AN ACT

Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An act relating to the public school system, including certain provisions applicable as well to private and parochial schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study, further providing for pandemic of 2020; and establishing the COVID-19 School Reopening Task Force.

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

Section 1. Section 1501.8 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a subsection to read:

Section 1501.8. Pandemic of 2020.--* * *

(m.1) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the following shall apply:

(1) Each school entity shall update its continuity of education plan submitted to the Department of Education before the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. The updated plan shall specify a comprehensive framework for school operations in anticipation of reopening school buildings and conducting in-
person instruction. The updated plan shall take into 
consideration any guideline issued by the Governor and the 
Secretary of Health to ensure the health and safety of students, 
parents, school employes and the community. The updated plan 
must include the following:

(i) Procedures to provide the continuation of education plan 
to students using alternative means during any period of closure 
in the future and specific information regarding technology 
resources that will be used to deliver education.

(ii) Procedures for a student who receives services under an 
individualized education plan to ensure the student receives a 
free and appropriate public education as required by law.

(iii) An assessment of each student's academic needs due to 
the pandemic and any compensatory instruction and services 
provided.

(iv) Classroom and building operation logistics to ensure 
the health and safety of students and school employes.

(v) Procedures for food distribution both in-person and 
during periods of closure.

(vi) Procedures for bus transportation of students.

(vii) Procedures for training school employes on proper 
cleaning and sanitation of school facilities, and the school's 
protocols on providing personal protective equipment, 
appropriate cleaning materials and supplies for school employes 
assigned to clean the facilities.

(viii) Measures to increase counseling and mental health 
services for students.

(2) The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the 
Secretary of Health, shall develop reopening guidelines 
consistent with the Governor's phases of red, yellow and green
for reopening regions in this Commonwealth. The Department of Education shall provide guidance to school entities and intermediate units on provisions listed in paragraph (1). The guidelines shall provide requirements each school entity must meet prior to reopening and shall be updated with the most current procedures.

(3) The Department of Education may provide technical assistance needed by school entities and intermediate units.

(4) A school entity shall post the plan on the school entity's publicly accessible Internet website.

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Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:


(b) The purpose of the task force shall be to examine all health and safety concerns regarding the successful reopening and operation of school entities during the pandemic of 2020 and into the future, and to put Pennsylvania's students into in-person classrooms as safely as possible.

(c) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

(2) One member appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate.

(3) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(4) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

(5) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(6) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
the Appropriations Committee of the Senate.

(7) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

(8) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
the Education Committee of the Senate.

(9) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
the Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

(d) All members shall be appointed within ten (10) days of
the effective date of this section.

(e) The task force shall hold an organizational meeting not
later than fifteen (15) days following the effective date of
this section.

(f) Vacancies on the task force shall be filled by the
original appointing authority.

(g) The task force shall elect two (2) task force
chairpersons, one from the Senate and one from the House of
Representatives.

(h) The task force shall hold meetings at the joint call of
the chairpersons.

(i) The task force shall hold six (6) or more public
hearings on the matters to be considered by the task force. All
meetings and public hearings of the task force shall be held in
conformity with 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

(j) Seven (7) members of the task force shall constitute a
quorum at a meeting.

(k) The task force members shall receive no compensation for
their services but shall be reimbursed for all necessary travel
and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the
performance of their duties as members.

(l) The task force shall have the following powers and

duties:

(1) Review all issues related to the safe return of students and draft plans for school districts' use.

(2) Evaluate and make recommendations on the following:

   (i) The potential staggering of school schedules to reduce the size of classrooms and open space gatherings.

   (ii) Enhanced cleaning procedures of buildings and buses.

   (iii) Implementation of additional policies related to personal protective equipment, air quality measurements and enhanced filtration.

   (iv) Meal preparation and serving procedures.

   (v) After-school activity precautions to mitigate the potential spread of germs.

   (vi) Redesigning of facilities to enhance social distancing.

   (vii) Procedures for student assemblies to enhance social distancing.

(3) Assess the additional costs to implement the necessary procedures to open schools safely.

(m) The task force shall consult with education stakeholders, health experts, parents and other groups to create a comprehensive report and recommendations for school entities. The report and recommendations shall be issued not later than July 31, 2020.

(n) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area career and technical school, charter school, cyber charter school or regional charter school a student attends in order to fulfill the compulsory attendance requirements of this act.
Section 3. All regulations are abrogated to the extent of any inconsistency with this act.

Section 4. This act shall take effect immediately.