

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2235 Session of
1991

INTRODUCED BY FREEMAN, ITKIN, CAWLEY, HARPER, GEORGE, COLAIZZO,
BELARDI, ROBINSON, ANGSTADT, LEVDANSKY, VEON, ARGALL,
KRUSZEWSKI, McHALE, CAPPABIANCA, CARLSON, NAILOR, STISH,
VANCE, FAJT, GRUPPO, PETRONE, HAYDEN, PISTELLA, MIHALICH,
MUNDY, NAHILL, TRELLO, STABACK, J. TAYLOR, KUKOVICH,
LAUGHLIN, BROUJOS, COY, BATTISTO, LINTON, TOMLINSON,
STEIGHNER, KREBS, STURLA, HERMAN, DeWEESE, RICHARDSON,
MURPHY, HERSHEY, CORRIGAN, SURRA, HANNA, KING, FARGO, BOYES,
BUTKOVITZ, GRUITZA AND ARNOLD, NOVEMBER 26, 1991

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 16, 1992

AN ACT

1 Providing for environmental education programs; providing for
2 further duties of the Department of Education and the
3 Department of Environmental Resources; ~~and~~ providing for the <—
4 disposition of a portion of certain fines and penalties; AND <—
5 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

8 Section 1. Short title.

9 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Environmental
10 Education Act.

11 Section 2. Declaration of policy.

12 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

13 (1) Section 27 of Article I of the Constitution of
14 Pennsylvania states that: "The people have a right to clean
15 air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural,

1 scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment.
2 Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common
3 property of all the people, including generations yet to
4 come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall
5 conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the
6 people."

7 (2) The State Board of Education has recognized the
8 study of the environment as an essential component of basic
9 education for graduating students. The regulations of the
10 board which pertain to curriculum identify the knowledge and
11 understanding of the environment as one of the goals of a
12 quality education.

13 (3) A quality education should provide each student with
14 knowledge of natural and human resources, an understanding of
15 geographic environments, knowledge of the interrelationships
16 and interdependence of natural and human systems, the
17 development of personal environmental attitudes and values,
18 the development of environmental problem solving and
19 management skills and knowledge of and appropriate uses of
20 energy.

21 (4) The Department of Environmental Resources has been
22 given the charge of steward and protector of this
23 Commonwealth's natural resources. Consequently, the
24 department has a responsibility to help the public understand
25 the environmental laws as well as the roles of individuals,
26 groups, institutions, industry and government in finding
27 solutions to this Commonwealth's environmental problems and
28 the prevention of new problems.

29 (5) The third week of October is recognized each year as
30 "Pennsylvania Environmental Education Week" as a means to

1 promote environmental education.

2 (6) The 20th Anniversary celebration of "Earth Day"
3 heralded the 1990's as the "Decade of the Environment." In
4 order to meet the challenges of this decade, citizens of this
5 Commonwealth will need the background, values and skills to
6 make informed decisions as consumers and voters to help
7 protect the environment and prevent pollution.

8 (7) It is the policy of this Commonwealth that
9 environmental education is critically important to promote a
10 citizenry which has the ability to make personal lifestyle
11 choices to help promote a healthy environment and an
12 understanding of the functioning of the natural world and the
13 necessity for environmental protection and sound resource
14 management.

15 Section 3. Legislative purpose.

16 It is the purpose of this act to:

17 (1) authorize and require the Department of Education
18 and the Department of Environmental Resources to develop and
19 implement environmental education programs for the citizens
20 of this Commonwealth;

21 (2) encourage the environmental education efforts of
22 other agencies where appropriate, including, but not limited
23 to, those of the county conservation districts, the Fish
24 Commission and the Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Energy
25 Office, and the Department of Commerce, the Department of
26 Community Affairs, the Department of General Services and the
27 Department of Transportation; and

28 (3) create and establish the Advisory Council on
29 Environmental Education within the Department of Education.

30 Section 4. Powers and duties of Department of Education.

1 The Department of Education shall have the following powers
2 and duties:

3 (1) To conduct a periodic assessment of school-based
4 environmental education in this Commonwealth.

5 (2) To provide assistance, support and resource
6 information to educators and public and private education
7 agencies and organizations on environmental education
8 programs.

