
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 172 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY WASHINGTON, BOSCOLA, COSTA, ERICKSON, GREENLEAF,
TARTAGLIONE, M. WHITE, WILLIAMS AND FERLO, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

AN ACT

1 Establishing the MESA Initiative; providing for duties of the
2 Department of Education; and establishing the State MESA
3 Commission.

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

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
8 MESA Initiative Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

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

13 "Commission." The State MESA Commission established under
14 section 5.

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

17 "MESA." Mathematics, engineering and science achievement.

18 "MESA Initiative." The program established under section 3

1 to promote science, engineering and mathematics education.

2 "STEM." Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

3 Section 3. MESA Initiative.

4 The MESA Initiative is hereby established as a program within
5 the department. The MESA Initiative shall seek to increase
6 exposure, educational motivation and achievement of students in
7 science, engineering and mathematics and build individual and
8 regional capacity to compete for STEM-based jobs in the global
9 market with a particular emphasis on students, parents,
10 educators and employers from urban and rural groups who have
11 historically had the lowest levels of high school degree
12 attainment and participation in college and graduate education.

13 Section 4. Administration of MESA Initiative.

14 (a) Designation of administrative agency.--The department
15 shall administer the MESA Initiative, including Statewide MESA
16 funding, operations, regional groups, programs and evaluations.

17 (b) Coordination.--The department shall coordinate the
18 efforts of the Commonwealth agencies that relate to MESA
19 education from the kindergarten level through the graduate level
20 to avoid unnecessary duplication of initiatives and ensure
21 adherence to established guidelines.

22 (c) Structure of STEM regions.--The department shall work
23 with the TEAM PA Foundation and the five established STEM
24 regions in this Commonwealth to create in each STEM region an
25 infrastructure for the MESA Initiative to support not fewer than
26 four professional staff, 20 retired industry mentors, 20
27 certified MESA teacher-coordinators and school administrators.

28 (d) Duties.--The department shall have the following duties:

29 (1) Develop annual goals and objectives for improving
30 MESA programs throughout this Commonwealth with particular

1 emphasis on regional economic and educational needs.

2 (2) No later than 30 days after developing the goals and
3 objectives under paragraph (1):

4 (i) Disseminate the goals and objectives to the
5 State MESA Commission and the MESA regions.

6 (ii) Communicate the goals and objectives to all
7 relevant agencies of the Commonwealth and collaborative
8 regional entities.

9 (iii) Make the goals and objectives available to the
10 general public, particularly to stakeholders.

11 (3) Coordinate and facilitate communication and
12 cooperation among all MESA regions and assure compliance with
13 established guidelines for the MESA Initiative.

14 (4) Conduct an ongoing inventory and assessment of the
15 effectiveness and coherence of efforts within the MESA
16 regions.

17 (5) Annually evaluate the progress and success of the
18 MESA regions at achieving the goals and objectives under
19 paragraph (1).

20 (6) Consult with Commonwealth agencies when developing
21 policies and initiatives related to MESA.

22 (7) Strengthen partnerships between the national MESA
23 community, Federal, State and local governments and relevant
24 international partners.

25 (8) Conduct an annual meeting on the status of the MESA
26 Initiative, in conjunction with:

27 (i) Relevant State agencies.

28 (ii) The State MESA Commission, as hosting entity.

29 (iii) Other state MESA Initiatives.

30 (iv) Regional businesses and industries.

1 (v) The State System of Higher Education.

2 (vi) Education professionals from the kindergarten
3 through graduate levels.

4 (vii) Other relevant stakeholders.

5 Section 5. State MESA Commission.

6 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established a State MESA
7 Commission to oversee the advancement of mathematics,
8 engineering, science and technology education.

9 (b) Membership.--The commission shall consist of the
10 following members:

11 (1) Not fewer than two representatives from each MESA
12 region.

13 (2) Elected officials, representatives of the department
14 and stakeholders as appointed by the department.

15 (c) Study.--The commission shall evaluate and report to the
16 General Assembly annually on the following:

17 (1) Efficacy of Statewide MESA Initiatives.

18 (2) Effective utilization of MESA Initiative resources.

19 (3) Influence of the MESA Initiative on:

20 (i) Student STEM aptitudes, as measured by
21 standardized testing.

22 (ii) Teacher effectiveness.

23 (iii) STEM-based employment within MESA regions.

24 (d) Fiscal planning.--The commission shall propose a budget
25 for the MESA Initiative aligned with the goals developed under
26 section 4(d)(1).

27 (e) Meetings.--The commission shall meet no less often than
28 quarterly.

29 Section 6. Effective date.

30 This act shall take effect in 60 days.