

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 826 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY COMITTA, SCHWANK, HUGHES, COLLETT, FONTANA,  
SANTARSIERO, DILLON, COSTA, MUTH, STREET, KANE AND  
CAPPELLETTI, JUNE 23, 2023

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JUNE 23, 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 talent recruitment, further  
6 providing for Talent Recruitment Account; establishing the  
7 Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant Program and grow-your-own  
8 educator career pathways; and imposing duties on the  
9 Department of Education.

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

12 Section 1. Section 1505-K of the act of March 10, 1949  
13 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, added  
14 July 8, 2022 (P.L.620, No.55), is amended to read:

15 Section 1505-K. Talent Recruitment Account.

16 (a) Establishment.--The Talent Recruitment Account is  
17 established as a restricted account in the General Fund.

18 (b) Use of funds.--Money in the account is appropriated to  
19 the department on a continuing basis to provide grants in  
20 accordance with ~~[section 1506-K]~~ sections 1506-K and 1504-K.1.

21 The appropriation shall not lapse at the end of any fiscal year.

1 (c) Contributions.--

2 (1) The State Treasurer may accept gifts, donations,  
3 legacies or any other revenues, including allowable Federal  
4 funds, for deposit into the account.

5 (2) Any interest that accrues in the account shall  
6 remain in the account.

7 (d) Distribution of money.--Money appropriated or made  
8 available to the department for grants in accordance with  
9 sections 1506-K and 1504-K.1 shall be distributed as follows:

10 (1) Not less than 50% shall be allocated to meet the  
11 purposes of section 1506-K.

12 (2) Funding shall be distributed geographically  
13 throughout this Commonwealth.

14 Section 2. The act is amended by adding an article to read:

15 ARTICLE XV-K.1

16 GROW-YOUR-OWN EDUCATORS GRANT PROGRAM

17 Section 1501-K.1. Scope of article.

18 This article relates to grow-your-own educator career  
19 pathways and the Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant Program.

20 Section 1502-K.1. Definitions.

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

24 "Approved educator preparation program." A sequence of  
25 courses and experiences offered by an institution of higher  
26 education or alternative program provider that is reviewed and  
27 approved by the department or an education career pathways  
28 program that prepares students to transfer into an approved  
29 educator preparation program.

30 "Career and technical student organization." An in-school

1 organization that provides personal and leadership development  
2 related to a career and technical program area as recognized by  
3 the United States Department of Education.

4 "Cohort model." An educator preparation model under which a  
5 group of participants begin, proceed through and complete a  
6 pattern of courses together, allowing the participants to work  
7 collaboratively and share their experiences.

8 "Committee." As defined in section 1502-K.

9 "Community organization." A public or private not-for-profit  
10 organization with a demonstrated commitment of providing  
11 resources and services to improving the educational and social  
12 well-being of a community or a specific population within a  
13 community.

14 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
15 Commonwealth.

16 "Education support professional." An employee of a school  
17 entity who is not any of the following:

18 (1) A professional employee, as the term "professional  
19 employee" is defined in section 1101(1).

20 (2) A substitute, as the term is defined in section  
21 1101(2).

22 (3) A temporary professional employee, as the term  
23 "temporary professional employe" is defined in section  
24 1101(3).

25 "Employee organization." As the term "employe organization"  
26 is defined in section 301(3) of the act of July 23, 1970  
27 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the Public Employe Relations Act.

28 "Evidence-based." As defined in 20 U.S.C. § 7801(21)  
29 (relating to definitions).

30 "Institution of higher education." Any of the following:

1           (1) A community college under Article XIX-A.  
2           (2) A rural regional college under Article XIX-G.  
3           (3) An institution which is part of the State System of  
4           Higher Education under Article XX-A.

5           (4) A State-related institution as defined in section  
6           2001-D.

7           (5) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

8           (6) An accredited, private or independent college or  
9           university located in this Commonwealth.

10          "Partnership." As follows:

11           (1) A collaboration among at least one school entity and  
12           an institution of higher education with an approved educator  
13           preparation program.

14           (2) The term may include:

15           (i) Additional school entities.

16           (ii) Additional institutions of higher education.

17           (iii) Community organizations.

18           (iv) Employee organizations.

19          "Pathway." One of the structured grow-your-own educator  
20          career pathways established in section 1503-K.1(b).

21          "Program." The Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant Program  
22          established under section 1504-K.1.

23          "School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area  
24          career and technical school, charter school, regional charter  
25          school, cyber charter school, approved private school or  
26          chartered school for the education of the deaf or blind.

27          "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.  
28          Section 1503-K.1. Grow-your-own educator career pathways.

29          (a) Purpose.--The purpose of this section is to identify and  
30          encourage the development and implementation of evidence-based,

1 high-quality grow-your-own educator career pathways throughout  
2 this Commonwealth, which are designed to meet specific educator  
3 workforce needs of the community on a continual basis.

