

CHAPTER 67  
FORMERLY  
SENATE BILL NO. 27  
AS AMENDED BY  
SENATE AMENDMENT NO. 1

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO ACCELERATED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

WHEREAS, it is vital that Delaware's public schools challenge and encourage students who are capable of doing accelerated academic work; and

WHEREAS, programs to encourage accelerated students can often be maintained by schools, after an initial-start cost, with funding roughly equivalent to what they currently receive; and

WHEREAS, the state should encourage schools to develop and implement programs to provide options for students capable of doing advanced classwork; and

WHEREAS, the integration of subjects such as the arts and trades can be important components of a program that provides opportunities for accelerated academic work; and

WHEREAS, the state's current financial restrictions require a focus on programs that can be sustained independently by schools after initial start-up assistance from the state;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making insertions as shown by underlining as follows:

§3113. Academic Excellence Start-Up Grants.

The Department of Education, through the process described herein, shall award start-up grants to public schools for the purpose of initiating new programs to offer specialized educational services to students who are capable of performing accelerated academic work, or renewing existing programs of the same description whose funding sources are expiring. The number of schools receiving such grants and the amount of such grants shall be determined based upon funds available during the relevant fiscal year. Grants shall not be awarded to supplant existing funds for current programs.

(a) Start-up grants shall be made for a single year, with the rebuttable assumption that they will be renewed for a single additional year pending available funding.

(b) Grants shall be awarded based upon the following criteria:

(1) Grants shall be awarded to programs that offer educational services specifically targeted at students who are capable of performing accelerated academic work.

(2) The quality of the proposed curriculum, qualifications of persons acting as instructors, integration with existing school programs, and sustainability of the program after expiration of its start-up grant shall be primary considerations in the awarding of grants.

(3) Programs that contain programming of the type enumerated in 14 Del.C. § 3101(6), including but not limited to programs focused on the visual and performing arts, shall be eligible to receive grants under this Section, provided that they otherwise qualify under this Section.

(4) Preference shall be given to programs that are offered during the traditional school day, or alternatively programs that provide a means for after-school transportation. Preference shall also be given to (a) programs that can demonstrate that they incorporate components of existing successful programs targeted at students who are capable of doing accelerated academic work, and (b) programs that minimize costs that do not have a direct impact in the classroom (including professional development).

(5) Preference shall be given to programs that explicitly provide for the encouragement of participation by students from diverse backgrounds, including students with disabilities.

(6) All programs awarded grants must provide a means for assessing the impact of the program on participating students' academic growth.

(7) The Department of Education shall also consider such other factors as may be recommended by the Gifted and Talented Student Task Force or its successor organization.

(c) The Department shall develop by regulation an explicit formula for evaluating proposals for grants under this section, and the scoring of such grant applications shall be considered public information. The Department shall also prepare an annual list of existing Delaware programs targeted at students who are capable of performing accelerated academic work for use by prospective grant applicants. The Department shall annually catalog the programs started with grants awarded under this Section for the purpose of allowing replication of successful programs in additional schools and school districts.

(d) "Academic work" for purposes of this statute shall consist of work in the areas of Writing, Reading, Science, Math, or Engineering, or work in other areas (including history and social studies) that specifically incorporates one of those academic fields.

Approved June 30, 2013