

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1886 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY HARRIS, HILL-EVANS, SIEGEL, T. DAVIS, GIRAL, ABNEY, HOHENSTEIN, SOLOMON, SCHLOSSBERG, MADDEN, BRENNAN, MAYES, BOYD, KHAN, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, BOROWSKI, PARKER, SANCHEZ, BULLOCK, BENHAM, FRANKEL, WEBSTER, CEPHAS, STURLA, DELLOSO, SMITH-WADE-EL, HANBIDGE, HARKINS, KINSEY, SCOTT, McNEILL, KENYATTA, BURGOS, DALEY, DEASY, POWELL, KINKEAD, GUENST, SHUSTERMAN, CIRESI, GREEN AND TAKAC, DECEMBER 6, 2023

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, DECEMBER 12, 2023

AN ACT

1 Providing for the Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program;
2 prescribing powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Higher
3 Education Assistance Agency; providing for scholarships for
4 tuition and fees, scholarships for room and board and aid for
5 adult reeducation; and establishing the Pennsylvania Promise
6 Pilot Program Fund.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
11 Promise Pilot Program Act.

12 Section 2. Definitions.

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

16 "Academic year." A 12-month period commencing on or after
17 August 1 of the calendar year.

1 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
2 Agency.

3 "Community college." An institution created under Article
4 XIX-A of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
5 Public School Code of 1949, or the act of August 24, 1963
6 (P.L.1132, No.484), known as the Community College Act of 1963.

7 "Eligible adult learner." An individual who:

8 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
9 application to the agency for aid to assist with reeducation
10 programs under section 8.

11 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
12 as determined by the agency.

13 (3) Is 24 years of age or older at the time of
14 application to the agency for aid to assist with reeducation
15 programs under section 8.

16 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
17 approved by the Department of Education.

18 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
19 of higher education.

20 (6) Has completed a Free Application for Federal Student
21 Aid (FAFSA).

22 (7) Has applied for all available Federal ~~Pell~~ grants, <--
23 State grants and institution grants.

24 "Eligible student." An individual who:

25 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
26 application to the agency for a scholarship under section 6
27 or 7.

28 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
29 as determined by the agency.

30 (3) Is less than 24 years of age or is an active member

1 of a branch of the armed services at the time of application
2 to the agency for a scholarship under section 6 or 7.

3 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
4 approved by the Department of Education within the previous
5 five years.

6 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
7 of higher education.

8 (6) Has completed a Free Application for Federal Student
9 Aid (FAFSA).

10 (7) Has applied for all available Federal ~~Pell~~ grants, <--
11 State grants and institution grants.

12 "Fees." Fixed charges to recover costs of certain services,
13 materials or activities provided. Fees may not exceed the
14 highest fixed charges set by the Board of Governors of the State
15 System of Higher Education.

16 "Full-time student." An individual enrolled in an
17 undergraduate degree program at an institution of higher
18 education and registered for a minimum of 12 credits per
19 semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the agency.

20 "Fund." The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund
21 established under section 5.

22 "INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION." AN <--
23 INSTITUTION OPERATED NOT FOR PROFIT, LOCATED IN AND INCORPORATED
24 OR CHARTERED BY THE COMMONWEALTH AND ENTITLED TO CONFER DEGREES
25 AS SPECIFIED IN 24 PA.C.S. § 6505 (RELATING TO POWER TO CONFER
26 DEGREES) AND TO APPLY ITSELF THE DESIGNATION "COLLEGE" OR
27 "UNIVERSITY" AS PROVIDED FOR BY THE STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS
28 PRESCRIBED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION UNDER 24 PA.C.S. CH.
29 65 (RELATING TO PRIVATE COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND SEMINARIES).

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

- 1 (1) A community college.
- 2 (2) A State-owned institution.
- 3 (3) A State-related institution.
- 4 (4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.
- 5 (5) AN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION. <--

6 "Part-time student." An individual enrolled in an
7 institution of higher education and registered for less than 12
8 credits per semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the
9 agency.

10 "Program." The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program
11 established under this act.

12 "Room and board." The standard educational expense allowance
13 for the most recent year as determined by the agency.

14 "Scholarship for room and board." A scholarship for room and
15 board awarded by the agency under section 7.

16 "Scholarship for tuition and fees." A scholarship for
17 tuition and fees awarded under section 6.

18 "State-owned institution." An institution which is part of
19 the State System of Higher Education under Article XX-A of the
20 Public School Code of 1949 and all branches and campuses of the
21 institution.

22 "State-related institution." The Pennsylvania State
23 University, Pennsylvania College of Technology, University of
24 Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University and associated
25 branch campuses of the universities.