4 (b) Establishment.--The following grow-your-own educator  
5 career pathways are established:

6 (1) High school student-to-aspiring educator pathway,  
7 which is offered by a partnership designed for secondary  
8 students with an interest in pursuing education as a  
9 profession. Students in the pathway under this paragraph  
10 shall:

11 (i) Participate in a co-curricular program of study  
12 for education and training that is developed by the  
13 department in accordance with section 1504-K.

14 (ii) Be provided with the following:

15 (A) Ongoing mentorship from certified educators.

16 (B) Support for the transition from secondary  
17 school to a postsecondary approved educator  
18 preparation program.

19 (C) Financial assistance in the form of free or  
20 reduced tuition for eligible students that enroll in  
21 a postsecondary approved educator preparation  
22 program.

23 (D) For students participating in a program of  
24 study offered by an area career and technical school,  
25 membership in a career and technical student  
26 organization for the education profession.

27 (2) Aspiring-to-enacting educator pathway, in which a  
28 partnership supports participants enrolled in an approved  
29 educator preparation program in successfully completing the  
30 program and obtaining certification. Programs in this pathway

1 may include teacher residency programs and teacher registered  
2 apprenticeship programs and shall continue providing supports  
3 during an enacting educator's induction period, where  
4 applicable. At a minimum, a partnership under this pathway  
5 must include the following:

6 (i) Paid clinical experience of at least one year  
7 for participants, under the guidance of qualified  
8 cooperating and mentor teachers.

9 (ii) Financial and training supports for cooperating  
10 and mentor teachers.

11 (iii) Wraparound supports to address challenges and  
12 barriers for participants, which may include financial  
13 assistance, coaching, mentoring and test preparation  
14 assistance.

15 (3) Education support professional-to-educator pathway,  
16 in which current school entity staff, including  
17 paraprofessionals and instructional aides, participate in  
18 education and training approved by the department to become  
19 full-time, certified educators in their community. A  
20 partnership offering the pathway under this paragraph shall:

21 (i) Provide flexibility in course offerings, which  
22 may include online and hybrid options and cohort models.

23 (ii) Apply wage-earning classroom time toward field  
24 experience requirements, where appropriate.

25 (iii) Identify and address barriers that  
26 participants may have encountered in accessing higher  
27 education, to the extent possible.

28 (iv) Ensure minimal out-of-pocket expenses for  
29 participants.

30 (v) Offer comprehensive support to participants,

1 including tutoring and advising.

2 (4) Community member-to-education support professional  
3 pathway, which provides technical assistance, funding and  
4 supports to recruit and provide high-quality preparation for  
5 community members who are committed to engaging in meaningful  
6 employment in the school entity in their local community. A  
7 partnership providing the pathway under this paragraph shall  
8 demonstrate that:

9 (i) barriers to recruitment and retention will be  
10 identified and addressed, to the extent possible;

11 (ii) requisite training will be provided; and

12 (iii) participants will earn appropriate credentials  
13 upon completion of the pathway program.

14 Section 1504-K.1. Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant Program.

15 (a) Establishment.--The Grow-Your-Own Educators Grant  
16 Program is established in the department.

17 (b) Purpose.--To the extent that money is appropriated for  
18 the program, the department shall award grants on a competitive  
19 basis to eligible partnerships for the purpose of establishing  
20 or expanding grow-your-own educator career pathways that meet  
21 criteria for funding.

22 (c) Funding.--Grants under the program shall be funded with  
23 money in the Talent Recruitment Account under section 1505-K and  
24 with any other money made available for this purpose.

25 (d) Priority.--The secretary shall give priority to an  
26 application for a grant under the program to partnerships that  
27 include school entities that:

28 (1) Have or previously had an acute poverty percentage  
29 equal to or greater than 30%, as calculated under section  
30 2502.53(c)(1)(ii).

1       (2) Have demonstrated shortages of educators, including  
2 inequitable access to effective educators for all students as  
3 required by 20 U.S.C. § 6311(g) (1) (B) (relating to State  
4 plans).

5       (3) Have demonstrated cooperation with one or more  
6 employee organizations in the school entity in designing the  
7 proposed program, as applicable.

8 Section 1505-K.1. Duties of department.

9       The department shall have the following powers and duties in  
10 implementing this article:

11       (1) Provide technical assistance to the eligible  
12 partnerships applying for grants under section 1504-K.1. The  
13 technical assistance shall include, without limitation, the  
14 following:

15           (i) Consultation with partnerships to assist in the  
16 planning, development and implementation of one or more  
17 grow-your-own educator career pathways.

18           (ii) Consultation with partnerships in identifying  
19 and maximizing funding from additional sources for the  
20 sustainability of the pathway beyond the grant.

21           (iii) Resources on evidence-based grow-your-own  
22 programming, which shall be posted on the department's  
23 publicly accessible Internet website.

