

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2743 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY LENTZ, BELFANTI, CALTAGIRONE, FRANKEL, GOODMAN,
HENNESSEY, KORTZ, KOTIK, KULA, MANN, McCALL, McGEEHAN,
McILVAINE SMITH, MELIO, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PASHINSKI,
READSHAW, ROCK, SIPTROTH, SURRA, SWANGER, R. TAYLOR, WHEATLEY
AND YOUNGBLOOD, AUGUST 21, 2008

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, AUGUST 21, 2008

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," further providing for the Office for
6 Safe Schools.

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

9 Section 1. Section 1302-A of the act of March 10, 1949
10 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949,
11 amended or added June 30, 1995 (P.L.220, No.26), and July 9,
12 2008 (P.L. , No.61), is amended to read:

13 Section 1302-A. Office for Safe Schools.--(a) There is
14 hereby established in the Department of Education an Office for
15 Safe Schools.

16 (b) The office shall have the following powers and duties:

17 (1) To coordinate antiviolence efforts between school,
18 professional, parental, governmental, law enforcement and

1 community organizations and associations.

2 (2) To collect, develop and disseminate information,
3 policies, strategies and other information to assist in the
4 development of programs to impact school violence.

5 (3) To provide direct training to school employes, parents,
6 law enforcement officials and communities on effective measures
7 to combat school violence.

8 (4) To advise school entities and nonpublic schools on the
9 development of policies to be used regarding possession of
10 weapons by any person, acts of violence and protocols for
11 coordination with and reporting to law enforcement officials and
12 the Department of Education.

13 (5) To develop forms to be used by school entities for
14 reporting incidents involving acts of violence and possession of
15 weapons on school property.

16 (6) To develop telephone hotlines insuring anonymity to be
17 used by students, parents, teachers, school employes and members
18 of the community to report potential or actual violence or
19 possession of weapons on school property.

20 (c) In addition to the powers and duties set forth under
21 subsection (a), the office is authorized to make targeted grants
22 to schools to fund programs which address school violence,
23 including, but not limited to, the following programs:

24 (1) Conflict resolution or dispute management.

25 (2) Peer helpers programs.

26 (3) Risk assessment, safety-related or violence prevention
27 curricula.

28 (4) Classroom management.

29 (5) Student codes of conduct.

30 (6) Training to undertake a districtwide assessment of risk

1 factors that increase the likelihood of problem behaviors among
2 students.

3 (7) Development and implementation of research-based
4 violence prevention programs that address risk factors to reduce
5 incidents of problem behaviors among students, including, but
6 not limited to, bullying.

7 (8) Comprehensive, districtwide school safety and violence
8 prevention plans.

9 (9) Security planning, purchase of security-related
10 technology which may include metal detectors, protective
11 lighting, surveillance equipment, special emergency
12 communications equipment, electronic locksets, deadbolts and
13 theft control devices and training in the use of security-
14 related technology. Security planning and purchase of security-
15 related technology shall be based on safety needs identified by
16 the school entity's board of directors.

17 (10) Institution of student, staff and visitor
18 identification systems.

19 (11) Establishment or enhancement of school security
20 personnel, including school resource officers.

21 (12) Provision of specialized staff and student training
22 programs, including training for Student Assistance Program team
23 members in elementary, middle and high schools in the referral
24 of students at risk of violent behavior to appropriate
25 community-based services, including mental health services.

26 (13) Alternative education programs provided for in Article
27 XIX-C.

28 (14) Counseling services for students enrolled in
29 alternative education programs.

30 (d) Grant applications shall contain information as the

1 office may require. The office shall conduct a thorough annual
2 evaluation of each program for which a grant under this section
3 is made.

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