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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL**  
**No. 1181** Session of  
1983

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INTRODUCED BY GALLAGHER, FREIND, HARPER, COWELL, BURNS,  
E. Z. TAYLOR, EVANS, FISCHER, COLAFELLA, DAVIES, LIVENGOD,  
MILLER, TIGUE, LESCOVITZ, STAIRS, WIGGINS, WASS, BATTISTO,  
HAGARTY, COY, DALEY, FATTAH, KOSINSKI, HERMAN AND WAMBACH,  
JUNE 7, 1983

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JUNE 7, 1983

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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 mandatory programs;  
6 providing for education assessment testing as a prerequisite  
7 for receipt of diploma; and making editorial changes.

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

10 Section 1. Section 290.1 of the act of March 10, 1949  
11 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is  
12 repealed.

13 Section 2. Section 1511 of the act, amended July 31, 1968  
14 (P.L.1020, No.301), is amended to read:

15 Section 1511. [Subjects of Instruction; Flag Code.--In every  
16 elementary public and private school, established and maintained  
17 in this Commonwealth, the following subjects shall be taught, in  
18 the English language and from English texts: English, including  
19 spelling, reading and writing, arithmetic, geography, the

1 history of the United States and of Pennsylvania, civics,  
2 including loyalty to the State and National Government, safety  
3 education, and the humane treatment of birds and animals,  
4 health, including physical education, and physiology, music and  
5 art. Other subjects shall be taught in the public elementary  
6 schools and also in the public high schools as may be prescribed  
7 by the standards of the State Board of Education. All such  
8 subjects, except foreign languages, shall be taught in the  
9 English language and from English texts: Provided, however,  
10 That, at the discretion of the Superintendent of Public  
11 Instruction, the teaching of subjects in a language other than  
12 English may be permitted as part of a sequence in foreign  
13 language study or as part of a bilingual education program if  
14 the teaching personnel are properly certified in the subject  
15 fields. Each school district shall provide and distribute to  
16 each pupil, enrolled in the eighth grade of the public schools,  
17 one illustrated copy of the National Flag Code, and shall, from  
18 time to time, make available such copies as are necessary for  
19 replacements from year to year. It shall be the duty of each  
20 teacher in the public schools to make such use of the code as  
21 may, from time to time, seem proper.] Programs or Courses of  
22 Study.--The mandatory required programs or courses of study to  
23 be offered are as follows:

24     (1) At the elementary school level: English, to include  
25 spelling, reading and writing; arithmetic; science; geography;  
26 history of the United States and Pennsylvania; civics; safety  
27 education, including regular instruction in the dangers and  
28 prevention of fires; health and physical education; music; art  
29 and remedial programs.

30     (2) At the secondary school level: English, to include

1 language, literature, speech and composition; science, to  
2 include biology, physics and chemistry; geography; social  
3 studies, to include civics, economics, world history, United  
4 States history and Pennsylvania history; foreign languages;  
5 mathematics, to include general mathematics and statistics,  
6 algebra, geometry, trigonometry and computer science; industrial  
7 arts; home economics; art; music; health and physical education  
8 and remedial programs. The program of health and physical  
9 education shall include instruction concerning the causes,  
10 effects, prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol abuse and  
11 the undesirability of the abuse of these substances.

12 (3) All subjects, except foreign languages, shall be taught  
13 in the English language and from English texts in compliance  
14 with State board regulations and department standards. The  
15 teaching of subjects in a language other than English may be  
16 permitted as part of a sequence in foreign language study if the  
17 teaching personnel are properly certified in the subject fields.

18 (4) Each school district shall provide and distribute to  
19 each student, enrolled in the eighth grade of the public  
20 schools, one illustrated copy of the National Flag Code and it  
21 shall be the duty of each teacher in the public schools to make  
22 such use of the code as may, from time to time, seem proper.

23 (5) The State board shall designate which of the mandated  
24 programs or courses of study shall be required of all students  
25 or of all students in certain grade levels.

26 (6) Notwithstanding the provisions of clause (5), the  
27 following minimum courses in grades nine (9) through twelve (12)  
28 are established as a requirement for high school graduation:

29 (i) Four (4) years of English.

30 (ii) Three (3) years of mathematics.

1     (iii) Three (3) years of science.

2     (iv) Three (3) years of social studies.

3     (v) One-half (1/2) year of computer science.

4     (vi) Two (2) years of foreign language studies.

5     The offering of such courses shall begin in school year 1984-  
6     1985 and the requirement for graduation shall apply to students  
7     graduating in 1989, and thereafter.

8     (7) Local school boards shall have the authority to  
9     establish written policies pertaining to the assignment of  
10    student homework and other out of class requirements.

11     Section 3. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

12     Section 1511.1. Education Assessment Testing; Prerequisite  
13    for Receipt of Diploma.--(a) The Department of Education,  
14    within one (1) year of the effective date of this act shall  
15    develop, cause to be developed or select commercially available  
16    tests designed to measure objectively cognitive development and  
17    educational performance in reading, writing, arithmetic or  
18    mathematics and science. These tests shall be administered to  
19    all public school students in this Commonwealth in the third,  
20    fifth, eighth and eleventh grades. Except for mentally gifted  
21    students as defined in regulations of the Department of  
22    Education, those students defined as exceptional under section  
23    1371 shall be exempt from the provisions of this section but may  
24    participate at the written request of a parent or guardian.

25     (b) Tests administered at the third, fifth and eighth grade  
26    levels shall be utilized by all school districts to measure  
27    relative student performance and to assist in the development of  
28    and placement of students in remedial educational programs as  
29    prescribed by the State Board of Education.

30     (c) Satisfactory performance as determined by the department

1 on the test administered in the eleventh grade shall be a basic  
2 prerequisite for all public, private and parochial school  
3 students receiving a high school diploma in Pennsylvania. A  
4 student failing the eleventh grade test shall immediately be  
5 placed in appropriate remedial programs to enable successful  
6 performance on the test. A student failing the eleventh grade  
7 test the first time shall be permitted to retake the test on a  
8 minimum of three (3) separate occasions, when the district shall  
9 offer it, during the student's senior year of high school. If a  
10 student fails to pass the test on all of these occasions, the  
11 student shall not receive a high school diploma. The graduation  
12 requirements established herein shall be applicable to the  
13 school year commencing four (4) years after the development or  
14 selection by the department of appropriate testing instruments.

15 (d) Results of the test administered in the third, fifth,  
16 eighth and eleventh grades shall be provided to parents or  
17 guardians. The board of school directors in each school district  
18 shall determine which school district personnel may have access  
19 to the test results.

20 Section 4. The Department of Education's Educational Quality  
21 Assessment Program and that program's goals of quality education  
22 are rescinded.

23 Section 5. This act shall take effect immediately except  
24 section 1511 which shall take effect beginning the 1984-1985  
25 school year.