

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 503 Session of
2003

INTRODUCED BY RHOADES, MOWERY, EARLL, PILEGGI, LAVALLE,
C. WILLIAMS, ERICKSON, COSTA, WOZNIAK AND KASUNIC,
MARCH 17, 2003

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, MARCH 17, 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," further providing for powers and
6 duties of the intermediate unit board of directors; and
7 providing for academic improvement programs.

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

10 Section 1. Section 914-A of the act of March 10, 1949
11 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
12 amended by adding a clause to read:

13 Section 914-A. Powers and Duties of the Intermediate Unit
14 Board of Directors.--An intermediate unit board of directors
15 shall have the power and its duty shall be:

16 * * *

17 (18) To appoint academic improvement teams and coordinate
18 and administer the academic improvement program established
19 under section 925-A.

20 Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

1 Section 925-A. Academic Improvement Program.--(a) Each
2 intermediate unit shall coordinate and administer an academic
3 improvement program for any school district assigned to the
4 intermediate unit that is eligible for assistance under
5 subsection (b). The intermediate unit shall provide technical
6 support and staff assistance to an academic improvement team
7 appointed under subsection (c).

8 (b) A school district shall be eligible for academic
9 assistance under this section where:

10 (1) Any school in the school district has a percentage of
11 its students in any grade level subject to the Pennsylvania
12 System of School Assessment or any other test established by the
13 State Board of Education to meet the requirements of section
14 2603-B(d)(10) that score below the yearly proficiency target
15 established by the Department of Education to calculate adequate
16 yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
17 (Public Law 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425).

18 (2) Any school in the school district is identified for
19 improvement or corrective action under section 1116(c)(3) or
20 (10) of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

21 (3) The school district requests academic assistance under
22 this section.

23 (c) (1) Within thirty (30) days of the intermediate unit's
24 receipt of the list of school districts eligible under
25 subsection (b), an academic improvement team shall be appointed
26 for each eligible school district. Members of the academic
27 improvement team shall be appointed by the intermediate unit
28 board of directors and the board of school directors of the
29 school district eligible for academic assistance.

30 (2) Five (5) members of the academic improvement team shall

be appointed by the intermediate unit board of directors. Such members shall not be employed by or otherwise affiliated with the school district eligible for academic assistance and may include:

(i) Intermediate unit staff members.

(ii) Teachers.

(iii) Administrators.

(iv) School board members.

(v) Faculty members of colleges or universities in this Commonwealth with particular expertise in school improvement.

(3) Four (4) members of the academic improvement team shall be appointed by the board of school directors of the school district eligible for academic assistance. Such members shall include:

(i) A parent of a student enrolled in the school district.

(ii) A teacher employed by the school district.

(iii) An administrator employed by the school district.

(iv) A member of the board of school directors of the school district.

(4) The intermediate unit board of directors shall select a chairman of the academic improvement team from the members appointed under paragraph (2).

(d) The academic improvement team shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) To create an academic improvement plan pursuant to subsection (e) for any school in the school district that is eligible for academic assistance under subsection (b)(1) or (2).

(2) To have ongoing access to school district personnel and information related to the academic performance of students.

(3) To provide periodic reports on the implementation of the

academic improvement plan to the intermediate unit board of directors and the board of school directors of the school district eligible for academic assistance.

(4) To meet not less than once each month to review the implementation of the academic improvement plan.

(5) To seek technical assistance from the Department of Education in the design and implementation of the academic improvement plan.

(e) (1) Within thirty (30) days of the appointment of an academic improvement team under subsection (c), the academic improvement team shall present an academic improvement plan or plans to the intermediate unit board of directors and the board of school directors of the school district for approval at a public meeting.

(2) The academic improvement plan or plans shall set forth specific goals for improving the academic performance of students in content areas subject to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment or any other test established by the State Board of Education to meet the requirements of section 2603-B(d)(10)(i) and shall include strategies designed to achieve those goals. Such strategies shall include, but may not be limited to:

(i) The involvement of parents in the improvement of academic performance through the development of home activities and materials to enhance student learning.

(ii) Continuing professional education options in addition to options included in the continuing professional education plan required under section 1205.1(c.1). Such additional options shall be specific to improvements in the academic performance of students.

1 (iii) Classroom instructional strategies specific to
2 improvements in the academic performance of students.

3 (iv) The redesign of curricula specific to improvements in
4 the academic performance of students.

5 (v) Improvements in school safety.

6 (vi) Tutoring programs for students whose results on the
7 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment or any other test were
8 below the level of proficiency established by the State Board of
9 Education to meet the requirements of section 2603-B(d)(10)(i).

10 (3) The academic improvement plan shall be effective for one
11 (1) school year. At the conclusion of the school year and within
12 fifteen (15) days of the school district's notification of the
13 results of the school district's performance on the Pennsylvania
14 System of School Assessment or any other test established by the
15 State Board of Education to meet the requirements of section
16 2603-B(d)(10)(i), the academic improvement team shall review
17 such results and make a report to the intermediate unit board of
18 directors and the board of school directors of the school
19 district eligible for academic assistance.

20 (4) Where the school district continues to be eligible for
21 academic assistance under subsection (b), the academic
22 improvement team shall propose any necessary adjustments to the
23 academic improvement plan or plans to the intermediate unit
24 board of directors and the board of school directors of the
25 school district eligible for academic assistance. Such
26 adjustments shall be subject to the approval of the intermediate
27 unit board of directors and the board of school directors and
28 shall constitute a new academic improvement plan.

29 (5) Where the school district is no longer eligible for
30 academic assistance under subsection (b), the academic

improvement team shall recommend the termination of the academic improvement plan. Termination of the academic improvement plan shall be subject to the approval of the board of school directors of the school district eligible for academic assistance.

(f) The Department of Education shall:

(1) Annually provide each intermediate unit with a list of school districts eligible for academic assistance under subsection (b)(i) or (ii).

(2) Upon request, provide technical assistance to an academic improvement team.

(3) Establish a clearinghouse of information related to strategies for improving the academic performance of students under subsection (e)(2).

(4) Establish and provide continuing professional education courses, programs, activities or learning experiences under section 1205.2(f) specific to the classroom strategies to improve the academic performance of students in content areas subject to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment or any other test established by the State Board of Education to meet the requirements of section 2603-B(d)(10)(i).

Section 3. Section 2595 of the act is amended by adding a subsection to read:

Section 2595. School Performance Incentives.--* * *

(f.3) No less than fifty percent (50%) of the allocation for school performance funding under this section shall be used by the Department of Education to establish an incentive program to reward school districts eligible for academic assistance under section 925-A that show improved academic performance as evidenced by a decline in the percentage of students scoring

1 below the level of proficiency on the Pennsylvania System of
2 School Assessment or any other test established by the State
3 Board of Education to meet the requirements of section 2603-
4 B(d)(10)(i).

5 * * *

6 Section 4. This act shall take effect in 60 days.