

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1898 Session of 1984

INTRODUCED BY D. R. WRIGHT, GALLAGHER, MANDERINO, IRVIS, PIEVSKY, F. E. TAYLOR, BURNS, STEWART, STEIGHNER, STUBAN, WARGO, ITKIN, BELFANTI, COY, GEORGE, RICHARDSON, COWELL, TIGUE, WAMBACH, MURPHY, RUDY, DOMBROWSKI, KUKOVICH, HARPER, FISCHER, WASS, BATTISTO, FREIND, BURNS, LIVENGOOD AND STAIRS, FEBRUARY 6, 1984

AS RE-REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 13, 1984

AN ACT

1 Establishing an Information Technology Education Board within
2 the Department of Education; enlarging the responsibilities
3 of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency;
4 creating Regional Computer Resource Centers; AND establishing <—
5 Regional Computer Resource Center boards; ~~and making~~ <—
6 appropriations.

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

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Information
11 Technology Education Act.

12 Section 2. Legislative intent.

13 (a) Findings.--The General Assembly finds:

14 (1) The ability to use and process information is an
15 essential skill to a productive society.

16 (2) Computers have become universal devices in the
17 processing of information.

1 (3) Surveys have found that relatively few students are
2 obtaining access to computers and that these students have
3 access for relatively short periods of time.

4 (4) There is a potentially increasing gap between
5 economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged
6 students regarding computer availability.

7 (5) The department has found that an overwhelming
8 majority of teachers in the Commonwealth have no computer
9 proficiency.

10 (6) It is the best interest of the Commonwealth to
11 improve and strengthen computer education in its elementary
12 and secondary schools by:

13 (i) Encouraging orderly planning for the use of
14 microcomputers and for the application of microcomputers
15 to the instructional programs of elementary and secondary
16 schools.

17 (ii) Improving teacher training in computer
18 education.

19 (iii) Encouraging the acquisition of computer
20 hardware.

21 (iv) Assisting in the acquisition of appropriate
22 computer software.

23 (b) Intent.--The General Assembly intends that:

24 (1) All areas of the Commonwealth shall have available a
25 Regional Computer Resource Center to assist school districts
26 in developing the computer skills of their students and
27 teachers and to ensure availability of computer equipment,
28 training and programs.

29 (2) There shall be at least eight, but no more than ten,
30 centers throughout the Commonwealth, each of which shall be

1 established at sites reflecting considerations of demography,
2 availability of expertise, prior experience in providing
3 related educational services to basic education, and
4 application of workload.

5 (3) Funding shall be made available to the centers from
6 the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency for
7 operation and maintenance and for local grants for teacher
8 training and from the Department of Education for hardware
9 and software acquisition.

10 (4) The initial priority of this act shall be to
11 equalize the development of computer skills of students and
12 teachers among the school districts.

13 (5) This program is designed as a five-year program.

14 Section 3. Definitions.

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

18 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
19 Agency.

20 "Board." The Information Technology Education Board.

21 "Center." A Regional Computer Resource Center.

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

24 Section 4. Establishment of Information Technology Education
25 Board.

26 (a) Creation.--There is hereby created the Information
27 Technology Education Board within the Department of Education.

28 (b) Members.--The board shall consist of seven members. Four
29 members shall be legislators, one from each party represented in
30 each house. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall

1 designate the members from the House and the President pro
2 tempore shall designate the members from the Senate. One member
3 shall be the Secretary of Education or his designee. One member
4 shall be the Executive Director of Pennsylvania Higher Education
5 Assistance Agency or his designee. These six members shall serve
6 for the duration of their respective terms of office, and
7 members from the House and Senate may be reappointed to the
8 board if reelected to legislative office. The one remaining
9 member shall be appointed by the Governor.

10 (c) Powers and duties.--The board shall be responsible for
11 establishing uniform school district application and review
12 procedures for grant proposals submitted to Regional Computer
13 Resource Centers by local school districts. It shall allocate
14 the appropriation for hardware and software acquisition grants
15 among the centers. It shall review annual reports of program
16 content, effectiveness and costs which will be submitted by the
17 centers.

18 (D) NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ALLOCATION.--CONSISTENT WITH THE ←
19 PROVISIONS OF SECTION 923-A OF THE ACT OF MARCH 10, 1949
20 (P.L.30, NO.14), KNOWN AS THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE OF 1949, AND OF
21 CHAPTER 2 OF THE FEDERAL EDUCATION CONSOLIDATION AND IMPROVEMENT
22 ACT OF 1981 (P.L.97-35, 20 U.S.C. § 3801 ET SEQ.), THE
23 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION BOARD SHALL ALLOCATE \$1,000,000
24 ANNUALLY AMONG THE INTERMEDIATE UNITS OF THE DEPARTMENT, FOR THE
25 LIFE OF THIS ACT, FROM FEDERAL EDUCATION CONSOLIDATION AND
26 IMPROVEMENT ACT CHAPTER 2 FUNDS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF LOANING
27 COMPUTER HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE TO NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS.

