

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 668 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY BENHAM, ORTITAY, PASHINSKI, WAXMAN, PROBST,
HOWARD, SCHLOSSBERG, BURGOS, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, CERRATO, ROZZI,
HANBIDGE, HILL-EVANS, PARKER AND OTTEN, MARCH 23, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 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 fostering independence through
6 education, further providing for definitions, for fostering
7 independence waiver program, for outreach and for report.

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

10 Section 1. Section 2601-K of the act of March 10, 1949
11 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
12 amended by adding definitions to read:

13 Section 2601-K. Definitions.

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

17 * * *

18 "Kinship care." The care of a child by a relative or other
19 kinship caregiver of the child who has an established
20 relationship with the child when the biological or custodial

parents of the child cannot care for the child.

"Kinship caregiver." An individual who has an established relationship with a child and assumes legal responsibility for the child. The term includes any of the following:

(1) A grandparent of the child.

(2) An aunt or uncle of the child.

(3) A family friend of the child.

(4) Any other relative or individual that legally assumes responsibility for the child.

* * *

Section 2. Sections 2602-K(c) and 2603-K(b) (2) and (3) of the act are amended to read:

Section 2602-K. Fostering independence waiver program.

* * *

(c) Eligibility.--In order to receive a fostering independence waiver under this section, an individual must [be a current resident of this Commonwealth and eligible for the Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program under the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-169, 113 Stat. 1822) as administered by the Department of Human Services and must have applied for all available Federal and State grants.]:

(1) Be a current resident of this Commonwealth.

(2) Be either of the following:

(i) Eligible for the Chafee Education and Training Grant Program.

(ii) Under the care of a kinship caregiver and would have been eligible for the Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program if not under kinship care.

(3) Have applied for all available Federal and State

1 grants.

2 * * *

3 Section 2603-K. Outreach.

4 * * *

5 (b) Duties of institutions of higher education.--Each
6 institution of higher education shall do all of the following:

7 * * *

8 (2) Disseminate the information prepared under
9 subsection (a)(1) to recipients of a [Pennsylvania Chafee
10 Education and Training Grant under the Foster Care
11 Independence Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-169, 113 Stat.
12 1822)] grant under the Chafee Education and Training Grant
13 Program who are individuals eligible under section 2602-K(c)
14 and all other individuals who are eligible under section
15 2602-K(c) and post the information prepared under subsection
16 (a)(1) on the institution's publicly accessible Internet
17 website.

18 (3) To improve retention, report to the department by
19 June 30, 2021, and June 30 each year thereafter all of the
20 following:

21 (i) The number of students receiving a [Pennsylvania
22 Chafee Education and Training Grant under the Foster Care
23 Independence Act of 1999] grant under the Chafee
24 Education and Training Grant Program.

25 (ii) The number of students who apply for the
26 program.

27 (iii) The number of students participating in the
28 program.

29 (iv) The retention rates of students participating
30 in the program.

(v) The number of students who are participating in the program and have unmet financial need.

(vi) Recommendations on how to improve outreach to students who are or are potentially eligible for the program.

(vii) Recommendations on ways in which to improve the delivery of services to students who are eligible under section 2602-K(c).

(viii) Impediments to retaining students who are eligible under section 2602-K(c).

(ix) The number of students in kinship care who are participating in the program.

* * *

Section 3. Section 2605-K(1) of the act is amended and the section is amended by adding a paragraph to read:

Section 2605-K. Report.

In order to determine and maximize the effectiveness of this article, the department, in conjunction with the Department of Human Services, shall collect information provided from institutions of higher education under section 2603-K(b)(3) and prepare an anonymized report to be submitted by August 31, 2021, and by August 31 of each year thereafter, to the chair and minority chair of the Education Committee of the Senate, the chair and minority chair of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, the chair and minority chair of the Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate and the chair and minority chair of the Children and Youth Committee of the House of Representatives that contains all of the following:

(1) The number of students receiving a [Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant under the Foster Care

1 Independence Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-169, 113 Stat.
2 1822)] grant under the Chafee Education and Training Grant
3 Program.

4 * * *

5 (9) The number of students in kinship care who are
6 participating in the program.

7 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.