
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1886 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY HARRIS, HILL-EVANS, SIEGEL, T. DAVIS, GIRAL,
ABNEY, HOHENSTEIN, SOLOMON, SCHLOSSBERG, MADDEN, BRENNAN,
MAYES, BOYD, KHAN, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, BOROWSKI, PARKER, SANCHEZ,
BULLOCK, BENHAM, FRANKEL, WEBSTER, CEPHAS, STURLA, DELLOSO,
SMITH-WADE-EL, HANBIDGE, HARKINS, KINSEY, SCOTT, McNEILL,
KENYATTA, BURGOS, DALEY, DEASY, POWELL, KINKEAD, GUENST,
SHUSTERMAN, CIRESI AND GREEN, DECEMBER 6, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, DECEMBER 6, 2023

AN ACT

1 Providing for the Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program;
2 prescribing powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Higher
3 Education Assistance Agency; providing for scholarships for
4 tuition and fees, scholarships for room and board and aid for
5 adult reeducation; and establishing the Pennsylvania Promise
6 Pilot Program Fund.

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

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
11 Promise Pilot Program Act.

12 Section 2. Definitions.

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

16 "Academic year." A 12-month period commencing on or after
17 August 1 of the calendar year.

1 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
2 Agency.

3 "Community college." An institution created under Article
4 XIX-A of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
5 Public School Code of 1949, or the act of August 24, 1963
6 (P.L.1132, No.484), known as the Community College Act of 1963.

7 "Eligible adult learner." An individual who:

8 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
9 application to the agency for aid to assist with reeducation
10 programs under section 8.

11 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
12 as determined by the agency.

13 (3) Is 24 years of age or older at the time of
14 application to the agency for aid to assist with reeducation
15 programs under section 8.

16 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
17 approved by the Department of Education.

18 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
19 of higher education.

20 (6) Has completed a Free Application for Federal Student
21 Aid (FAFSA).

22 (7) Has applied for all available Federal Pell grants,
23 State grants and institution grants.

24 "Eligible student." An individual who:

25 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
26 application to the agency for a scholarship under section 6
27 or 7.

28 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
29 as determined by the agency.

30 (3) Is less than 24 years of age or is an active member

1 of a branch of the armed services at the time of application
2 to the agency for a scholarship under section 6 or 7.

3 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
4 approved by the Department of Education within the previous
5 five years.

6 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
7 of higher education.

8 (6) Has completed a Free Application for Federal Student
9 Aid (FAFSA).

10 (7) Has applied for all available Federal Pell grants,
11 State grants and institution grants.

12 "Fees." Fixed charges to recover costs of certain services,
13 materials or activities provided. Fees may not exceed the
14 highest fixed charges set by the Board of Governors of the State
15 System of Higher Education.

16 "Full-time student." An individual enrolled in an
17 undergraduate degree program at an institution of higher
18 education and registered for a minimum of 12 credits per
19 semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the agency.

20 "Fund." The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund
21 established under section 5.

22 "Institution of higher education." Any of the following:

- 23 (1) A community college.
- 24 (2) A State-owned institution.
- 25 (3) A State-related institution.
- 26 (4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

27 "Part-time student." An individual enrolled in an
28 institution of higher education and registered for less than 12
29 credits per semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the
30 agency.

1 "Program." The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program
2 established under this act.

3 "Room and board." The standard educational expense allowance
4 for the most recent year as determined by the agency.

5 "Scholarship for room and board." A scholarship for room and
6 board awarded by the agency under section 7.

7 "Scholarship for tuition and fees." A scholarship for
8 tuition and fees awarded under section 6.

9 "State-owned institution." An institution which is part of
10 the State System of Higher Education under Article XX-A of the
11 Public School Code of 1949 and all branches and campuses of the
12 institution.

13 "State-related institution." The Pennsylvania State
14 University, Pennsylvania College of Technology, University of
15 Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University and associated
16 branch campuses of the universities.

17 "Tuition." An amount not to exceed the maximum undergraduate
18 in-State tuition rate established by the Board of Governors of
19 the State System of Higher Education for rendering educational
20 services, as enumerated in Article XX-A of the Public School
21 Code of 1949. The agency, at its discretion, may increase the
22 maximum amount.

