

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1822 Session of
1995

INTRODUCED BY HANNA, LYNCH, ROBINSON, JAROLIN, VAN HORNE,
BELARDI, L. I. COHEN, BUNT, CAPPABIANCA, CORRIGAN, BOSCOLA,
TRELLO, STEELMAN, VEON, CAWLEY, M. COHEN, SAYLOR, YOUNGBLOOD,
BATTISTO AND RICHARDSON, JUNE 19, 1995

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JUNE 19, 1995

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 computer hardware
6 grants to school districts and State-owned institutions of
7 higher learning; and making an appropriation.

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

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

13 ARTICLE XXVI-H.

14 COMPUTER HARDWARE GRANTS.

15 Section 2601-H. Definitions.--When used in this article, the
16 following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

17 "Board." The computer hardware grant advisory board created
18 under this article.

19 "Computer hardware." A data processor which can be programmed

1 in at least two (2) standard computer languages, which has a
2 random access memory with a capacity for at least thirty-two
3 thousand (32,000) bytes and is or can be used connected to a
4 screen for visual display of data. Display screens, printers,
5 disk drives and installation costs shall also be considered
6 computer hardware under this definition.

7 "Computer hardware grant." An amount, not exceeding one
8 million dollars (\$1,000,000) during any given fiscal year,
9 awarded to an eligible institution by the Department of
10 Education to be used specifically for the purchase and
11 installation of computer hardware equipment.

12 "Eligible institution." Any public school district or State-
13 owned institution which is a member of the State System of
14 Higher Education.

15 Section 2602-H. Computer Hardware Grants.--For the State
16 fiscal year beginning on July 1, 1995, and commencing on July 1
17 on every fiscal year thereafter, the department shall award
18 computer hardware grants on a continuing basis to eligible
19 institutions which clearly demonstrate a need for new equipment
20 or upgrades of existing equipment to enhance academic or
21 technical instruction.

22 Section 2603-H. Application.--The department shall develop
23 an application for computer hardware grants within three (3)
24 months after the passage of this article. Each eligible
25 institution applying for grant moneys must submit such
26 application to the department for review. The department shall
27 approve or disapprove every application within thirty (30) days
28 and notify the applicant within fifteen (15) days after its
29 decision. The information required with the application shall
30 include, but not be limited to:

1 (1) a statement of need by the eligible institution;

2 (2) a specific explanation of how students at each eligible
3 institution can utilize the computer hardware to gather data,
4 analyze data and apply data to enhance their problem solving and
5 analytical skills;

6 (3) an explanation which explains how the educational
7 institution will use the computer hardware to produce higher
8 student outcomes in a single learning discipline or a
9 combination of disciplines;

10 (4) a description of the computer hardware to be purchased;

11 (5) a copy of the contract purchase agreement and other
12 bidding information the department deems necessary;

13 (6) a statement that any grant moneys awarded will be used
14 specifically for computer hardware purchases; and

15 (7) any other information required by the department.

16 Section 2604-H. Bids and Purchasing.--(a) Each eligible
17 institution which applies for grant moneys under this article
18 shall follow applicable sections of State law pertaining to bids
19 and purchasing, including section 807.1 and section 12 of the
20 act of December 6, 1967 (P.L.678, No.318), known as "The
21 Pennsylvania Higher Educational Facilities Authority Act of
22 1967."

23 (b) The department may assist school districts in reviewing
24 contract bids and provide technical assistance to school
25 districts regarding the bidding process and award of contracts
26 for computer hardware equipment.

27 Section 2605-H. Contributions by Educational Institutions.--

28 (a) A school district's fund matching obligation shall be
29 calculated as a percentage which shall be determined by
30 multiplying the value of one (1) minus the district's determined

aid ratio provided for under Article XXV of this act. No school district shall be required to contribute an amount exceeding twenty-five percent (25%) of the total cost of the computer hardware equipment purchased.

(b) A State-owned institution of higher learning shall provide matching funds in order to receive a computer hardware grant pursuant to this article.

Section 2606-H. Limitation on Funds.--(a) Not more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the funds appropriated during any given fiscal year shall be awarded to State-owned institutions of higher learning.

(b) No eligible institution shall be awarded grant funds exceeding one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in any given fiscal year.

Section 2607-H. Advisory Board.--(a) Within thirty (30) days after the effective date of this article and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Education shall appoint an advisory board consisting of eleven (11) persons. The board shall be composed of the following:

(1) Five (5) professional employees or school directors representing school districts from different geographic regions of this Commonwealth.

(2) Two (2) representatives of State-owned institutions of higher learning.

(3) Three (3) citizens of this Commonwealth.

(4) One (1) employee of the department.

(b) The board shall provide advice to the Secretary of Education during the development of rules and regulations under this article and may offer comments and recommendations on the awarding of computer hardware grants.

1 (c) Advisory board members shall not receive a salary but
2 shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred while attending
3 meetings under this article.

4 (d) The advisory board shall select a chairman from among
5 its members and shall meet as it deems necessary.

6 Section 2608-H. Report to General Assembly.--The department
7 shall annually submit to the General Assembly a report of:

8 (1) the total number of grants awarded;

9 (2) the amount of individual grants and the educational
10 institutions to which they were awarded; and

11 (3) the total amount of grant moneys awarded.

12 Section 2609-H. Rules and Regulations.--The department shall
13 promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of
14 this article within ninety (90) days following the effective
15 date of this article.

16 Section 2. The sum of \$30,000,000 is hereby appropriated to
17 the Department of Education for the fiscal year July 1, 1995, to
18 June 30, 1996, to award computer hardware grants under the
19 provisions of this act.

20 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.