

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 865 Session of 1991

INTRODUCED BY COWELL, COY, SCHULER, BATTISTO, KOSINSKI, ROEBUCK, CARONE, STAIRS, RUDY, HERMAN, E. Z. TAYLOR, TULLI, ITKIN, KUKOVICH, DeLUCA, LINTON, VAN HORNE, NOYE, NAHILL, D. R. WRIGHT, DALEY, PESCI, MICOZZIE, LANGTRY, GIGLIOTTI, KRUSZEWSKI, HAYES, BUSH, REINARD, NAILOR, DURHAM, CAPPABIANCA, MERRY, HUGHES, BUNT, McNALLY, LEVDANSKY, CLARK, ALLEN, STURLA, KENNEY, JOSEPHS, MUNDY, BILLOW, COHEN, HESS, TRELLO, HAGARTY, VEON, ARGALL, ULIANA, OLASZ, STEIGHNER, BELFANTI, PRESTON, McCALL, BELARDI, LAUGHLIN, MIHALICH, PISTELLA, STISH, SURRA, DEMPSEY, G. SNYDER, MELIO, MICHLOVIC, DERMODY, LESCOVITZ, COLAFELLA, ROBINSON, STABACK AND HARPER, MARCH 19, 1991

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 19, 1991

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," creating a financial incentive for
6 school districts to reduce class sizes in kindergarten
7 through third grade.

8 The General Assembly finds that it is in the public interest
9 that school districts in this Commonwealth establish and
10 maintain small class sizes, particularly for children in
11 kindergarten and the early grades who have varying needs and
12 maturation levels. Research and experience demonstrate that
13 young children in small classes have higher achievement than
14 young children in larger classes where they may have difficulty
15 adhering to standardized norms of progress and achievement.

1 Self-esteem and confidence can be established or damaged by the
2 child's experience in the lower grades. Small class size, by
3 allowing individual help and assistance, and by allowing
4 teachers to construct an individual plan for each child's
5 progress, provides a better foundation for future learning and
6 achievement in the higher grades.

7 The General Assembly, therefore, declares that the purpose of
8 this act is to provide financial incentives to school districts
9 to maintain or achieve small class size in the lower grades.
10 However, it is not the intention of the General Assembly that
11 class size in the higher grades be increased so that districts
12 may qualify for this financial assistance. The money authorized
13 by this act is designed to increase the level of commitment of
14 the Commonwealth and its school districts to quality education
15 at grades kindergarten through third grade.

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

18 Section 1. Section 2501 of the act of March 10, 1949
19 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
20 amended by adding clauses to read:

21 Section 2501. Definitions.--For the purposes of this article
22 the following terms shall have the following meanings:

23 * * *

24 (10.3) "Reduced Class Size Supplement." Districts that have
25 students enrolled in classrooms of twenty-one (21) students or
26 less in kindergarten through third grade shall be entitled to a
27 "Reduced Class Size Supplement" which shall be in addition to
28 any other State funding to which the district is entitled. After
29 the district's instructional subsidy has been calculated
30 pursuant to the provisions of this act, the district shall then

1 be eligible for the "Reduced Class Size Supplement" as provided
2 in clause (10.6). Unless the General Assembly expressly states
3 otherwise, the "Reduced Class Size Supplement" shall not be
4 included in the base for calculating any "hold harmless" payment
5 or minimum or maximum payment in the current or in subsequent
6 years as provided in section 2502.5. For the school year 1991-
7 1992, school districts shall be eligible to receive the "Reduced
8 Class Size Supplement" for grades kindergarten and first. For
9 the school year 1992-1993, school districts shall be eligible to
10 receive the "Reduced Class Size Supplement" for grades
11 kindergarten, first and second. For the school year 1993-1994
12 and each year thereafter, school districts shall be eligible to
13 receive the "Reduced Class Size Supplement" for grades
14 kindergarten, first, second and third.

15 (10.4) "Determining Class Size." In order to determine a
16 school district's eligibility to receive the "Reduced Class Size
17 Supplement" as provided in clauses (10.5) and (10.6), the school
18 district shall report to the Department of Education the number
19 of students per teacher in each classroom for grades
20 kindergarten through third. Each student in grades kindergarten
21 through third who is taught in a classroom of twenty-one (21)
22 students or less shall earn an additional weighted value to be
23 used in determining the supplement. Only certified teachers
24 instructing at grade levels kindergarten through third shall be
25 counted as teachers in determining the class size for
26 reimbursement purposes. Specialists, counselors, librarians and
27 administrators shall not be counted when determining the class
28 size.

29 (10.5) "Reduced Class Size Values." School districts that
30 instruct students in class with sizes stipulated below in grades

1 kindergarten through third shall be entitled to receive the
2 "Reduced Class Size Supplement." The Secretary of Education
3 shall annually certify the number of weighted pupils in each
4 school district that qualify for the supplement. The additional
5 weighted value for students enrolled in various class size
6 levels shall be as follows:

7	Class Size	Reduced Class Size
8	(pupils per teacher)	Weighted Value
9	15.000 or less	0.50
10	15.001 to 18.000	0.30
11	18.001 to 21.000	0.15

12 (10.6) "Reduced Class Size Supplement Formula." The
13 following calculation shall be used to determine the subsidy for
14 school districts eligible to receive the "Reduced Class Size
15 Supplement."

16	Reduced Class Size	=	FEE X MV/PI Aid Ratio
17	Supplement	X	Appropriate Reduced
18			Class Size Weighted Value
19		X	Weighted Pupils in
20			Qualifying Classes.

21 (10.7) "Evaluation." The Department of Education shall
22 provide for evaluation of the results of the "Reduced Class Size
23 Supplement" and its benefits for students enrolled in classes
24 with reduced class size and shall report its findings and
25 recommendations annually to the General Assembly.

26 * * *

27 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.