
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1812 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY RABB, SMITH-WADE-EL, SANCHEZ, PROBST, MADDEN,
HILL-EVANS, PARKER, BURGOS, KHAN, DALEY AND KRAJEWSKI,
NOVEMBER 2, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, NOVEMBER 2, 2023

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," establishing the Tuition Waiver for
6 Native American Students Program.

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

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

12 ARTICLE XXVI-L

13 TUITION WAIVER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

14 Section 2601-L. Definitions.

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

18 "Applicant." An eligible student who applies for a tuition
19 waiver.

1 "Department." The Department of Education of the
2 Commonwealth.

3 "Eligible student." A student who is attending or has been
4 accepted to attend an institution of higher education and who is
5 an active member of an eligible tribe.

6 "Eligible tribe." A Native American tribe that was
7 originally located on the land that is now this Commonwealth or
8 that had members who were enrolled at the Carlisle Industrial
9 Indian School as determined by the department.

10 "Institution of higher education." An institution that is
11 part of the State System of Higher Education under Article XX-A.

12 "Program." The Tuition Waiver for Native American Students
13 Program established by this article.

14 Section 2602-L. Tuition Waiver for Native American Students
15 Program.

16 (a) General rule.--The Tuition Waiver for Native American
17 Students Program is established in the department. Beginning
18 with the first fall semester following the effective date of
19 this section, an institution of higher education shall waive
20 tuition for an eligible student who qualifies for admission.

21 (b) Eligibility.--To qualify for a tuition waiver, an
22 applicant must make an application to an institution of higher
23 education and meet all of the following criteria:

24 (1) Be enrolled as a full-time or part-time student at
25 the institution of higher education.

26 (2) Be an active member of one of the eligible tribes
27 determined by the department.

28 (c) Application.--An application must be made to the
29 institution of higher education on or before the deadline for
30 submission of the application as established by the institution

1 of higher education to receive a tuition waiver. The application
2 shall contain all of the information required under subsection
3 (b) and demonstrate that the applicant satisfies the required
4 criteria.

5 Section 2603-L. Department responsibilities.

6 The department shall:

7 (1) Develop a list of eligible tribes within 30 days of
8 the effective date of this section.

9 (2) Publish the list of eligible tribes on its publicly
10 accessible Internet website within 30 days of the development
11 of the list.

12 Section 2604-L. Outreach.

13 (a) Duties of department.--The department shall:

14 (1) By January 1, 2024, and each January 1 thereafter,
15 prepare and provide information for dissemination by the
16 department and institutions of higher education that:

17 (i) Describes the availability of the program.

18 (ii) Explains how to participate in the program.

19 (2) (Reserved).

20 (b) Duties of institutions of higher education.--An
21 institution of higher education shall:

22 (1) Provide technical assistance to individuals who are
23 eligible under section 2602-L(b) in completing admissions
24 applications and financial aid applications.

25 (2) Post the information prepared under subsection (a)
26 (1) on the institution of higher education's publicly
27 accessible Internet website.

28 (3) To improve retention, report to the department by
29 June 30, 2025, and each June 30 thereafter, all of the
30 following:

- 1 (i) The number of students who apply for the
2 program.
- 3 (ii) The number of students participating in the
4 program.
- 5 (iii) The retention rates of students participating
6 in the program.
- 7 (iv) The number of students who are participating in
8 the program and have unmet financial need.
- 9 (v) Recommendations on how to improve outreach to
10 students who are or are potentially eligible for the
11 program.
- 12 (vi) Recommendations on ways in which to improve the
13 delivery of services to students who are eligible under
14 section 2602-L(b).
- 15 (vii) Impediments to retaining students who are
16 eligible under section 2602-L(b).
- 17 (c) Limitations.--The department may not require any other
18 information to be provided by an institution of higher
19 education, except as provided under subsection (b) (3).

20 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.