

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2383 Session of 2024

INTRODUCED BY SOLOMON, HILL-EVANS, WAXMAN, GIRAL, FREEMAN,
SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, D. WILLIAMS, DALEY, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, KHAN
AND FLEMING, JUNE 5, 2024

AS AMENDED ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
JULY 9, 2024

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Older Adult Mentor Volunteer Program; and
2 providing for duties of the Department of Education, the
3 State Board of Education, intermediate units and public
4 school entities.

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Older Adult
9 Mentor Volunteer Program Act.

10 Section 2. Legislative intent.

11 The intent of this act is to facilitate the exchange of
12 knowledge between generations, using the experience and wisdom
13 of retired older adults to enrich the lives and futures of this
14 Commonwealth's young people.

15 Section 3. Definitions.

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

1 "Department." The Department of Education of the
2 Commonwealth.

3 "Intermediate unit." An intermediate unit established under
4 Article IX-A of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known
5 as the Public School Code of 1949.

6 "MVP volunteer." An individual who is approved to
7 participate in the program.

8 "Older adult." An individual who is 55 years of age or
9 older.

10 "Program" or "MVP." The Older Adult Mentor Volunteer Program
11 established in section 4.

12 "School entity." A public school district, intermediate
13 unit, charter school, CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL, regional charter <--
14 school or area career and technical school.

15 "State board." The State Board of Education.
16 Section 4. Older Adult Mentor Volunteer Program.

17 (a) Establishment.--The Older Adult Mentor Volunteer Program
18 is established in furtherance of expanding opportunities for
19 qualified older adult volunteers to work directly with students
20 before, during or after school hours, in school buildings and
21 facilities and on school grounds. The purpose of the program is
22 to:

23 (1) Enable older adults to impart the wisdom that they
24 have accrued to the next generation and to share their unique
25 professions, skills and experiences with students.

26 (2) Provide opportunities for students to explore areas
27 of interest and develop skills, knowledge and experience in a
28 variety of subjects, trades and hobbies.

29 (b) Participation.--

30 (1) A school entity shall not be required to utilize the

1 services of qualified MVP volunteers or to participate in the
2 program beyond the requirements of section 7(b).

3 (2) The program shall not supersede or restrict a school
4 ~~district~~ ENTITY volunteer program operating outside of the <--
5 program.

6 Section 5. Guidelines.

7 ~~The~~ TO THE EXTENT THAT FUNDING IS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THIS <--
8 PURPOSE, THE department, in consultation with the State board
9 AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING, shall develop guidelines for the <--
10 program. The guidelines shall ensure the development of a
11 program that uses the wisdom and talents of older adults to
12 enhance the personal, educational and professional experiences
13 of students. The guidelines shall include the following:

14 (1) The respective roles of school entities and
15 intermediate units in program implementation and evaluation.

16 (2) Policies and procedures for operation of the program
17 by school entities in coordination with intermediate units.

18 (3) Identification of methods for use in fostering
19 participation in the program.

20 (4) Development and dissemination of application forms.

21 Section 6. Registry.

22 ~~The~~ TO THE EXTENT THAT FUNDING IS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THIS <--
23 PURPOSE, THE department shall develop and maintain, in
24 coordination with intermediate units, a central registry of
25 older adult volunteers to facilitate matching older adult
26 volunteers with students. The department shall provide
27 electronic access to the registry to intermediate units and
28 school entities.

29 Section 7. Application procedures.

30 (a) General rule.--An interested older adult may apply for

1 participation in the program as an MVP volunteer by submitting
2 an application to an intermediate unit. The applicant shall
3 indicate the school entity or school entities for which the
4 applicant proposes to be an MVP volunteer.

5 (b) Duties of intermediate units, school entities and State
6 and local agencies.--Intermediate units, school entities and
7 area agencies on aging shall furnish program applications to
8 older adults upon request. An individual may submit an
9 application electronically through the publicly accessible
10 Internet websites of the department and the Department of Aging.
11 A school entity or a State or local agency, other than an
12 intermediate unit, that receives an application shall forward
13 the application to the ~~appropriate~~ intermediate unit OR <--
14 INTERMEDIATE UNITS THAT REPRESENT THE SCHOOL ENTITY OR SCHOOL
15 ENTITIES FOR WHICH THE APPLICANT PROPOSES TO BE AN MVP VOLUNTEER
16 for review and processing.

17 (c) Review.--Upon receipt of an application, an intermediate
18 unit shall review the application and, subject to 23 Pa.C.S. §
19 6344.2 (relating to volunteers having contact with children),
20 shall approve the application and add the applicant to the
21 registry as an MVP volunteer.

22 (d) Compliance with policies.--An MVP volunteer must comply
23 with the applicable policies of the school entity for which the
24 MVP volunteer has applied to serve AND WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF <--
25 23 PA.C.S. § 6344.3(G)(1) (RELATING TO CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT OR
26 PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM, ACTIVITY OR SERVICE).

27 ~~Section 8. Orientation and training.~~ <--

28 ~~A school entity that uses the services of MVP volunteers~~
29 ~~shall link older adults with students according to academic~~
30 ~~interests, professional pursuits, hobbies, skills or an~~

1 ~~identified need for an enriching exchange with an MVP volunteer.~~

2 SECTION 8. ORIENTATION. <--

3 PRIOR TO COMMENCING SERVICE AS AN MVP VOLUNTEER, A SCHOOL
4 ENTITY SHALL FURNISH AN MVP VOLUNTEER WITH THE GUIDELINES
5 DEVELOPED UNDER SECTION 5 AND ANY APPLICABLE POLICIES OF THE
6 SCHOOL ENTITY PERTAINING TO THE PROGRAM AND AN MVP VOLUNTEER
7 SHALL CERTIFY THAT THEY HAVE REVIEWED AND WILL COMPLY WITH ALL
8 APPLICABLE GUIDELINES AND POLICIES.

9 Section 9. Public awareness program.

10 The department shall undertake efforts to make older adults,
11 students and school entities aware of the existence and purpose
12 of the program. ~~The department and school entities shall also~~ <--
13 ~~undertake efforts aimed at recruiting individuals to become MVP~~
14 ~~volunteers. School entities shall identify students that may~~
15 ~~benefit from the program.~~

16 SECTION 10. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION. <--

17 A SCHOOL ENTITY THAT USES THE SERVICES OF MVP VOLUNTEERS
18 SHALL IDENTIFY STUDENTS THAT MAY BENEFIT FROM THE PROGRAM. A
19 SCHOOL ENTITY THAT USES THE SERVICES OF MVP VOLUNTEERS SHALL
20 LINK OLDER ADULTS WITH STUDENTS ACCORDING TO ACADEMIC INTERESTS,
21 PROFESSIONAL PURSUITS, HOBBIES, SKILLS OR AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR
22 AN ENRICHING EXCHANGE WITH AN MVP VOLUNTEER. A SCHOOL ENTITY
23 SHALL NOTIFY AND OBTAIN CONSENT FROM A STUDENT'S PARENT OR
24 GUARDIAN PRIOR TO LINKING A STUDENT WITH AN MVP VOLUNTEER.

25 Section ~~10~~ 11. Effective date. <--

26 This act shall take effect in 60 days.