

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 114 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY BROOKS, ARGALL, BREWSTER, STEFANO, DILLON,
BARTOLOTTA, KANE, DUSH, TARTAGLIONE, BROWN, MASTRIANO,
SANTARSIERO AND L. WILLIAMS, JANUARY 9, 2023

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JANUARY 9, 2023

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 terms and courses of study,
6 further providing for firefighter and emergency service
7 training and establishing the Secondary Education Fire
8 Training Pilot Program and the Fire Training Fund.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Section 1550 of the act of March 10, 1949
12 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
13 amended to read:

14 Section 1550. Firefighter and Emergency Service Training.--

15 (a) [Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year and each school
16 year thereafter, a school district] A school entity or nonpublic
17 school may offer firefighter and emergency service training as
18 credit-earning courses to students of the age of sixteen (16)
19 years or older, except as otherwise provided in subsection (c).

20 Such courses may include:

1 (1) Training as a Firefighter I from the National Board on
2 Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

3 (2) Training as an emergency medical technician pursuant to
4 the act of July 3, 1985 (P.L.164, No.45), known as the
5 "Emergency Medical Services Act."

6 (b) A school [district] entity or nonpublic school that
7 offers firefighter and emergency service training as credit-
8 earning courses shall provide transportation to and supervision
9 during any firefighter and emergency service training program
10 that takes place off school grounds. Supervision of training
11 shall be conducted as a cooperative education program in
12 accordance with the provisions of 22 Pa. Code § 11.28 (relating
13 to out-of-school programs and part-time employment).

14 (c) The Secondary Education Fire Training Pilot Program is
15 established. The purpose of the pilot program is to provide high
16 school students with instruction through a partnership between
17 institutions of higher education and school entities or
18 nonpublic schools, or both, to increase the number of
19 individuals capable of becoming volunteer firefighters. The
20 pilot program shall be implemented in accordance with section 7
21 of the act of October 24, 2012 (P.L.1209, No.151), known as the
22 Child Labor Act, and the following:

23 (1) The State Fire Commissioner shall accept proposals from
24 institutions of higher education in this Commonwealth for the
25 pilot program. From the proposals submitted, the State Fire
26 Commissioner shall select three institutions of higher education
27 to offer the pilot program. The State Fire Commissioner, to the
28 greatest extent practicable, shall select one institution of
29 higher education each from the eastern, central and western
30 regions of this Commonwealth. Nothing in this section shall

1 prohibit an institution of higher education from incorporating
2 emergency medical services instruction in the pilot program.

3 (2) An institution of higher education selected by the State
4 Fire Commissioner shall operate the pilot program by entering
5 into an agreement with a school entity or nonpublic school, or
6 both, for the provision of fire instruction to students who are
7 in at least the ninth grade and leading to Firefighter I
8 certification.

9 (3) A nonlapsing, restricted account is established in the
10 State Treasury, to be known as the Fire Training Fund. The State
11 Fire Commissioner may accept monetary donations and other money
12 for deposit into the Fire Training Fund from a person, business,
13 foundation, tax-exempt organization under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3)
14 (relating to exemption from tax on corporations, certain trusts,
15 etc.) or government entity on behalf of the Commonwealth.

16 (4) Money may be appropriated to the State Fire Commissioner
17 to carry out the provisions of this subsection. Each institution
18 of higher education offering the pilot program shall receive at
19 least one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) for the
20 duration of the pilot program.

21 (5) Any funds appropriated, donated or transferred under
22 this subsection and interest earned on the Fire Training Fund
23 shall be deposited into the Fire Training Fund.

24 (6) During the pilot program, the Legislative Budget and
25 Finance Committee shall conduct a survey of volunteer fire
26 companies in the municipalities surrounding the school entities
27 and nonpublic schools that participate in the pilot program to
28 determine whether the pilot program is increasing the number of
29 volunteer firefighters and any additional recommendations. The
30 results of the survey shall be submitted to the chair and

1 minority chair of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency
2 Preparedness Committee of the Senate and the chair and minority
3 chair of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness
4 Committee of the House of Representatives within six (6) months
5 of the expiration of the pilot program.

6 (7) The pilot program shall expire four (4) years from the
7 effective date of this paragraph.

8 (d) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
9 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
10 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

11 "Institution of higher education." A community college
12 operating under Article XIX-A, a college operating under Article
13 XIX-G or a university within the State System of Higher
14 Education.

15 "Nonpublic school." A nonprofit school, other than a public
16 school in this Commonwealth, wherein a resident of this
17 Commonwealth may legally fulfill the compulsory school
18 attendance requirements of this act and which meets the
19 applicable requirements of 42 U.S.C. § 2000(d) et seq. (Civil
20 Rights Act of 1964).

21 "School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area
22 career and technical school, charter school, cyber charter
23 school or regional charter school.

24 Section 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 2024, or
25 immediately, whichever is later.