limited to funds
32 available for this purpose under section 1508-N.

33 (b) Application.--The department shall develop an
34 application form that school entities must use to apply for a
35 grant under the program. Grant applications must be submitted in
36 accordance with guidelines developed by the department.

37 Section 1508-N. Funding.

38 The department shall use the following funding sources for
39 the purpose of this article and to award grants to school
40 entities under section 1507-N, including providing professional
41 coaching and contracting with multiple service providers to
42 provide coaching support in the program as required under
43 section 1205.8:

44 (1) Appropriations to the department for the purpose of
45 this article.

46 (2) Money made available to the department from other
47 public and private sources, including the Federal Government.
48 Section 1509-N. Reporting.

49 (a) School entity report.--Beginning July 31, 2028, and
50 continuing each July 31 thereafter, a school entity shall report
51 annually to the department the following:

1 (1) The number and percentage of students, disaggregated
2 by grade and by individual school, identified with a
3 potential reading deficiency at the beginning of the school
4 year according to the first screening of the school year
5 required under section 1504-N and the literacy intervention
6 approaches provided.

7 (2) The number and percentage of students, disaggregated
8 by grade and by individual school, identified with a
9 potential reading deficiency at the end of the school year
10 according to the final screening of the school year required
11 under section 1504-N.

12 (3) The number of students, disaggregated by grade and
13 by individual school, excepted from the assessment under
14 section 1504-N(b).

15 (4) Any other information deemed necessary by the
16 Secretary of Education to carry out this article and assess
17 effectiveness over time.

18 (b) Department report.--Beginning November 30, 2028, and
19 continuing each November 30 thereafter, the department shall
20 produce an annual report that provides the information reported
21 to the department under subsection (a).

22 (c) Report data.--Data included in the report shall be
23 deidentified and comply with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (relating to
24 family educational and privacy rights).

25 (d) Public posting.--The department shall post the report
26 required under this section on the department's publicly
27 accessible Internet website, and shall submit the report to each
28 of the following:

29 (1) The Governor.

30 (2) The State Board of Education.

31 (3) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

32 (4) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

33 (5) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
34 Education Committee of the Senate.

35 (6) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
36 Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

37 Section 1510-N. Accountability.

38 (a) Duties of the department.--The department shall monitor
39 and enforce school entity compliance with this article as
40 follows:

41 (1) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, and
42 continuing each school year thereafter, the department shall
43 develop a plan to monitor progress of a school entity's
44 evidence-based reading instruction to ensure improved
45 educational outcomes.

46 (2) If a school entity is not in compliance with this
47 article or its students are not demonstrating progress in
48 reading skills or proficiency, the department may implement
49 evidence-based corrective actions, including literacy coaches
50 and other resources.

51 (b) Effect of noncompliance.--A school entity that declines

department assistance under subsection (a) forfeits grant funding under this article.

Section 1511-N. Construction.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to supersede or preempt the rights, remedies and procedures afforded to school employees or labor organizations under Federal or State law or any provision of a collective bargaining agreement negotiated between a school employer and an exclusive representative of the employees in accordance with the act of July 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the Public Employee Relations Act.

Section 37. Section 1607 of the act is amended by adding a subsection to read:

Section 1607. Attendance in Other Districts.--* * *

(b.3) For a school district that eliminated its high school under subsection (b), if sufficient funds are available, the Secretary of Education shall establish a project team which shall conduct an assessment of the educational, financial, administrative and community impacts of consolidation of the school district with another school district. The following apply:

(1) The assessment shall include a feasibility study to analyze consolidation with no less than three school districts identified by the Secretary of Education whose borders are no more than seven miles from the school district's border.

(2) The feasibility study shall include a review of educational program offerings and services, facilities utilization and capital planning, fiscal analyses, governance and leadership structures, operational efficiencies and stakeholder considerations.

(3) The school district that eliminated its high school under subsection (b) and the school districts identified by the Secretary of Education under paragraph (1) shall cooperate with the project team conducting the assessment.

(4) The project team shall submit a report, including its findings and recommendations, to the Secretary of Education, the Education Committee of the Senate and the Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

* * *

Section 38. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 1617. Free Application for Federal Student Aid.--(a) Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, prior to completing high school, a student who attends a school entity or nonpublic school in this Commonwealth, unless exempted under subsection (e), shall file a FAFSA with the United States Department of Education or submit an opt-out form in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) The parent or legal guardian of a student or, if a student is at least eighteen years of age or legally emancipated, the student may opt out of filing the FAFSA under subsection (a) by completing and submitting to the school entity or nonpublic school an opt-out form developed by the department,

1 in consultation with the agency. The opt-out form shall include
2 the following information:

3 (1) A statement that United States citizens are eligible for
4 Federal financial aid.

5 (2) A statement that the parent, legal guardian or student,
6 as applicable, understands the purpose of the FAFSA and has
7 chosen not to file the application.

8 (3) A statement that submitting the FAFSA is optional and,
9 if the parent, legal guardian or student submits the opt-out
10 form, the student shall be exempt from the requirements of
11 subsection (a).

12 (c) The department shall make the opt-out form available to
13 school entities and nonpublic schools and post the opt-out form
14 on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

15 (d) A school entity or nonpublic school shall provide a copy
16 of the opt-out form to parents, legal guardians and students.

17 (e) If a FAFSA is not filed or opt-out form is not submitted
18 on behalf of a student, the school entity or nonpublic school
19 shall exempt the student from the provisions of subsection (a).
20 Prior to making an exemption, the school entity or nonpublic
21 school must make a reasonable effort to contact the parent or
22 legal guardian of the student and provide the parent, legal
23 guardian or student with information explaining the purposes of
24 the FAFSA and the benefits available from completing the form.

25 (f) No student shall be prevented from graduating or be
26 penalized by the school entity or nonpublic school in any way
27 for failing to complete the FAFSA or opt-out form.

28 (g) The agency shall provide a school entity or nonpublic
29 school with information indicating whether a student of the
30 school entity or nonpublic school has completed the FAFSA,
31 provided the agency has access to the information.

32 (h) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to
33 require a parent, legal guardian or student to provide personal
34 financial information to a school entity or nonpublic school or
35 indicate a reason for not completing the FAFSA or opt-out form.

36 (i) Personal financial information inadvertently obtained
37 from a parent, legal guardian or student by a school entity or
38 nonpublic school as a result of administering this section is
39 not a public record accessible for inspection and duplication in
40 accordance with the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3),
41 known as the "Right-to-Know Law."

42 (j) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
43 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
44 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

45 "Agency" shall mean the Pennsylvania Higher Education
46 Assistance Agency.

47 "Department" shall mean the Department of Education of the
48 Commonwealth.

49 "FAFSA" shall mean the Free Application for Federal Student
50 Aid.

51 "Nonpublic school" shall mean a school, other than a public

1 school within this Commonwealth, in which a resident of this
2 Commonwealth may legally fulfill the compulsory school
3 attendance requirements of this act and that meets the
4 applicable requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of
5 1964 (Public Law 88-352, 42 U.S.C. § 2000 et seq.).

6 "School entity" shall mean an area career and technical
7 school, charter school, cyber charter school, regional charter
8 school or school district.

9 Section 39. Section 1604-A(b) (1) of the act is amended to
10 read:

11 Section 1604-A. Council Recommendations and Standards.--* *
12 *

13 (b) The association shall take all steps necessary to comply
14 with the following standards:

15 (1) Adopt and adhere to policies governing the conduct of
16 open meetings that conform with the requirements of 65 Pa.C.S.
17 Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings)[.] and that require all the
18 open meetings to be live-streamed, and make a recording of an
19 open meeting available no later than 10 days after the open
20 meeting on the association's publicly accessible Internet
21 website, free of charge, beginning January 1, 2026.

22 * * *

23 Section 40. Section 1725.1-A of the act, added July 11, 2024
24 (P.L.618, No.55), is amended to read:

25 Section 1725.1-A. Funding for Cyber Charter Schools.--(a)
26 There shall be no tuition charge for a resident or nonresident
27 student attending a cyber charter school.

28 (b) Notwithstanding [section 1725-A(a) (3)] section 1725-A(a)
29 (2) and (3), per-student funding amounts for non-special
30 education students and special education students attending a
31 cyber charter school shall be calculated in accordance with this
32 section and shall be paid by the school district of residence of
33 each student.

34 (c) Effective January 1, 2025, [and the entirety of each
35 school year thereafter] through the end of the 2024-2025 school
36 year, for special education students, a cyber charter school
37 shall receive for each student enrolled the lesser of:

38 (1) the amount calculated under section 1725-A(a) (3); or

39 (2) the same funding as for each non-special education
40 student as provided in section 1725-A(a) (2), plus an additional
41 amount determined by dividing the district of residence's total
42 special education expenditure by the school district of
43 residence's total special education average daily membership for
44 the prior school year.

45 (d) For the 2024-2025 school year, the monthly payments for
46 July through December for special education students shall be
47 based upon the rate calculated under section 1725-A(a) (3) and
48 the monthly payments for January through June for special
49 education students shall be based upon the rate calculated in
50 subsection (c).

51 (e) For the 2025-2026 school year and each school year

1 thereafter, for non-special education students, a cyber charter
2 school shall receive for each student enrolled an amount
3 calculated as follows:

4 (1) The amount under section 1725-A(a)(2) adjusted as
5 follows:

6 (i) The budgeted expenditures of the school district shall
7 include the following additional deductions: tuition paid to
8 cyber charter schools; tax assessment and collection services;
9 sixty per centum of student activities; and sixty per centum of
10 operations and maintenance of plant services.

11 (ii) The average daily membership of the school district for
12 students enrolled in a cyber charter school shall be deducted
13 from the average daily membership of the school district.

14 (2) Multiply the amount determined under paragraph (1) by
15 the following:

16 (i) For a school district of the first class A, the lesser
17 of one (1) or the amount determined under section 2502.56(d)(2)

18 (ii) for the school district for the most recent year available
19 as of the first day of June preceding the school year for which
20 the per-student funding amounts apply.