26 "Tuition." An amount not to exceed the maximum undergraduate
27 in-State tuition rate established by the Board of Governors of
28 the State System of Higher Education for rendering educational
29 services, as enumerated in Article XX-A of the Public School
30 Code of 1949. The agency, at its discretion, may increase the

1 maximum amount.

2 Section 3. Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program.

3 The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program is established within
4 the agency.

5 Section 4. Procedure.

6 (a) Agency.--The agency shall administer the program and
7 carry out this act.

8 (b) Regulations.--The agency may promulgate regulations
9 necessary to administer this act.

10 Section 5. Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund.

11 (a) Fund.--The Pennsylvania Promise Pilot Program Fund is
12 established in the State Treasury.

13 (b) Administration of fund.--Money in the fund is
14 appropriated to the agency on an ongoing basis to carry out this
15 act.

16 (c) Contributions and investment.--

17 (1) The fund may accept gifts, donations, legacies or
18 any other revenues.

19 (2) Interest earned by the fund shall remain in the
20 fund.

21 (d) Purpose.--Money in the fund shall be used for the
22 purpose stated in this act.

23 (e) Nonlapsing.--Money in the fund shall not lapse and shall
24 be available in subsequent fiscal years to be used in accordance
25 with the provisions of this act.

26 (f) Allocation.--For fiscal year 2024-2025, the agency shall
27 allocate:

28 (1) No more than \$10,000,000 from the fund for eligible
29 adult learners.

30 (2) No more than \$125,000,000 from the fund to eligible

1 students attending a State-owned institution in accordance
2 with sections 6 and 7.

3 (3) No more than \$50,000,000 from the fund to eligible
4 students attending a State-related institution in accordance
5 with sections 6 and 7.

6 (4) NO MORE THAN \$50,000,000 FROM THE FUND TO ELIGIBLE <--
7 STUDENTS ATTENDING AN INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
8 EDUCATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 6 AND 7.

9 ~~(4)~~ (5) No more than \$35,000,000 from the fund to <--
10 eligible students attending a community college.

11 (g) Reallocation.--Notwithstanding subsection (f), the
12 agency may allocate money from the fund to eligible students
13 attending an institution of higher education in accordance with
14 sections 6 and 7.

15 (h) Administrative costs.--For fiscal year 2024-2025, the
16 agency may utilize no more than \$5,000,000 from the fund to
17 cover the agency's costs associated with administering and
18 operating the program.

19 (i) Interfund transfer.--No later than July 1, 2024, the sum
20 of ~~\$225,000,000~~ \$275,000,000 shall be transferred from the <--
21 General Fund to the fund.

22 Section 6. Scholarship for tuition and fees.

23 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
24 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
25 students for a scholarship for tuition and fees as provided in
26 this section.

27 ~~(b) Scholarship at State owned or State related <--~~
28 ~~institution. An eligible student may receive a scholarship for~~
29 ~~tuition and fees at a State owned institution or State related~~
30 ~~institution for the academic year in an amount not to exceed the~~

1 ~~outstanding tuition and fees after Federal, State and~~
2 ~~institution grants have been applied, if the eligible student:~~

3 (B) SCHOLARSHIP AT STATE-OWNED OR STATE-RELATED INSTITUTION <--
4 OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.--AN ELIGIBLE
5 STUDENT MAY RECEIVE A SCHOLARSHIP FOR TUITION AND FEES AT A
6 STATE-OWNED INSTITUTION, STATE-RELATED INSTITUTION OR
7 INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE ACADEMIC
8 YEAR. THE AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP MAY NOT EXCEED THE LESSER OF
9 THE MAXIMUM UNDERGRADUATE IN-STATE TUITION RATE ESTABLISHED BY
10 THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
11 FOR RENDERING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AS ENUMERATED IN ARTICLE XX-A
12 OF THE ACT OF MARCH 10, 1949 (P.L.30, NO.14), KNOWN AS THE
13 PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE OF 1949, UNLESS THE AGENCY, IN ITS
14 DISCRETION, INCREASES THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT, OR THE OUTSTANDING
15 TUITION AND FEES AFTER FEDERAL, STATE AND INSTITUTION GRANTS
16 HAVE BEEN APPLIED, IF THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT:

17 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
18 exceed \$200,000; and

19 (2) is enrolled full time.

20 (c) Scholarship at community college.--An eligible student
21 may receive a scholarship at a community college for the
22 academic year in an amount not to exceed the outstanding tuition
23 and fees after Federal, State and institution grants have been
24 applied if, at a minimum, the eligible student is enrolled full
25 time.

26 (d) Review and approval.--

27 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
28 under this section.

29 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
30 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or

1 (c) and if the eligible student submitting the application
2 meets the requirements of this act.

3 (e) Distribution of scholarship.--Once an eligible student
4 has been approved for a scholarship for tuition and fees, the
5 agency shall, upon receipt of an outstanding balance from an
6 institution of higher education, pay the outstanding tuition and
7 fee balance owed by the eligible student directly to the
8 institution of higher education.

