

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1341 Session of  
2024

INTRODUCED BY LAUGHLIN AND BARTOLOTTA, OCTOBER 18, 2024

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, OCTOBER 18, 2024

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," in certification of teachers, further  
6 providing for continuing professional development; providing  
7 for access to advanced courses for all students; establishing  
8 the Access to Advanced Courses for All Students Grant  
9 Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Section 1205.1(c.1)(3) of the act of March 10,  
13 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949,  
14 is amended to read:

15 Section 1205.1. Continuing Professional Development.--\* \* \*

16 (c.1) The continuing professional education plan shall  
17 specify the professional education needs that will be met by  
18 completion of each continuing professional education option and  
19 how it relates to areas of assignment and certification or  
20 potential administrative certification. The options may include,  
21 but shall not be limited to:

22 \* \* \*

- 1 (3) Other programs, activities or learning experiences taken  
2 for credit or hourly, to include:
- 3 (i) curriculum development and other program design and  
4 delivery activities at the school entity or grade level as  
5 determined by the school entity and approved by the board of  
6 directors;
- 7 (ii) participation in professional conferences and  
8 workshops;
- 9 (iii) education in the workplace, where the work relates to  
10 the professional educator's area of assignment and is approved  
11 by the board of directors;
- 12 (iv) review, redesign and restructuring of school programs,  
13 organizations and functions as determined by the school entity  
14 and approved by the board of directors;
- 15 (v) in-service programs that comply with guidelines  
16 established by the department;
- 17 (vi) early childhood and child development activities for  
18 professional educators whose area of assignment includes  
19 kindergarten through third grade;
- 20 (vii) special education activities for professional  
21 educators whose area of assignment includes students with  
22 special needs;
- 23 (viii) successful completion of department training for  
24 service as a Distinguished Educator if the professional educator  
25 participates in and completes at least one assignment in the  
26 Distinguished Educators Program;
- 27 (ix) other continuing professional education courses,  
28 programs, activities or learning experiences sponsored by the  
29 department; [or]
- 30 (x) visits by educators to a manufacturing workplace for

1 orientation and demonstrations to give the professional educator  
2 a greater understanding of job opportunities in manufacturing  
3 for students[.]; or

4 (xi) providing opportunities for educators to serve as  
5 advanced coursework coaches to support teachers in delivering  
6 high-quality advanced coursework instruction.

7 \* \* \*

8 Section 2. The act is amended by adding an article to read:

9 ARTICLE XVII-E

10 ACCESS TO ADVANCED COURSES FOR ALL STUDENTS

11 Section 1701-E. Scope of article.

12 This article relates to access to advanced courses for all  
13 students.

14 Section 1702-E. 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 "Advanced course." An academically rigorous college-level  
19 course delivered to secondary students by an eligible educator  
20 that includes an end-of-course exam that qualifies students to  
21 earn college credit for prior learning.

22 "Core academic areas." Mathematics, English language arts,  
23 science, social studies and computer science.

24 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
25 Commonwealth.

26 "Educator." A "professional employe," "temporary  
27 professional employe" or "substitute" as those terms are defined  
28 in section 1101.

29 "Educator training entity." An institution of higher  
30 education, intermediate unit or other organization approved by

1 the department to train educators to teach advanced courses. For  
2 courses, the educator training entity shall also be endorsed by  
3 the provider of advanced course work.

4 "Eligible educator." An educator who is certified in the  
5 subject area of the advanced course that the educator will be  
6 teaching.

7 "Eligible school entity." A school entity that does not meet  
8 the minimum benchmarks for advanced course offerings established  
9 by the department under section 1703-E(b)(2)(i) or is unable to  
10 offer an advanced course due to the retirement, departure or  
11 other loss of an educator who teaches an advanced course.

12 "Exam fee." The amount required to take an exam associated  
13 with an advanced course.

14 "Institution of higher education." The term includes any of  
15 the following:

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

17 (2) A university within the State System of Higher  
18 Education under Article XX-A.