21 (ii) For all other school districts, one (1).

22 (f) For the 2025-2026 school year and each school year
23 thereafter, for special education students, a cyber charter
24 school shall receive for each student enrolled the lesser of:

25 (1) the same funding as for each non-special education
26 student as provided in section 1725-A(a)(2), plus an additional
27 amount determined by dividing the school district of residence's
28 total special education expenditure by the school district of
29 residence's total special education average daily membership for
30 the prior school year; or

31 (2) the amount determined under subsection (e) for the
32 school district multiplied by one and eighty-nine hundredths
33 (1.89).

34 (g) Notwithstanding section 1725-A(a)(5), payments shall be
35 made to the cyber charter school in twelve (12) equal monthly
36 payments, by the fifth day of each month, within the operating
37 school year. A student enrolled in a cyber charter school shall
38 be included in the average daily membership of the student's
39 school district of residence for the purpose of providing basic
40 education funding payments and special education funding
41 pursuant to Article XXV. If a school district fails to make a
42 payment to a cyber charter school as prescribed in this
43 subsection, the secretary shall deduct the estimated amount, as
44 documented by the cyber charter school using the most recently
45 available per-student amounts posted under section 1725-A(a)(7),
46 from any and all State payments made to the district after
47 receipt of documentation from the cyber charter school. The
48 secretary shall not make a deduction on behalf of a cyber
49 charter school unless the documentation from the cyber charter
50 school uses the per-student amount that is posted under section
51 1725-A(a)(7). No later than October 1 of each year, a cyber

1 charter school shall submit to the school district of residence
2 of each student final documentation of payment to be made using
3 the per-student amounts posted under 1725-A(a)(7) and the
4 average daily membership for the students enrolled in the cyber
5 charter school from the school district for the previous school
6 year. If a school district fails to make payment to the cyber
7 charter school, the secretary shall deduct and pay the amount as
8 documented by the cyber charter school using the per-student
9 amounts posted under section 1725-A(a)(7) from any and all State
10 payments made to the school district after receipt of
11 documentation from the cyber charter school from the
12 appropriations for the fiscal year in which the final
13 documentation of payment was submitted to the school district of
14 residence.

15 (h) Notwithstanding section 1725-A(a)(6), not later than
16 thirty (30) days after the secretary makes the deduction
17 described in subsection (g), a school district may notify the
18 secretary that the deduction made from State payments to the
19 school district under this subsection is inaccurate. The
20 secretary shall provide the school district with an opportunity
21 to be heard concerning whether the cyber charter school
22 documented that its students were enrolled in the cyber charter
23 school, the period of time during which each student was
24 enrolled, the school district of residence of each student and
25 whether the amounts deducted from the school district were
26 accurate.

27 Section 41. Sections 1748-A(a) and (b) and 1748.1-A(a) of
28 the act, amended or added July 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), are
29 amended and the sections are amended by adding subsections to
30 read:

31 Section 1748-A. Enrollment and notification.

32 (a) Notice to school district.--

33 (1) Within 10 days of the enrollment of a student to a
34 cyber charter school, the parent or guardian and the cyber
35 charter school shall notify the student's school district of
36 residence of the enrollment through the use of the
37 notification form under subsection (b).

38 (1.1) The parent or guardian of a student enrolled in a
39 cyber charter school shall also use the form developed under
40 subsection (b) to submit continued proof of the student's
41 residence to the cyber charter school and the student's
42 school district of residence by November 1 and by March 1 of
43 each school year. The notification form of a newly enrolled
44 cyber charter student shall satisfy the first November 1 or
45 March 1 notification deadline, whichever is sooner. A student
46 identified as homeless under 42 U.S.C. § 11302 (relating to
47 general definition of homeless individual) may not be
48 required to submit the home address information required
49 under subsection (b)(1) or (6).

50 (2) If a school district [which has received notice
51 under paragraph (1)] determines at any time that a student is

1 not a resident of the school district, the following apply:

2 (i) Within [seven] 10 days of receipt of the notice
3 under paragraph (1), the school district shall notify the
4 cyber charter school and the department that the student
5 is not a resident of the school district. Notification of
6 nonresidence shall include the basis for the
7 determination.

8 (ii) Within [seven] 10 days of notification under
9 subparagraph (i), the cyber charter school shall review
10 the notification of nonresidence[, respond to the school
11 district and provide a copy of the response to the
12 department. If the cyber charter school agrees that a
13 student is not a resident of the school district, it
14 shall determine the proper district of residence of the
15 student before requesting funds from another school
16 district.] and notify the school district and the
17 department that the cyber charter school agrees with the
18 school district's determination or does not agree with
19 the school district's determination. If the cyber charter
20 school disagrees with the school district's
21 determination, the cyber charter school shall provide
22 proof of residency as the basis of the determination. If
23 the cyber charter school agrees that the student is not a
24 resident of the school district, the cyber charter school
25 shall determine the proper school district of residence
26 for the student and request funds from that school
27 district.

28 (iii) Within [seven] 10 days of receipt of the
29 response under subparagraph (ii), the school district
30 shall notify the cyber charter school that it agrees with
31 the cyber charter school's determination or does not
32 agree with the cyber charter school's determination.

33 (iv) A school district that has notified the cyber
34 charter school that it does not agree with the cyber
35 charter school's determination under subparagraph (iii)
36 shall appeal to the department for a final determination.

37 (v) All decisions of the department regarding the
38 school district of residence of a student shall be
39 subject to review by the Commonwealth Court.

40 (vi) A school district shall continue to make
41 payments to a cyber charter school under section 1725-A
42 during the time in which the school district of residence
43 of a student is in dispute.

44 (vii) If a final determination is made that a
45 student is not a resident of an appealing school
46 district, the cyber charter school shall return all funds
47 provided on behalf of that student during the period for
48 which the student is not a resident of the school
49 district to the school district within 30 days.

50 (a.1) Employee report of nonresidency.--Notwithstanding any
51 provision of the act of December 12, 1986 (P.L.1559, No.169),

1 known as the Whistleblower Law, or any other law to the
2 contrary, if an employee of a cyber charter school makes a good
3 faith report that a student does not reside within the school
4 district that has received notice of the student's enrollment
5 under subsection (a), a cyber charter school may not discharge,
6 threaten or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an
7 employee regarding the employee's compensation, terms,
8 conditions, location or privileges of employment because the
9 employee makes a good faith report under this subsection.

10 (b) Notification form.--The department shall develop a
11 notification form, which may be electronic, for use under
12 subsection (a). The notification shall include:

13 (1) The name, home address and mailing address of the
14 student.

15 (2) The grade in which the student is being enrolled.

16 (3) The date the student will be enrolled.

17 (4) The name and address of the cyber charter school and
18 the name and telephone number of a contact person able to
19 provide information regarding the cyber charter school.

20 (5) The signature of the parent or guardian and an
21 authorized representative of the cyber charter school.

22 (6) Proof of residency, which shall be a document
23 containing the parent or guardian's name and address, on any
24 of the following:

25 (i) An active residential lease agreement or a
26 mortgage statement no more than three months old.

27 (ii) A bank statement no more than three months old
28 or a utility or Internet bill no more than three months
29 old.

30 (iii) A tax bill no more than three months old.

31 (iv) An insurance document no more than three months
32 old.

33 (v) Any other document determined acceptable by the
34 department.

35 * * *

36 (d) Penalty for falsifying reimbursement reports.--Any
37 school administrator, employee or representative of a school
38 district or cyber charter school who knowingly falsifies
39 information submitted to a school district, cyber charter school
40 or the department under this section shall be guilty of a
41 misdemeanor of the third degree.

42 (e) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
43 construed to conflict or be inconsistent with section 1302 or
44 1302.1 or 42 U.S.C. Ch. 119 (relating to homeless assistance).
45 Section 1748.1-A. Enrollee wellness checks.

46 (a) Requirements.--A cyber charter school shall, at least
47 once during any week consisting of at least three full or
48 partial days of academic instruction, ensure that each enrolled
49 student is [able to be] visibly seen and communicated with in
50 real time by a teacher, administrator or other representative of
51 the cyber charter school, either in person or via electronic

1 means, in order to ensure the well-being of the student and
2 verify participation in the educational program. The requirement
3 under this subsection may be satisfied by students turning on a
4 webcam during synchronous online instruction.

5 * * *

6 (c) Wellness policy.--Each cyber charter school shall submit
7 to the department a wellness check policy that demonstrates
8 compliance with subsections (a) and (b).

9 (d) Student verification.--The department may require proof
10 of compliance with this section from a cyber charter school to
11 ensure the well-being of a student enrolled in the cyber charter
12 school and to verify attendance in the educational program.

13 (e) Noncompliance.--Failure to comply with this section may
14 result in the department taking the following actions:

15 (1) Requiring the cyber charter school to report to the
16 department the date, time and method of each wellness check
17 for each student.

18 (2) Mandating teachers, administrators and staff of the
19 cyber charter school to complete child abuse recognition,
20 prevention and reporting training annually.

21 (3) Requiring the cyber charter school to meet in person
22 with each student at least once during the school year
23 following the school year in which the cyber charter school
24 is out of compliance with this section.

25 (4) Prohibiting a cyber charter school from being
26 awarded a State grant by the department until the cyber
27 charter school demonstrates compliance with subsections (a)
28 and (b).

29 Section 42. Section 1850.4(a) of the act is amended to read:
30 Section 1850.4. Capital Reserve Fund for Approved Purchases
31 of Equipment and Facility Maintenance.--(a) Any area career and
32 technical board shall have the power to create a special fund
33 which may be designated as a capital reserve fund and to
34 accumulate therein moneys to be expended, in accordance with the
35 provisions of this section, during a period not to exceed [five]
36 ten years from the date when the first payment was made into the
37 fund, for the purpose of purchasing equipment or maintaining
38 facilities.

