
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 571 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY LEACH AND FONTANA, APRIL 18, 2019

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, APRIL 18, 2019

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 subjects of instruction and flag code
7 and providing for mental health, physical disabilities and
8 developmental disabilities education.

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

11 Section 1. Section 1511 of the act of March 10, 1949
12 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
13 amended to read:

14 Section 1511. Subjects of Instruction; Flag Code.--In every
15 elementary public and private school, established and maintained
16 in this Commonwealth, the following subjects shall be taught, in
17 the English language and from English texts: English, including
18 spelling, reading and writing, arithmetic, geography, the
19 history of the United States and of Pennsylvania, civics,
20 including loyalty to the State and National Government, safety
21 education, and the humane treatment of birds and animals,

1 health, including physical education, [and] physiology[,] and
2 information regarding mental health, physical disabilities and
3 developmental disabilities and music and art. Other subjects
4 shall be taught in the public elementary schools and also in the
5 public high schools as may be prescribed by the standards of the
6 State Board of Education. All such subjects, except foreign
7 languages, shall be taught in the English language and from
8 English texts: Provided, however, That, at the discretion of the
9 Superintendent of Public Instruction, the teaching of subjects
10 in a language other than English may be permitted as part of a
11 sequence in foreign language study or as part of a bilingual
12 education program if the teaching personnel are properly
13 certified in the subject fields. Each school district shall
14 provide and distribute to each pupil, enrolled in the eighth
15 grade of the public schools, one illustrated copy of the
16 National Flag Code, and shall, from time to time, make available
17 such copies as are necessary for replacements from year to year.
18 It shall be the duty of each teacher in the public schools to
19 make such use of the code as may, from time to time, seem
20 proper.

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

22 Section 1555. Mental Health, Physical Disabilities and
23 Developmental Disabilities Education.--(a) The department, in
24 consultation with the State Board of Education, shall:

25 (1) Develop, within twelve (12) months of the effective date
26 of this section, model curriculum for instruction in mental
27 health, physical disabilities and developmental disabilities.

28 The department shall, at a minimum, consult with the following
29 individuals in developing the model curriculum:

30 (i) a parent of a child with a disability;

1 (ii) a parent of a child with a mental health diagnosis;
2 (iii) a mental health advocacy organization or mental health
3 provider organization;
4 (iv) a disability advocacy organization or disability
5 provider organization;
6 (v) a school psychologist or psychological organization; and
7 (vi) a public school teacher and a private school teacher,
8 or their employe organizations.

9 (2) Integrate the model curriculum developed under paragraph
10 (1) into the health curriculum framework for school entities.

11 (3) Ensure that the model curriculum developed under
12 paragraph (1) shall:

13 (i) be age appropriate;

14 (ii) be designed in a manner that supports inclusion in all
15 aspects of public life; and

16 (iii) combat the stigma historically associated with a
17 mental health, physical disability or developmental disability
18 diagnosis.

19 (4) Publish the model curriculum developed under paragraph
20 (1) on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

21 (b) A school entity may utilize appropriate resources in
22 implementing the model curriculum developed under subsection (a)
23 (1).

24 (c) The department shall make available to each school
25 entity a list of resources and materials to assist school
26 entities in implementing the model curriculum developed under
27 subsection (a) (1).

28 (d) Definitions.--As used in this section, the following
29 words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this
30 subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

1 "Department." The Department of Education of the
2 Commonwealth.

3 "School entity." A school district, charter school, regional
4 charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or area
5 vocational-technical school.

6 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.