

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1021 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY LONGIETTI, ROEBUCK, BIANCUCCI, CALTAGIRONE, COHEN,
CURRY, DePASQUALE, EACHUS, FABRIZIO, FRANKEL, GEORGE,
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MYERS, PETRARCA, McILVAINE SMITH, STURLA, SURRA, THOMAS,
WANSACZ, YOUNGBLOOD, JAMES, McGEEHAN AND HARKINS,
APRIL 5, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 5, 2007

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," establishing the Common Cents
6 Program.

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

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding an
11 article to read:

12 ARTICLE VIII-A

13 COMMON CENTS PROGRAM

14 Section 801-A. Definitions.

15 The following words and phrases when used in this article
16 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
17 context clearly indicates otherwise:

18 "Department." The Department of Education of the

1 Commonwealth.

2 "Participating intermediate unit." An intermediate unit that
3 has been selected to participate in the program.

4 "Participating school district." A school district that has
5 agreed to participate in the program.

6 "Program." The Common Cents Program established under this
7 article.

8 Section 802-A. Establishment.

9 There is established in the department the Common Cents
10 Program. The purpose of the program shall be to encourage school
11 districts to share services with one another in order to
12 increase the efficient use of taxpayer resources and improve
13 service delivery for students.

14 Section 803-A. Application.

15 (a) Decision.--At a meeting of each intermediate unit
16 council held before September 1 of each year, the school
17 districts within each intermediate unit shall decide by majority
18 vote whether the intermediate unit shall apply to participate in
19 this program on their behalf. Two intermediate units may apply
20 jointly if the school districts contained within the
21 intermediate units agree, but an intermediate unit may not apply
22 to participate in the program more than once in each fiscal
23 year.

24 (b) Submittal.--Applications shall be submitted to the
25 department by October 1 of each year. Applications shall be
26 submitted on a form and in a manner as is required by the
27 department. Each application shall include a resolution by the
28 board of school directors of each school district setting forth
29 its agreement to participate in the study and certifying that it
30 will comply with the requirements of section 807-A.

1 Section 804-A. Selection.

2 (a) Competitive basis.--Participating intermediate units
3 will be selected on a competitive basis at the discretion of the
4 department.

5 (b) Preference.--Preference for participation shall be given
6 to applications that include all of the school districts in an
7 intermediate unit and to joint intermediate unit applications.

8 (c) Regional diversity.--Participating intermediate units
9 will be selected so as to ensure regional diversity throughout
10 this Commonwealth.

11 Section 805-A. Contract with consultant.

12 (a) Consultation services.--The department shall enter into
13 a contract to obtain consultant services to conduct a study of
14 specific services or activities across school districts
15 participating in the program and to make recommendations about
16 combining services and activities across school districts within
17 each participating intermediate unit in order to promote
18 improved service delivery, efficiency and economy of operation.
19 The scope of consultant services shall include the creation of
20 the implementation plan referenced under section 807-A(d). The
21 study recommendations shall include all of the following:

22 (1) Transportation.

23 (2) Food services and nutrition.

24 (3) Instructional services.

25 (4) Safety and security.

26 (5) Health services.

27 (6) Purchasing.

28 (7) Finance and payroll.

29 (8) Facilities and real estate.

30 (9) Human resources.

1 (10) Technology services.

2 (11) Administration.

3 (b) Nature of recommendations.--Recommendations of the study
4 shall not be binding upon any participating school district.

5 (c) Scope of recommendations.--Recommendations of the study
6 may include sharing of services or activities with a
7 municipality.

8 Section 806-A. Advisory panel.

9 (a) Appointment.--The department shall appoint an advisory
10 panel to review this act to determine whether any provisions of
11 this act would be barriers to consolidating the services listed
12 under section 805-A(a). The advisory panel shall report the
13 results of its review to the Governor, the chairmen and minority
14 chairmen of the Appropriations Committee and the Education
15 Committee of the Senate and the chairmen and minority chairmen
16 of the Appropriations Committee and the Education Committee of
17 the House of Representatives no later than six months after the
18 effective date of this section.

19 (b) Composition.--The advisory panel shall consist of at
20 least two of each of the following:

21 (1) A school district superintendent.

22 (2) A school district business manager.

23 (3) A school board member.

24 (4) An intermediate unit administrator.

25 (5) A teacher.

26 (6) A consultant with experience in organizational
27 management and gaining efficiencies within and across
28 organizations.

29 Section 807-A. Duties of intermediate units and school
30 districts.

1 (a) Participation in study.--Participating school districts
2 and intermediate units shall do all of the following:

3 (1) Cooperate with the consultant during the conduct of
4 the study.

5 (2) Provide data and information requested by the
6 consultant if the disclosure is consistent with Federal or
7 State laws protecting the confidentiality of certain
8 information.

9 (3) Make staff available to be interviewed.

10 (b) Meetings.--Upon receipt of the consultant report, each
11 school district that participated in the study shall hold no
12 fewer than one public meeting to present the consultant's
13 recommendations and seek public input. Each school district
14 shall post the consultant report on its Internet website for at
15 least 30 days and shall announce the date of the public meeting
16 at the immediately prior public meeting of the board of school
17 directors.

18 (c) Pursuit of recommendations.--Within six months of the
19 receipt of the consultant report, the board of school directors
20 shall vote separately on whether to pursue each recommendation
21 contained in the consultant report. The board shall forward the
22 results of each resolution to the intermediate unit and the
23 department.

24 (d) Review.--At the intermediate unit council meeting that
25 immediately follows the voting of each board of school directors
26 of the school district, the intermediate unit council shall
27 review the resolutions of each board of school directors and
28 shall request in writing that the consultant create a plan for
29 the implementation of any recommendations approved by the school
30 districts, regardless of whether the recommendation was approved

1 by all of the school districts in the intermediate unit. The
2 implementation plan may include a list of potential vendors for
3 each of the services to be provided but the consultant may not
4 recommend a single vendor. Only those school districts approving
5 the recommendation shall be part of the implementation plan. The
6 intermediate unit council shall forward the implementation plan
7 to the school districts.

8 (e) Cost savings.--Cost savings resulting from
9 implementation of the consultant recommendations shall be spent
10 for academic purposes in the schools of the school district,
11 after deducting any one-time expenditures required for the
12 implementation of the recommendations. Academic purposes include
13 professional development, student supplies, textbooks, classroom
14 technology, school safety, improvement of classroom facilities
15 or any other instructional activity directly affecting student
16 performance or the learning environment.

17 (f) Report.--Participating intermediate units and school
18 districts shall report to the department in the form and at the
19 times as determined by the department.

20 Section 808-A. Duties of department.

21 (a) Contract.--The department shall enter into a contract
22 for consulting services as provided in section 805-A.

23 (b) Guidelines and forms.--The department shall establish
24 guidelines and develop forms as are necessary for the proper
25 implementation of the grant program.

26 (c) Results.--The department shall publish on its Internet
27 website the results of each study conducted through the program
28 and any implementation plans.

29 (d) Report.--The department shall submit an annual report on
30 the program to the chairman and minority chairman of the

1 Appropriations Committee and the chairman and minority chairman
2 of the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairman and
3 minority chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the
4 chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the
5 House of Representatives.

6 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007, or
7 immediately, whichever is later.