

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 544 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY O'NEILL, BEYER, CALTAGIRONE, CREIGHTON, CURRY,
EVERETT, GRUCELA, KOTIK, R. MILLER, MUNDY, MURT, PYLE,
REICHLEY, SIPTROTH, SURRA AND YOUNGBLOOD, MARCH 6, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 6, 2007

AN ACT

1 Establishing a program for obtaining information from
2 institutions of higher education in a uniform manner to
3 permit statistical comparison; and imposing additional powers
4 and duties on the Department of Education and institutions of
5 higher education.

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 Teacher
10 Assessment Report Card Act.

11 Section 2. Definitions.

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

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

17 "Institution of higher education." A public or private
18 college or university offering a teacher education program
19 approved by the Department of Education.

1 "Report card." The teacher assessment report card identified
2 in section 4.

3 "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

4 "Teacher assessment test for initial certification." The
5 assessment tool identified by the Department of Education to be
6 used to evaluate a candidate's preparedness for initial
7 certification.

8 Section 3. Duties of institutions of higher education.

9 (a) General rule.--Each institution of higher education
10 shall complete a report card in accordance with this act and on
11 a uniform form prepared and furnished by the department.

12 (b) Time.--The report card form shall be completed by each
13 institution of higher education for each academic year and
14 forwarded to the department on a schedule to be established by
15 the secretary.

16 Section 4. Teacher assessment report card.

17 (a) General rule.--The teacher assessment report card shall
18 contain information to assist teachers, students and the general
19 public in assessing, evaluating and comparing the quality of
20 education being provided to higher education students in
21 approved teacher education programs.

22 (b) Access to report cards.--The secretary shall make use of
23 modern technology to assure wide access and distribution of the
24 information provided on the report cards and shall include such
25 information as the secretary in the secretary's discretion deems
26 necessary to assist the general public in assessing, evaluating,
27 comparing and understanding the quality of education being
28 provided students enrolled in teacher education programs at
29 institutions of higher education.

30 (c) Contents.--The report card form shall state that the

1 information is provided for the purpose of presenting an
2 overview of the applicable institution of higher education and
3 shall not be deemed to create a set of standards relating to the
4 quality of education being offered in that institution of higher
5 education and other institutions of higher education. This
6 information shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

7 (1) Number of students enrolled in approved
8 postsecondary teacher education programs in an academic year.

9 (2) Number of students who applied or were accepted to
10 take the teacher assessment test for initial certification in
11 that academic year.

12 (3) Number of students who passed the teacher assessment
13 test for initial certification after the first attempt.

14 (4) Number of students who passed the teacher assessment
15 test for initial certification after multiple attempts.

16 (5) Average number of attempts taken in order to pass
17 the teacher assessment test for initial certification.

18 (6) Report of the teacher assessment test for initial
19 certification results by the individual subject matter or
20 content area tested. This report shall be limited to those
21 subject matter areas or content areas in which no fewer than
22 ten students were tested.

23 (7) Report the number of faculty teaching a subject
24 matter area or content area, the number of faculty that have
25 obtained a teacher certification and the number of faculty
26 who have classroom teaching experience.

27 (8) Such other information as deemed necessary by the
28 department.

29 Section 5. Duties of department.

30 (a) Form development.--The department shall prepare a

1 uniform report card form and distribute that form to each
2 Pennsylvania institution of higher education no later than April
3 15 of each academic year. The form shall include a description
4 of each requirement in section 4 written in plain English.

5 (b) Statewide report.--

6 (1) Upon receipt of the completed report card
7 information from the individual institution of higher
8 education by a date certain established by the department,
9 the department shall compile a Statewide report for the
10 academic year for which data is supplied and the prior two
11 academic years, including a listing of each institution of
12 higher education and the information required under section
13 4.

14 (2) For purposes of the Statewide report, the department
15 shall not be required to compile or distribute data for the
16 prior two academic years until such time as the data becomes
17 available.

18 (3) (i) The department shall make available to each
19 institution of higher education a draft copy of its
20 Statewide report before initiating the final report
21 required by subsection (c).

22 (ii) An institution of higher education shall have
23 20 days from receipt of its draft Statewide report to
24 submit corrections to the department. Corrections shall
25 be accompanied by supporting documentation.

26 (4) The information received under section 4 shall be
27 deemed to be accurate for any institution of higher education
28 that does not resubmit its draft Statewide report to the
29 department on a timely basis.

30 (c) Release of final report.--No later than January 1

1 following the academic year for which report card data has been
2 furnished by the institutions of higher education, except that
3 for the 2007-2008 academic year when the date shall be February
4 1, the department shall furnish each institution of higher
5 education with its completed report card. The report card shall
6 include information as specified in section 4 and the Statewide
7 report as specified in subsection (b).

8 Section 6. Dissemination of report card.

9 (a) Students.--No later than March 1, except for the 2007-
10 2008 academic year when the date shall be April 1, each
11 institution of higher education shall make the applicable report
12 card available to postsecondary students in approved teacher
13 education programs either at the office of the dean or head of
14 the teacher education program of the respective institution of
15 higher education or by posting the report card on the campus
16 Internet website.

17 (b) General public.--The department shall publicize the
18 Statewide results as defined in section 5(c) by posting the
19 report on the department's Internet website no later than March
20 1, except for the 2007-2008 academic year when the date shall be
21 April 1.

22 (c) General Assembly.--The department shall forward a copy
23 of the Statewide results of the report card to the chairperson
24 and minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the
25 Senate and the chairperson and minority chairperson of the
26 Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

27 Section 7. Cause of action.

28 Nothing in this act shall be construed as establishing cause
29 of action for educational malpractice by students.

30 Section 8. Additional requirements.

1 (a) State Board of Education.--The State Board of Education
2 shall adopt policies, standards, rules and regulations necessary
3 for the proper administration and implementation of this act.

4 (b) Department.--The department shall provide technical
5 assistance to institutions of higher education in completing
6 forms as required by section 3(a).

7 Section 9. Effective date.

8 This act shall take effect July 1, 2007, or immediately,
9 whichever is later.