AN ACT

Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An act relating to the public school system, including certain provisions applicable as well to private and parochial schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws relating thereto," in transfers of credits between institutions of higher education, further providing for definitions, for duties of public institutions of higher education and State-related institutions, for Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee and for duties of department.

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

Section 1. Section 2001-C of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, amended November 6, 2017 (P.L.1142, No.55), is amended to read:

Section 2001-C. Definitions.

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

"Advanced Placement Program." A program authorized by the college board that allows a student to study college-level
subjects while enrolled in high school and to receive advanced placement and college credit for earning a qualified score on the course-related Advanced Placement Program exam.

"Career, technical or applied courses." Courses usually offered as part of an associate degree curriculum designed to prepare students for entry-level professions, not for transfer to baccalaureate programs for advanced studies.

"College-Level Examination Program." A set of standardized tests developed by the college board for various subjects, and on which a qualifying score can be used to earn college credit.

"Community college." An institution created pursuant to Article XIX-A or the act of August 24, 1963 (P.L.1132, No.484), known as the Community College Act of 1963.

"Credit for prior learning." College-level credit granted toward the award of a postsecondary degree or certificate for experiential learning that can be demonstrated through various means of assessment to be the equivalent of learning gained through formal collegiate instruction, including an Advanced Placement Program exam, International Baccalaureate Diploma Program exam, a College-Level Examination Program exam and Dantes Subject Standardized Tests.

"Dantes Subject Standardized Tests." A set of subject exams approved by the American Council on Education that tests knowledge of both lower-level and upper-level college material.

["Degree objective courses." Courses required for completion of a major in a subject area.]

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

"Developmental or remedial courses." Courses typically consisting of reading, writing and math designed to prepare
students for college-level courses and that are not
transferable.

"Equivalent courses." Courses determined to have generally
equivalent content and level as determined by the faculty of an
institution of higher education consistent with the policy at
each institution of higher education.

"Foundation courses." Courses required to be completed by
students that provide an academic foundation for the degree,
general education or advanced study in a major.

"Independent institution of higher education." An
institution of higher education which is operated not for
profit, located in and incorporated or chartered by the
Commonwealth and entitled to confer degrees as set forth in 24
Pa.C.S. § 6505 (relating to power to confer degrees) and to
apply to itself the designation "college" or "university" as
provided for by the standards and qualifications prescribed by
the State Board of Education pursuant to 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 65
(relating to private colleges, universities and seminaries).

"Industry-recognized credential." A credential that:

(1) is sought or accepted by employers within the
industry or sector involved as a recognized, preferred or
required credential for recruitment, screening, hiring,
retention or advancement purposes;

(2) where appropriate, is endorsed by a nationally
recognized trade association or organization representing a
significant part of the industry or sector; and

(3) is approved by the department.

"Institution of higher education." Any of the accredited
following:

(1) A public institution of higher education.
(2) A rural regional college.

(3) A State-related institution.

(4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

"International Baccalaureate Diploma Program." An academically challenging two-year precollege diploma program comprised of three core requirements and six academic subject areas with final examinations that prepare students, 16 to 19 years of age, for higher education and life in a global society.

"Public institution of higher education." A community college or an institution which is part of the State System of Higher Education pursuant to Article XX-A.

"Public school." Any of the following:

(1) A school district.

(2) An intermediate unit.

(3) An area vocational-technical school.

(4) A charter school, as defined in section 1703-A.

(5) A regional charter school, as defined in section 1703-A.

(6) A cyber charter school, as defined in section 1703-A.

"Rural regional college." A rural regional college operating under Article XIX-G.

"State-related institution." The Pennsylvania State University, the University of Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University and their branch campuses.

"Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee." The committee established under section 2004-C.

Section 2. Section 2003-C of the act is amended to read:

Section 2003-C. Duties of [public] institutions of higher education and [State-related institutions] public
schools.

(a) Agreements.--Each [public] institution of higher education and [State-related institution] public school shall provide the Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee and the department with copies of all articulation agreements for inclusion in the electronic database or software program and portal provided for under section 2005-C(4) within 180 days of the effective date of this section and within 30 days of entering into any subsequent articulation agreement.

(b) Reporting requirements.--The following shall apply to reporting requirements:

(1) Each [public] institution of higher education [and State-related institution] shall submit to the department a series of interim reports that describe the status of the institution's articulation agreements, which shall include all of the following:

   (i) The number of students who have transferred to the [public] institution of higher education [or State-related institution] by institution of origin within the last academic year or since submittal of the institution's last interim report required under this section.

   (ii) The total number of credits completed by transfer students at the institution of origin.

   (iii) The total number of credits from each institution of origin that transferred to the [public] institution of higher education [or State-related institution] for each academic year.

   (iv) An explanation of the credit transfer process at the institution.
(v) Any other information related to the credit transfer process as requested by the department, including the useability of transfer credits.

(2) Each [public] institution of higher education [and State-related institution] shall submit its first interim report required under this section 180 days after the effective date of this section and by September 30 of each year thereafter.

Section 3. Section 2004-C(a)(1) introductory paragraph is amended and subsection (c) is amended by adding a paragraph to read:

Section 2004-C. Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee.

(a) Establishment and membership.--

(1) In order to develop and implement equivalency standards as provided for in subsection (c)(1) and provide access to articulation agreements, there is hereby established within the department, the Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee. The committee shall be comprised of the following members:

* * *

(c) Duties of Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee.--The committee shall:

* * *

(7) Meet on a regular basis at least quarterly.

Section 4. Section 2005-C(4) of the act is amended to read:

Section 2005-C. Duties of department.

The department shall:

* * *

(4) Provide for an electronic database or software program and portal for the purpose of providing access to all
of the following information on an Internet website:

(i) Articulation agreements and agreements that award credit for an industry-recognized credential entered into by [public institutions of higher education and institutions that elect to participate under section 2006-C.] institutions of higher education, public schools and institutions described under clause (C). The following apply:

(A) The department shall extract transfer information from each articulation agreement and each agreement that awards credit for an industry-recognized credential and enter the information into the electronic database or software program and portal and provide a meaningful, user-friendly and interactive search engine for access to the information.

(B) The department shall, within 60 days of receiving an articulation agreement or agreement that awards credit for an industry-recognized credential, update the database and post each articulation agreement and each agreement that awards credit for an industry-recognized credential on its publicly accessible Internet website.

(C) An institution which is not subject to the duties under section 2003-C may submit to the department any articulation agreement or agreement that awards credit for an industry-recognized credential into which the institution enters. Each submitted articulation agreement and each agreement that awards credit for an industry-recognized credential.
credential shall be subject to this paragraph.

(ii) The annual report to the General Assembly as required by section 2004-C(c)(5).

[(iii) At the request of a public institution of higher education or an institution that elects to participate under section 2006-C, any articulation agreements.]

Section 5. This act shall take effect in 60 days.