39 * * *

40 Section 43. Section 1855 of the act is amended by adding a
41 subsection to read:

42 Section 1855. Career and Technical Education Equipment
43 Grants.--* * *

44 (f.1) The Department of Education shall use data for the
45 calculations required under this section based on the most
46 recent years for which data is available, as determined by the
47 Department of Education, and shall fix the data as of the first
48 day of June preceding the school year in which the allocation
49 occurs. If the data based on the first day of June is incorrect,
50 the Department of Education shall revise the calculations
51 accordingly.

1 * * *

2 Section 44. Sections 1857 heading, (a), (d) introductory
3 paragraph and (e) and 1858 heading, (a), (d) introductory
4 paragraph and (e) of the act are amended to read:

5 Section 1857. Cosmetology Training through Career and
6 Technical Center [Pilot] Program.--(a) The Cosmetology Training
7 Through Career And Technical Center [Pilot] Program is
8 established in the State Board of Cosmetology.

9 * * *

10 (d) No later than June [30, 2023, and] 1 each year
11 [thereafter through June 30, 2025], each CTC and secondary
12 school participating in the [pilot] program shall report the
13 following information to the State Board of Cosmetology on a
14 form prescribed by the board:

15 * * *

16 [(e) The pilot program under this section shall expire three
17 years from the effective date of this section.]

18 * * *

19 Section 1858. Barber Training through Career and Technical
20 Center [Pilot] Program.--(a) The Barber Training Through Career
21 and Technical Center [Pilot] Program is established in the State
22 Board of Barber Examiners.

23 * * *

24 (d) No later than June [30, 2023, and] 1 each year
25 [thereafter through June 30, 2025], each CTC and secondary
26 school participating in the [pilot] program shall report the
27 following information to the State Board of Barber Examiners on
28 a form prescribed by the board:

29 * * *

30 [(e) The pilot program under this section shall expire three
31 years from the effective date of this section.]

32 * * *

33 Section 45. The act is amended by adding an article to read:

34 ARTICLE XVIII-B

35 NURSING SHORTAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

36 Section 1801-B. Scope of article.

37 This article relates to the Nursing Shortage Assistance
38 Program.

39 Section 1802-B. Definitions.

40 The following words and phrases when used in this article
41 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
42 context clearly indicates otherwise:

43 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
44 Agency.

45 "Applicant." An entity that applies for a grant under
46 section 1803-B.

47 "Critical access hospital." A hospital that:

48 (1) has qualified under section 1861(mm)(1) of the
49 Social Security Act (49 Stat. 620, 42 U.S.C. § 1395x(mm)(1))
50 as a critical access hospital under Medicare; or

51 (2) is a rural hospital licensed under section 808 of

1 the act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the
2 Health Care Facilities Act, that:

3 (i) provides inpatient medical care and other
4 related services for surgery, acute medical conditions or
5 injuries;

6 (ii) is located in a county of the sixth, seventh or
7 eighth class that has no more than two medical
8 assistance-enrolled general acute care hospitals;

9 (iii) is located in a county that has greater than
10 17% of its population that are eligible for medical
11 assistance or has greater than 10,000 persons eligible
12 for medical assistance;

13 (iv) has no more than 200 licensed and staffed beds;
14 and

15 (v) does not qualify as a critical access hospital
16 under section 1861(mm)(1) of the Social Security Act as a
17 critical access hospital under Medicare.

18 "Educational institution."

19 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A.

20 (2) A university within the State System of Higher
21 Education.

22 (3) The Pennsylvania State University.

23 (4) The University of Pittsburgh.

24 (5) Temple University.

25 (6) Lincoln University.

26 (7) Any other institution that is designated as State-
27 related by the Commonwealth.

28 (8) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

29 (9) An accredited private or independent college or
30 university.

31 (10) A college established under Article XIX-G.

32 (11) A private licensed school as defined in the act of
33 December 15, 1986 (P.L.1585, No.174), known as the Private
34 Licensed Schools Act.

35 "Hospital." As defined in section 802.1 of the act of July
36 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the Health Care Facilities
37 Act.

38 "Nursing degree." A degree issued by an educational
39 institution for completion of an accredited nursing program.

40 "Partner hospital." A hospital that has entered into a
41 contractual relationship with a qualified nursing servicer and
42 meets all of the following:

43 (1) Provides loan repayment assistance to nurses
44 employed by the hospital.

45 (2) Agrees to provide non-State sourced matching funds
46 for nurse loan repayment assistance equal to at least 100% of
47 the grant amount made available by the qualified nursing
48 servicer.

49 "Program." The Nursing Shortage Assistance Program
50 established under section 1803-B.

51 "Qualified nursing servicer." An entity that does all of the

1 following:

2 (1) Contracts with multiple educational institutions and
3 hospitals in a manner that promotes greater access to
4 education and career opportunities for prospective nursing
5 students.

6 (2) Maintains a place of business in this Commonwealth.

7 (3) Contracts with multiple hospitals within this
8 Commonwealth to coordinate agreements between prospective
9 nursing students and hospitals in a manner that facilitates
10 the repayment of student loan expenses incurred by the
11 prospective nursing students.

12 (4) Has contracted with a public educational institution
13 in this Commonwealth to create new educational programs
14 within the health sciences field.

15 (5) Has more than two years of experience in supporting
16 educational institutions, including support for at least 25
17 educational institutions through agreements with a total
18 contract value greater than \$1,000,000. Experience under this
19 paragraph must include marketing, recruiting, student
20 support, clinical placement, learning design and application
21 of technology.

22 (6) Does not:

23 (i) provide student loans or engage in the
24 origination of loans, including, but not limited to,
25 serving as a loan originator or underwriter; or

26 (ii) directly or indirectly hold, purchase or
27 securitize any student loan instrument within the health
28 sciences field.

29 "Recipient." An applicant that has been awarded a grant
30 under section 1803-B.

31 Section 1803-B. Nursing Shortage Assistance Program.

32 (a) Establishment.--The Nursing Shortage Assistance Program
33 is established within the agency. The program shall provide
34 grants to qualified nursing servicers to assist nursing students
35 with securing postgraduation employment and the repayment of
36 student loan expenses incurred while obtaining a degree in
37 nursing.

38 (b) Application.--A qualified nursing servicer may apply to
39 the agency for a grant under this section. The application shall
40 be in a form and manner determined by the agency, which, at a
41 minimum, shall include all of the following:

42 (1) The name and address of the applicant.

43 (2) The name and address of the partner hospital that is
44 providing employment opportunities to prospective nurses.

45 (3) The number of prospective nurses that will receive
46 loan repayments from the grant if awarded to the qualified
47 nursing servicer.

48 (c) Awarding of grants.--

49 (1) All applications received during an application
50 period shall be reviewed and evaluated by the agency. In
51 awarding a grant under this section, the agency shall

1 consider all of the following:

2 (i) The number of timely and complete applications
3 received by the agency during the application period.

4 (ii) The anticipated number of students that would
5 receive loan repayments under the grant application.

6 (iii) The anticipated number of students of each
7 nursing degree type that would receive loan repayments
8 under the grant application.

9 (iv) The anticipated geographic distribution of
10 students receiving loan repayments under the grant
11 application.

12 (v) The anticipated number of applications for
13 students at critical access hospitals.

14 (vi) The plans for ongoing support to maximize the
15 chances of success for the nurses once employed.

16 (vii) The ability of the qualified nursing servicer
17 to develop new or expanded programs within the health
18 sciences field at eligible education institutions.

19 (viii) The ability of the qualified nursing servicer
20 to provide marketing, recruitment, student support,
21 clinical placement, learning design and technology
22 support to a participating educational institution.

23 (2) Upon determining that the applicant has met all
24 program requirements, the agency may approve a grant
25 application.

26 (d) Grant agreements.--If the agency approves an application
27 under subsection (c), the agency and the recipient shall enter
28 into a grant agreement, which, at a minimum, shall include all
29 of the following:

30 (1) The name and address of the partner hospital that is
31 partnering with the recipient to administer the program
32 funded under the grant.

33 (2) The number of prospective nurses that will receive
34 loan repayment assistance under the grant.

35 (3) A commitment by the partner hospital to use all
36 matching funds first before applying State grant funds when
37 providing loan repayment assistance to nurses who become
38 employees of the partner hospital.

39 (e) Award.--Upon execution of the grant agreement required
40 by subsection (d), the agency shall award the applicant a grant.
41 Section 1804-B. Restrictions.

42 (a) Limitations.--The following limitations shall apply to
43 grant funds awarded under section 1803-B:

44 (1) A qualified nursing servicer shall use awarded funds
45 for the purpose of this article.

46 (2) A subgrantee partner hospital shall use all
47 available matching funds before utilizing grant funds for
48 nurse loan repayment assistance.

49 (3) An individual nurse employed by a partner hospital
50 may not receive more than \$10,000 per year, or \$30,000 in the
51 aggregate, of grant money for loan repayment assistance for a

1 degree in nursing.

2 (4) A commitment by the nurse to maintain employment at
3 a hospital located in this Commonwealth for a minimum of
4 three years after the loan repayment assistance is awarded.
5 If a nurse breaches the agreement, the loan repayment
6 assistance shall be prorated.

7 (5) Loan repayment assistance received by the individual
8 nurse shall not be considered taxable income for purposes of
9 Article III of the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known
10 as the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

11 (b) Reimbursement of administrative costs.--The agency may
12 use up to 10% of money, available for the purpose of this
13 article, for payment to a qualified nursing servicer for
14 administrative costs.

15 (c) Unencumbered funds.--The recipient shall return to the
16 Commonwealth any grant funds that remain unencumbered after
17 three years.

18 Section 1805-B. Agency guidelines, application period and grant
19 awards.

20 (a) Written guidelines.--Within 30 days of the effective
21 date of this subsection, the agency shall develop written
22 guidelines for the implementation of this article.

23 (b) Application period.--In any fiscal year in which funds
24 are made available for the program, the agency shall open an
25 application period of not more than 30 days to receive
26 applications under section 1803-B.

27 (c) Grant awards.--For the fiscal year beginning July 1,
28 2025, the agency shall make grant awards under section 1803-B
29 within 30 days of the close of the application period for that
30 fiscal year.

