

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1342 Session of 2019

INTRODUCED BY BROWN, PICKETT, READSHAW, KAUFFMAN, SCHLOSSBERG, MURT, SCHLEGEL CULVER, BARRAR, MILLARD, STRUZZI, DeLUCA, TOOHL, MEHAFFIE, SCHWEYER, KINSEY, RADER, T. DAVIS, BOBACK, MACKENZIE, CIRESI, YOUNGBLOOD AND DEASY, APRIL 29, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 29, 2019

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," in school health services, further
 6 providing for health services and providing for vision
 7 screening and examinations.

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

10 Section 1. Section 1402(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 to read:

13 Section 1402. Health Services.--(a) Each child of school
 14 age shall be given by methods established by the Advisory Health
 15 Board, [(1) a vision test by a school nurse, medical technician
 16 or teacher,] (2) a hearing test by a school nurse or medical
 17 technician, (3) a measurement of height and weight by a school
 18 nurse or teacher, who shall use the measurement to compute a
 19 child's weight-for-height ratio, (4) tests for tuberculosis

1 under medical supervision, and (5) such other tests as the
2 Advisory Health Board may deem advisable to protect the health
3 of the child. [Vision tests shall be given at least annually and
4 other tests at intervals established by the Advisory Health
5 Board.]

6 * * *

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

8 Section 1403.1. Vision Screening and Examinations.--(a) (1)

9 Within thirty (30) days of the start of the school year at a
10 public, private, parochial or nonpublic school in this
11 Commonwealth, including special education and home education
12 programs and cyber and charter schools or upon entry into the
13 school district, the parent or legal guardian of a child
14 entering kindergarten shall present to school health personnel
15 certification that the child within the previous twelve months
16 passed a vision screening performed by a primary care provider
17 or a vision screening conducted by screeners with specific
18 training in vision screening techniques and protocols approved
19 by the Department of Health or has completed a comprehensive eye
20 exam conducted by an ophthalmologist or optometrist.

21 (2) The Advisory Health Board shall promulgate regulations
22 to establish vision screening standards based on instrument-
23 based vision screening technologies or visual acuity testing,
24 taking into consideration national guidelines from the American
25 Academy of Pediatrics.

26 (b) (1) Every school year at a public, private, parochial
27 or nonpublic school in this Commonwealth, including special
28 education and home education programs and cyber and charter
29 schools, until a child completes the fifth grade and every two
30 years thereafter until the child graduates from the twelfth

1 grade, the child shall have a vision screening performed by
2 school health personnel or screeners with specific training in
3 vision screening techniques and protocols approved by the
4 Advisory Health Board. The results of the vision screening shall
5 be supplied to the parent or legal guardian of the child.

6 (2) For a child who fails a required vision screening, a
7 comprehensive eye examination, performed by an ophthalmologist
8 or optometrist, shall also be required. Notification of the
9 parent or legal guardian of the failed screening shall be
10 accompanied by notification of requirement for a comprehensive
11 examination that must be completed within one hundred twenty
12 (120) days or before the start of the next school year,
13 whichever comes first. Notification should also include a form,
14 to be completed by the examining ophthalmologist or optometrist,
15 to be used for reporting the results of the examination. The
16 report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

17 (i) Date of report.

18 (ii) Name, address and date of birth of the child.

19 (iii) Name of the child's school.

20 (iv) A summary of significant findings, including best
21 corrected visual acuity, diagnosis, treatment, prognosis,
22 whether or not a return visit is recommended and, if so, when.

23 (v) Recommended educational adjustments for the child, if
24 any, which may include preferential seating in the classroom,
25 eyeglasses for full-time use in school, eyeglasses for part-time
26 use in school, sight-saving eyeglasses or any other
27 recommendations.

28 (vi) Name, address and signature of the examiner.

29 (3) The examination report shall be accompanied by an
30 envelope for return of the form to school health personnel so

1 the completion status and result of the examination may be
2 recorded.

3 (c) No child shall be excluded from attending school for the
4 reason that the parent or guardian failed to furnish a report of
5 the child's vision screening or to have an examination completed
6 upon failure of the vision screening. Parents and guardians that
7 fail to present the required report shall be notified in writing
8 of the required vision examination every three months until the
9 examination completion has been verified.

10 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.