

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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WANSACZ, YOUNGBLOOD, JAMES, McGEEHAN, HARKINS, GIBBONS AND
SIPTROTH, APRIL 5, 2007

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 20, 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:

ARTICLE VIII-ACOMMON 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:

1 "Department." The Department of Education of the
2 Commonwealth.

3 "INTERMEDIATE UNIT COUNCIL." A COUNCIL AS ESTABLISHED UNDER <—
4 SECTION 916-A.

5 "Participating intermediate unit." An intermediate unit that
6 has been selected to participate in the program.

7 "Participating school district." A school district that has
8 agreed to participate in the program.

9 "Program." The Common Cents Program established under this
10 article.

11 Section 802-A. Establishment.

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

17 Section 803-A. Application.

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

27 (b) Submittal.--Applications shall be submitted to the
28 department by ~~October~~ NOVEMBER 1 of each year. Applications <—
29 shall be submitted on a form and in a manner as is required by
30 the department. Each application shall include a resolution by

1 the board of school directors of each school district setting
2 forth its agreement to participate in the study and certifying
3 that it will comply with the requirements of section 807-A.
4 Section 804-A. Selection.

5 (a) Competitive basis.--Participating intermediate units
6 will be selected on a competitive basis at the discretion of the
7 department.

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

11 (c) Regional diversity.--Participating intermediate units
12 will be selected so as to ensure regional diversity throughout
13 this Commonwealth.

14 Section 805-A. Contract with consultant.

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

25 (1) Transportation.

26 (2) Food services and nutrition.

27 (3) Instructional services.

28 (4) Safety and security.

29 (5) Health services.

30 (6) Purchasing.

1 (7) Finance and payroll.

2 (8) Facilities and real estate.

3 (9) Human resources.

4 (10) Technology services.

5 (11) Administration.

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

8 (c) Scope of recommendations.--Recommendations of the study
9 may include sharing of services or activities with a
10 municipality.

11 Section 806-A. Advisory panel.

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

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

24 (1) A school district superintendent.

25 (2) A school district business manager.

26 (3) A school board member.

27 (4) An intermediate unit administrator.

28 (5) A teacher.

29 (6) A consultant with experience in organizational
30 management and gaining efficiencies within and across

1 organizations.

2 Section 807-A. Duties of intermediate units and school
3 districts.

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

6 (1) Cooperate with the consultant during the conduct of
7 the study.

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

12 (3) Make staff available to be interviewed.

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

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

27 (d) Review.--At the intermediate unit council meeting that
28 immediately follows the voting of each board of school directors
29 of the school district, the intermediate unit council shall
30 review the resolutions of each board of school directors and

1 shall request in writing that the consultant create a plan for
2 the implementation of any recommendations approved by the school
3 districts, regardless of whether the recommendation was approved
4 by all of the school districts in the intermediate unit. The
5 implementation plan may include a list of potential vendors for
6 each of the services to be provided, INCLUDING THE INTERMEDIATE ←
7 UNIT, but the consultant may not recommend a single vendor. Only
8 those school districts approving the recommendation shall be
9 part of the implementation plan. The intermediate unit council
10 shall forward the implementation plan to the school districts.

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

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

23 Section 808-A. Duties of department.

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

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

29 (c) Results.--The department shall publish on its Internet
30 website the results of each study conducted through the program

1 and any implementation plans.

2 (d) Report.--The department shall submit an annual report on
3 the program to the chairman and minority chairman of the
4 Appropriations Committee and the chairman and minority chairman
5 of the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairman and
6 minority chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the
7 chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the
8 House of Representatives.

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