
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 447 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY WAUGH, CORMAN, CONTI, COSTA, GERLACH, M. WHITE,
BOSCOLA, BODACK, BELL, O'PAKE, JUBELIRER, THOMPSON AND
LEMMOND, FEBRUARY 15, 2001

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 15, 2001

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Preapproved School Design Program; providing
2 for the powers and duties of the Department of Education; and
3 making an appropriation.

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

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Preapproved
8 School Design Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

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

13 "Department." The Department of Education of the
14 Commonwealth.

15 "Program." The Preapproved School Design Program established
16 in section 3.

17 "School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area
18 vocational-technical school or charter school operating within

1 this Commonwealth under provisions of the act of March 10, 1949
2 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.

3 Section 3. Preapproved School Design Program.

4 (a) Program established.--The Preapproved School Design
5 Program is established to provide school entities with
6 preapproved design plans, documents and estimates for the
7 construction of new school buildings. The plans shall meet with
8 the approval of the department based upon various factors
9 provided by the school entity. Those factors shall include:

10 (1) The expected range of grade level or ages of pupils
11 enrolled at the school.

12 (2) The anticipated rated pupil capacity.

13 (3) The exterior dimensions of the facility.

14 (4) The proposed appearance of the facility, including
15 interior and exterior finishes.

16 (5) Physical site characteristics and limitations.

17 (6) Local zoning ordinances affecting school building
18 construction and use.

19 (7) The projected potential for future expansion or
20 additions in use.

21 (8) Any other information deemed necessary by the
22 department.

23 (b) Implementation.--Within five years of the effective date
24 of this act, the department shall make available to school
25 entities a portfolio of preapproved design plans. The department
26 may charge a service fee to cover administrative and clerical
27 fees associated with the production of the plans.

28 Section 4. Duties of department.

29 The department shall acquire a portfolio of building plans
30 and may contract with any school entity to purchase or otherwise

1 acquire a set of plans for a project which is partially or fully
2 completed or plans for a proposed project. The department shall
3 evaluate and acquire plans which meet the following criteria:

4 (1) Each plan must base the construction on standard-
5 grade quality materials which meet or exceed State and local
6 building codes.

7 (2) Each plan must meet the highest level for current
8 standards of health, safety, accessibility, environmental
9 protection and energy efficiency.

10 (3) Each plan must demonstrate the latest technology and
11 techniques of construction and be free of costly aesthetic
12 embellishments.

13 (4) Each plan must use traditional straight-line, right-
14 angle design principle and be free of costly curved and
15 nonsymmetrical design.

16 (5) To the greatest extent possible, a multiple story-
17 design must be used in order to preserve open space and
18 promote energy efficiency.

19 (6) Each plan must be designed with at least one side
20 available for easy additions in the event expansion is needed
21 in the future.

22 (7) Each plan must include the most current needs in
23 terms of technology and associated equipment being used in
24 the education of students.

25 (8) Each plan must be designed primarily with academic
26 and technological needs of students in mind.

27 Section 5. Cooperative arrangements.

28 Any two or more school entities that plan, build or purchase
29 cooperatively shall be eligible to split the calculated savings
30 evenly and receive reimbursement for any cost savings to the

1 department under this act.

2 Section 6. Financial incentives.

3 A school entity that utilizes, as its final plan, a
4 standardized plan provided by the department under the program
5 shall receive an additional State reimbursement equal to 10% of
6 the State reimbursement factor provided for in section 2574 of
7 the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public
8 School Code of 1949.

9 Section 7. Appropriation.

10 The sum of \$500,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary,
11 is hereby appropriated to the Department of Education for the
12 purpose of departmental evaluations and plan acquisition under
13 this act for the fiscal year July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2002.

14 Section 8. Effective date.

15 This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.