9 (f) Limitation on scholarship.--Notwithstanding any
10 provision of this act to the contrary, the agency may not issue
11 a scholarship in excess of the outstanding balance for tuition
12 and fees received from an institution of higher education.

13 (g) Renewal.--

14 (1) The scholarship for tuition and fees may not exceed
15 one academic year.

16 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
17 previously approved eligible students to recertify their
18 eligibility.

19 (3) An eligible student at a State-owned institution ~~or~~, <--
20 State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF <--
21 HIGHER EDUCATION who has not exceeded the limitation in
22 subsection (i) may reapply for the scholarship for tuition
23 and fees if the eligible student:

24 (i) Is enrolled full time.

25 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress as
26 determined by the institution of higher education, unless
27 the eligible student is in the first year of college.

28 (iii) While attending a State-owned institution ~~or~~, <--
29 State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF <--
30 HIGHER EDUCATION, has a total annual household income

1 that does not exceed \$200,000.

2 (4) An eligible student at a community college who has
3 not exceeded the limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for
4 the scholarship for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

5 (i) Is enrolled full time or part time.

6 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress,
7 unless the eligible student is in the first year of
8 college.

9 (h) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
10 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
11 the academic year which the eligible student received a
12 scholarship for tuition and fees. If the eligible student is not
13 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
14 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
15 (g).

16 (i) Limitation to scholarship.--

17 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
18 for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

19 (i) While attending a community college, has
20 completed no more than four academic years or has earned
21 an associate's degree, except as provided in paragraph
22 (2).

23 (ii) While attending a State-owned institution ~~or~~, <--
24 State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF <--
25 HIGHER EDUCATION, has completed four academic years or
26 has earned a bachelor's degree.

27 (2) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
28 scholarship for tuition and fees under this section may not
29 receive the scholarship if the local sponsor has not made the
30 payment required under section 1913-A(a) (2) of the ~~act of~~ <--

1 ~~March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the~~ Public School
2 Code of 1949.

3 (3) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for no
4 more than four academic years at an institution of higher
5 education.

6 Section 7. Scholarship for room and board.

7 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
8 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
9 students for a scholarship for room and board as provided in
10 this section.

11 (b) Scholarship at State-owned institution ~~or~~, State-related <--
12 institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.--An <--
13 eligible student at a State-owned institution ~~or~~, State-related <--
14 institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION may <--
15 receive a scholarship for room and board for the academic year
16 after Federal, State and institution grants have been applied if
17 the eligible student:

18 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
19 exceed \$60,000; and

20 (2) is enrolled full time.

21 (c) Scholarship at community college.--An eligible student
22 at a community college may receive a scholarship for room and
23 board for the academic year after Federal, State and institution
24 grants have been applied, if the eligible student:

25 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
26 exceed \$60,000; and

27 (2) is enrolled full time or part time.

28 (d) Review and approval.--

29 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
30 under this section.

1 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
2 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or
3 (c) and if the eligible student meets the requirements of
4 this act.

5 (e) Distribution of scholarship at State-owned institution
6 ~~or~~, State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF <--
7 HIGHER EDUCATION.--If an eligible student has been approved for
8 a scholarship for room and board, the agency shall, upon receipt
9 of an outstanding balance from the State-owned institution ~~or~~, <--
10 State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER <--
11 EDUCATION, pay the outstanding balance for room and board owed
12 by the eligible student directly to the institution.

13 (f) Distribution of scholarship at community colleges.--If
14 an eligible student has been approved for a scholarship for room
15 and board, the agency shall pay a scholarship for room and board
16 in a manner decided by the agency.

17 (g) Limitation on scholarship.--

18 (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and
19 notwithstanding any provision of this act to the contrary,
20 the agency may not issue a scholarship for room and board in
21 excess of the outstanding balance received from a State-owned
22 institution ~~or~~, State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT <--
23 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

24 (2) The agency may issue a scholarship for room and
25 board in excess of the outstanding balance received from a
26 community college.

27 (3) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
28 scholarship for room and board under this section may not
29 receive the scholarship if the local sponsor as defined under
30 section 1901-A(2) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30,

1 No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, has not made
2 the payment required under section 1913-A(a)(2) of the Public
3 School Code of 1949.

4 (h) Renewal.--

5 (1) A scholarship for room and board may not exceed one
6 academic year.

7 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
8 previously approved eligible students to recertify the
9 eligible student's eligibility.

10 (3) An eligible student who has not exceeded the
11 limitation in subsection (j) may reapply for the scholarship
12 for room and board if the student is enrolled full time at a
13 State-owned institution ~~or~~, State-related institution OR <--
14 INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION or is enrolled
15 full time or part time at a community college and:

16 (i) is making satisfactory academic progress AS <--
17 DETERMINED BY THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, unless
18 the eligible student is in the first year of college; and

19 (ii) has a total annual household income that does
20 not exceed \$60,000.