31 Section 1806-B. Reports.

32 (a) Reports to the agency.--Each qualified nursing servicer
33 shall submit an annual report to the agency summarizing the
34 effectiveness of the qualified nursing servicer's program, which
35 shall include:

36 (i) the names of educational institutions and partner
37 hospitals contacted for program participation, including a
38 designation of whether the institution or hospital is new to,
39 or a continuing participant in, the program; and

40 (ii) a breakdown by category, in a manner as prescribed
41 by the agency, of the program costs expended by the qualified
42 nursing servicer.

43 (b) Reports to the General Assembly.--No later than December
44 31, 2026, and each year thereafter, the agency shall submit a
45 report to the General Assembly summarizing the effectiveness of
46 the grants provided by this article. The report shall include
47 the names of all partner hospitals involved in the program as of
48 the date of the report and the number of nurses that receive
49 loan repayment assistance under the program. The report shall be
50 submitted to the chairperson and minority chairperson of the
51 Appropriations Committee of the Senate, the chairperson and

1 minority chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the
2 House of Representatives, the chairperson and minority
3 chairperson of the Education Committee of the Senate and the
4 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Education Committee
5 of the House of Representatives.

6 Section 46. Section 1913-A(b) (1.6) of the act is amended by
7 adding a subclause to read:

8 Section 1913-A. Financial Program; Reimbursement of
9 Payments.--* * *

10 (b) * * *

11 (1.6) For the 2006-2007 fiscal year and each fiscal year
12 thereafter, the payment for a community college shall consist of
13 the following:

14 * * *

15 (xxi) For fiscal year 2025-2026, each community college
16 shall receive an amount equal to the following:

17 (A) An amount equal to the reimbursement received in fiscal
18 year 2024-2025 under subclauses (xix)(A) and (C) and (xx).

19 (B) An amount equal to the economic development stipend
20 received in fiscal year 2024-2025 under subclause (xix)(B).

21 * * *

22 Section 47. The definition of "merit scholarship" in section
23 2001-A of the act, amended July 17, 2024 (P.L.945, No.89), is
24 amended and the section is amended by adding a definition to
25 read:

26 Section 2001-A. Definitions.--The following words and
27 phrases when used in this article shall, for the purpose of this
28 article, have the following meanings, respectively, except in
29 those instances where the context clearly indicates a different
30 meaning:

31 * * *

32 ["Merit scholarship" shall mean the waiver of an amount equal
33 to the differential between tuition for a resident and
34 nonresident student.]

35 * * *

36 "Tuition waiver" shall mean the waiver of an amount equal to
37 the differential between tuition for a resident and nonresident
38 student.

39 * * *

40 Section 48. Section 2022-A heading, (a), (b) introductory
41 paragraph and (5), (c), (d), (g)(1), (j), (k) and (n) of the
42 act, added July 17, 2024 (P.L.945, No.89), are amended to read:

43 Section 2022-A. Grow Pennsylvania [Merit Scholarship]
44 Tuition Waiver Program.--(a) Beginning with the class of first-
45 time freshmen enrolling for the 2025-2026 academic year, the
46 agency, in conjunction with the system, shall administer a
47 program, which is established and shall be known as the Grow
48 Pennsylvania [Merit Scholarship] Tuition Waiver Program. The
49 agency shall award [merit scholarships] tuition waivers to
50 eligible nonresident students.

51 (b) To be eligible for receipt of a [merit scholarship]

1 tuition waiver, an eligible nonresident student must:

2 * * *

3 (5) Enter into a written agreement with the agency to:

4 (i) Satisfy all degree requirements and other requirements
5 of this section.

6 (ii) [Commence] Reside and commence employment in this
7 Commonwealth within one year after completion of an approved
8 course of study culminating in a bachelor's or associate's
9 degree. The employment must be in an in-demand [occupations]
10 occupation, as determined by the agency, for a period of twelve
11 months [of] for each academic year the student received a [merit
12 scholarship] tuition waiver, unless the agency determines that
13 there are extenuating circumstances. If the agency determines
14 that there are no extenuating circumstances, residency and
15 employment in this Commonwealth must be maintained for the
16 duration of the qualifying employment.

17 (iii) Reimburse the agency the aggregate amount of a
18 [scholarship] tuition waiver received, including interest, under
19 this section if the student [breeches] breaches the agreement.
20 For a student who partially satisfies the work requirement, the
21 agency shall prorate the required reimbursement. Any interest
22 charged may not be more than the three-month U.S. Treasury bill
23 rate.

24 (c) The agency shall:

25 (1) Develop guidelines, including instructions for how a
26 nonresident student may apply for a [merit scholarship] tuition
27 waiver and how institutions may receive [merit scholarship]
28 tuition waiver funds from the agency for [scholarship] tuition
29 waiver recipients.

30 (2) Monitor and verify a student's compliance with the
31 agreement and enforce loan repayment of all [merit scholarships]
32 tuition waivers for a student who does not comply with the
33 provisions of this section, including use of lawful collection
34 procedures.

35 (d) A [merit scholarship] tuition waiver shall be for a
36 maximum of four academic years or the completion of a bachelor's
37 degree, whichever occurs first.

38 * * *

39 (g) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to:

40 (1) Change a student's eligibility for a [merit scholarship]
41 tuition waiver if the student terminates enrollment in one
42 approved course of study and enrolls in a different approved
43 course of study at the same institution or another institution.

44 * * *

45 (j) In any year when fewer than three hundred (300) [merit
46 scholarships] tuition waivers are awarded, the Commonwealth
47 shall pay to the system in the subsequent year the following
48 amount:

49 (1) Subtract the number of [merit scholarships] tuition
50 waivers awarded from three hundred (300).

51 (2) Multiply the sum in paragraph (1) by the differential

1 between tuition for a resident and nonresident student.

2 (k) A [merit scholarship] tuition waiver received by a
3 student shall not be considered taxable income for purposes of
4 Article III of the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as
5 the "Tax Reform Code of 1971."

6 * * *

7 (n) The agency, in consultation with the system, shall
8 prepare and submit to the Governor, the General Assembly and the
9 secretary [no later than December 31, 2025, and each December 31
10 thereafter, a] an annual report detailing the operation of the
11 program each year. The report shall, at a minimum, include:

12 (1) A list of the in-demand occupations for which [merit
13 scholarships] tuition waivers may be sought.

14 (2) The number of [merit scholarship] tuition waiver
15 applicants.

16 (3) The number of [merit scholarships] tuition waivers
17 awarded to students.

18 (4) The number of [merit scholarships] tuition waivers
19 awarded by approved course of study.

20 (5) The number of [merit scholarships] tuition waivers
21 awarded by institution.

22 (6) The average amount of the [merit scholarship] tuition
23 waiver.

24 (7) The number of [merit scholarship] tuition waiver
25 recipients that are employed and meeting the work requirement
26 under subsection (b) (5).

27 (8) The number of [merit scholarship] tuition waiver
28 recipients that have not met the work requirement.

29 (9) The amount of money reimbursed to the agency by [merit
30 scholarship] tuition waiver recipients that have not met the
31 work requirement.

32 Section 49. Section 2006-B(a) (1) of the act, amended July
33 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), is amended to read:
34 Section 2006-B. Limitations.

35 (a) Amount.--

36 (1) The total aggregate amount of all tax credits
37 approved for contributions from business firms to scholarship
38 organizations, educational improvement organizations and pre-
39 kindergarten scholarship organizations shall not exceed
40 [\$540,000,000] \$590,000,000 in a fiscal year. The following
41 shall apply:

42 (i) No less than \$375,000,000 of the total aggregate
43 amount shall be used to provide tax credits for
44 contributions from business firms to scholarship
45 organizations.

46 (ii) No less than \$74,500,000 of the total aggregate
47 amount shall be used to provide tax credits for
48 contributions from business firms to educational
49 improvement organizations.

50 (iii) The total aggregate amount of all tax credits
51 approved for contributions from business firms to pre-

kindergarten scholarship organizations shall not exceed \$30,500,000 in a fiscal year.

(iv) No less than [\$60,000,000] \$110,000,000 of the total aggregate amount shall be used to provide tax credits for contributions from business firms to increase the scholarship or pre-kindergarten scholarship by up to \$2,000 or, in the case of a scholarship for a student attending a secondary school, by up to \$4,000, for a student attending an economically disadvantaged school, to the extent that the total amount of scholarships, pre-kindergarten scholarships and opportunity scholarships will not exceed the lesser of \$8,500 or the school's tuition.

* * *

Section 50. Section 2006-H(a) and (c) of the act, added July 17, 2024 (P.L.818, No.69), are amended to read:
Section 2006-H. Exit counseling.

(a) General rule.--[Unless an individual selects not to participate, each] Each institution of higher education that receives information regarding Federal education loans or other student loans that may require repayment for a student enrolled at the institution of higher education shall make financial aid counseling available to each student at the end of the student's final academic term, unless the individual selects not to participate.

* * *

(c) Counseling for students who transfer or withdraw.--With respect to a student who leaves an institution of higher education without the knowledge of the institution or transfers to another institution, the institution shall attempt to make financial aid counseling available to the student[.] unless the student has Federal education loans or other student loans known to the institution of higher education that do not require repayment. If the institution is unable to get in contact with the student, the institution shall mail the information described in subsection (b) in writing to the student at the last known address on file.

* * *

Section 51. Section 2002-I of the act is repealed:
[Section 2002-I. State-related university performance-based funding model.

(a) Duty of commission.--Beginning January 23, 2023, the commission shall develop a performance-based funding model no later than June 15, 2023, to distribute State funding to the State-related universities. A performance-based funding model may include a base funding amount and minimum eligibility thresholds to evaluate achievement of performance-based metrics. The commission may include the following metrics in the model:

(1) The four-year graduation rate for baccalaureate students.

(2) The four-year graduation rate for first-time-in-

college students.

(3) The six-year graduation rate for students who are awarded a Pell Grant in their first year.

(4) The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled who received a Pell Grant during the previous school year.

(5) Student retention rates.

(6) Bachelor's degree production.