19 (3) A State-related institution as defined in section  
20 1502-A.

21 (4) Any accredited nonprofit public, private or  
22 independent college or university.

23 "Program." The Access to Advanced Courses for All Students  
24 Grant Program established under section 1704-E.

25 "School entity." A school district, area career and  
26 technical school, charter school or regional charter school  
27 operating in this Commonwealth.

28 "Secondary student." A student in grades seven through  
29 twelve who is enrolled in a school entity.

30 "Virtual learning instruction." The provision of academic

1 courses and instruction to students through the Internet or the  
2 use of video or audio technology.

3 Section 1703-E. Equitable access to advanced courses.

4 (a) Access.--Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, each  
5 school entity receiving a grant under section 1704-E(b) shall  
6 provide secondary students with expanded opportunities to enroll  
7 in advanced courses as well as exam fee assistance, as  
8 appropriate.

9 (b) Duties.--

10 (1) No later than September 1, 2025, and every five  
11 years thereafter, each school entity shall report to the  
12 department, in a manner determined by the department, all  
13 advanced course offerings that are available to the school  
14 entity's secondary students for the current school year as  
15 well as the number of students participating in advanced  
16 courses, completing advanced courses and taking an end-of-  
17 course exam.

18 (2) No later than December 1, 2025, and every five years  
19 thereafter, the department shall:

20 (i) Establish benchmarks to improve secondary  
21 student access to and enrollment in advanced courses.

22 (ii) Identify school entities that require intensive  
23 assistance to improve secondary student access to and  
24 enrollment in advanced courses.

25 (iii) Prepare a report containing the information  
26 provided under paragraph (1), as well as the benchmarks  
27 established and school districts identified under  
28 subparagraphs (i) and (ii), and post the report on the  
29 department's publicly accessible Internet website.  
30 Beginning with the report required to be posted on

1 December 1, 2030, the report shall include an explanation  
2 of whether school entities in this Commonwealth are  
3 progressing or regressing in improving secondary student  
4 access to and enrollment in advanced courses.

5 Section 1704-E. Access to Advanced Courses for All Students  
6 Grant Program.

7 (a) Purpose.--The Access to Advanced Courses for All  
8 Students Grant Program is established in the department to help  
9 ensure that all school entities have properly trained educators  
10 to meet the advanced course benchmarks established under section  
11 1703-E(b)(2)(i), to provide advanced course exam fee assistance  
12 to students and to make money available for nationally normed  
13 assessments.

14 (b) Educator training grants to school entities.--

15 (1) A school entity that does not meet a minimum  
16 advanced course benchmark established by the department under  
17 section 1703-E(b)(2)(i) shall be eligible for annual grants  
18 for a maximum of five consecutive years to train educators to  
19 teach advanced courses to enable the school entity to meet  
20 the benchmark and further expand access to advanced courses  
21 beyond the benchmark over the five-year grant period.

22 (2) The department may limit the number of educators per  
23 school building within an eligible school entity for whom the  
24 eligible school entity may receive an educator training  
25 grant.

26 (3) Multiple eligible school entities may apply jointly  
27 for an educator training grant under the program if the  
28 educators to be trained will provide instruction in more than  
29 one eligible school entity through classroom instruction or  
30 virtual learning instruction.

1           (4) The department shall develop an application process  
2 and application form for an eligible school entity seeking an  
3 educator training grant under the program. The application  
4 form shall include the following:

5           (i) The subject areas in which the eligible school  
6 entity currently has advanced course offerings.

7           (ii) The subject areas in which the eligible school  
8 entity does not have advanced course offerings.

9           (iii) The eligible school entity's plan to expand  
10 and increase advanced course participation within the  
11 eligible school entity, including for student populations  
12 that have been traditionally underserved, and how an  
13 educator training grant will help expedite the eligible  
14 school entity's progress toward its advanced course  
15 participation goals.

16           (iv) The following information:

17           (A) The names of the eligible educators to be  
18 trained using educator training grant proceeds.

