
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1486 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY THOMAS, AUGUST 10, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, AUGUST 10, 2015

AN ACT

1 Establishing the STEMM Pathways Initiative Program and the STEMM
2 Opportunity Fund; and conferring powers and imposing duties
3 on the Department of Education.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the STEMM
8 Pathways Initiative Act.

9 Section 2. Legislative intent.

10 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

11 (1) The economy of this Commonwealth is increasingly
12 dependent upon innovation and technology industries such as
13 advanced manufacturing, life sciences, engineering and
14 computer sciences.

15 (2) Continued and sustained economic growth in these
16 areas will depend upon a robust pipeline of a highly educated
17 and trained work force that has the knowledge, skills and
18 abilities in science, technology, engineering, mathematics
19 and manufacturing disciplines.

1 (3) STEMM education is the foundation upon which a 21st
2 century work force pipeline is built and significant
3 investments in the K-12 ecosystem, including school
4 districts, universities, industry and community-based
5 organizations, are required.

6 (4) The General Assembly intends to create a program to
7 increase exposure, educational motivation and achievement of
8 students in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and
9 manufacturing and build individual and regional capacity to
10 compete for STEMM-based jobs in the global market.

11 Section 3. Definitions.

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

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

17 "Fund." The STEMM Opportunity Fund.

18 "Program." The STEMM Pathways Initiative Program.

19 "STEMM." Science, technology, engineering, mathematics and
20 manufacturing.

21 Section 4. Establishment.

22 (a) Program.--The STEMM Pathways Initiative Program is
23 established to prepare students for STEMM careers. Under the
24 program, the department may:

25 (1) Provide grants to STEMM centers as provided under
26 section 5 to fund local STEMM education initiatives for
27 students in kindergarten through 8th grades.

28 (2) Provide scholarships to high school students as
29 provided under section 6.

30 (b) Fund.--The STEMM Opportunity Fund is established in the

1 State Treasury. Money in the fund shall be used to fund the
2 grants and scholarships provided under sections 5 and 6. The
3 following shall apply:

4 (1) The fund shall consist of all of the following:

5 (i) Money appropriated by the General Assembly for
6 inclusion in the fund.

7 (ii) Grants, donations, contributions or gifts from
8 public or private sources specifically earmarked for
9 deposit into the fund.

10 (iii) Interest, dividends and pecuniary gains from
11 investment of money in the fund.

12 (2) The sum of \$30,000,000 is appropriated to the
13 department for fiscal year 2016-2017 to implement the
14 program.

15 Section 5. Grants for local STEMM education.

16 (a) Establishment of STEMM centers.--Each intermediate unit
17 shall establish a STEMM center which shall be responsible for
18 promoting STEMM education for students in kindergarten through
19 8th grades at a local level.

20 (b) Establishment of STEMM educational councils.--Each STEMM
21 center shall establish and manage a STEMM educational council
22 which shall develop the strategic plans for local STEMM
23 education for students in kindergarten through 8th grades. A
24 STEMM educational council shall be comprised of a diverse set of
25 public and private stakeholders, including representatives from
26 local education agencies, local and regional industries, private
27 philanthropic foundations, universities, informal science
28 institutions and community-based organizations.

29 (c) Grants.--The department may provide grants to a STEMM
30 center for the purpose of funding the STEMM center's strategic

1 plans for novel and innovative approaches to local STEMM
2 education for students in kindergarten through 8th grades. In
3 order to receive a grant, a STEMM center must submit its
4 strategic plans for local STEMM education for students in
5 kindergarten through 8th grades to the department. Grants shall
6 be awarded on a competitive basis, based on the department's
7 review of a STEMM center's strategic plans, and shall match the
8 STEMM center's proposed investment amount in STEMM education on
9 a dollar-for-dollar basis.

10 Section 6. STEMM scholarships for high school students.

11 (a) Compilation.--Each intermediate unit shall compile a
12 list of the most qualified students, based on merit, from each
13 high school in this Commonwealth who are in their final year of
14 high school and are committed to attend a college or university
15 in this Commonwealth to major in STEMM. Each intermediate unit
16 shall submit its list to the department each year.

17 (b) Award.--The department may award scholarships to
18 students based on the lists compiled by each intermediate unit.
19 The scholarship shall cover the full cost of tuition at the
20 college or university. The department may promulgate rules and
21 regulations necessary to implement this section.

22 Section 7. Effective date.

23 This act shall take effect July 1, 2016, or immediately,
24 whichever is later.