(7) Net tuition and fees per 120 credit hours.

(8) Postgraduation employment rates and salaries, including wage thresholds, that reflect the added value of a baccalaureate degree.

(9) The number and percentage of students enrolled, and degrees attained in fields determined to be of importance to this Commonwealth by the commission.

(10) The number and percentage of high school students who are dual-enrolled and the number of credits earned.

(11) The percentage of credits articulated.

(12) Other metrics listed in section 2001-I(h), or as determined by the commission.

(b) Other considerations.--As part of the development of the performance-based funding model, the commission may consider the following:

(1) Adjusting a performance-based funding incentive payment if a State-related university fails to meet the minimum eligibility thresholds.

(2) Establishing an improvement plan to assist a State-related university to make satisfactory progress toward meeting the minimum eligibility thresholds.

(3) A process to award or redistribute money for meeting the minimum eligibility thresholds and rewarding institutional excellence.

(c) Effective date of the performance-based funding model.--The performance-based funding model developed by the commission shall not go into effect unless the model is approved by an act of the General Assembly enacted after the effective date of this section.

(d) Level of State funding.--The General Assembly shall, through the annual nonpreferred appropriations process, determine the level of State funding for a State-related university.

(e) Definitions.--As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Base State funding." The minimum amount of funding, as recommended by the commission, to be appropriated to each State-related university for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

"Commission." The Public Higher Education Funding Commission established under section 2001-I.

"Institutional investment." A reallocated percentage of the base State funding.

"Performance-based funding incentive payment." Consists of

1 the following:

2 (1) Institutional investment.

3 (2) State investment for excellence.

4 "State investment for excellence." An amount appropriated by
5 the General Assembly that exceeds the base State funding and is
6 used to reward excellence as measured by the performance-based
7 funding metrics determined by the commission.

8 "State-related university." The Pennsylvania State
9 University, the University of Pittsburgh and Temple University
10 and associated branch campuses.]

11 Section 52. Section 2003-I(a) and (d) of the act are amended
12 to read:

13 Section 2003-I. Prohibition on scholarship displacement at
14 public institutions of higher education.

15 (a) General rule.--A public institution of higher education
16 may reduce a student's institutional financial aid as a result
17 of the awarding of [private] scholarships to the student only
18 under the circumstances enumerated in subsections (b) and (c).

19 * * *

20 (d) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
21 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
22 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

23 "Cost of attendance." The average annual cost for a student
24 to attend a college or university, including tuition and fees,
25 room and board, books, supplies and other expenses and is used
26 to calculate financial aid of an eligible student under Title IV
27 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-329, 20
28 U.S.C. § 1070 et. seq.).

29 "Institutional financial aid." The sum of all need-based and
30 merit-based grants, scholarships, tuition waivers and all other
31 forms of financial assistance provided to a student by a public
32 institution of higher education that are not loans or work-study
33 programs.

34 ["Private scholarship." A scholarship awarded by a business,
35 private foundation, nonprofit organization or service group.
36 The term does not include an award funded by a private
37 organization which is affiliated with a public institution of
38 higher education and requests the public institution of higher
39 education's assistance in selecting the recipient of the award.]

40 "Public institution of higher education." Any of the
41 following:

42 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A.

43 (2) A rural regional college established under Article
44 XIX-G.

45 (3) A university within the State System of Higher
46 Education under Article XX-A.

47 (4) A State-related institution as defined in section
48 2001-C.

49 (5) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

50 (6) The Pennsylvania College of Technology.

51 "Scholarship."

1 (1) The term includes:
2 (i) A scholarship awarded by a business, private
3 foundation, nonprofit organization or service group.
4 (ii) A tuition waiver under section 2022-A.
5 (iii) A grant under Subarticle D of Article XX-L.
6 (2) The term does not include an award funded by a
7 private organization that is affiliated with a public
8 institution of higher education and requests the public
9 institution of higher education's assistance in selecting the
10 recipient of the award.
11 "Student." An individual enrolled at a public institution of
12 higher education.
13 Section 53. The act is amended by adding sections to read:
14 Section 2005-I. Cooperation.
15 (a) Interinstitutional cooperation authorized.--
16 (1) Notwithstanding 22 Pa.C.S. § 501(c) (relating to
17 appointment by nonprofit corporations), two or more
18 independent institutions of higher education may jointly
19 cooperate in the exercise or in the performance of their
20 respective functions, powers or responsibilities as it
21 relates to university campus police or public safety
22 officers.
23 (2) For the purpose of carrying out this section, the
24 independent institutions of higher education cooperating to
25 provide shared campus police or public safety officers
26 services shall enter into any joint agreements as may be
27 deemed appropriate for those purposes.
28 (b) Interinstitutional governmental cooperation.--An
29 independent institution of higher education, by an act of its
30 governing body, may cooperate or agree in the exercise of any
31 function, power or responsibility as it relates to university
32 campus police or public safety officers with, or delegate or
33 transfer any function, power or responsibility of its university
34 campus police or public safety officer to, one or more other
35 independent institutions of higher education.
36 (c) Effect of joint cooperation agreements.--Any joint
37 cooperation agreement shall be deemed in force when the
38 agreement has been adopted by resolution of the governing bodies
39 of all cooperating independent institutions of higher education.
40 After adoption by all cooperating independent institutions of
41 higher education, the agreement shall be binding and its
42 covenants may be enforced by appropriate remedy by any one or
43 more of the independent institutions of higher education against
44 any other independent institutions of higher education which is
45 a party to the agreement.
46 (d) Recognition by Commonwealth departments and agencies.--
47 All Commonwealth agencies in the performance of their
48 administrative duties shall deem a consortium-similar entity
49 established by two or more independent institutions of higher
50 education under this section as a legal entity.
51 (e) Limitations.--

1 (1) Any joint agreement entered into under the
2 provisions of this section shall not supersede, void or
3 replace any labor agreement between an independent
4 institution of higher education and its campus police or
5 public safety officers.

6 (2) Any joint agreement entered into under this section
7 shall not be in effect during any labor dispute or labor
8 strike impacting campus police or public safety officers for
9 the independent institutions of higher education subject to
10 the joint agreement.

11 (3) Any joint agreement entered into under this section
12 shall become null and void if an independent institution of
13 higher education, subject to the agreement, reduces its
14 campus police or public safety officer complement by more
15 than 25%.

16 (f) Definitions.--The following words and phrases when used
17 in this subchapter shall the meanings given to them in this
18 section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

19 "Commonwealth agency." A department, board, commission or
20 any other agency or office of the Commonwealth under the
21 jurisdiction of the Governor.

22 "Independent institution of higher education." An
23 institution of higher education operated not for profit, located
24 and incorporated or chartered by the Commonwealth and entitled
25 to confer degrees as provided in 24 Pa.C.S. 6505 (relating to
26 power to confer degrees) and which applies to itself the
27 designation "college" or "university" as provided for by the
28 standards and qualifications prescribed by the State Board of
29 Education under 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 65 (relating to private colleges,
30 universities and seminaries).

31 Section 2006-I. State scholarship renewals.

32 (a) Establishment.--Notwithstanding the limits on
33 scholarship renewals in section 8(a) of the act of January 25,
34 1966 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541), referred to as the Higher
35 Education Scholarship Law, the Pennsylvania Higher Education
36 Assistance Agency shall establish a three-year State Scholarship
37 Extension Pilot Program. No more than 50 students per year may
38 participate in the pilot program.

39 (1) Institutions of higher education that have students
40 who participate in the pilot program may renew a State
41 scholarship beyond the scholarship's renewal limit if the
42 renewal is made pursuant to the State Scholarship Extension
43 Pilot Program, as authorized by the Board of Directors of the
44 Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency.

45 (2) Participating students in the pilot program as
46 authorized by this section must attend an institution of
47 higher education domiciled and headquartered in this
48 Commonwealth as determined by the agency.

49 Section 54. Section 2011-L(c)(6) of the act, added July 17,
50 2024 (P.L.818, No.69), is amended to read:

51 Section 2011-L. Powers and duties of State Board of Higher

1 Education.

2 * * *

3 (c) Duties.--The board shall perform all duties appropriate
4 to carry out and effectuate the board's purposes under this
5 article, including, but not limited to:

6 * * *

7 [(6) Establish the council to carry out the purposes of
8 Subarticle C.]

9 * * *

10 Section 55. Section 2031-L of the act is amended by adding
11 definitions to read:

12 Section 2031-L. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this subarticle
14 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Council." The Performance-based Funding Council established
17 and reconstituted under section 2032-L.

18 "Department." The Department of Education of the
19 Commonwealth.

20 "Fund." The State-related University Performance Fund
21 established under section 2034-L.

22 "High-demand degree." A bachelor's degree that is aligned
23 with the in-demand occupations in the Grow Pennsylvania
24 Scholarship Grant Program under Subarticle D.

25 "Higher education price index." The average total cost of
26 attendance for colleges and universities nationally, determined
27 by the council in consultation with the department, using
28 publicly available data, including information published by the
29 CommonFund Institute.

30 "Low-matriculation high school." A public high school in
31 this Commonwealth determined to have a college matriculation
32 rate less than or equal to 40%.

33 "Short-term workforce demand projection." The sum of all
34 Statewide short-term projected job openings, as published by the
35 Department of Labor and Industry, in occupations that require at
36 least a bachelor's degree and align with the in-demand
37 occupations in the Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant Program
38 under Subarticle D.

39 * * *

40 Section 56. Section 2032-L(a), (c), (d), (e), (i) and (l) of
41 the act, added July 17, 2024 (P.L.960, No.90), are amended and
42 the section is amended by adding subsections to read:

43 Section 2032-L. Performance-based Funding Council.

44 (a) Purpose.--The Performance-based Funding Council [is
45 established and] shall [develop]:

46 (1) Develop a process to distribute funding to the
47 State-related universities. The process shall utilize
48 performance-based metrics designed to increase degree
49 attainment, encourage affordability in higher education, meet
50 workforce needs and grow the economy.

51 (2) Oversee the performance-based funding formula by

1 assigning performance goals and weights.

