
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1708 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY ROEBUCK, C. PARKER, ROZZI, SCHREIBER, THOMAS,
SCHLOSSBERG, LONGIETTI, V. BROWN, KINSEY, COHEN, TRUITT,
READSHAW, O'BRIEN, CARROLL AND SANTARSIERO, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

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," in certification of teachers, further
6 providing for continuing professional development and for
7 continuing professional education for school or system
8 leaders and providing for the Beginning Teacher Mentor
9 Program.

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

12 Section 1. Section 1205.1(c.1)(3) of the act of March 10,
13 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949,
14 amended October 22, 2014 (P.L.2624, No.168), is amended and the
15 section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

16 Section 1205.1. Continuing Professional Development.--* * *

17 (c.1) The continuing professional education plan shall
18 specify the professional education needs that will be met by
19 completion of each continuing professional education option and
20 how it relates to areas of assignment and certification or
21 potential administrative certification. The options may include,

1 but shall not be limited to:

2 * * *

3 (3) Other programs, activities or learning experiences taken
4 for credit or hourly, to include:

5 (i) curriculum development and other program design and
6 delivery activities at the school entity or grade level as
7 determined by the school entity and approved by the board of
8 directors;

9 (ii) participation in professional conferences and
10 workshops;

11 (iii) education in the workplace, where the work relates to
12 the professional educator's area of assignment and is approved
13 by the board of directors;

14 (iv) review, redesign and restructuring of school programs,
15 organizations and functions as determined by the school entity
16 and approved by the board of directors;

17 (v) in-service programs that comply with guidelines
18 established by the department;

19 (vi) early childhood and child development activities for
20 professional educators whose area of assignment includes
21 kindergarten through third grade;

22 (vii) special education activities for professional
23 educators whose area of assignment includes students with
24 special needs;

25 (viii) successful completion of department training for
26 service as a Distinguished Educator if the professional educator
27 participates in and completes at least one assignment in the
28 Distinguished Educators Program;

29 (ix) other continuing professional education courses,
30 programs, activities or learning experiences sponsored by the

1 department; [or]

2 (x) visits by educators to a manufacturing workplace for
3 orientation and demonstrations to give the professional educator
4 a greater understanding of job opportunities in manufacturing
5 for students[.]; or

6 (xi) inclusion of a Beginning Teacher Mentor Program
7 established under section 1218 or similar program approved by
8 the department.

9 * * *

10 (c.5) A professional education plan shall include trained
11 mentors providing support of beginning teachers during a two-
12 year induction period.

13 * * *

14 Section 2. Section 1205.5 of the act is amended by adding a
15 subsection to read:

16 Section 1205.5. Continuing Professional Education for School
17 or System Leaders.--* * *

18 (i) All programs offered or approved by the Department of
19 Education under this section shall address the Beginning Teacher
20 Mentor Program for purposes of beginning teacher evaluations
21 pursuant to section 1218.

22 Section 3. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

23 Section 1218. Beginning Teacher Mentor Program.--(a) The
24 Department of Education, by July 1, 2016, shall establish a
25 Statewide comprehensive Beginning Teacher Mentor Program that
26 consists of multiple forms of support for beginning teachers to
27 assist in their effective transition into the classroom
28 environment during a two-year induction period. The following
29 apply:

30 (1) Under the provisions of 22 Pa. Code § 49.16 (relating to

1 approval of induction plans), the approval of induction plans
2 shall include mentor training as provided for under this
3 section. The Department of Education shall extend the induction
4 period for beginning teachers to at least two years.

5 (2) The structure of the program shall be similar to the
6 Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership Program standards developed
7 under section 1217 for school leaders. Mentors shall be trained
8 to provide supports to beginning teachers in the program, which
9 shall include, but not be limited to:

10 (i) Enhancing competencies and qualifications for specific
11 grade levels.

12 (ii) Strengthening knowledge on subject matter.

13 (iii) Enhancing instructional strategies.

14 (iv) Coaching and training in classroom management
15 instruction skills.

16 (v) Coteaching models and peer classroom observations.

17 (vi) Providing tools to meet the needs of diverse learners,
18 which include:

19 (A) Special education students.

20 (B) English language learners.

21 (C) Students in high poverty, rural and urban areas.

22 (b) To serve as a mentor to a beginning teacher in the
23 program, a professional educator must be one of the following:

24 (1) A highly qualified and experienced certified Level II
25 teacher with a rating of distinguished under section 1123.

26 (2) A highly qualified and experienced certified Level II
27 teacher recommended by a principal or superintendent or other
28 peer teacher with a rating of proficient under section 1123.

29 (3) A certified teacher eligible under clause (1) or (2)
30 contracted in a charter school entity or area vocational-

1 technical school.

2 (4) A retired teacher approved by a school district on
3 active status under the requirements of section 1205.2.

4 (c) There shall be no cost to a professional educator or a
5 school entity for the training of mentors required under this
6 program.

7 (d) Mentors may be part-time or full-time mentors based on
8 school districts' needs to aid beginning teachers.

9 (e) A school district that has a comprehensive mentoring
10 program, similar to the Beginning Teacher Mentor Program, must
11 have the comprehensive mentoring program approved by the
12 Department of Education to satisfy the requirements under this
13 section.

14 (f) In the development of the program, the Department of
15 Education shall consult and collaborate with school leaders,
16 administrators of teacher preparation programs, career educators
17 from educational organizations within the State and the school
18 community.

19 (g) The program shall be included in professional
20 development requirements as follows:

21 (1) The program shall be incorporated in each school
22 entity's three-year professional education plan under section
23 1205.1 to allow mentors to receive continuing education credit
24 or hours during the two-year teacher mentor period.

25 (2) Each mentor trained under the requirements of this
26 section shall be eligible for continuing education credits or
27 hours required under section 1205.2 to satisfy one five-year
28 continuing professional education requirement.

29 (3) Each principal shall receive hours toward continuing
30 professional education for school or system leaders required

1 under section 1205.5 for any participation in training mentors
2 or evaluating beginning teachers under this section.

3 (4) A program component shall be incorporated into each
4 school district's three-year professional education plan
5 required under section 1205.1.

6 (h) A beginning teacher, during the induction period, may be
7 evaluated based on classroom observation and practice models
8 related to student achievement which include planning and
9 preparation, classroom environment, instruction and professional
10 responsibilities. This criteria shall be used by mentors or a
11 designated school administrator to evaluate a beginning teacher
12 during the first two years of induction.

13 (i) A school entity may make recommendations for any teacher
14 to participate in the program at no cost to a teacher to enhance
15 skills needed if the teacher's overall performance is less than
16 proficient as defined under section 1123. In addition, at the
17 discretion of a school entity, newly employed personnel may be
18 required to participate in this induction period.

19 (j) The program shall be evaluated every three years by the
20 professionals listed under subsection (f), local school district
21 administrators, mentors and local school boards.

22 (k) The Department of Education shall annually report the
23 following to the Education Committee of the Senate and the
24 Education Committee of the House of Representatives:

25 (1) The progress of the program established under this
26 section.

27 (2) District retention rates of beginning teachers,
28 specifically in rural and urban districts.

29 (3) Ongoing retention rates for teachers attending the
30 program.

1 (4) Any other necessary information needed to retain the
2 program.

3 (l) The General Assembly shall, through the annual
4 appropriations process, determine the level of State funding
5 necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

6 (m) As used in this section, the term "program" means the
7 Beginning Teacher Mentor Program established under subsection
8 (a).

9 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.