9 (3) To identify, recognize and establish awards for
10 exemplary environmental education curricula developed in
11 Commonwealth schools.

12 (4) To ensure that schools develop mechanisms for
13 assessing the learning outcomes for the Environmental Goal of
14 Quality Education (in accordance with 22 Pa. Code Ch. 5
15 (relating to curriculum requirements)).

16 Section 5. Powers and duties of Department of Environmental
17 Resources.

18 The Department of Environmental Resources shall have the
19 following powers and duties:

20 (1) To conduct a periodic assessment of the status of
21 environmental education taking place in the nonformal sector
22 (outside of the classroom) in this Commonwealth.

23 (2) To maintain an inventory of environmental education
24 materials, programs and resources available in Commonwealth
25 agencies.

26 (3) To use the department's environmental education
27 centers as outreach facilities to bring youth and adult
28 education programs into communities and schools, focusing on
29 environmental issues of importance to the Commonwealth.

30 (4) To provide such grants as the Secretary of Education

1 shall, in his discretion, approve to the following: public
2 and private schools for youth environmental education,
3 conservation and education organizations and institutions for
4 the purposes of providing environmental education training to
5 teachers, county conservation districts and Bureau of State
6 Parks Environmental Education Program.

7 (5) To prepare a guidance document, in consultation with
8 the Secretary of Education, for administering the grants.

9 This document shall be published in the Pennsylvania
10 Bulletin.

11 Section 6. Environmental Education Report.

12 The Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Environmental
13 Resources shall prepare a periodic report to the Governor and
14 the General Assembly outlining environmental education programs
15 and achievements, highlighting new initiatives and recommending
16 future program needs.

17 Section 7. The Advisory Council on Environmental Education.

18 (a) Duties.--There is hereby created an Advisory Council on
19 Environmental Education within the Department of Education. The
20 advisory council shall:

21 (1) Make recommendations to the Secretary of Education
22 and the Secretary of Environmental Resources with respect to
23 the use of any funds used to support environmental education
24 activities.

25 (2) Advise and assist the Secretary of Education and the
26 Secretary of Environmental Resources in carrying out
27 environmental education activities.

28 (3) Advise and assist the Secretary of Education and the
29 Secretary of Environmental Resources in conducting a
30 continual assessment of the trends and needs in environmental

1 education.

2 (4) Make recommendations to the Secretary of Education
3 and the Secretary of Environmental Resources to help foster
4 environmental education programs.

5 (5) Make recommendations to the Secretary of
6 Environmental Resources on the distribution of available
7 grant moneys.

8 (b) Composition.--Council membership shall consist of 13
9 persons, six appointed by the Secretary of Education, six
10 appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Resources and one
11 appointed by the Chancellor of the State System of Higher
12 Education, and shall represent a diversity of backgrounds,
13 including basic and higher education, industry and resource
14 management. THE COUNCIL MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY OF
15 EDUCATION SHALL INCLUDE TEACHERS CHOSEN FROM PANELS OF NOMINEES
16 SUBMITTED BY STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS.

17 (c) Appointment, terms and expenses.--The 13 council members
18 shall be appointed for five-year terms. The initial term of four
19 of the council members shall be for one year, the initial term
20 of four members shall be for three years, and the initial term
21 of the remainder shall be for five years. A member may be
22 appointed for more than one term and shall serve until a
23 successor has been appointed. Members shall not be compensated
24 but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses in accordance with
25 the rules of the Executive Board.

26 (d) Officers and bylaws.--The council shall convene at least
27 biannually, shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson to
28 serve a one-year term, and shall adopt bylaws for governing its
29 operations.

30 (e) Staff.--The Secretary of Education shall designate such

1 staff as may be necessary for the operation of the council.

2 Section 8. Funding.

3 An amount, ~~not to exceed~~ EQUAL TO 5% of the moneys collected <—
4 annually from fines and penalties deposited in special funds or
5 restricted revenue accounts administered by the Department of
6 Environmental Resources, is hereby ~~allocated~~ APPROPRIATED, with <—
7 the approval of the Governor, to the Department of Environmental
8 Resources to promote environmental education as provided in this
9 act. This annual allocation amount shall be based upon the
10 amounts collected in the previous fiscal year.

11 Section 9. Effective date.

12 This act shall take effect immediately.