

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL
No. 1295 Session of
1997

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LEDERER, LAUGHLIN, M. COHEN, THOMAS, C. WILLIAMS, BOSCOLA,
BELFANTI AND PETTIT, APRIL 10, 1997

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 10, 1997

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Education Plus Program and providing for its
2 operation; and making an appropriation.

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

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Education
7 Plus Program Act.

8 Section 2. Legislative intent.

9 The General Assembly finds and declares that it is the
10 purpose of this act to encourage partnerships between
11 institutions of higher education and secondary schools serving
12 low-income and disadvantaged students and encourage the support
13 and participation of programs that do the following:

14 (1) Improve the retention and graduation rates at
15 secondary schools.

16 (2) Improve the academic skills of public secondary

1 school students.

2 (3) Increase the students' opportunities to continue a
3 program of education after secondary school.

4 (4) Improve the students' prospects for employment after
5 secondary school.

6 Section 3. Definitions.

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

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

12 "First-generation college student." An individual whose
13 parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree or an individual
14 whose parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree if the
15 individual regularly resided with and received support from only
16 one parent.

17 "Low-income individual." An individual from a family which
18 is eligible for participation in the Federal Aid to Families
19 with Dependent Children Program as determined by the Department
20 of Public Welfare.

21 "Low-income school district." A school district where low-
22 income individuals comprise more than 45% of the student
23 population.

24 "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

25 Section 4. Education Plus Program.

26 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established the
27 Education Plus Program which shall be administered by the
28 department and which shall be designed to generate skills and
29 motivation necessary for success in education beyond secondary
30 school.

(b) Permissible services.--Any Education Plus Program project assisted under this act may provide services such as:

(1) Instruction in reading, writing, study skills, mathematics and other subjects necessary for success beyond secondary school.

(2) Personal and career counseling.

(3) Academic advice and assistance in secondary school course selection.

(4) Tutorial services.

(5) Exposure to cultural events, academic programs and other activities not usually available to disadvantaged youth.

(6) Activities designed to acquaint youths participating in the project with the range of career options available to them.

(7) Instruction designed to prepare youths participating in the project for careers in which persons from disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly underrepresented.

(8) On-campus residential programs.

(9) Mentor programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students or any combination of such persons.

(10) Assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications.

(11) Assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations.

(12) Programs and activities as described in paragraphs (1) through (11) which are specially designed for students of limited English proficiency.

(c) Required services.--Any Education Plus Program project

1 assisted under this act which has received funding for two or
2 more years shall include, as part of the core curriculum in the
3 next and succeeding years, instruction in mathematics through
4 precalculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition
5 and literature.

6 (d) Eligible participants.--Only secondary school students
7 in grade levels 9 through 12 are eligible to participate.

8 Section 5. Agreement.

9 (a) General rule.--To be eligible for a grant under this
10 act, an institution of higher education shall enter into a
11 written partnership agreement with a local educational agency.
12 The partnership may include businesses, labor organizations,
13 professional associations, community-based organizations, public
14 television stations or other telecommunications entities, or
15 other public or private agencies or organizations. Each entity
16 participating in the partnership shall sign the agreement.

17 (b) Contents of agreement.--The agreement shall include the
18 following:

19 (1) A listing of all participants in the partnership,
20 including a designation of the official representatives of
21 each entity participating in the partnership.

22 (2) A description of the responsibilities of each
23 participant in the partnership.

24 (3) A listing of the resources to be contributed by each
25 participant in the partnership.

26 Section 6. Grant program.

27 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established a grant
28 program to implement the purposes of this act which is to be
29 administered by the secretary.

30 (b) Amount and use of grants.--The secretary shall make

1 grants under this act in amounts which are not less than
2 \$100,000 and not more than \$500,000. A grant under this act may
3 be used by the partnership for programs that are designed to do
4 the following:

5 (1) Use college students to tutor secondary school
6 students and improve their basic academic skills or to
7 involve secondary school students in community service
8 learning projects.

9 (2) Improve the basic academic skills of secondary
10 school students.

11 (3) Increase the understanding of specific subjects of
12 secondary school students.

13 (4) Improve the opportunity to continue a program of
14 education after graduation for secondary school students.

15 (5) Increase the prospects for employment after
16 graduation of secondary school students.

17 (c) Preferences.--In making grants under this act, the
18 secretary shall give a preference to any of the following:

19 (1) Programs which will serve predominantly low-income
20 school districts.

21 (2) Partnerships which will run programs during the
22 regular school year and summer.

23 (3) Programs which will serve the following types of
24 students:

25 (i) Educationally disadvantaged students.

26 (ii) Students with disabilities.

27 (iii) Potential dropouts.

28 (iv) Pregnant adolescents and teenage parents.

29 (v) Children of migratory agricultural workers.

30 (vi) Students whose native language is other than

1 English.

2 (4) Programs designed to encourage women and minorities
3 who are underrepresented in the fields of science and
4 mathematics to pursue these fields.

