
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 424 Session of
2013

INTRODUCED BY WASHINGTON, GREENLEAF, FONTANA, WOZNIAK, FERLO,
BROWNE AND TARTAGLIONE, FEBRUARY 7, 2013

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 7, 2013

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Schools of Excellence Program.

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Short title.

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Schools of
6 Excellence Act.

7 Section 2. Legislative intent.

8 It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish the
9 permanent operation of the Schools of Excellence that will do
10 all of the following:

11 (1) Foster leadership skills through intensive and
12 acutely relevant curricula, and by tackling current, pressing
13 issues within students' respective fields, further enabling
14 them to deal with current problems in their field and
15 determine how to solve future problems as they arise.

16 (2) Enable students to live together, learn together and
17 work toward a common goal. Committed youth will be able to

1 share their talents and knowledge for the betterment of
2 others.

3 (3) Give students the freedom to take creative and
4 intellectual risks that advance their skills and vision
5 without the inhibitions found in a normal classroom.

6 (4) Educate students about the positive impact of
7 community service and encourage their participation.

8 (5) Encourage students and alumni to remain in
9 Pennsylvania.

10 (6) Provide encouragement to students from every race,
11 ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ideology and geographic
12 location in Pennsylvania, providing opportunity for all
13 students.

14 Section 3. Definitions.

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

18 "Department." The Department of Education of the
19 Commonwealth.

20 "Host site." The college or university where a School of
21 Excellence is located.

22 "Program." The Schools of Excellence Program.

23 "Schools of Excellence." The following:

24 (1) School for the Agriculture Sciences at The
25 Pennsylvania State University.

26 (2) School for the Arts at Mercyhurst College.

27 (3) School for Global Entrepreneurship at Lehigh
28 University.

29 (4) School for Information, Society and Technology at
30 Drexel University.

1 (5) School for International Studies at University of
2 Pittsburgh.

3 (6) School for Health Care at University of Pittsburgh.

4 (7) School for Science at Carnegie Mellon University.

5 (8) School for Teaching at Millersville University.

6 "Tuition free." No charge for tuition is assessed to a
7 student enrolled in a program at a participating institution of
8 higher education. For purposes of this definition, tuition does
9 not include any additional fees or surcharges that are required
10 for enrollment in a particular program.

11 Section 4. Schools of Excellence Program.

12 The Schools of Excellence Program is hereby established
13 within the department.

14 Section 5. Duties of department.

15 (a) Disciplines.--The department shall establish Schools of
16 Excellence in the following disciplines at host sites throughout
17 this Commonwealth. The disciplines shall include all of the
18 following:

19 (1) Arts.

20 (2) Agricultural sciences.

21 (3) Information, society and technology.

22 (4) International studies.

23 (5) Sciences.

24 (6) Teaching, which shall include a course of study in
25 urban teaching.

26 (7) Global entrepreneurship.

27 (8) Health care.

28 (b) Locations.--Schools of Excellence may be sponsored by
29 and located at Pennsylvania institutions of higher education
30 that previously sponsored Governor's Schools. The department

1 shall work with the Pennsylvania institutions of higher
2 education to ensure that Schools of Excellence are
3 geographically dispersed throughout this Commonwealth and cover
4 the disciplines referenced in subsection (a). Where an
5 institution that previously sponsored a Governor's School is no
6 longer willing or able to sponsor a School of Excellence, the
7 department shall work with other institutions of higher
8 education or nonprofit organizations to find a sponsor for this
9 program.

10 (c) Administration.--In administering the program, the
11 department shall do all of the following:

12 (1) Make applications available to every public and
13 nonpublic school in this Commonwealth and include the
14 application on the department's Internet website.

15 (2) Ensure that each School of Excellence is utilizing a
16 process whereby students are selected on the basis of their
17 performance and achievement through a competitive selection
18 process and seek to ensure an economically, socially and
19 geographically diverse student population.

20 (3) Ensure the program is tuition free enabling all
21 qualified students the opportunity to enroll in the program
22 regardless of their economic circumstances.

23 (d) Scheduling.--Schools of Excellence shall be held, to the
24 extent possible, during the summer months between the end and
25 beginning of the school year. The department may grant
26 permission for a school to be held at other times during the
27 school year when circumstances and programming options warrant
28 such a change.

29 (e) Costs.--Students attending a School of Excellence shall
30 not be required to pay any tuition or fees to attend and

1 participate in a School of Excellence. Students are responsible
2 for their own costs relating to transportation to and from the
3 program.

4 Section 6. Reports.

5 (a) Requirement.--The department, on the first of October of
6 each year, shall file a report with the Governor, the chairman
7 and minority chairman of the Education Committee of the Senate
8 and the chairman and minority chairman of the Education
9 Committee of the House of Representatives.

10 (b) Contents.--The report required under subsection (a)
11 shall include the following information:

12 (1) The number of host sites participating in the
13 program.

14 (2) The number of students participating at each School
15 of Excellence.

16 (3) The number of faculty at each host site.

17 (4) The subject, focus and activities of each class.

18 Section 7. Funding.

19 The department shall provide funding for the Schools of
20 Excellence out of its general appropriation. Funding to
21 institutions sponsoring a School of Excellence shall not be a
22 reimbursement for prior year's costs. Institutions shall receive
23 funding from the department to assist with costs relating to
24 implementing a program. An institution shall not receive funding
25 in any given year for sponsoring a School of Excellence in an
26 amount that exceeds the amount expended by the Commonwealth for
27 a previous Governor's School program. This amount may be
28 adjusted every five years based on the increase to the Consumer
29 Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the
30 Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland area for the

1 preceding 12 months in the year in which the increase in funding
2 is to occur.

3 Section 20. Effective date.

4 This act shall take effect immediately.