19           (B) The school buildings within the eligible  
20 school entity where the eligible educators will  
21 teach.

22           (C) The advanced course subject areas in which  
23 the eligible educators will provide instruction.

24           (D) Whether the instruction will be provided  
25 through traditional classroom instruction or virtual  
26 learning instruction.

27           (v) The names of the educator training entities that  
28 will train the eligible educators to teach advanced  
29 courses.

30           (vi) An agreement that the eligible school entity

1 will commit to offering the advanced courses to secondary  
2 students for at least five years.

3 (5) By June 30 of each year, each school entity that  
4 receives an educator training grant under this section shall  
5 report to the department the following for the immediately  
6 preceding school year in a form and manner determined by the  
7 department:

8 (i) The number of students who enrolled in an  
9 advanced course taught by an educator who received  
10 training funded by the grant and the number of students  
11 who completed the course.

12 (ii) The number of students who took an end-of-  
13 course exam in an advanced course taught by an educator  
14 who received training funded by the grant.

15 (iii) The grade levels in which advanced courses  
16 were taught.

17 (iv) The number of educators who received training  
18 funded by the grant who taught advanced courses within  
19 the school entity.

20 (c) Exam fee grant to students.--Beginning with the 2024-  
21 2025 school year, the department shall provide advanced course  
22 exam fee assistance in accordance with the following:

23 (1) The department shall reimburse school entities 100%  
24 of the exam fee for each student at or above 185% of the  
25 Federal poverty level who completes an advanced course for  
26 which the student is required or chooses to take an exam.

27 (2) On an annual basis, each school entity shall certify  
28 to the department the amount of reimbursement due under  
29 paragraph (1) in accordance with guidelines developed by the  
30 department and posted on the department's publicly accessible



1 Internet website.

2 (d) Nationally normed assessments.--Beginning with the 2024-  
3 2025 school year, the department shall make money available to  
4 school entities to administer nationally normed assessments to  
5 students in grade 10 that can be used to identify students ready  
6 for advanced coursework, provide access to college scholarships  
7 and provide information about college and career opportunities.

8 Section 1705-E. Powers and duties of department.

9 (a) Rules.--The department shall promulgate rules and  
10 procedures necessary for the implementation of this article.

11 (b) Report.--By September 1, 2026, and every five years  
12 thereafter, the department shall issue a report on the program  
13 to the General Assembly that includes:

14 (1) The number of educators in school entities who  
15 received training in advanced course instruction delineated  
16 by type of advanced course instruction.

17 (2) The number and percentage of schools enrolling  
18 secondary students that offer advanced courses and the change  
19 in advanced course offerings over the five-year grant period.

20 (3) The number and percentage of secondary students who  
21 completed advanced courses at school entities.

22 (4) The number and percentage of secondary students who  
23 achieved a qualifying score, reported separately from an  
24 advanced course exam at school entities.

25 (5) The number and percentage of institutions of higher  
26 education located within this Commonwealth that provide  
27 academic course credit for advanced course exam scores.

28 (6) The names of the school entities and high schools  
29 that do not offer advanced courses or are below the minimum  
30 benchmark established by the department under section 1703-

1 E(b) (2) (i).

2 (7) The number of educators who where trained to teach  
3 advanced courses outside the core academic areas who are  
4 teaching other advanced courses.

5 Section 1706-E. Program funding.

6 (a) Funding.--Funding for the program shall be made from  
7 annual appropriations made by the General Assembly to the  
8 department for that purpose, as well as available Federal funds  
9 or funds from private sources.

10 (b) Priorities.--In the event of insufficient funds in any  
11 fiscal year, the department shall prioritize funding of eligible  
12 school entities based on the eligible school entity's poverty  
13 level and deficiency in providing advanced course opportunities  
14 as compared to the benchmark established by the department under  
15 section 1703-E(b) (2) (i).

16 Section 1707-E. Rights of school employees.

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

25 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.