

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," providing for hybrid learning
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 XV-H

13 HYBRID LEARNING PROGRAM

14 Section 1501-H. Definitions.

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

18 "Department." The Department of Education of the
19 Commonwealth.

1 "Hybrid learning." An educational model under which a blend
2 of digital resources, classroom teaching and peer collaboration
3 are used to create a personalized learning environment for each
4 student, the goal of which is to deliver cost-effective,
5 individualized instruction to increase student engagement and
6 improve academic performance.

7 "Hybrid learning program" or "program." The program
8 established under section 1502-H.

9 "School entity." A school district, charter school, cyber
10 charter school or regional charter school.

11 Section 1502-H. Establishment.

12 A hybrid learning program is established, under which the
13 department shall award grants to school entities that are
14 selected through an application process to be established and
15 administered by the department.

16 Section 1503-H. Grant award and application process.

17 The following shall apply:

18 (1) The hybrid learning program established under
19 section 1502-H shall be funded by \$10,000,000 appropriated by
20 the General Assembly and from any Federal, State or private
21 funds otherwise available for this purpose.

22 (2) From funds available for the hybrid learning program
23 under paragraph (1), the department shall award grants to
24 school entities that are selected through an application
25 process that shall be established and administered by the
26 department. The application process established by the
27 department shall require each school entity seeking grant
28 funds under the program to do the following:

29 (i) Describe the hybrid learning opportunities the
30 school entity will make available to students.

1 (ii) Identify the school entity's goals for
2 participation in the program, including the school
3 entity's goals for student academic achievement.

4 (iii) Deliver to its professional educator staff a
5 professional development program that provides training
6 in hybrid learning pedagogy.

7 (iv) Monitor the school entity's progress toward its
8 stated goals, including student academic achievement,
9 throughout the academic year.

10 (v) Report the school entity's progress under the
11 program, including student academic achievement results,
12 to the department beginning on July 30, 2015, and by July
13 30 of each year thereafter.

14 (3) The department shall determine the amount of all
15 grants awarded under the program.

16 (4) School entities receiving grants under the program
17 shall apply all grant funds to implement the hybrid learning
18 opportunities described in the grant application.

19 Section 1504-H. Requirements for hybrid learning opportunities.

20 The following shall apply:

21 (1) Hybrid learning opportunities may be delivered
22 outside of a school building in whole or in part using
23 technology that may include the Internet, video conferencing
24 or other electronic means.

25 (2) The time during which a student participates in
26 hybrid learning opportunities shall be considered to be
27 compliant with the compulsory attendance requirements of
28 section 1327.

29 (3) School entities offering hybrid learning
30 opportunities shall develop policies related to the following

1 and post such policies on the school entity's publicly
2 accessible Internet website:

3 (i) Course grades.

4 (ii) Course credit.

5 (iii) Student promotion and graduation.

6 (iv) Eligibility requirements for student
7 participation in hybrid learning opportunities.

8 (4) A school entity offering hybrid learning
9 opportunities shall ensure that each student enrolled in the
10 school entity and participating in hybrid learning
11 opportunities is offered at least 990 hours of instruction at
12 the secondary level and 900 hours of instruction at the
13 elementary level.

14 Section 1505-H. Powers and duties of department.

15 The department shall:

16 (1) Establish and administer an application process for
17 school entities seeking grant funds under the program and
18 promulgate guidelines regarding the application process and
19 the criteria the department will use in reviewing
20 applications.

21 (2) Review all applications pursuant to criteria
22 established under paragraph (1).

23 (3) From funds available for the hybrid learning program
24 under section 1503-H(1), award grants to school entities
25 satisfying the criteria established under paragraph (1) in
26 amounts determined by the department.

27 (4) Provide technical assistance as needed to school
28 entities receiving grant funding under the program.

29 (5) Prepare and submit the annual report required under
30 section 1506-H.

1 Section 1506-H. Annual report.

2 By November 30, 2015, and by November 30 of each year
3 thereafter, the department shall prepare and submit a report to
4 the Governor, the Appropriations Committee of the Senate, the
5 Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives, the
6 Education Committee of the Senate and the Education Committee of
7 the House of Representatives regarding the effectiveness and
8 administration of the hybrid learning program established under
9 this article. The report shall, at a minimum, discuss the
10 following:

11 (1) Whether the hybrid learning program is meeting the
12 goal of delivering cost-effective, individualized instruction
13 to increase student engagement and improve academic
14 performance.

15 (2) The measures the department used to measure outcomes
16 of the hybrid learning program, including student academic
17 performance.

18 (3) Individual school entity results from participation
19 in the program, as reported to the department pursuant to
20 section 1503-H(2)(v).

21 (4) The overall success of the hybrid learning program.

22 (5) Recommendations for modifications to the hybrid
23 learning program.

24 Section 1507-H. Collective bargaining.

25 Nothing contained in this article shall be construed to
26 supersede or preempt the rights, remedies and procedures
27 afforded to school employees or labor organizations under
28 Federal or State law, including the act of July 23, 1970
29 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the Public Employe Relations Act, or
30 any provision of a collective bargaining agreement negotiated

1 between a school entity and an exclusive representative of the
2 employees in accordance with that act.

3 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.