2 (3) Make legislative recommendations to the Governor and
3 the General Assembly regarding the performance-based funding
4 formula.

5 (a.1) Establishment and reconstitution.--

6 (1) The Performance-based Funding Council is
7 established.

8 (2) The council shall be reconstituted on the effective
9 date of this subsection.

10 * * *

11 (c) Membership.--

12 (1) The council shall consist of voting members
13 appointed under paragraph (2) and nonvoting members, who
14 shall serve in an advisory role, described under paragraph
15 (3).

16 (2) The voting members of the council shall consist of
17 the following members [of the State Board of Higher Education
18 under section 2010-L(c)]:

19 (i) The Secretary of Education [appointed under
20 section 2010-L(c) (1)] or a designee who is a deputy
21 secretary of the department.

22 (ii) One member of the Senate appointed by the
23 President pro tempore of the Senate [appointed under
24 section 2010-L(c) (3)].

25 (iii) One member of the Senate appointed by the
26 Minority Leader of the Senate [appointed under section
27 2010-L(c) (4)].

28 (iv) One member of the House of Representatives
29 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
30 [appointed under section 2010-L(c) (5)].

31 (v) One member of the House of Representatives
32 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
33 Representatives [appointed under section 2010-L(c) (6)].

34 (3) The nonvoting members of the council shall be:

35 (i) The President of The Pennsylvania State
36 University or a designee.

37 (ii) The Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh
38 or a designee.

39 (iii) The President of Temple University or a
40 designee.

41 (c.1) Term.--Voting members of the council appointed under
42 subsection (c) (2) (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v) shall serve a term of
43 office coterminous with the respective elective term of the
44 members of the General Assembly. The Secretary of Education
45 shall serve as long as the Secretary of Education is in office.

46 (d) Chairperson.--The voting members of the council shall
47 appoint a member to serve as the chairperson. The council shall
48 vote not later than every 24 months to appoint a member to serve
49 as chairperson.

50 (e) Council meetings.--The meetings of the council shall be
51 [held bimonthly and] at the call of the chairperson as necessary

1 and shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of 65
2 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

3 * * *

4 (h.1) Administrative support.--The General Assembly and the
5 department shall provide administrative support for the council.

6 (i) Powers and duties.--The council [shall]:

7 (1) [Consult] May consult with Commonwealth agencies and
8 experts to assist in carrying out the duties of this section.

9 (2) [Hold] May hold public hearings at [each one of the
10 State-related universities and receive input from experts and
11 interested parties, including parents and students.] the call
12 of the chair to receive input from experts and interested
13 parties.

14 (3) [Develop] Shall develop recommendations for a
15 process that utilizes performance-based metrics to distribute
16 funding.

17 (4) [No] Shall, no later than [April 30, 2025,] May 5,
18 2025, transmit the recommendations to the Governor, the
19 board, the department and the General Assembly, including
20 draft legislation to implement the process to distribute
21 funding.

22 (5) Shall annually assign performance goals and weights
23 under section 2035-L for the performance-based funding
24 formula.

25 * * *

26 (1) [Dissolution and reconstitution.--

27 (1) Upon transmittal of the report under subsection (i)
28 (4), the council shall dissolve until reconstituted under
29 paragraph (2).

30 (2) The board shall reconstitute the council every five
31 years to reevaluate the performance metrics utilized for the
32 distribution of funds to State-related universities.]

33 (Reserved).

34 (m) Workforce outcomes.--

35 (1) The Department of Labor and Industry and the
36 department shall develop an analysis on postsecondary
37 graduate employment outcomes for State-related universities,
38 including earnings and employment outcomes for graduates by
39 degree level, degree major and state in which an individual
40 is employed.

41 (2) The council shall consider the information and
42 analysis on postsecondary graduate employment outcomes as
43 part of future recommendations by the council relating to
44 improvement and affordability under section 2035-L(f).

45 Section 57. Section 2033-L of the act, added July 17, 2024
46 (P.L.960, No.90), is amended to read:

47 Section 2033-L. Public institution of higher education
48 reporting.

49 (a) Requirements.--Notwithstanding any other provision of
50 law, the following information shall be reported, including
51 disaggregated data sets for resident students, nonresident

1 students, undergraduate students and graduate students, to the
2 department by public institutions of higher education:

3 (1) Student enrollment[, including in-State and out-of-
4 State students,] disaggregated by demographics, enrollment
5 status and degree type [and level].

6 (2) Students reaching 30, 60, 90 and 120 credit hour
7 thresholds.

8 (3) Students completing credentials, including
9 credentials aligned to high-priority occupations.

10 (4) Students included in priority populations, including
11 low-income students, underrepresented minority students and
12 academically unprepared students.

13 (4.1) For State-related universities, performance
14 metrics data under section 2034-L.

15 (5) Any other data required by the department, including
16 data related to the metrics under section 2032-L.

17 (b) Transmittal.--

18 (1) A public institution of higher education shall
19 report information required under this section to the
20 department in a manner and form prescribed by the department.

21 (2) Each State-related university shall annually
22 transmit data to the department no later than March 1, 2026,
23 and each February 1 thereafter. The department shall transmit
24 data to the council in a timely manner.

25 (c) Submission.--The system may submit the information
26 required under this section on behalf of the State-owned
27 universities.

28 (d) Exclusion.--The provisions of section 118 shall not
29 apply to any data required under this section.

30 (e) Data sharing.--

31 (1) The department may share data collected under this
32 section with the board [and the council].

33 (2) The department shall share data collected under this
34 section with the council.

35 (3) The following shall apply to confidential data
36 shared under this subsection:

37 (i) Within 120 days of the effective date of this
38 subparagraph, the department shall enter into a data use
39 agreement with the council. The data use agreement shall
40 include terms to ensure that the data is kept
41 confidential and secure and remain confidential in
42 accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy
43 Act of 1974 (Public Law 90-247, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g) and
44 other applicable laws governing data sharing.

45 (ii) The department shall enter into a data use
46 agreement with the board prior to sharing data under
47 paragraph (1) and include the same terms in subparagraph
48 (i).

49 (iii) The department may utilize a disclosure method
50 to protect student privacy to prevent the identification
51 of students.

1 (f) Definition.--As used in this section, the term "student"
2 means an individual who attends an institution of higher
3 education, whether enrolled on a full-time, part-time, degree-
4 seeking, non-degree-seeking, credit or noncredit basis.

5 (g) Construction.--Nothing in the section shall be construed
6 to limit the obligations of a State-related university to
7 provide data or other information to the department or the
8 General Assembly as required by law.

9 Section 58. The act is amended by adding sections to read:
10 Section 2034-L. State-related University Performance Fund.

11 (a) Establishment.--The State-related University Performance
12 Fund is established in the State Treasury.

13 (b) Composition.--The fund shall consist of money
14 appropriated or transferred to the fund and all interest
15 earnings received from investment of money in the fund.

16 (c) Appropriations.--Money in the fund shall not be
17 appropriated except in accordance with section 30 of Article III
18 of the Constitution of Pennsylvania.

19 (d) Payments.--The Commonwealth shall pay, on an equal
20 monthly basis during the fiscal year, money from the fund as
21 provided under subsection (c) to each State-related university
22 in the amount calculated under section 2035-L for that fiscal
23 year.

24 (e) Remaining balance.--Any available balance in the fund
25 not awarded by the allocation under section 2035-L during a
26 fiscal year may not be expended in that fiscal year but shall
27 remain in the fund for appropriation under subsection (c) in a
28 subsequent fiscal year.

29 Section 2035-L. Performance-based funding formula.

30 (a) Findings and declarations.--The General Assembly finds
31 and declares that the performance-based funding formula is the
32 result of the work of the council.

33 (b) Student-weighted count.--

34 (1) No later than June 1, 2026, and each June 1
35 thereafter, the council shall assign weights to the following
36 categories of in-State students in a State-related
37 university:

38 (i) Full-time, fall undergraduate students.

39 (ii) Students who have received a Pell Grant.

40 (iii) Students who transferred from a community
41 college.

42 (iv) Students from a low-matriculation high school.

43 (v) Students who earned a high-demand degree.

44 (vi) Students who have earned 60 credits by the
45 start of their third year.

46 (2) Using the categories of students and the weights
47 assigned by the council under paragraph (1), the department
48 shall annually calculate the student-weighted count using the
49 most recent data available for each State-related university.

50 (c) Maximum performance allocation.--

51 (1) No later than June 1, 2026, and each June 1

1 thereafter, the council shall assign:

2 (i) A proportion between 0 and 1 of the maximum
3 allocation that is based upon an equal share between each
4 State-related university.

5 (ii) A proportion between 0 and 1 of the maximum
6 allocation that is based upon each State-related
7 university's share of the total student-weighted count
8 determined under subsection (b)(2).

9 (iii) The sum of the assigned proportions under
10 subparagraphs (i) and (ii) shall equal 1.

11 (2) The department shall annually calculate the maximum
12 performance allocation for each State-related university as
13 follows:

14 (i) Multiply the amount available in the fund by
15 0.95.

16 (ii) Multiply the product determined in subparagraph
17 (i) by the proportion determined under paragraph (1)(ii).

18 (iii) Divide the State-related university's student-
19 weighted count calculated under subsection (b)(2) by the
20 sum of the student-weighted count for all State-related
21 universities calculated under subsection (b)(2).

22 (iv) Multiply the product determined under
23 subparagraph (ii) by the quotient determined under
24 subparagraph (iii).

25 (v) Multiply one-third by the proportion determined
26 under paragraph (1)(i).

27 (vi) Multiply the product in subparagraph (i) by the
28 product in subparagraph (v).

29 (vii) Add the products in subparagraphs (iv) and
30 (vi).

31 (d) Performance metrics and goals.--

32 (1) The State-related university's performance
33 allocation under subsection (e) shall be calculated based on
34 performance across the following metrics:

35 (i) Four-year graduation rates for in-State,
36 undergraduate students.

37 (ii) Six-year graduation rates for in-State,
38 undergraduate students.