24       (2) Within 90 days of the effective date of this  
25 paragraph and in consultation with the committee, adopt  
26 guidelines for the program including, at a minimum:

27           (i) Criteria for grant eligibility and procedures  
28 and criteria for awarding grants under the program,  
29 including prioritization of applications under section  
30 1504-K.1(d).

1           (ii) Required and allowable grant uses.

2           (iii) Permitted funding levels or limitations and  
3 the renewability of grants.

4           (iv) The form, manner and time frame for eligible  
5 partnerships to apply for a grant. Each application for a  
6 grant must include:

7                   (A) A statement of objectives and overview of  
8 the proposed education career pathway to be offered  
9 by the partnership.

10                   (B) A needs assessment, including current and  
11 future needs for an effective and diverse educator  
12 workforce based on relevant data determined by the  
13 department.

14                   (C) Documentation of agreement for the  
15 partnership, including an overview of the planning  
16 process reflecting meaningful engagement of  
17 stakeholders and commitment of an established group  
18 of educators and administrators to supporting the  
19 pathway and its participants.

20                   (D) A description of the high-quality wraparound  
21 supports to be provided to participants, as  
22 applicable.

23                   (E) A description of assessments to ensure that  
24 participants will be prepared to meet State-required  
25 competencies for educational professionals.

26                   (F) A description of how the pathway will  
27 integrate comprehensive and coordinated field  
28 experiences which embed effective educator  
29 competencies throughout the program.

30                   (G) A description of how the partnership will

1 define success, monitor progress and make program  
2 improvements.

3 (H) A description of community-based recruitment  
4 efforts, as applicable.

5 (I) A description of how participation in the  
6 program will result in an industry-recognized  
7 credential, certification, postsecondary credit  
8 attainment or employment eligibility.

9 (J) A proposed budget for the program,  
10 including:

11 (I) The amount of the grant requested.

12 (II) Additional financial resources to be  
13 used for the program.

14 (III) An outline of anticipated costs for a  
15 high-quality, sustainable program, including  
16 wraparound supports for participants, stipends  
17 for participants and their mentors, additional  
18 staffing needed for implementation and costs for  
19 trainings and instructional resources.

20 (3) Carry out all other functions necessary to implement  
21 this article, including:

22 (i) Begin awarding grants under the program no later  
23 than December 31, 2023, and by each December 1  
24 thereafter.

25 (ii) In consultation with the committee, at least  
26 every three years review the guidelines and standards,  
27 grant application and program and pathway requirements  
28 and make revisions if necessary.

29 (iii) Post all guidelines, standards and forms for  
30 implementation of this article on its publicly accessible

1 Internet website.

2 Section 1506-K.1. Annual reports.

3 (a) Submittal.--By December 31, 2024, and by each December  
4 31 thereafter, the department shall submit a report, in  
5 accordance with subsection (b), to the following:

6 (1) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
7 Appropriations Committee of the Senate.

8 (2) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
9 Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

10 (3) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
11 Education Committee of the Senate.

12 (4) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
13 Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

14 (b) Contents.--Each report under this section shall include:

15 (1) An assessment of the impact of the program.

16 (2) Recommendations for improvements to the program and  
17 grow-your-own educator career pathways.

18 (3) Relevant data concerning types of partnerships  
19 created.

20 (4) The number and demographics of participants in each  
21 pathway.

22 (5) The number and dollar amounts of grants awarded  
23 under the program.

24 (6) A description of the uses of the grants awarded  
25 under the program.

26 (c) Posting.--The department shall post each report under  
27 this section on its publicly accessible Internet website.

28 Section 1507-K.1. Existing collective bargaining agreements.

29 Nothing in this article shall be construed to supersede or  
30 preempt a provision of a collective bargaining agreement between

1 a school entity and an employee organization or a right of an  
2 employee organization under the provisions of the act of July  
3 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known as the Public Employe  
4 Relations Act.

5 Section 1508-K.1. Exclusions.

6 (a) Supplemental spending.--Grants received under this  
7 article shall supplement and not supplant existing school entity  
8 spending on educator recruitment and retention. A school entity  
9 may use a grant received under this article to pay costs related  
10 to a pathway initiated by the school entity within the 12 months  
11 prior to the effective date of this article that satisfies the  
12 requirements of section 1503-K.1. Nothing shall preclude a  
13 school entity from making an application in a subsequent year  
14 for the same purpose and amount awarded in a prior year.

15 (b) Calculation of amounts paid.--Notwithstanding any other  
16 provision of law, a grant received by a school entity under this  
17 article shall not be included in the school entity's budgeted  
18 total expenditure per average daily membership used to calculate  
19 the amount to be paid to a charter school, regional charter  
20 school or cyber charter school under section 1725-A(a)(2) and  
21 (3).

22 (c) Entitlement.--Nothing in this article shall be construed  
23 to create an entitlement or a right to financial assistance as a  
24 result of a grant received under this article.

25 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 90 days.