
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 191

Session of
1987

INTRODUCED BY E. Z. TAYLOR, DeWEESE, SAURMAN, COWELL, JOHNSON,
MORRIS, HALUSKA, SCHULER, TIGUE, BUNT, FOX, KOSINSKI,
BATTISTO, SIRIANNI, RAYMOND, J. L. WRIGHT, SWEET, KUKOVICH,
WOGAN, BLAUM, DAWIDA, BOOK, PHILLIPS, HECKLER, MRKONIC,
STAIRS, CARLSON, GEIST, PETRONE, TRELLO, HERMAN, GLADECK,
GODSHALL, LaGROTTA, ITKIN, HARPER, FARGO, FLICK, COY, MILLER,
DISTLER, HERSHEY, D. R. WRIGHT, CORNELL, LANGTRY, DORR, ARTY,
CAWLEY AND MERRY, FEBRUARY 4, 1987

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 4, 1987

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Pennsylvania Writing Project, designed to
2 improve the writing skills of teachers and students of this
3 Commonwealth; and making an appropriation.

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

6 Section 1. Legislative intent.

7 The General Assembly recognizes that there has been a
8 significant decline in the writing skills of students in
9 Pennsylvania. A variety of factors contribute to this decline,
10 but a major cause has been the lack of adequate teacher
11 preparation in writing instruction. The General Assembly
12 acknowledges that colleges and universities are improving
13 teacher education programs in this area; however, these
14 improvements will not be sufficient to improve the writing
15 skills of students in Pennsylvania. Therefore, the General

1 Assembly recognizes that the retraining of existing teachers in
2 the teaching of writing skills must be a priority measure in
3 improving the quality of writing instruction in the schools of
4 this Commonwealth. The General Assembly further recognizes that
5 the writing problem is shared by all segments and levels of
6 education and that it can best be addressed by cooperatively
7 planned and funded efforts.

8 Section 2. Pennsylvania Writing Project established.

9 The Department of Education shall establish the Pennsylvania
10 Writing Project. Colleges and universities and public and
11 nonpublic schools may apply to serve as project sites. The
12 following requirements are established for the department:

13 (1) The department shall distribute writing project
14 sites throughout this Commonwealth so that school and college
15 personnel located in rural, urban and suburban areas may
16 avail themselves of writing skills training.

17 (2) For the 1987-1988 school year, the department shall
18 utilize existing sites established at West Chester University
19 of Pennsylvania, the Capitol Campus of The Pennsylvania State
20 University, California University of Pennsylvania, Gannon
21 University and the University of Pittsburgh and may establish
22 three additional sites. For the 1988-1989 school year, and
23 school years thereafter, the department shall select project
24 sites, within the amounts appropriated for this act, to
25 comply with the geographic distribution requirements of this
26 section.

27 (3) The department shall approve a director for each
28 project site.

29 Section 3. Criteria for program selection.

30 In selecting writing programs the Department of Education

shall use, but not be limited to, the following criteria:

(1) The program shall be designed to improve systematically the writing skills of project participants, the teachers to be trained by participants, and ultimately, students attending elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools.

(2) The program shall be accredited or authorized by the National Writing Project and shall adhere to its established model.

(3) Participating elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities shall provide financial and personnel support to the writing project site.

(4) The program shall use participants as writing skill trainers in elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities.

(5) The program shall utilize various levels and segments of education in a cooperative approach.

(6) The program shall provide continuing writing skills training to project participants.

(7) The program shall conduct an ongoing evaluation to assess the writing skills of students of the program and shall solicit participant comments regarding the effectiveness of the program.

Section 4. Operation of programs.

The director of each program site is authorized to, but not limited to, perform the following functions:

(1) Employ staff and contract for services to operate the program site.

(2) Establish tuition for the programs.

(3) Receive gifts and contributions. All funds shall be

1 used solely for programs and expenses incurred in operating
2 the program.

3 (4) Receive in-kind services from public and private
4 higher education institutions or school districts, private
5 schools or other education agencies providing assistance to
6 elementary and secondary education programs.

7 (5) Structure programs in order that students may
8 receive Department of Education approved inservice or
9 postbaccalaureate credits.

10 Section 5. Appropriation.

11 In addition to such amounts as may be determined by the
12 General Assembly in succeeding years, the sum of \$240,000 is
13 hereby appropriated to the Department of Education for the
14 fiscal year July 1, 1987, to June 30, 1988, to carry out the
15 provisions of this act.

16 Section 6. Effective date.

17 This act shall take effect July 1, 1987.