

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 434 Session of 2019

INTRODUCED BY SOLOMON, GROVE, T. DAVIS, HILL-EVANS, MURT, SCHLOSSBERG, CALTAGIRONE, MEHAFFIE, RABB, ULLMAN, JAMES, YOUNGBLOOD, DRISCOLL, SAYLOR, FREEMAN, ISAACSON AND NEILSON, FEBRUARY 11, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 11, 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 certification of teachers,
 6 providing for a cultural awareness continuing professional
 7 development course.

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

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

13 Section 1218. Cultural Awareness Continuing Professional
 14 Development Course.--(a) The Department of Education shall
 15 develop and implement a continuing professional education course
 16 on cultural awareness that may be used by professional educators
 17 to satisfy the requirements of section 1205.2.

18 (b) The Department of Education shall develop the continuing
 19 professional education course in a manner which provides

1 professional educators with information and strategies which can
2 be incorporated into instruction and general interactions with
3 students in order to encourage students to become more
4 culturally aware.

5 (c) The continuing professional education course shall
6 include training on the following:

7 (1) Information and strategies to encourage students to
8 become more culturally aware, and to reject ethnic, cultural and
9 religious biases.

10 (2) Resolving disputes between students that result from
11 ethnic and cultural disputes.

12 (3) Resolving disputes between students that result from
13 religious biases.

14 (4) The dynamics of prejudice and discrimination that impede
15 effective learning.

16 (5) Civil rights awareness.

17 (6) Intellectual, physical and behavioral disability
18 awareness.

19 (d) Continuing professional education course materials may
20 include the following:

21 (1) Materials that educate students in cultural sensitivity
22 by introducing the students to various cultures.

23 (2) Teaching aids that allow students to explore cultures
24 through food, art, books, movies, dance, traditions and cross-
25 cultural experiences.

26 (3) Resources that allow students to explore the cultural
27 experience of other people, their history, present-day
28 experiences and connection to the American culture and fabric of
29 our land.

30 (4) Educational aids that provide students with information

1 on the cultural experiences of the inhabitants of this
2 Commonwealth, the inhabitants' experiences arriving in this
3 Commonwealth and development over the years.

4 (e) By July 31, 2020, and each July 31 thereafter, the
5 Department of Education shall submit to the chairperson and
6 minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the Senate
7 and the chairperson and minority chairperson of the Education
8 Committee of the House of Representatives a report which shall
9 include:

10 (1) The number of professional educators that have enrolled
11 in the continuing professional education course.

12 (2) The number of professional educators that have completed
13 the continuing education course.

14 (3) The number of schools that have implemented classroom
15 instruction in cultural awareness.

16 (4) Any issues that professional educators, administrators,
17 students or the Department of Education have identified and need
18 to be addressed.

19 (f) The course established under subsection (a) shall be
20 voluntary, offered online and at no cost to professional
21 educators.

22 (g) For the purpose of this section, the term "professional
23 educator" shall mean an individual who holds a Pennsylvania
24 teacher, educational specialist or administrative certification
25 or letter of eligibility.

26 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.