
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 719 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY COMITTA, FONTANA, CAPPELLETTI, KANE, COSTA, MUTH
AND SANTARSIERO, MAY 28, 2021

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, MAY 28, 2021

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 miscellaneous provisions relating
6 to institutions of higher education, establishing the Hunger-
7 Free Campus Grant Program and the Hunger-Free Campus Grant
8 Fund.

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

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

14 Section 2002-I. Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.

15 (a) Establishment.--The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program is
16 established within the Department of Education for the purposes
17 under subsection (b).

18 (b) Purpose.--The purpose of the Hunger-Free Campus Grant
19 Program shall be to provide grants to public institutions of
20 higher education that have one or more campuses designated by
21 the Secretary of Education as hunger-free campuses under

1 subsection (c). The purpose of the grant funding shall be to:

2 (1) Address student hunger.

3 (2) Leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic
4 food needs on campus.

5 (3) Raise awareness of services currently offered on
6 campus which address basic food needs.

7 (4) Continue to build strategic partnerships at the
8 Federal, State and local levels to address food insecurity
9 among students.

10 (c) Hunger-free campus designation.--In order to be
11 designated as a hunger-free campus, a public institution of
12 higher education shall:

13 (1) Establish a hunger task force that meets a minimum
14 of three times per academic year to set at least two goals
15 with action plans and includes representatives from the
16 current student body.

17 (2) Designate a staff member responsible for assisting
18 students with enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition
19 Assistance Program (SNAP).

20 (3) Provide options for students to utilize SNAP
21 benefits at campus stores or provide students with
22 information on establishments in the surrounding area of
23 campus where they can utilize SNAP EBT benefits.

24 (4) Participate in an awareness day campaign activity
25 and plan a campus awareness event during the National Hunger
26 and Homelessness Awareness Week.

27 (5) Provide at least one physical food pantry on campus
28 or enable students to receive food through a separate,
29 stigma-free arrangement with a local food pantry or food bank
30 near campus.

1 (6) Develop a student meal credit donation program or
2 designate a certain amount of money for free meal vouchers
3 for students.

4 (7) Annually conduct a student survey on hunger,
5 developed by the Department of Education, and submit the
6 results of the survey to the Secretary of Education at a time
7 prescribed by the Secretary of Education for inclusion in a
8 comparative profile of each campus designated as a hunger-
9 free campus. Survey data on student hunger shall be
10 disaggregated by race, gender identity, sexual orientation,
11 parenting status and financial aid status of students. In the
12 development of the survey, the Department of Education may
13 utilize any existing surveys designed to collect information
14 on food insecurity among students enrolled in public
15 institutions of higher education.

16 (d) Allocation.--The Secretary of Education shall allocate
17 grant funding to each public institution of higher education
18 that has one or more campuses designated by the Secretary of
19 Education as a hunger-free campus as provided under subsection
20 (c). The Secretary of Education, or a designee, shall determine
21 the amount of each grant which shall be used by the public
22 institution of higher education to further address food
23 insecurity among students enrolled in the public institution of
24 higher education. The Secretary of Education or a designee shall
25 prioritize grants to public institutions of higher education
26 serving minority, low-income and high Pell-grant-recipient
27 campuses.

28 (e) Report.--The Department of Education shall submit a
29 report to the Governor, the chair and minority chair of the
30 Education Committee of the Senate and the chair and minority

1 chair of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives
2 no later than two years after the establishment of the Hunger-
3 Free Campus Grant Program. The report shall include, but not be
4 limited to, the number and amounts of the grant awards, the
5 impact the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program had on establishing
6 additional hunger-free campuses at public institutions of higher
7 education and reducing the number of students experiencing food
8 insecurity, the disaggregated data on students served reflecting
9 the students' race, gender identity, sexual orientation,
10 parenting status and financial aid status and recommendations on
11 the expansion of the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.

12 (f) Hunger-Free Campus Grant Fund.--The Hunger-Free Campus
13 Grant Fund is established as a special fund in the State
14 Treasury. The following shall apply to the operation of the
15 fund:

16 (1) Money in the fund shall be appropriated on a
17 continuing basis to the Department of Education for the
18 purpose of awarding grants under this section.

19 (2) The sum of \$1,000,000 shall be transferred from the
20 General Fund to the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Fund to be used
21 exclusively for the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Fund.

22 (g) Definitions.--As used in this section, the following
23 words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this
24 subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

25 "Public institution of higher education." Any of the
26 following:

27 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A.

28 (2) A rural regional college established under Article
29 XIX-G.

30 (3) A university within the State System of Higher

1 Education under Article XX-A.

2 (4) A State-related institution as defined in section
3 2001-C.

4 (5) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

5 (6) The Pennsylvania College of Technology.

6 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.