

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2348

Session of
1988

INTRODUCED BY R. C. WRIGHT, DURHAM, FATTAH, TRELLO, LINTON,
EVANS, ARTY, RAYMOND, COLAFELLA, JOSEPHS, GEIST AND HUGHES,
APRIL 13, 1988

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 13, 1988

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," placing additional requirements on
6 school districts with respect to remedial programs; and
7 providing for payments for such programs.

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

10 Section 1. Section 503 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,
11 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, amended
12 September 21, 1959 (P.L.925, No.373) and October 21, 1965
13 (P.L.601, No.312), is amended to read:

14 Section 503. Kindergartens and Preschool Programs.--(a) The
15 board of school directors in any school district may establish
16 and maintain kindergartens for children between the ages of four
17 and six years. When established, the kindergartens shall be an
18 integral part of the elementary school system of the district,
19 and be kept open for not less than two and one-half hours each
20 day for the full school term as provided in section 1501.

However, when more than one-third of the students of the school district are identified for remediation in a test administered in grades three and five, pursuant to section 1511.1 and regulations of the State Board of Education, the school district shall provide a full-day kindergarten in the school year immediately following notification of the number of students identified for remediation. The full-day program shall comply with the minimum hourly requirements established in the regulations of the State Board of Education. The full-day kindergarten shall continue for four years and may be continued after this period. Children between the ages of four and six years residing in a district in which more than one-third of the students are identified for remediation in a test administered in grades three and five pursuant to section 1511.1 and regulations of the State Board of Education shall be required to attend a full-day kindergarten as a prerequisite for admission to first grade, except for children moving into the school district who have attained the age level for admission to the first grade.

(b) A child whose age is within one year of the entrance age of the district for enrolling in kindergarten and residing in a district in which more than fifty per centum of the students are identified for remediation in a test administered in grades three and five pursuant to section 1511.1 and regulations of the State Board of Education, shall be required to attend a preschool or day-care program provided by the district as a prerequisite for admission to kindergarten, except for children moving into the school district who have attained the age level for admission to kindergarten. Children enrolled in a day-care home or program licensed by the Department of Public Welfare, a

private academic school licensed by the Department of Education or other State and federally approved preschool programs shall be deemed to have met the requirements of this subsection.

(c) The number of kindergartens in any one district shall be fixed by the board of school directors, and shall be open during the school year.

[If the average attendance in any one kindergarten in any district is ten or less for the school year, the school directors shall, at the close of the school year, discontinue the same.]

(d) The board of school directors shall appoint and assign a sufficient number of teachers to such kindergartens, who shall be certified in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Council of Basic Education.

(e) The Commonwealth shall be responsible for the additional expenses incurred by school districts for a full-day kindergarten and a preschool or day-care program established pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) for four years. For the first year, school districts shall submit an estimate of the additional expenses to the Department of Education by August 1. The department shall make a payment to the districts equal to fifty per centum of the approved costs by September 15. The remainder of the payment shall be made in January of that school year. In succeeding years, the Commonwealth shall reimburse districts under the payment schedule for the equalized subsidy for basic education as specified in section 2517. The department shall develop budget standards to determine approved costs for full-day kindergarten and district operated preschool or day-care programs established pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

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