
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1206 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY YOUNG, SCHLOSSBERG, CIRESI, GALLOWAY, WEBSTER,
N. NELSON, BURGOS AND D. WILLIAMS, APRIL 16, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 16, 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 terms and courses of study,
6 further providing for pandemic of 2020; and establishing the
7 COVID-19 School Reopening Task Force.

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

10 Section 1. Section 1501.8 of the act of March 10, 1949
11 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
12 amended by adding a subsection to read:

13 Section 1501.8. Pandemic of 2020.--* * *

14 (m.2) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary,
15 the following shall apply:

16 (1) Each school entity shall update its continuity of
17 education plan submitted to the Department of Education before
18 the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. The updated plan
19 shall specify a comprehensive framework for school operations in
20 anticipation of reopening school buildings and conducting in-

1 person instruction. The updated plan shall take into
2 consideration any guideline issued by the Governor and the
3 Secretary of Health to ensure the health and safety of students,
4 parents, school employes and the community. The updated plan
5 must include the following:

6 (i) Procedures to provide the continuation of education plan
7 to students using alternative means during any period of closure
8 in the future and specific information regarding technology
9 resources that will be used to deliver education.

10 (ii) Procedures for a student who receives services under an
11 individualized education plan to ensure the student receives a
12 free and appropriate public education as required by law.

13 (iii) An assessment of each student's academic needs due to
14 the pandemic and any compensatory instruction and services
15 provided.

16 (iv) Classroom and building operation logistics to ensure
17 the health and safety of students and school employes.

18 (v) Procedures for food distribution both in-person and
19 during periods of closure.

20 (vi) Procedures for bus transportation of students.

21 (vii) Procedures for training school employes on proper
22 cleaning and sanitation of school facilities, and the school's
23 protocols on providing personal protective equipment,
24 appropriate cleaning materials and supplies for school employes
25 assigned to clean the facilities.

26 (viii) Measures to increase counseling and mental health
27 services for students.

28 (2) The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the
29 Secretary of Health, shall develop reopening guidelines
30 consistent with the Governor's phases of red, yellow and green

1 for reopening regions in this Commonwealth. The Department of
2 Education shall provide guidance to school entities and
3 intermediate units on provisions listed in paragraph (1). The
4 guidelines shall provide requirements each school entity must
5 meet prior to reopening and shall be updated with the most
6 current procedures.

7 (3) The Department of Education may provide technical
8 assistance needed by school entities and intermediate units.

9 (4) A school entity shall post the plan on the school
10 entity's publicly accessible Internet website.

11 * * *

12 Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

13 Section 1501.10. COVID-19 School Reopening Task Force.--(a)
14 The COVID-19 School Reopening Task Force is established.

15 (b) The purpose of the task force shall be to examine all
16 health and safety concerns regarding the successful reopening
17 and operation of school entities during the pandemic of 2020 and
18 into the future, and to put Pennsylvania's students into in-
19 person classrooms as safely as possible.

20 (c) The task force shall consist of the following members:

21 (1) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

22 (2) One member appointed by the President pro tempore of the
23 Senate.

24 (3) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of
25 Representatives.

26 (4) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the
27 Senate.

28 (5) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House
29 of Representatives.

30 (6) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of

1 the Appropriations Committee of the Senate.

2 (7) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
3 the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

4 (8) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
5 the Education Committee of the Senate.

6 (9) The majority chairperson and the minority chairperson of
7 the Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

8 (d) All members shall be appointed within ten (10) days of
9 the effective date of this section.

10 (e) The task force shall hold an organizational meeting not
11 later than fifteen (15) days following the effective date of
12 this section.

13 (f) Vacancies on the task force shall be filled by the
14 original appointing authority.

15 (g) The task force shall elect two (2) task force
16 chairpersons, one from the Senate and one from the House of
17 Representatives.

18 (h) The task force shall hold meetings at the joint call of
19 the chairpersons.

20 (i) The task force shall hold six (6) or more public
21 hearings on the matters to be considered by the task force. All
22 meetings and public hearings of the task force shall be held in
23 conformity with 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

24 (j) Seven (7) members of the task force shall constitute a
25 quorum at a meeting.

26 (k) The task force members shall receive no compensation for
27 their services but shall be reimbursed for all necessary travel
28 and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the
29 performance of their duties as members.

30 (l) The task force shall have the following powers and

1 duties:

2 (1) Review all issues related to the safe return of students
3 and draft plans for school districts' use.

4 (2) Evaluate and make recommendations on the following:

5 (i) The potential staggering of school schedules to reduce
6 the size of classrooms and open space gatherings.

7 (ii) Enhanced cleaning procedures of buildings and buses.

8 (iii) Implementation of additional policies related to
9 personal protective equipment, air quality measurements and
10 enhanced filtration.

11 (iv) Meal preparation and serving procedures.

12 (v) After-school activity precautions to mitigate the
13 potential spread of germs.

14 (vi) Redesigning of facilities to enhance social distancing.

15 (vii) Procedures for student assemblies to enhance social
16 distancing.

17 (3) Assess the additional costs to implement the necessary
18 procedures to open schools safely.

19 (m) The task force shall consult with education
20 stakeholders, health experts, parents and other groups to create
21 a comprehensive report and recommendations for school entities.
22 The report and recommendations shall be issued not later than
23 July 31, 2021.

24 (n) As used in this section, the following words and phrases
25 shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless
26 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

27 "School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area
28 career and technical school, charter school, cyber charter
29 school or regional charter school a student attends in order to
30 fulfill the compulsory attendance requirements of this act.

1 Section 3. All regulations are abrogated to the extent of
2 any inconsistency with this act.

3 Section 4. This act shall take effect immediately.