
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1146 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY AUMENT, EICHELBERGER, RAFFERTY, SCARNATI,
GREENLEAF, SCHWANK, MENSCH, VULAKOVICH, YUDICHAK, WAGNER AND
BROWNE, MARCH 4, 2016

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, MARCH 4, 2016

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," providing for higher education
6 accountability and transparency.

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 XX-H

13 HIGHER EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY

14 AND TRANSPARENCY

15 Section 2001-H. Definitions.

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

19 "Department." The Department of Education of the

1 Commonwealth.

2 "Institution of higher education." The term includes any of
3 the following:

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

5 (2) A university within the State System of Higher
6 Education.

7 (3) The Pennsylvania State University.

8 (4) The University of Pittsburgh.

9 (5) Temple University.

10 (6) Lincoln University.

11 (7) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

12 (8) Any other institution designated as State-related by
13 the Commonwealth.

14 (9) An institution of higher education which is operated
15 not for profit, located in and incorporated or chartered by
16 the Commonwealth and entitled to confer degrees as set forth
17 in 24 Pa.C.S. § 6505 (relating to power to confer degrees)
18 and is designated as a "college" or "university" as provided
19 for by the standards and qualifications prescribed by the
20 State Board of Education pursuant to 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 65
21 (relating to private colleges, universities and seminaries).

22 "PHEAA." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
23 Agency.

24 Section 2002-H. Comparison tool.

25 (a) General rule.--The department shall make available on
26 the department's publicly accessible Internet website a search
27 tool that allows an individual to compare institutions of higher
28 education that meet certain criteria selected by the individual,
29 including offering a particular major or program of study.

30 (b) Requirements.--The comparison tool required under this

1 section shall:

2 (1) Be accessible from the department's publicly
3 accessible Internet website.

4 (2) Allow a user to identify and compare institutions of
5 higher education by the following:

6 (i) Name of an institution of higher education.

7 (ii) Physical address of an institution of higher
8 education.

9 (iii) Total enrollment for the previous academic
10 year of an institution of higher education.

11 (iv) Average tuition and fees per year based on the
12 previous academic year for an institution of higher
13 education.

14 (v) Percentage of students receiving Federal aid at
15 an institution of higher education.

16 (vi) Average amount borrowed for undergraduate study
17 per year at an institution of higher education.

18 (vii) Graduation and transfer rates at an
19 institution of higher education, including information on
20 average time, in years, to attainment of a degree.

21 (viii) Percentage of graduates employed or enrolled
22 in graduate school at an institution of higher education.

23 (ix) Average first-year earnings of graduates by
24 degree level at an institution of higher education.

25 (x) Percentage of students who have defaulted on
26 their Federal student loans within three years of
27 graduation from an institution of higher education.

28 (3) Be accessible to the public without requiring
29 registration or use of a user name, password or other user
30 identification.

1 (4) Include a link to the publicly accessible Internet
2 website of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry
3 and a link to the publicly accessible Internet website of
4 each of the institutions of higher education selected.

5 (c) Chart.--The comparison tool required under this section
6 shall generate a comparison chart in a grid format that:

7 (1) lists the institutions of higher education that
8 match a user's search criteria; and

9 (2) provides information for each institution of higher
10 education listed as outlined in subsection (b) (2).

11 (d) Duty of institutions.--

12 (1) An institution of higher education shall provide the
13 information outlined in this section to the department not
14 later than October 1 of each year.

15 (2) The department shall update the comparison tool as
16 soon as practicable after receiving information from each
17 institution of higher education.

18 (3) Failure to comply with this subsection shall result
19 in the withholding of any PHEAA funds received by the
20 institution of higher education in noncompliance for the
21 corresponding fiscal year.

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