

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2047 Session of  
1999

INTRODUCED BY VEON, STURLA, SURRA, STABACK, BELARDI, EVANS,  
DeWEESE, DALEY, DERMODY, DeLUCA, BATTISTO, CAWLEY,  
CAPPABIANCA, BELFANTI, CARN, VAN HORNE, SEYFERT, PRESTON,  
STEELMAN, RAMOS, THOMAS, COLAFELLA, BISHOP, GIGLIOTTI,  
BROWNE, TRAVAGLIO, M. COHEN, GEIST, MCGILL, BARD AND ROONEY,  
NOVEMBER 9, 1999

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, NOVEMBER 9, 1999

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 gifted and talented  
6 education professional requirements; further providing for  
7 special temporary or special certificates; providing for  
8 standards for gifted and talented students, for an advisory  
9 council on gifted and talented education and for a matching  
10 grant program; making an appropriation; and making an  
11 editorial change.

12 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

13 (1) Recognizing that one of the Commonwealth's greatest  
14 resources is the minds of its students, gifted students  
15 should be provided with an education that addresses their  
16 special needs.

17 (2) In an effort to ensure that these young people may  
18 achieve their maximum potential, educators should learn the  
19 most effective techniques to challenge and inspire their  
20 gifted students' intellect and creativity.

1 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
2 hereby enacts as follows:

3 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
4 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a  
5 section to read:

6 Section 1205.2.--Gifted and Talented Education Professional  
7 Requirements.--In addition to any other requirements under this  
8 act, a continuing professional development plan established  
9 under section 1205.1 shall include education activities,  
10 learning experiences, professional education courses or  
11 collegiate study addressing gifted and talented education.

12 Section 2. Section 1207 of the act is amended to read:

13 Section 1207. Special Temporary or Permanent Certificates.--  
14 [The Superintendent of Public Instruction] (a) The Secretary of  
15 Education shall provide for special examinations, and for  
16 temporary or permanent certificates, for teachers of  
17 kindergartens, gifted and talented students, drawing, vocal  
18 music, manual training, physical training and other special  
19 branches.

20 (b) The Department of Education shall develop written  
21 standards for program approval and teacher certification for  
22 Certification in Gifted and Talented Education. Specific  
23 standards which require studies of the nature and needs of  
24 gifted and talented students and curriculum design for students  
25 who are gifted shall be developed. A Certification in Gifted and  
26 Talented Education shall be required of any person who spends a  
27 majority of teaching time with gifted or talented students after  
28 the effective date of this subsection.

29 [The Superintendent of Public Instruction] (c) The Secretary  
30 of Education may issue temporary or permanent certificates for

1 the teaching of such special subjects to graduates of approved  
2 special schools of such subjects, under such conditions as he  
3 may make.

4 Section 3. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

5 Section 1371.1. Standards for Gifted and Talented  
6 Students.--Subject to approval of the State Board of Education,  
7 the Department of Education shall promulgate standards to ensure  
8 uniformity in identifying gifted students. Each school district  
9 shall use multiple eligibility criteria to determine which  
10 students are eligible for gifted education services. Multiple  
11 eligibility criteria shall include:

12 (1) evidence of student work product or performance;  
13 (2) data from teacher, parent or peer observation; and  
14 (3) evidence of student performance on nationally normed  
15 standardized tests of mental ability, achievement, and  
16 creativity.

17 Section 1371.2. Advisory Council of Gifted and Talented  
18 Education.--(a) Within the Department of Education an advisory  
19 council on gifted and talented education is hereby created to:

20 (1) provide assistance to the department in relation to  
21 gifted and talented education;  
22 (2) make recommendations regarding the awarding of matching  
23 grants under section 1371.3; and  
24 (3) comment and make recommendations on gifted and talented  
25 education policy within this Commonwealth.

26 (b) Members of the advisory council shall be appointed as  
27 follows:

28 (1) One (1) member shall be appointed by each of the four  
29 legislative caucuses in the General Assembly.

30 (2) One (1) member shall be appointed by the Governor.

1     (3) One (1) member shall be appointed by the Governor from a  
2     list of nominations provided by a Statewide teacher's  
3     association.

4     (4) One (1) member shall be appointed by the Governor from a  
5     list of nominations provided by a Statewide association of  
6     school boards.

7     (c) Each member shall serve without compensation and at the  
8     pleasure of the appointing authority. Members appointed under  
9     subsection (b)(1) and (2) shall have, at a minimum, experience  
10    with gifted and talented education either as an administrator,  
11    teacher, parent or academic specialist in the field of gifted or  
12    talented education.

13    Section 1371.3. Grant Program.--There is hereby established  
14    within the Department of Education a competitive personnel  
15    preparation matching grant program. School districts may apply  
16    to the department for matching grants to provide any of the  
17    following services:

18    (1) Support for general education teachers and staff.

19    (2) Training for general education teachers in recognizing  
20    and working with the special needs of gifted students.

21    (3) Development of organized instruction to parents of  
22    gifted and talented students, school directors and school  
23    administrators.

24    (4) Development of special curriculum for gifted education  
25    students.

26    Section 4. The sum of \$1,000,000 is hereby appropriated to  
27 the Department of Education for the fiscal year July 1, 2000, to  
28 June 30, 2001, to fund the grant program established under  
29 section 1371.3. This appropriation shall not lapse at the end of  
30 the fiscal year but shall be a continuing appropriation.

1       Section 5. This act shall take effect as follows:

2           (1) This section shall take effect immediately.

3           (2) The addition of section 1371.2 of the act shall take  
4 effect in 90 days.

5           (3) The addition of section 1371.3 of the act shall take  
6 effect July 1, 2001.

7           (4) Section 4 of this act shall take effect July 1,  
8 2001.

9           (5) The remainder of this act shall take effect in two  
10 years.