21 (i) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
22 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
23 the academic year for which the eligible student received a
24 scholarship for room and board. If an eligible student is not
25 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
26 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
27 (h).

28 (j) Limitation to eligibility.--

29 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
30 for room and board if the eligible student:

1 (i) Except as provided in paragraph (2), has
2 completed four academic years or has earned an
3 associate's degree while attending a community college.

4 (ii) Has completed four academic years or has earned
5 a bachelor's degree while attending a State-owned
6 institution ~~or~~, State-related institution OR INDEPENDENT <--
7 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

8 (2) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for
9 two academic years at a State-owned institution ~~or~~, State- <--
10 related institution OR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER <--
11 EDUCATION if eligibility under paragraph (1)(i) has been
12 exhausted.

13 Section 8. Aid for adult reeducation.

14 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
15 form and manner as determined by the agency, from an eligible
16 adult learner for aid for adult reeducation.

17 (b) Eligibility.--An eligible adult learner may receive
18 assistance for aid for adult reeducation programs for the
19 academic year the eligible adult learner:

20 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
21 exceed \$200,000; and

22 (2) has applied for and been accepted into an adult
23 reeducation program or adult reeducation certificate program,
24 or is enrolled full time or part time in an institution of
25 higher education.

26 (c) Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate
27 Scholarship Program.--Notwithstanding any provisions of law, the
28 agency may use money allocated for adult reeducation for the
29 Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate Scholarship
30 Program.

1 (d) Review and approval.--

2 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
3 under this section.

4 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
5 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) and
6 if the eligible adult learner meets the requirements of this
7 section.

8 (e) Priority.--When reviewing an application for aid under
9 this section, the agency shall prioritize aid for programs that
10 lead to an industry-recognized credential that is articulated
11 with college credit. The agency shall annually determine and
12 post on its publicly accessible Internet website industry-
13 recognized credentialed programs which qualify for aid priority
14 under this section.

15 (f) Distribution of aid.--If an eligible adult learner has
16 been approved for aid under this section, the agency shall, upon
17 receipt of an outstanding balance from an institution of higher
18 education, pay the outstanding balance owed by an adult learner
19 directly to the institution of higher education.

20 (g) Limitation on aid.--Notwithstanding any provision of
21 this act, the agency may not issue any aid in excess of the
22 outstanding balance received from an institution of higher
23 education.

24 (h) Renewal.--

25 (1) Aid awarded to an eligible adult learner shall not
26 exceed one academic year.

27 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
28 previously approved eligible adult learners to recertify
29 their eligibility.

30 (3) An eligible adult learner who has not exceeded the

1 limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for aid if:

2 (i) Enrolled as a full-time or part-time student at
3 an institution of higher education or a certificate
4 program approved by the agency.

5 (ii) Total annual household income does not exceed
6 \$200,000.

7 (i) Limitation to eligibility.--An eligible adult learner
8 may not receive aid if the eligible adult learner:

9 (1) Has:

10 (i) completed no more than four academic years while
11 attending a community college;

12 (ii) earned an associate's degree while attending a
13 community college; or

14 (iii) completed an industry-recognized credential
15 for which the eligible adult learner was enrolled in
16 order to qualify for aid.

17 (2) Has completed:

18 (i) four academic years or has earned a bachelor's
19 degree while attending a State-owned institution or
20 State-related institution; or

21 (ii) AN industry-recognized credential for which the <--
22 eligible adult learner was enrolled in order to qualify
23 for aid.

24 Section 9. Annual report.

25 Beginning one year after the first scholarship is awarded
26 under this act, the agency shall provide the Governor and the
27 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Appropriations
28 Committee of the Senate, the chairperson and minority
29 chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the House of
30 Representatives, the chairperson and minority chairperson of the

1 Education Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and
2 minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the House of
3 Representatives with a report which includes the following:

4 (1) The total number of students served by the program.

5 (2) A breakdown by race, gender, ethnicity and
6 socioeconomic demographic for all students served by the
7 program, if known.

8 (3) The total number of scholarships awarded and the
9 average amount awarded.

10 (4) A year-over-year comparison of the net total costs
11 at all institutions of higher education in this Commonwealth
12 which shall be used to evaluate the adequacy and success of
13 the program in lowering college costs.

14 (5) Recommendations, if any, for improving access and
15 affordability of higher education.

16 (6) A breakdown of the institutions attended by eligible
17 students in the program.

18 (7) A breakdown of the majors in which the eligible
19 students in the program are enrolled.

20 (8) Any other information.

21 Section 10. Effective date.

22 This act shall take effect immediately.