

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2464 Session of
2000

INTRODUCED BY GLADECK, ARGALL, BARD, BROWNE, CAPPABIANCA, CLARK,
L. I. COHEN, M. COHEN, COSTA, CURRY, FAIRCHILD, FREEMAN,
GEORGE, GIGLIOTTI, GODSHALL, GRUCELA, HALUSKA, HERMAN, HESS,
KENNEY, KIRKLAND, MANDERINO, MARSICO, McCALL, MICOZZIE,
NAILOR, RAMOS, ROEBUCK, ROSS, RUBLEY, SAMUELSON, SAYLOR,
SEMMELE, SHANER, STABACK, STEELMAN, STURLA, TIGUE, TRELLO,
TRICH, WILLIAMS AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 12, 2000

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 12, 2000

AN ACT

1 Establishing a State grant program to further assist those
2 school districts wishing to reduce class sizes in primary
3 grades; and imposing powers and duties on the Department of
4 Education and the Secretary of Education.

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Class Size
9 Reduction Incentive Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

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

14 "Department." The Department of Education of the
15 Commonwealth.

16 "Federal initiative." The Federal Class Size Reduction

1 Initiative.

2 "Primary grades." Kindergarten through third grade.

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

4 Section 3. Purpose.

5 The grants provided for in this act are intended to act as an
6 incentive to encourage school districts to reduce their class
7 sizes in primary grades by helping to meet the additional costs
8 associated with implementing such reductions.

9 Section 4. Incentive grants.

10 Beginning with the 2000-2001 fiscal year and continuing each
11 school year thereafter the department shall award incentive
12 grants to eligible school districts in order to encourage the
13 reduction of class sizes in primary classrooms.

14 Section 5. Eligibility.

15 In order to qualify for a grant under this act, a school
16 district must:

17 (1) Be a participant in the Federal initiative.

18 (2) Document to the department the number of students
19 per teacher in each classroom for primary grades.

20 (3) Comply with such application requirements, rules or
21 standards as may be promulgated by the department pursuant to
22 section 8.

23 Section 6. Funding.

24 (a) General rule.--The secretary shall allocate grants to
25 eligible school districts from funds appropriated for the
26 implementation of this act.

27 (b) Amount of grants.--An eligible school district shall
28 receive a grant in the amount of \$5,000 for each classroom in
29 primary grades in which the number of students per teacher is 20
30 or fewer.

1 Section 7. Use of funds.

2 The grants provided for by this act may be used to:

3 (1) Make additional class size reductions in primary
4 grades.

5 (2) Carry out activities to improve teacher quality,
6 including professional development activities.

7 (3) Offset building construction or renovation costs
8 related to class size reduction efforts.

9 Section 8. Duties of department.

10 (a) Form of applications.--Grant applications shall be filed
11 on a form and in such manner as determined by the secretary. The
12 application shall address the determination of eligibility
13 pursuant to section 5.

14 (b) Rules and regulations.--The department may promulgate
15 such rules and regulations necessary to administer and enforce
16 this act.

17 (c) Budget submission.--The secretary shall annually, as
18 part of the department's budget proposal submitted to the
19 Governor, include an estimate of State funds required for the
20 ensuing fiscal year to fund the grants provided by this act.

21 Section 9. Program evaluation.

22 (a) General rule.--The department shall contract with a
23 Pennsylvania institution of higher education, or consortia
24 thereof, to conduct an ongoing evaluation of class size
25 reduction efforts in this Commonwealth.

26 (b) Use of evaluation.--This evaluation shall be used to
27 determine the overall effectiveness of whether reduced class
28 sizes improve the classroom learning environment and academic
29 progress of students.

30 (c) Data to be included.--The evaluation shall specifically

1 include data comparing student achievement in those school
2 districts undertaking class size reduction initiatives with
3 those that are not participating in such efforts.

4 (d) Report to General Assembly.--At the conclusion of the
5 2003-2004 school year, the institution of higher education, or
6 consortia, conducting the evaluation shall prepare a
7 comprehensive report outlining the three-year history of its
8 findings. This final report shall be made to the Governor and
9 the General Assembly no later than December 1, 2004.

10 Section 10. Effective date.

11 This act shall take effect July 1, 2000, or immediately,
12 whichever is later.