28 Section 5. Responsibility of Pennsylvania Higher Education
29 Assistance Agency.

30 (a) Establish centers.--The Pennsylvania Higher Education

1 Assistance Agency shall establish not less than eight nor more
2 than ten Regional Computer Resource Centers throughout the
3 Commonwealth at sites based on demography, availability of
4 expertise, equalization of workload and prior experience in
5 providing related educational services to basic education.

6 (b) Teacher training grant supervision.--The agency shall be
7 responsible for reviewing teacher training grant proposals
8 submitted on behalf of teachers by Regional Computer Resource
9 Centers. It shall allocate the appropriation for teacher
10 training grants among the centers.

11 Section 6. Regional Computer Resource Centers.

12 (a) Purpose.--The purposes of each Regional Computer
13 Resource Center are to increase teacher expertise relating to
14 computer information technology and to assist local school
15 districts within the region to upgrade computer hardware and
16 software. To this end, it will:

- 17 (1) Provide teacher training.
- 18 (2) Help design computer oriented curricula.
- 19 (3) Assist with the evaluation of software.
- 20 (4) Review and evaluate proposals for upgrading computer
21 and computer oriented instruction.
- 22 (5) Provide funding for computer hardware and software.
- 23 (6) Coordinate purchase of computer hardware and
24 software.

25 (b) Regional Computer Resource Center Board.--

- 26 (1) The ~~Governor~~ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION BOARD ←
27 shall appoint five persons to be members of each Regional
28 Computer Resource Center Board of Directors. The appointments
29 shall be made based on recommendations of the agency. The
30 persons appointed shall represent five broad areas: computer

1 technology, teacher education, computer education, elementary
2 education and secondary education. NO LESS THAN TWO MEMBERS ←
3 OF THE REGIONAL COMPUTER RESOURCE CENTER BOARD SHALL BE
4 CLASSROOM TEACHERS OR BUILDING PRINCIPALS.

5 (2) It shall be the duty of the regional board to
6 receive grant applications from school districts. Such
7 applications shall include plans for upgrading computer
8 education through two related and coordinated actions:
9 teacher training and computer hardware and software
10 acquisition and utilization.

11 (i) Grant applications from school districts for
12 teacher training in computer education shall be received
13 by the regional board. After reviewing applications, the
14 regional board shall request an allocation from the
15 Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency.

16 (ii) Grant applications from school districts for
17 purchasing hardware and software necessary to supply
18 programs designed by the applicants shall be received by
19 the regional board. After reviewing applications, the
20 regional board shall request an aggregate allocation from
21 the Information Technology Education Board of the
22 Department of Education. The grants to school districts
23 made by the Regional Computer Resource Center shall
24 reflect the aid ratio defined in the act of March 10,
25 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of
26 1949, but shall not exceed \$50,000. Each school district
27 applying shall be required to supply the balance of the
28 funding necessary for its program; the balance may be
29 supplied in cash or in kind.

30 (c) Support staff and equipment.--The centers will be

1 staffed on a full-time basis and shall have sufficient
2 technological equipment to meet their purposes.

3 ~~Section 7. Appropriations.~~ <—

4 ~~(a) Education appropriation. The sum of \$3,250,000, or as~~
5 ~~much thereof as may be necessary, is specifically appropriated~~
6 ~~to the Department of Education for the fiscal year July 1, 1984~~
7 ~~to June 30, 1985, to provide up to \$3,200,000 for grants to~~
8 ~~school districts for developing and implementing hardware and~~
9 ~~software computer usage in accordance with this act and to~~
10 ~~provide up to \$50,000 for administrative expenses incurred by~~
11 ~~the department and by the Information Technology Education~~
12 ~~Board.~~

13 ~~(b) Distribution to school districts. The funds~~
14 ~~appropriated for the purposes of this act shall be distributed~~
15 ~~to school districts by a formula which is based upon factors of~~
16 ~~60% for relative enrollment, 35% for low income pupils and 5%~~
17 ~~for students in sparsely populated areas. For the purposes of~~
18 ~~this act, low income pupils are defined as children aged 5 to 17~~
19 ~~years, inclusive, in families receiving a grant in excess of~~
20 ~~\$2,000 from the Commonwealth on account of dependent children~~
21 ~~under Title IV of the Federal Social Security Act. Funds~~
22 ~~distributed for students in sparsely populated areas shall be~~
23 ~~assigned to districts whose population is less than 100 per~~
24 ~~square mile as determined by the Secretary of Education from the~~
25 ~~most recent records of the United States Census Bureau.~~

26 ~~(c) Agency appropriation. The sum of \$1,900,000, or as much~~
27 ~~thereof as may be necessary, is specifically appropriated to the~~
28 ~~Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, to provide for~~
29 ~~establishing, operating and maintaining Regional Computer~~
30 ~~Resource Centers, to provide up to \$400,000 for teacher computer~~

1 ~~training grants and to provide up to \$100,000 for administrative~~
2 ~~expenses incurred by the agency. This appropriation shall not~~
3 ~~lapse at the end of the fiscal year but shall continue until~~
4 ~~June 30, 1989.~~

5 Section 8 7. Sunset provision. <—

6 The program created under this act shall expire five years
7 from the effective date of this act.

8 Section 9 8. Effective date. <—

9 This act shall take effect in 30 days.