5 (d) Duration.--Each grant awarded under this act may be
6 awarded for a period not to exceed five years.

7 Section 7. Grant application.

8 (a) Application required.--A partnership desiring to receive
9 a grant under this act shall submit an application to the
10 secretary, in the form and providing any information the
11 secretary, by regulation or rule, shall require.

12 (b) Contents of application.--The application shall include
13 the following:

14 (1) The partnership agreement described in section 5.

15 (2) A listing of the public and private nonprofit
16 secondary school or schools to be involved in the program.

17 (3) A description of the activities and services for
18 which assistance is sought.

19 (4) A description of the programs to be developed and
20 operated by the partnership.

21 (5) Assurances to the secretary that the following
22 guidelines will be met:

23 (i) The partnership will establish a governing body
24 including one representative of each participant in the
25 partnership.

26 (ii) A local educational agency or institution of
27 higher education receiving funds under this act shall not
28 reduce its combined fiscal effort per student or its
29 aggregate expenditure on education.

30 (iii) State funds will provide no more than 90% of

1 the cost of the project in the first year, 80% of the
2 cost in the second year and 70% of the cost in the third
3 year and any subsequent year.

4 (iv) In no case shall funds under a grant be used to
5 supplant non-State funds already available.

6 (c) Special rule.--The non-State share of grants awarded
7 under this act may be in cash or in kind fairly evaluated,
8 including services, supplies or equipment.

9 (d) Waiver.--The secretary may waive the matching
10 requirement described in subsection (b)(5)(iii) for any eligible
11 partnership that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the
12 secretary a unique hardship that prevents compliance with the
13 matching requirement.

14 (e) Number of applications for grants and contracts.--The
15 secretary shall not limit the number of applications submitted
16 by an entity under any program authorized under this act if the
17 additional applications describe programs serving different
18 populations or campuses.

19 Section 8. Application status.

20 The secretary shall inform each entity operating programs
21 under this act regarding the status of their application for
22 continued funding at least eight months prior to the expiration
23 of the grant or contract. The secretary, in the case of an
24 entity that is continuing to operate a successful program under
25 this act, shall ensure that the start-up date for a new grant or
26 contract for the program immediately follows the termination of
27 a preceding grant or contract so that no interruption of funding
28 occurs for successful re-applicants. The secretary shall inform
29 each entity requesting assistance under this section for a new
30 program regarding the status of its application at least eight

1 months prior to the proposed start-up date of the program.

2 Section 9. Outreach.

3 (a) Generally.--The secretary shall conduct outreach
4 activities to ensure that entities eligible for assistance under
5 this act submit applications proposing programs that serve low-
6 income school districts and eligible populations which have been
7 underserved by the programs assisted under this act.

8 (b) Notice.--In carrying out the provisions of subsection
9 (a), the secretary shall notify the qualified entities of the
10 availability of assistance under this subsection not less than
11 120 days prior to the deadline for submission of applications
12 under this act.

13 (c) Technical assistance.--The secretary shall provide
14 technical training to applicants for projects and programs
15 authorized under this act. The secretary shall give priority to
16 serving programs and projects that serve low-income school
17 districts and eligible populations which have been underserved
18 by the programs assisted under this act. Technical training
19 activities shall include the provision of information on
20 authorizing legislation, goals and objectives of the program,
21 required activities, eligibility requirements, application
22 process and deadlines, and assistance in the development of
23 program proposals and the completion of program applications.
24 All training shall be furnished at convenient geographic
25 locations to ensure that all areas of this Commonwealth with
26 large concentrations of eligible participants are served.

27 (d) Special rule.--The secretary may contract with eligible
28 entities to conduct the outreach activities described in this
29 section.

30 Section 10. Program review.

1 (a) General.--For the purpose of improving the operation of
2 the programs and projects assisted under this act, the secretary
3 is authorized to make grants to and enter into contracts with
4 institutions of higher education and other public and private
5 institutions and organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of
6 the various programs assisted under this act in meeting the
7 purposes of this act.

8 (b) Content.--The evaluations described in subsection (a)
9 shall identify institutional, community and program practices
10 particularly effective in increasing the access of low-income
11 individuals and first-generation college students to
12 postsecondary education, and ensuring success in postsecondary
13 education.

14 (c) Results.--In order to improve program effectiveness, the
15 results of the ongoing evaluations described in subsection (a)
16 shall be disseminated by the secretary to the programs assisted
17 under this act, to individuals concerned with the postsecondary
18 access and retention of low-income individuals and first-
19 generation college students and to the General Assembly.

20 Section 11. Appropriation.

21 The sum of \$1,500,000, or as much thereof as may be
22 necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of Education
23 for the fiscal year July 1, 1997, to June 30, 1998, to carry out
24 the provisions of this act.

25 Section 12. Effective date.

26 This act shall take effect in 60 days.