
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 924 Session of
2013

INTRODUCED BY WASHINGTON, WILLIAMS, FERLO, KITCHEN, ERICKSON,
FONTANA, GREENLEAF, SCHWANK, TARTAGLIONE, FARNESE, SOLOBAY,
COSTA AND BROWNE, MAY 15, 2013

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, MAY 15, 2013

AN ACT

1 Establishing the MESA Initiative; providing for duties of the
2 Department of Education; and establishing the State MESA
3 Commission.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
8 MESA Initiative Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Commission." The State MESA Commission established under
14 section 5.

15 "Department." The Department of Education of the
16 Commonwealth.

17 "MESA." Mathematics, engineering and science achievement.

18 "MESA Initiative." The program established under section 3

1 to promote science, engineering and mathematics education.

2 "STEM." Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

3 Section 3. MESA Initiative.

4 Not later than 18 months from the effective date of this act,
5 the department shall establish the MESA Initiative as a program
6 within the department. The MESA Initiative shall seek to
7 increase exposure, educational motivation and achievement of
8 students in science, engineering and mathematics and build
9 individual and regional capacity to compete for STEM-based jobs
10 in the global market with a particular emphasis on students,
11 parents, educators and employers from urban and rural groups who
12 have historically had the lowest levels of high school degree
13 attainment and participation in college and graduate education.

14 Section 4. Administration of MESA Initiative.

15 (a) Coordination.--The department shall coordinate the
16 efforts of all Commonwealth agencies that relate to MESA
17 education from kindergarten through grade 12 and with
18 institutions of higher education to avoid unnecessary
19 duplication of initiatives and ensure adherence to established
20 guidelines.

21 (b) Structure of STEM regions.--The department shall work
22 with the TEAM PA Foundation and the five established STEM
23 regions in this Commonwealth to create in each STEM region an
24 infrastructure for the MESA Initiative.

25 (c) Duties.--In consultation with the commission,
26 Commonwealth agencies, institutions of higher education, the
27 TEAM PA Foundation and the STEM regions, the department shall:

28 (1) Develop annual goals and objectives for improving
29 MESA programs throughout this Commonwealth with particular
30 emphasis on regional economic and educational needs.

1 (2) No later than 30 days after developing the goals and
2 objectives under paragraph (1), communicate the goals and
3 objectives to all relevant agencies of the Commonwealth, the
4 STEM regions and the public by making the goals and
5 objectives available on the department's publicly accessible
6 Internet website.

7 (3) Coordinate and facilitate communication and
8 cooperation among all MESA regions and assure compliance with
9 established guidelines for the MESA Initiative.

10 (4) Conduct an ongoing inventory and assessment of the
11 effectiveness and coherence of efforts within the MESA
12 regions.

13 (5) After an initial evaluation, biennially evaluate the
14 progress and success of the MESA regions at achieving the
15 goals and objectives under paragraph (1).

16 (6) Strengthen partnerships between the national MESA
17 community, Federal, State and local governments and relevant
18 international partners.

19 Section 5. State MESA Commission.

20 (a) Establishment.--There is established within the State
21 Board of Education under the Council of Basic Education a State
22 MESA Commission to oversee the advancement of science,
23 technology, engineering and mathematics education.

24 (b) Membership.--The commission shall consist of not more
25 than 20 members, including the following:

26 (1) Two representatives from each STEM.

27 (2) Elected officials, representatives of the department
28 and stakeholders as appointed by the department.

29 (c) Study.--The commission shall evaluate and report to the
30 General Assembly biennially on the following:

- 1 (1) Efficacy of Statewide MESA Initiatives.
- 2 (2) Effective utilization of MESA Initiative resources.
- 3 (3) Influence of the MESA Initiative on:
- 4 (i) Student STEM aptitudes, as measured by
- 5 standardized testing.
- 6 (ii) Teacher effectiveness.
- 7 (iii) STEM-based employment within MESA regions.
- 8 (d) Meetings.--The commission shall meet no less often than
- 9 quarterly.
- 10 Section 6. Effective date.
- 11 This act shall take effect in 60 days.