23 Section 3. Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program.

24 The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program is established within
25 the agency.

26 Section 4. Procedure.

27 (a) Agency.--The agency shall administer the program and
28 carry out this act.

29 (b) Regulations.--The agency may promulgate regulations
30 necessary to administer this act.

1 Section 5. Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund.

2 (a) Fund.--The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund is
3 established in the State Treasury.

4 (b) Administration of fund.--Money in the fund is
5 appropriated to the agency on an ongoing basis to carry out this
6 act.

7 (c) Contributions and investment.--

8 (1) The fund may accept gifts, donations, legacies or
9 any other revenues.

10 (2) Interest earned by the fund shall remain in the
11 fund.

12 (d) Purpose.--Money in the fund shall be used for the
13 purpose stated in this act.

14 (e) Nonlapsing.--Money in the fund shall not lapse and shall
15 be available in subsequent fiscal years to be used in accordance
16 with the provisions of this act.

17 (f) Allocation.--For fiscal year 2024-2025, the agency shall
18 allocate:

19 (1) No more than \$10,000,000 from the fund for eligible
20 adult learners.

21 (2) No more than \$125,000,000 from the fund to eligible
22 students attending a State-owned institution in accordance
23 with sections 6 and 7.

24 (3) No more than \$50,000,000 from the fund to eligible
25 students attending a State-related institution in accordance
26 with sections 6 and 7.

27 (4) No more than \$35,000,000 from the fund to eligible
28 students attending a community college.

29 (g) Reallocation.--Notwithstanding subsection (f), the
30 agency may allocate money from the fund to eligible students

1 attending an institution of higher education in accordance with
2 sections 6 and 7.

3 (h) Administrative costs.--For fiscal year 2024-2025, the
4 agency may utilize no more than \$5,000,000 from the fund to
5 cover the agency's costs associated with administering and
6 operating the program.

7 (i) Interfund transfer.--No later than July 1, 2024, the sum
8 of \$225,000,000 shall be transferred from the General Fund to
9 the fund.

10 Section 6. Scholarship for tuition and fees.

11 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
12 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
13 students for a scholarship for tuition and fees as provided in
14 this section.

15 (b) Scholarship at State-owned or State-related
16 institution.--An eligible student may receive a scholarship for
17 tuition and fees at a State-owned institution or State-related
18 institution for the academic year in an amount not to exceed the
19 outstanding tuition and fees after Federal, State and
20 institution grants have been applied, if the eligible student:

21 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
22 exceed \$200,000; and

23 (2) is enrolled full time.

24 (c) Scholarship at community college.--An eligible student
25 may receive a scholarship at a community college for the
26 academic year in an amount not to exceed the outstanding tuition
27 and fees after Federal, State and institution grants have been
28 applied if, at a minimum, the eligible student is enrolled full
29 time.

30 (d) Review and approval.--

1 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
2 under this section.

3 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
4 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or
5 (c) and if the eligible student submitting the application
6 meets the requirements of this act.

7 (e) Distribution of scholarship.--Once an eligible student
8 has been approved for a scholarship for tuition and fees, the
9 agency shall, upon receipt of an outstanding balance from an
10 institution of higher education, pay the outstanding tuition and
11 fee balance owed by the eligible student directly to the
12 institution of higher education.

13 (f) Limitation on scholarship.--Notwithstanding any
14 provision of this act to the contrary, the agency may not issue
15 a scholarship in excess of the outstanding balance for tuition
16 and fees received from an institution of higher education.

17 (g) Renewal.--

18 (1) The scholarship for tuition and fees may not exceed
19 one academic year.

20 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
21 previously approved eligible students to recertify their
22 eligibility.

23 (3) An eligible student at a State-owned institution or
24 State-related institution who has not exceeded the limitation
25 in subsection (i) may reapply for the scholarship for tuition
26 and fees if the eligible student:

27 (i) Is enrolled full time.

28 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress as
29 determined by the institution of higher education, unless
30 the eligible student is in the first year of college.

