

**TASK FORCE ON HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION - ESTABLISHMENT,
POWERS AND DUTIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

Act of Jul. 5, 2012, P.L. 1078, No. 123

Cl. 24

An Act

Establishing a task force within the Department of Education, providing for its powers and duties and providing for administrative support.

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

Section 1. Task force on homeless children's education.

(a) Establishment.--There is established within the Department of Education a task force on homeless children's education.

(b) Composition.--The task force shall be composed of the following members:

(1) The Secretary of Education, who shall act as chairperson of the task force.

(2) The Secretary of Public Welfare or a designee from the Office of Children, Youth and Families.

(3) Twelve members to be appointed by the Secretary of Education, within 30 days of the effective date of this act, to include:

(i) Five representatives of local agencies assisting homeless children and families, one each from southwestern, northwestern, central, southeastern and northeastern Pennsylvania.

(ii) Three representatives from the Commonwealth's public schools, one of which shall be from a charter school, representing urban, suburban and rural areas of Pennsylvania.

(iii) Two representatives from Pennsylvania intermediate units.

(iv) Two representatives from Pennsylvania social services organizations or advocacy organizations with experience working with homeless children and education issues.

(c) Study.--The task force shall conduct a study of the demographics and education of Pennsylvania's homeless child population and their educational needs. The Department of Education shall develop uniform forms and surveys necessary for obtaining the information required for the study. If the department has already collected the data or information required, the task force shall incorporate the data or information into the report required under subsection (d). The study shall include:

(1) A demographic survey of homeless parents and homeless youth.

(2) An assessment of the difficulties in providing educational services to homeless students.

(3) An assessment of barriers to serving the needs of preschool children experiencing homelessness, including access to early intervention services.

(4) An assessment of successful strategies for serving homeless students, including strategies for informing parents, homeless shelters, students and school districts of the educational services available to homeless students.

(5) An assessment of best practices used in other states to educate homeless students.

(6) Recommendations regarding the collection and use of data currently collected by the department.

(d) Report to the General Assembly.--The task force shall issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President pro tempore of the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the Senate and the chairman and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives. The initial report shall be submitted within 18 months of the effective date of this section. The report shall be distributed to State and local agencies that work with homeless children, as well as to all Pennsylvania school districts.

(e) Meetings.--The task force shall meet at least once each quarter and shall hold its first meeting within 60 days of the effective date of this section.

(f) Compensation.--Task force members shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for all necessary travel and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the performance of their duties as members.

(g) Duties of department.--The Department of Education shall provide administrative support, office space and any other technical assistance required by the task force to carry out its duties under this section, including access to all reports and data required by the Federal Government to comply with Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-10, 20 U.S.C. Ch. 63, et seq.) and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77, 42 U.S.C. § 11301, et seq.).

Compiler's Note: The Secretary of Public Welfare, referred to in this section, was redesignated as the Secretary of Human Services by Act 132 of 2014.

Section 2. Expiration.

This act shall expire two years following the effective date of this section.

Section 3. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.