

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 832 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY HARKINS, KIM, D. COSTA, C. PARKER, BROWNLEE, O'BRIEN, BIZZARRO, SCHWEYER, PASHINSKI, McNEILL, THOMAS, COHEN, KINSEY, J. HARRIS, MULLERY, V. BROWN, BARBIN, SAMUELSON, CARROLL, McCARTER, MAHONEY, MURT, FARINA AND ROEBUCK, MARCH 24, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 24, 2015

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 duties and powers of boards of
 6 school directors, further providing for kindergartens; and,
 7 in pupils and attendance, further providing for the
 8 definition of "compulsory school age."

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

11 Section 1. Section 503 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,
 12 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, amended
 13 September 21, 1959 (P.L.925, No.373) and October 21, 1965
 14 (P.L.601, No.312), is amended to read:

15 Section 503. Kindergartens.--(a) The board of school
 16 directors in [any school district may] all school districts
 17 shall establish and maintain kindergartens [for children between
 18 the ages of four and six years. When established, the]. A
 19 district may establish an age policy but may not deny

1 kindergarten to any child who is five years of age or older on
2 the first day of the school year. The kindergartens shall be an
3 integral part of the elementary school system of the district,
4 and be kept open for not less than two and one-half hours each
5 day for the full school term as provided in section 1501.

6 (b) The number of kindergartens in any one district shall be
7 fixed by the board of school directors, and shall be open during
8 the school year. Kindergartens shall be available to all
9 children in residence of the school district who are of the age
10 fixed by the board of school directors under subsection (a).

11 [If the average attendance in any one kindergarten in any
12 district is ten or less for the school year, the school
13 directors shall, at the close of the school year, discontinue
14 the same.]

15 (c) The board of school directors shall appoint and assign a
16 sufficient number of teachers to such kindergartens, who shall
17 be certified in accordance with the rules and regulations
18 prescribed by the [Council of Basic Education.] State Board of
19 Education.

20 (d) One hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000) collected by
21 the Department of Revenue each fiscal year under Article II of
22 the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the "Tax Reform
23 Code of 1971," shall annually be transferred to a special fund
24 within the State Treasury, which fund is hereby established. The
25 money of the fund is appropriated on a continuing basis to the
26 Department of Education for the purpose of providing grants to
27 school districts under this section. The amounts awarded to
28 school districts under this subsection shall be in addition to
29 any other amount annually appropriated for the purposes of
30 providing kindergarten and other early childhood education

1 programs in school districts, including accountability grants
2 established under section 2599.2.

3 Section 2. Section 1326 of the act is amended to read:

4 Section 1326. Definitions.--The term "compulsory school
5 age," as hereinafter used, shall mean the period of a child's
6 life from the time the child's parents elect to have the child
7 enter school, which shall be not later than at the age of [eight
8 (8)] six (6) years, until the age of seventeen (17) years. The
9 term shall not include any child who holds a certificate of
10 graduation from a regularly accredited senior high school.

11 The term "migratory child," wherever used in this subdivision
12 of this article, shall include any child domiciled temporarily
13 in any school district for the purpose of seasonal employment,
14 but not acquiring residence therein, and any child accompanying
15 his parent or guardian who is so domiciled.

16 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.