39 (iii) Six-year graduation rates for in-State, Pell-
40 Grant-recipient undergraduate students.

41 (iv) High-demand degree production for in-State
42 undergraduate students.

43 (2) No later than June 1, 2026, and each June 1
44 thereafter, the council shall assign weights to each of the
45 performance metrics under paragraph (1) for the purpose of
46 calculating each State-related university's progress towards
47 the State-related university's goal.

48 (3) No later than June 1, 2026, and each June 1
49 thereafter, the council shall adopt a goal rate for each
50 performance metric under paragraph (1).

51 (4) The high-demand degree production goal for each

1 State-related university shall be assigned by the council as
2 follows:

3 (i) A high-demand degree production target rate
4 shall be determined as a proportion between 0 and 1.

5 (ii) Divide a State-related university's total
6 bachelor's degrees awarded for the most recent year
7 available by the Statewide bachelor's degrees awarded for
8 the most recent year available.

9 (iii) Multiply the quotient in subparagraph (ii) by
10 the short-term workforce demand projection.

11 (iv) Multiply the product in subparagraph (iii) by
12 the proportion in subparagraph (i).

13 (e) Performance allocation.--

14 (1) The department shall calculate the progress toward
15 the goal for each State-related university as follows:

16 (i) For the performance metrics in subsection (d)(1)
17 (i), (ii) and (iii), divide the current rate of each
18 metric for the most recent year available by each
19 metric's respective goal rate as determined in subsection
20 (d)(3).

21 (ii) For the metric in subsection (d)(1)(iv), divide
22 the number of high-demand degrees for the most recent
23 year available by the product in subsection (d)(4)(iv).

24 (iii) Calculate the average of the quotients in
25 subparagraphs (i) and (ii).

26 (2) The department shall calculate the performance
27 allocation for each State-related university by multiplying
28 the State-related university's maximum performance allocation
29 determined under subsection (c)(2) by the State-related
30 university's progress toward the goal determined under
31 paragraph (1).

32 (f) Improvement and affordability allocation.--

33 (1) The department shall annually calculate the total
34 amount available for the improvement and affordability
35 allocation by multiplying the amount in the fund by 0.05.

36 (2) The department shall annually calculate an
37 improvement bonus for each State-related university as
38 follows:

39 (i) Add the positive percentage point increases in
40 the rates of the performance metrics in subsection (d)(1)
41 (i), (ii) and (iii) from the most recent year of data
42 available compared to the prior year.

43 (ii) Subtract the high-demand degrees awarded for
44 the prior year from the high-demand degrees awarded for
45 the most recent year data is available.

46 (iii) Divide the difference in subparagraph (ii) by
47 the high-demand degrees awarded for the prior year.

48 (iv) Determine the greater of the quotient found in
49 subparagraph (iii) or zero.

50 (v) Add the amounts in subparagraphs (i) and (iv).

51 (3) No later than June 1, 2026, and each June 1

1 thereafter, the council shall annually assign a percentage
2 point affordability bonus for each State-related university
3 on the basis that the State-related university maintains the
4 percentage increase in their total cost of attendance for the
5 current year over the prior year by an amount less than the
6 percentage increase in the higher education price index for
7 the most recent year available.

8 (4) The improvement and affordability allocation for
9 each State-related university shall be calculated by the
10 department as follows:

11 (i) Add the amounts in paragraph (2)(v) for each
12 State-related university.

13 (ii) Add the amounts in paragraph (3) for each
14 State-related university.

15 (iii) Add the sums in subparagraphs (i) and (ii).

16 (iv) Add the sum in paragraph (2)(v) for the State-
17 related university to the amount in paragraph (3) for the
18 State-related university.

19 (v) Divide the sum in subparagraph (iv) for the
20 State-related university by the sum in subparagraph
21 (iii).

22 (vi) Multiply the quotient in subparagraph (v) by
23 the amount available for the improvement and
24 affordability allocation under paragraph (1).

25 Section 2036-L. Public accountability.

26 (a) Goals and weights.--After the council assigns the
27 performance goals and weights under section 2035-L, the chair of
28 the council shall transmit the performance goals and weights to
29 the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the next
30 available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

31 (b) Public posting.--The department and each State-related
32 university shall post on the publicly accessible Internet
33 website of the department and each State-related university the
34 following:

35 (1) The current year data for each of the metrics
36 included in the student-weighted count and each metric
37 included as performance metric under section 2035-L.

38 (2) The performance goals and weights assigned by the
39 council and published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin for the
40 performance metrics.

41 Section 59. Section 2052-L(2), (4)(v)(B) and (C) and (5) of
42 the act, added July 17, 2024 (P.L.945, No.89), are amended and
43 the section is amended by adding a paragraph to read:

44 Section 2052-L. Agency duties.

45 The agency shall:

46 * * *

47 (2) Use money appropriated for the purpose of awarding
48 grants[.], except that the agency may use up to 5% of money
49 appropriated for the purpose of administering, implementing
50 and servicing costs associated with the program.

51 * * *

1 (4) Establish eligibility criteria in order for a
2 student to receive a grant. The criteria shall, at a minimum,
3 include that a student must:

4 * * *

5 (v) Enter into a written agreement with the agency
6 to:

7 * * *

8 (B) [Commence] Reside and commence employment in
9 this Commonwealth within one year after completion of
10 an approved course of study culminating in a
11 bachelor's or associate's degree. The employment must
12 be in an in-demand occupation, as determined by the
13 agency, for a period of 12 months for each academic
14 year the student received a grant, unless the agency
15 determines that there are extenuating circumstances.
16 If the agency determines that there are no
17 extenuating circumstances, residency and employment
18 in this Commonwealth must be maintained for the
19 duration of the qualifying employment.

20 (C) Reimburse the Commonwealth the aggregate
21 amount of a scholarship, including interest, received
22 under this subarticle if the student fails to comply
23 with clauses (A) and (B). For a student who partially
24 satisfies the work requirement, the agency shall
25 prorate the required reimbursement.

26 (5) Monitor and verify a student's compliance with the
27 agreement and enforce loan repayment of all grants for a
28 student who does not comply with the provisions of this
29 section, including use of all lawful collection procedures.
30 Nothing under this paragraph shall be construed to require an
31 institution of higher education to enforce any provision of
32 this subarticle relating to repayment of funds for failure to
33 comply with the provisions of this section.

34 * * *

35 (7) Not charge more than the three-month U.S. Treasury
36 bill rate for interest on any repayment under paragraph (4)
37 (v) (C).

38 Section 60. Sections 2054-L, 2062-L introductory paragraph
39 and 2204-B(b)(1) of the act, amended or added July 17, 2024
40 (P.L.945, No.89), are amended to read:
41 Section 2054-L. Grant priority.

42 The agency shall:

43 (1) Establish a process for accepting and reviewing
44 applications. The process shall ensure applications which
45 meet the eligibility criteria and are complete will be
46 awarded in the order received by the agency. [The following
47 shall apply:

48 (i) For the 2024-2025 school year, applications
49 shall open no earlier than September 15.

50 (ii) For the 2025-2026 school year and each school
51 year thereafter, applications shall open as follows:

1 (A) For the spring term, no earlier than
2 September 15.

3 (B) For the fall term, no earlier than February
4 15.]

5 (2) Give renewal applicants the opportunity of first
6 priority in awarding grants for their renewal applications.
7 Section 2062-L. Report.

8 The agency shall prepare and submit to the Governor, the
9 General Assembly and the Secretary of Education[, no later than
10 December 31, 2025, and each December 31 thereafter, a] an annual
11 report detailing the operation of the program each year. The
12 report shall, at a minimum, include:

13 * * *

14 Section 2204-B. Agency.

15 * * *

16 (b) Eligibility criteria.--The eligibility criteria
17 developed for the receipt of a scholarship under subsection (a)
18 shall, at a minimum, require all of the following:

19 (1) Total annual household income not to exceed
20 [\$175,000] \$200,000. With each new award year, the agency may
21 annually adjust the total annual household income threshold
22 under this paragraph to reflect any upward changes in the
23 Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the
24 Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland area.

25 * * *

26 Section 61. The act is amended by adding a section to read:
27 Section 2329. State Aid for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

28 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary,
29 each library subject to 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 93 (relating to public
30 library code) shall be eligible for State aid for fiscal year
31 2025-2026 as follows:

32 (1) Funds appropriated for libraries shall be
33 distributed to each library under the following formula:

34 (i) Divide the sum of the amount of funding the
35 library received in fiscal year 2024-2025 under section
36 2328 by the total State-aid subsidy for fiscal year 2024-
37 2025.

38 (ii) Multiply the quotient under subparagraph (i) by
39 the total State-aid subsidy for fiscal year 2025-2026.

40 (2) Following distribution of funds appropriated for
41 State aid to libraries under paragraph (1), any remaining
42 funds may be distributed at the discretion of the State
43 Librarian.

44 (3) If funds appropriated for State aid to libraries in
45 fiscal year 2025-2026 are less than funds appropriated in
46 fiscal year 2002-2003, adjusted for inflation according to
47 the Consumer Price Index, the State Librarian may waive
48 standards as prescribed in 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 93.

49 (4) Each library system receiving State aid under this
50 section may distribute the local library share of that aid in
51 a manner as determined by the board of directors of the

1 library system.

2 (5) In the case of a library system that contains a
3 library operating in a city of the second class, changes to
4 the distribution of State aid to the library shall be made by
5 mutual agreement between the library and the library system.

6 (6) In the event of a change in district library center
7 population prior to the effective date of this section as a
8 result of:

9 (i) a city, borough, town, township, school district
10 or county moving from one library center to another; or

11 (ii) a transfer of district library center status to
12 a county library system; funding of district library
13 center aid shall be paid based on the population of the
14 newly established or reconfigured district library
15 center.

16 (7) In the event of a change in direct service area from
17 one library to another, the State Librarian, upon agreement
18 of the affected libraries, may redistribute the local library
19 share of aid to the library currently servicing the area.