1 (iii) While attending a State-owned institution or
2 State-related institution, has a total annual household
3 income that does not exceed \$200,000.

4 (4) An eligible student at a community college who has
5 not exceeded the limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for
6 the scholarship for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

7 (i) Is enrolled full time or part time.

8 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress,
9 unless the eligible student is in the first year of
10 college.

11 (h) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
12 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
13 the academic year which the eligible student received a
14 scholarship for tuition and fees. If the eligible student is not
15 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
16 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
17 (g).

18 (i) Limitation to scholarship.--

19 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
20 for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

21 (i) While attending a community college, has
22 completed no more than four academic years or has earned
23 an associate's degree, except as provided in paragraph
24 (2).

25 (ii) While attending a State-owned institution or
26 State-related institution, has completed four academic
27 years or has earned a bachelor's degree.

28 (2) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
29 scholarship for tuition and fees under this section may not
30 receive the scholarship if the local sponsor has not made the

1 payment required under section 1913-A(a)(2) of the act of
2 March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School
3 Code of 1949.

4 (3) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for no
5 more than four academic years at an institution of higher
6 education.

7 Section 7. Scholarship for room and board.

8 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
9 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
10 students for a scholarship for room and board as provided in
11 this section.

12 (b) Scholarship at State-owned institution or State-related
13 institution.--An eligible student at a State-owned institution
14 or State-related institution may receive a scholarship for room
15 and board for the academic year after Federal, State and
16 institution grants have been applied if the eligible student:

17 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
18 exceed \$60,000; and

19 (2) is enrolled full time.

20 (c) Scholarship at community college.--An eligible student
21 at a community college may receive a scholarship for room and
22 board for the academic year after Federal, State and institution
23 grants have been applied, if the eligible student:

24 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
25 exceed \$60,000; and

26 (2) is enrolled full time or part time.

27 (d) Review and approval.--

28 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
29 under this section.

30 (2) The agency may approve an application if the

1 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or
2 (c) and if the eligible student meets the requirements of
3 this act.

4 (e) Distribution of scholarship at State-owned institution
5 or State-related institution.--If an eligible student has been
6 approved for a scholarship for room and board, the agency shall,
7 upon receipt of an outstanding balance from the State-owned
8 institution or State-related institution, pay the outstanding
9 balance for room and board owed by the eligible student directly
10 to the institution.

11 (f) Distribution of scholarship at community colleges.--If
12 an eligible student has been approved for a scholarship for room
13 and board, the agency shall pay a scholarship for room and board
14 in a manner decided by the agency.

15 (g) Limitation on scholarship.--

16 (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and
17 notwithstanding any provision of this act to the contrary,
18 the agency may not issue a scholarship for room and board in
19 excess of the outstanding balance received from a State-owned
20 institution or State-related institution.

21 (2) The agency may issue a scholarship for room and
22 board in excess of the outstanding balance received from a
23 community college.

24 (3) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
25 scholarship for room and board under this section may not
26 receive the scholarship if the local sponsor as defined under
27 section 1901-A(2) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,
28 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, has not made
29 the payment required under section 1913-A(a)(2) of the Public
30 School Code of 1949.

1 (h) Renewal.--

2 (1) A scholarship for room and board may not exceed one
3 academic year.

4 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
5 previously approved eligible students to recertify the
6 eligible student's eligibility.

7 (3) An eligible student who has not exceeded the
8 limitation in subsection (j) may reapply for the scholarship
9 for room and board if the student is enrolled full time at a
10 State-owned institution or State-related institution or is
11 enrolled full time or part time at a community college and:

12 (i) is making satisfactory academic progress, unless
13 the eligible student is in the first year of college; and

14 (ii) has a total annual household income that does
15 not exceed \$60,000.

16 (i) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
17 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
18 the academic year for which the eligible student received a
19 scholarship for room and board. If an eligible student is not
20 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
21 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
22 (h).

23 (j) Limitation to eligibility.--

24 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
25 for room and board if the eligible student:

26 (i) Except as provided in paragraph (2), has
27 completed four academic years or has earned an
28 associate's degree while attending a community college.

