

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL
No. 1301 Session of
2003

INTRODUCED BY STURLA, MAY 5, 2003

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MAY 5, 2003

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," providing for a distinguished
6 educator program.

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

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a
11 section to read:

12 Section 1715.5-B. Distinguished Educators.--(a) The
13 department shall establish a Distinguished Educator Program for
14 recognizing outstanding qualified educators and organizing them
15 into a State corps of educators for the purpose of making them
16 available throughout this Commonwealth to help eligible schools
17 improve the quality of education.

18 (b) The department shall develop guidelines, standards and
19 criteria for the selection of participants. At a minimum,

1 candidates shall be educators certified by the department and
2 have active experience as a teacher or school administrator for
3 a minimum of five (5) years prior to the date of application.
4 Candidates selected for participation shall have knowledge and
5 skills relating to school leadership, management, curriculum and
6 instruction.

7 (c) Applications shall be submitted to the department in a
8 form and manner prescribed by the department. The application
9 form and information relating to applying for the program, along
10 with the criteria to be used to review applications, shall be
11 published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin and may be placed on the
12 department's World Wide Web site.

13 (d) The department shall annually select from the
14 applications received from educators to participate in the
15 program. Following completion of the training program required
16 by this section, the department shall recognize a participant in
17 the program as a Distinguished Educator, award a special
18 certificate of achievement and accord special Statewide
19 recognition and honors deemed appropriate by the department.

20 (e) By participating in the program, all educators
21 recognized as Distinguished Educators by the department agree to
22 provide assistance to eligible schools at the request of the
23 department.

24 (f) The department shall establish an intensive and
25 comprehensive training program for Distinguished Educators to
26 participate in the program. Educators must attend and complete
27 the training program before being named a Distinguished
28 Educator. The department may require additional training from
29 time to time to ensure the competencies of Distinguished
30 Educators and the integrity of the program. Training shall be

provided at no cost to participants. The training program shall include, but not be limited to, instruction relating to school management, methods of personnel evaluation, school organization, school curriculum and assessment techniques and methodologies. Participants in the program will be compensated by the department during training pursuant to the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement or contract of employment applicable to the participant.

(g) (1) Upon request of the department, a Distinguished Educator may be assigned to provide assistance to an eligible school.

(2) Upon receipt of a request from an eligible school for assistance, the department may assign a Distinguished Educator to provide assistance.

(3) (i) A Distinguished Educator may be assigned to provide assistance to an eligible school for a period of at least one (1) school semester, which period may be extended upon mutual agreement of the Distinguished Educator and the department. A Distinguished Educator shall not be required to accept an assignment more than once within two (2) consecutive years. A Distinguished Educator shall not be assigned to a school from which leave was granted for the Distinguished Educator pursuant to subsection (h).

(ii) While on assignment, a Distinguished Educator shall:
(I) Report to and cooperate with the superintendent where the school is located.

(II) Assist the school improvement team, the principal and the school staff with the development and implementation of a school improvement plan.

(III) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1123, in a

1 school or school district in a corrective action or school
2 improvement cycle, evaluate and rate school staff and staff
3 effectiveness.

4 (IV) Recommend staff adjustments and advise the
5 superintendent on the reconstitution of schools when
6 appropriate.

7 (h) Upon the request of the department, a school district
8 shall grant leave to a Distinguished Educator to serve under and
9 in accordance with the provisions of this article.

10 (i) During the leave granted pursuant to subsection (h), the
11 department shall pay the Distinguished Educator the salary,
12 compensation and employee benefits payable or due to the
13 Distinguished Educator under collective bargaining agreement or
14 contract of employment applicable to the educator. The
15 department shall further pay a Distinguished Educator assigned
16 to a school in a school improvement cycle or in a corrective
17 action cycle an annual salary supplement equal to fifty per
18 centum (50%) of the Distinguished Educator's regular salary,
19 prorated for the length of the assignment. Vehicle mileage shall
20 be reimbursed as provided by law. Distinguished Educators shall
21 maintain the rights established in sections 1167, 1168 and 1170,
22 but not the requirements in section 1166. The fifty per centum
23 (50%) salary supplement shall not be compensation for the
24 purposes of computing the final average salary of a member of
25 the Public School Employees' Retirement System or the State
26 Employees' Retirement System. The department shall not pay any
27 costs incurred by a school district to fill a vacancy resulting
28 from the absence of a Distinguished Educator during the leave
29 granted pursuant to subsection (h).

30 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2003, or

1 immediately, whichever is later.