
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 987 Session of
2010

INTRODUCED BY LONGIETTI, OCTOBER 5, 2010 -

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, OCTOBER
5, 2010

A RESOLUTION -

1 Urging the State Board of Education with the Department of
2 Education to conduct a study of the Commonwealth's public
3 school library services for students in kindergarten through
4 grade 12, measuring and comparing access to print and
5 electronic resources, professional support and instruction in
6 the use of information and research among this Commonwealth's
7 public school entities and evaluating how funding and
8 resources are allocated for school library services in
9 relation to student and community circumstances. -

10 WHEREAS, Up-to-date school libraries include printed-
11 materials, computers and technology, video and audio materials, -
12 research tools and professional instruction and support for-
13 students; and -

14 WHEREAS, Effective school libraries include a variety of-
15 instructional and educational programs designed to meet the-
16 needs of all students, including gifted students, students with-
17 disabilities, English as a second language students, students in-
18 poverty and students from different racial and cultural -
19 backgrounds; and -

20 WHEREAS, Students and teachers need high-quality school-
21 library services and related educational resources in order to -

1 meet this Commonwealth's academic standards for research and -
2 learning in all core academic subjects, specifically addressing -
3 competencies in Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System that -
4 require students to be able to "analyze and evaluate information -
5 from a variety of sources for relevance to the research -
6 question, topic or thesis"; and -

7 WHEREAS, In a study of this Commonwealth's school libraries -
8 conducted in 1999-2000, a significant correlation between -
9 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment reading test scores of -
10 students and schools with quality school library programs and -
11 staffing proved the impact of school libraries on improved -
12 student achievement; and -

13 WHEREAS, Similar studies in 19 other states conducted over -
14 the past 16 years have supported the findings of this -
15 Commonwealth's study and demonstrated the role that school -
16 libraries play in student learning; and -

17 WHEREAS, The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has -
18 identified information, media and technology skills necessary -
19 "to ensure that students emerge from our schools with the skills -
20 needed to be effective citizens, workers and leaders in the 21st -
21 century"; and -

22 WHEREAS, Not all of this Commonwealth's students attend a -
23 public school that has a school library, and this is -
24 particularly true in impoverished rural and urban communities -
25 with larger numbers of at-risk children; and -

26 WHEREAS, Access to and instruction by a certified school -
27 librarian is also nonexistent in many schools or limited in -
28 school districts where librarians serve in multiple buildings, -
29 thus reducing hours the school library is open and available to -
30 students and teachers; and -

1 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth does not have any requirements for -
2 public schools to operate a school library or to have certified -
3 staffing, although the Public School Code does require school -
4 libraries and staffing for private schools; and -

5 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth does not provide or require -
6 dedicated funding for school library services, such as New York, -
7 which provides \$6.25 per student for school library resources -
8 and, therefore, this Commonwealth is at a disadvantage compared -
9 to neighboring states, a disadvantage which results in school -
10 library resources and school library conditions that vary widely -
11 across this Commonwealth; therefore be it -

12 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
13 Department of Education be urged to conduct a study of public -
14 school library resources and services in this Commonwealth for -
15 students in kindergarten through grade 12, measuring and -
16 comparing funding, facilities, access to print and electronic -
17 resources, professional support and programming and instruction -
18 in the use of information and research among this Commonwealth's -
19 public schools and districts and evaluating how these elements -
20 are allocated in relation to student and community -
21 circumstances, such as poverty, disability, race and English -
22 language ability; and be it further -

23 RESOLVED, That, in addition, the study is urged to include an -
24 analysis of the following for this Commonwealth, measured and -
25 quantified, when possible, per student, per school, per district -
26 and Statewide: -

27 (1) The number of public schools without a centralized -
28 school library collection in the building under the -
29 administration of a certified school librarian assigned full -
30 time to that building. -

1 (2) The ratio of certified school librarians to -
2 students. -

3 (3) The assignment of other support staffs to work in -
4 school libraries, the number of such other staffs and their -
5 qualifications. -

6 (4) The number of hours that students have access to the -
7 school library in their building per day. -

8 (5) The amount of up-to-date and useful print and -
9 electronic resources to which students and teachers have -
10 access through school library services. -

11 (6) The average age and condition of books and -
12 technology in school libraries. -

13 (7) The amount of funding from all sources being spent -
14 annually over the past ten years for school library resources -
15 and services. -

16 (8) The availability of up-to-date, functional, -
17 Internet-connected computers for student use in school -
18 libraries. -

19 (9) The kinds of other library services and programs -
20 provided by school libraries to support students and -
21 teachers. -

22 (10) Additional aspects of school libraries related to -
23 the overall purpose of this study; -
24 and be it further -

25 RESOLVED, That the Commonwealth libraries provide available -
26 support for this study as requested by the State Board of -
27 Education with the Department of Education; and be it further -

28 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
29 Department of Education be urged to request the assistance of -
30 the following organizations in conducting this study: the -

1 Education Committee of the Senate, the Education Committee of -
2 the House of Representatives, the Pennsylvania School Librarians -
3 Association, the Pennsylvania State Education Association and -
4 the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers; and be it further -

5 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
6 Department of Education be urged to provide recommendations -
7 necessary or desirable to improve and update public school -
8 library resources, services and facilities for all students in -
9 this Commonwealth, including recommendations for appropriate -
10 levels of resources, staffing and hours of access; and be it -
11 further -

12 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
13 Department of Education be urged to provide recommendations -
14 necessary or desirable to provide all students with the school -
15 library resources, facilities, programs and instruction to -
16 enable them to become successful readers, learners, researchers -
17 and consumers and producers of information; and be it further -

18 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
19 Department of Education be urged to provide recommendations -
20 necessary or desirable to address school library inequities or -
21 insufficiencies affecting disadvantaged students and -
22 communities; and be it further -

23 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
24 Department of Education be urged to conduct at least three -
25 public roundtables to receive input about a draft of the study -
26 and its recommendations; and be it further -

27 RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education with the -
28 Department of Education be urged to report to the House of -
29 Representatives the result of its study and recommendations -
30 regarding the status of this Commonwealth's school libraries and -

1 student access to them and file the report with the Chief Clerk -
2 of the House of Representatives no later than June 30, 2011. -