29 (ii) Has completed four academic years or has earned
30 a bachelor's degree while attending a State-owned

1 institution or State-related institution.

2 (2) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for
3 two academic years at a State-owned institution or State-
4 related institution if eligibility under paragraph (1)(i) has
5 been exhausted.

6 Section 8. Aid for adult reeducation.

7 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
8 form and manner as determined by the agency, from an eligible
9 adult learner for aid for adult reeducation.

10 (b) Eligibility.--An eligible adult learner may receive
11 assistance for aid for adult reeducation programs for the
12 academic year the eligible adult learner:

13 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
14 exceed \$200,000; and

15 (2) has applied for and been accepted into an adult
16 reeducation program or adult reeducation certificate program,
17 or is enrolled full time or part time in an institution of
18 higher education.

19 (c) Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate
20 Scholarship Program.--Notwithstanding any provisions of law, the
21 agency may use money allocated for adult reeducation for the
22 Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate Scholarship
23 Program.

24 (d) Review and approval.--

25 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
26 under this section.

27 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
28 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) and
29 if the eligible adult learner meets the requirements of this
30 section.

1 (e) Priority.--When reviewing an application for aid under
2 this section, the agency shall prioritize aid for programs that
3 lead to an industry-recognized credential that is articulated
4 with college credit. The agency shall annually determine and
5 post on its publicly accessible Internet website industry-
6 recognized credentialed programs which qualify for aid priority
7 under this section.

8 (f) Distribution of aid.--If an eligible adult learner has
9 been approved for aid under this section, the agency shall, upon
10 receipt of an outstanding balance from an institution of higher
11 education, pay the outstanding balance owed by an adult learner
12 directly to the institution of higher education.

13 (g) Limitation on aid.--Notwithstanding any provision of
14 this act, the agency may not issue any aid in excess of the
15 outstanding balance received from an institution of higher
16 education.

17 (h) Renewal.--

18 (1) Aid awarded to an eligible adult learner shall not
19 exceed one academic year.

20 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
21 previously approved eligible adult learners to recertify
22 their eligibility.

23 (3) An eligible adult learner who has not exceeded the
24 limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for aid if:

25 (i) Enrolled as a full-time or part-time student at
26 an institution of higher education or a certificate
27 program approved by the agency.

28 (ii) Total annual household income does not exceed
29 \$200,000.

30 (i) Limitation to eligibility.--An eligible adult learner

1 may not receive aid if the eligible adult learner:

2 (1) Has:

3 (i) completed no more than four academic years while
4 attending a community college;

5 (ii) earned an associate's degree while attending a
6 community college; or

7 (iii) completed an industry-recognized credential
8 for which the eligible adult learner was enrolled in
9 order to qualify for aid.

10 (2) Has completed:

11 (i) four academic years or has earned a bachelor's
12 degree while attending a State-owned institution or
13 State-related institution; or

14 (ii) industry-recognized credential for which the
15 eligible adult learner was enrolled in order to qualify
16 for aid.

17 Section 9. Annual report.

18 Beginning one year after the first scholarship is awarded
19 under this act, the agency shall provide the Governor and the
20 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Appropriations
21 Committee of the Senate, the chairperson and minority
22 chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the House of
23 Representatives, the chairperson and minority chairperson of the
24 Education Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and
25 minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the House of
26 Representatives with a report which includes the following:

27 (1) The total number of students served by the program.

28 (2) A breakdown by race, gender, ethnicity and
29 socioeconomic demographic for all students served by the
30 program, if known.

1 (3) The total number of scholarships awarded and the
2 average amount awarded.

3 (4) A year-over-year comparison of the net total costs
4 at all institutions of higher education in this Commonwealth
5 which shall be used to evaluate the adequacy and success of
6 the program in lowering college costs.

7 (5) Recommendations, if any, for improving access and
8 affordability of higher education.

9 (6) A breakdown of the institutions attended by eligible
10 students in the program.

11 (7) A breakdown of the majors in which the eligible
12 students in the program are enrolled.

13 (8) Any other information.

14 Section 10. Effective date.

15 This act shall take effect immediately.