
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1384 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY BROWNE, BELARDI, BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE, CAPPELLI,
CURRY, FREEMAN, GEIST, GODSHALL, GRUCELA, HENNESSEY, JAMES,
W. KELLER, MANDERINO, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROEBUCK, SAINATO,
SANTONI, STURLA, THOMAS, WALKO AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 14, 2005

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 14, 2005

AN ACT

1 Providing targeted assistance to urban school districts to
2 improve early learning and development so children are better
3 prepared to succeed in school.

4 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

5 (1) Particularly in urban areas, too many children are
6 not ready to learn when they arrive at school, with many
7 children beginning first grade with at least one significant
8 factor that places them at risk of academic failure.

9 (2) Children, especially those living in poverty, should
10 be provided with high quality, early childhood learning
11 opportunities that promote early cognitive development and
12 readiness to learn.

13 (3) When learning is delayed costs of that delay
14 multiply astronomically. Studies have estimated that for
15 every dollar spent as investment in early childhood
16 initiatives, a total of \$7 in public funds would be saved
17 over the long term through decreased placement in special

1 education, decreased retention in grade and reduction in
2 later criminal and delinquent behavior, not to mention
3 expected increases in high school graduation rates and rates
4 of parental involvement in education.

5 (4) The purpose of this act is to assist urban school
6 districts in providing quality programs aimed at improving
7 early learning and development so that these children are
8 better prepared to succeed in school.

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

11 Section 1. Short title.

12 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Urban Success
13 in Schools Act.

14 Section 2. 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 "Urban school district." A public school district located
21 within a city of the first class, city of the first class A,
22 city of the second class, city of the second class A or a city
23 of the third class with a population of not less than 20,000 at
24 the most recent Federal decennial census.

25 Section 3. Funding.

26 (a) Allocation.--Funds shall be allocated to urban school
27 districts by the department from appropriations made for this
28 purpose. During the 2005-2006 school year, and each year
29 thereafter, each urban school district shall be paid:

30 (1) An amount to be determined by multiplying \$100 by

1 the urban school district's school-age average daily
2 membership in kindergarten through third grades, if the urban
3 school district's percent of enrollment from low-income
4 families exceeds 60%.

5 (2) An amount to be determined by multiplying \$50 by the
6 urban school district's school-age average daily membership
7 in kindergarten through third grades, if the urban school
8 district's percent of enrollment from low-income families is
9 less than 60%.

10 (b) Use of funds.--Funds shall be used to:

11 (1) institute or expand full-day kindergarten programs;

12 (2) develop or expand pre-school programs for children
13 who are four years of age; or

14 (3) develop or expand any of the district's other early
15 childhood development initiatives, such as Head Start.

16 (c) Accountability.--Each urban school district shall
17 maintain separate accounts in its district budget to facilitate
18 monitoring the use of these funds. The department shall develop
19 auditing guidelines to track the expenditures under this
20 section.

21 Section 4. Reports.

22 (a) District reporting.--An urban school district shall
23 provide program and fiscal reports as required by the
24 department.

25 (b) Department reporting.--Beginning in the 2006 fiscal
26 year, the department shall submit a report, no later than
27 December 1 of each year, to the Chairmen and Minority Chairmen
28 of the Appropriations and Education Committees of the Senate and
29 the Chairmen and Minority Chairmen of the Appropriations and
30 Education Committees of the House of Representatives summarizing

1 the program and fiscal reports on funds disbursed under this
2 act.

3 Section 5. Effective date.

4 This act shall take effect July 1, 2005, or immediately,
5 whichever is later.