20 Section 62. Section 2502.56(b)(2)(ii) of the act, added July
21 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), is amended and the section is amended
22 by adding a subsection to read:

23 Section 2502.56. Student-Weighted Basic Education Funding
24 Beginning with 2023-2024 School Year.--* * *

25 (b) For the 2023-2024 school year and each school year
26 thereafter, the Commonwealth shall pay to each school district a
27 basic education funding allocation which shall consist of the
28 following:

29 * * *

30 (2) A student-based allocation to be calculated as follows:

31 * * *

32 (ii) Multiply the product in subparagraph (i) by the
33 difference between the amount appropriated for the allocation of
34 basic education funding to school districts and the sum of the
35 amounts appropriated for the allocation in paragraph (1) and
36 [subsection (c)] subsections (c) and (c.1).

37 * * *

38 (c.1) For the 2024-2025 school year, the Commonwealth shall
39 pay an amount equal to five million dollars (\$5,000,000) to a
40 school district located in a county of the second class A with a
41 2021-2022 adjusted average daily membership greater than 5,590
42 and less than 5,595 and a 2021-2022 current expenditure of less
43 than one hundred ten million dollars (\$110,000,000). Payments
44 under this subsection shall be deemed to be part of the school
45 district's allocation amount under subsection (b)(1) for the
46 immediately succeeding school year and each school year
47 thereafter.

48 * * *

49 Section 63. Section 2509.8 of the act is amended by adding a
50 subsection to read:

51 Section 2509.8. Extraordinary Special Education Program

Expenses.--* * *

(g) For the 2025-2026 school year, an amount equal to five million dollars (\$5,000,000) from uncommitted, unexpended funds available in the special education appropriation shall be distributed to charter schools established under section 1717-A in a school district of the first class for extraordinary expenses incurred in providing a special education program or service to one or more students with disabilities as approved by the Secretary of Education. The following shall apply:

(1) The extraordinary expenses shall be calculated in accordance with section 1372(8)(vi).

(2) The provisions of subsections (c) and (f)(ii) and (iii) shall apply to money distributed under this subsection.

Section 64. Section 2510.3(a)(2) of the act, amended July 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), is amended to read:

Section 2510.3. Assistance to School Districts Declared to be in Financial Recovery Status or Identified for Financial Watch Status.--(a) The following apply:

* * *

(2) For the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024 [and], 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 fiscal years, the Department of Education may utilize up to seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) of undistributed funds not expended, encumbered or committed from appropriations for grants, subsidies and assessments made to the Department of Education to assist school districts declared to be in financial recovery status under section 621-A, identified for financial watch status under section 611-A or 694-A or subject to oversight during the transition period under section 625-A. The funds shall be transferred by the Secretary of the Budget to a restricted account as necessary to make payments under this section and, when transferred, are hereby appropriated to carry out the provisions of this section.

* * *

Section 65. Section 2599.6(a.4), (a.6)(2), (a.7)(2), (a.8) and (f)(1) of the act, added July 11, 2024 (P.L.618, No.55), are amended and the section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

Section 2599.6. Ready-to-Learn Block Grant.--* * *

(a.4) For the 2023-2024 school year [and each school year thereafter], each school entity shall receive a Ready-to-Learn Block Grant in an amount not less than the amount received by the school entity from the appropriation for the Ready-to-Learn Block Grant during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

* * *

(a.6) The Commonwealth shall pay an adequacy supplement from the Ready-to-Learn Block Grant appropriation as follows:

* * *

(2) [(Reserved).] For the 2025-2026 school year:

(i) Divide the amount determined in subsection (f)(1) by the sum of the amounts determined in subsection (f)(1) for each

1 school district.

2 (ii) Multiply the quotient determined in subparagraph (i) by
3 \$526,440,000.

4 (a.7) The Commonwealth shall pay a tax equity supplement
5 from the Ready-to-Learn Block Grant appropriation as follows:

6 * * *

7 (2) [(Reserved).] For the 2025-2026 school year:

8 (i) Subtract the amount received under paragraph (1) from
9 the amount determined in subsection (g)(1).

10 (ii) Divide the difference in subparagraph (i) by the sum of
11 the amounts determined in subparagraph (i) for each school
12 district.

13 (iii) Multiply the quotient determined in subparagraph (ii)
14 by \$32,202,000.

15 (a.8) No school district that receives funding under
16 subsection (a.6) or (a.7) shall seek a referendum exception
17 under section 333 of the act of June 27, 2006 (1st Sp.Sess.,
18 P.L.1873, No.1), known as the Taxpayer Relief Act, for the 2025-
19 2026 [school year.] and 2026-2027 school years. A school
20 district is not required to apply for and receive the funding
21 under subsection (a.6) or (a.7) for which it is eligible.

22 (a.9) The Commonwealth shall pay a minimum allocation
23 supplement, for which the provisions under subsections (b)(1),
24 (c)(3) and (d)(2) shall apply, from the Ready-to-Learn Block
25 Grant appropriation as follows:

26 (1) For the 2025-2026 school year:

27 (i) If the sum of the amounts determined under subsections
28 (a.6)(2)(ii) and (a.7)(2) for the school district is less than
29 \$50,000, the difference of \$50,000 minus the sum of the amounts
30 determined under subsections (a.6)(2)(ii) and (a.7)(2) for the
31 school district.

32 (ii) If the sum of the amounts determined under subsections
33 (a.6)(2)(ii) and (a.7)(2) for the school district is greater
34 than or equal to \$50,000, \$0.

35 (2) (Reserved).

36 * * *

37 (f) The provisions in this subsection relate to the adequacy
38 supplement. The following shall apply:

39 (1) The department shall calculate an adequacy gap for each
40 school district as follows:

41 (i) For each school district, multiply \$14,120 by the school
42 district's student-weighted average daily membership calculated
43 under subsection (e)(2).

44 (ii) Subtract the school district's current expenditures
45 from the amount calculated for the school district under
46 subparagraph (i).

47 (iii) Determine the greater of \$0 or the difference
48 calculated under subparagraph (ii).

49 (iv) Subtract the adequacy adjustment under paragraph (3)
50 from the amount determined in subparagraph (iii). For the 2025-
51 2026 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, the adequacy

1 adjustment determined in paragraph (3) for each school district
2 shall be zero.

3 * * *

4 Section 66. Section 2608-J of the act, amended July 11,
5 2024, P.L.618, No.55), is amended to read:
6 Section 2608-J. Applicability.

7 This article shall apply to projects for which approval and
8 reimbursement is sought and to the maintenance project grant
9 program beginning July 1, [2025] 2026.

10 Section 67. An individual to whom the Department of
11 Education has issued an instructional intern certificate or
12 career and technical intern certificate prior to the effective
13 date of this section and which certificate is valid on the
14 effective of this section shall be deemed to hold an
15 instructional experience-based certificate or career and
16 technical experience-based certificate, as applicable, under the
17 act and the regulations promulgated under 22 Pa. Code Ch. 49.

18 Section 68. The Cosmetology Training Through Career and
19 Technical Center Program is a continuation of the Cosmetology
20 Training Through Career and Technical Center Pilot Program. The
21 conversion to a permanent program is a continuation of the pilot
22 program and all activities initiated under the pilot program
23 shall continue and remain in full force and effect. Orders,
24 regulations, rules and decisions which were made under the pilot
25 program and which are in effect on the effective date of this
26 section shall remain in full force and effect until revoked,
27 vacated or modified. Contracts, obligations and collective
28 bargaining agreements entered into under the pilot program are
29 not affected nor impaired by the conversion from the pilot
30 program.

31 Section 69. The Barber Training Through Career and Technical
32 Center Program is a continuation of the Barber Training Through
33 Career and Technical Center Pilot Program. The conversion to a
34 permanent program is a continuation of the pilot program and all
35 activities initiated under the pilot program shall continue and
36 remain in full force and effect. Orders, regulations, rules and
37 decisions which were made under the pilot program and which are
38 in effect on the effective date of this section shall remain in
39 full force and effect until revoked, vacated or modified.
40 Contracts, obligations and collective bargaining agreements
41 entered into under the pilot program are not affected nor
42 impaired by the conversion from the pilot program.

43 Section 70. The following apply to regulations:

44 (1) Any regulation inconsistent with the addition of
45 section 1221 of the act is abrogated to the extent of any
46 inconsistency with the addition of section 1221 of the act.

47 (2) The regulations at 22 Pa. Code Ch. 49 are abrogated
48 to the extent of any inconsistency with this act.

49 (3) The regulations at 22 Pa. Code § 49.85(c) and (d)
50 are abrogated insofar as they are inconsistent with this act.

51 Section 71. The following shall apply retroactively to July

1, 2025:

(1) The addition of section 1207.5 of the act.
(2) The amendment of section 1857 heading, (a), (d) introductory paragraph and (e) of the act.

(3) The amendment of section 1858 heading, (a), (d) introductory paragraph and (e) of the act.

Section 72. This act shall take effect as follows:

(1) The following shall take effect in 30 days:

(i) The addition of section 1203.1 of the act.

(ii) The amendment of section 1216.1(d) of the act.

(iii) The addition of section 1333(a)(2.1) and (2.2) and (c.1) of the act.

(iv) The addition of section 1333.3(i) of the act.

(2) The following shall take effect in 60 days:

(i) The amendment or addition of section 1205.2(k) introductory paragraph, (2) and (2.2) and (k.2) of the act.

(ii) The amendment or addition of section 1327.2(a) and (a.1) of the act.

(iii) The addition of section 1333.2(i) of the act.

(iv) The addition of section 1333.3(j) of the act.

(v) The amendment or addition of section 1303-D heading, (a), (c)(11), (12) and (13), (d) and (e) of the act.

(vi) The amendment or addition of section 1748-A(a), (a.1), (b), (d) and (e) of the act.

(3) The following shall take effect August 1, 2026:

(i) The amendment of section 1327.2(c) of the act.

(ii) The addition of section 1333.1(d.1) of the act.

(iii) The addition of section 1333.5 of the act.

(iv) The amendment of section 1339 of the act.

(4) The remainder of this act shall take effect immediately.