

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1150 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY MARTIN, K. WARD, PITTMAN, AUMENT, ARGALL,
PENNYCUICK, LANGERHOLC, LAUGHLIN, MASTRIANO, REGAN, STEFANO,
VOGEL AND J. WARD, APRIL 26, 2024

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, APRIL 26, 2024

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," establishing the Grow Pennsylvania
6 Scholarship Grant Program; and imposing powers and duties on
7 the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency.

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 an
12 article to read:

13 ARTICLE XXVI-M

14 GROW PENNSYLVANIA SCHOLARSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

15 Section 2601-M. Definitions.

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

19 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
20 Agency.

1 "Approved course of study." A program offered by an
2 institution of higher education that provides instruction in
3 agriculture, computer science, criminal justice, business,
4 education, engineering, nursing, trades or other in-demand
5 occupations approved by the agency in consultation with the
6 Independent Fiscal Office.

7 "Grant." A Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant awarded under
8 this article.

9 "In-demand occupation." A job that is in demand by employers
10 in this Commonwealth, requires a high level of skill and is
11 likely to provide family sustaining wages.

12 "Institution of higher education." An institution of higher
13 learning that is located in this Commonwealth and approved by
14 the agency for enrollment of grant recipients under the act of
15 January 25, 1966 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541), referred to as the
16 Higher Education Scholarship Law.

17 "Program." The Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant Program
18 established under this article.

19 "Student." A resident of this Commonwealth who attends or is
20 about to attend an institution of higher education.

21 "Trade." A program offered by the Pennsylvania College of
22 Technology and Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.
23 Section 2602-M. Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant Program.

24 The Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant Program is
25 established within the agency.

26 Section 2603-M. Agency duties.

27 The agency shall:

28 (1) Administer the program and, in its sole discretion,
29 award grants to students who submit a completed application
30 and satisfy the eligibility criteria in paragraph (4). The

1 agency shall develop an application form that students may
2 use to apply for a grant. The application of a student under
3 18 years of age must include the signature of a parent or
4 guardian.

5 (2) Use money appropriated for the purpose of awarding
6 grants.

7 (3) Award a grant to a student in an amount of \$5,000
8 per academic year or a lesser amount if the total amount of
9 Federal and State grants available to the student exceeds the
10 educational cost as determined by the agency.

11 (4) Establish eligibility criteria in order for a
12 student to receive a grant. The criteria shall, at a minimum,
13 include that a student must:

14 (i) Be a resident of this Commonwealth as defined by
15 the agency.

16 (ii) Be enrolled in person in an approved course of
17 study.

18 (iii) Enter into a written agreement with the agency
19 to:

20 (A) Satisfy all degree requirements and other
21 requirements under this article.

22 (B) Commence employment in this Commonwealth
23 within one year after completion of an approved
24 course of study culminating in a bachelor's or
25 associate's degree. The employment must be in a
26 field, as determined by the agency, related to the
27 approved course of study for a period of 15 months
28 for each academic year the student received a grant,
29 unless the agency determines that there are
30 extenuating circumstances.

1 (C) Reimburse the Commonwealth all amounts
2 received under this article, including interest, as
3 determined by the agency, if the student fails to
4 comply with clauses (A) and (B).

5 (5) Monitor and verify a student's compliance with the
6 agreement and enforce repayment of all grants for a student
7 who does not comply with the provisions of this section,
8 including use of all lawful collection procedures and of
9 private collection agencies.

10 Section 2604-M. Term of grant.

11 A grant shall be for a maximum of four academic years.

12 Section 2605-M. Grant priority.

13 Grants shall be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis
14 and in subsequent years first priority for awarding grants shall
15 be given to renewal applicants.

16 Section 2606-M. Limitations.

17 The number of grants shall be limited to the amount of money
18 appropriated to the agency for the program.

19 Section 2607-M. Termination.

20 If a student terminates enrollment in the approved course of
21 study during the academic year or prior to completion of the
22 approved course of study, the institution of higher education
23 shall notify the agency in writing and shall return any unused
24 portion of the grant to the agency.

25 Section 2608-M. Reimbursed and returned money.

26 Money reimbursed and returned under sections 2603-M and 2607-
27 M shall be used to provide additional grants.

28 Section 2609-M. Exception.

29 The agency shall postpone the work requirement under section
30 2603-M for extenuating circumstances, as determined by the

1 agency, or if the student enrolls in a higher level degree
2 program. A student that enrolls in a higher level degree program
3 must provide the agency with documentation showing continual
4 status as a full-time student in order to be given a
5 postponement by the agency under this section.

6 Section 2610-M. Taxation.

7 Grants received by a student shall not be considered taxable
8 income for purposes of Article III of the act of March 4, 1971
9 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

10 Section 2611-M. Financial assistance.

11 Grants shall not be considered financial assistance or
12 appropriations to the approved educational institution.

13 Section 2612-M. Duties of Independent Fiscal Office.

14 The Independent Fiscal Office shall provide advice to the
15 agency with regard to the identification of in-demand
16 occupations. No later than December 31, 2024, and each year
17 thereafter, the Independent Fiscal Office shall develop and
18 transmit a list of in-demand occupations to the agency. In the
19 development of the list of in-demand occupations, the
20 Independent Fiscal Office shall consult with the Department of
21 Labor and Industry, business and industry trade associations,
22 employee organizations and other parties that may provide
23 information beneficial to the development of the list.

24 Section 2613-M. Report.

25 The agency shall prepare and submit to the Governor and the
26 General Assembly no later than December 31, 2025, and each year
27 thereafter, a report detailing the operation of the program. The
28 report shall, at a minimum, include:

29 (1) A list of the in-demand occupation for what grants
30 may be sought.

- 1 (2) The number of grant applicants.
- 2 (3) The number of grants awarded to students.
- 3 (4) The number of grants awarded to students by approved
4 course of study.
- 5 (5) The number of grants awarded to students by
6 institution of higher education.
- 7 (6) The average value of a grant award.
- 8 (7) The number of grant recipients that are employed and
9 meeting the work requirement under section 2603-M(4)(iii)(B).
- 10 (8) The number of grant recipients that are employed and
11 meeting the work requirement by occupation.
- 12 (9) The number of grant recipients that have not met the
13 work requirement.
- 14 (10) The amount of money reimbursed to the Commonwealth
15 by grant recipients that have not met the work requirement.
- 16 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.