



To: Pennsylvania State Senate
From: Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA)
Re: Opposition to SB 1243

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the more than 5,000 school directors and administrators governing the state's school districts, intermediate units and career and technology centers, PSBA **urges your opposition to Senate Bill 1243 (Gebhard)**.

Although PSBA and its members recognize the importance of personal finance education, SB 1243 represents an unprecedented statewide legislative mandate of curriculum in public schools. PSBA's Legislative Platform directs the Association to oppose any bills which would impose such a requirement.

State law requiring schools to teach specific subjects or topics is not new. For example, section 1512.1 of the Public School Code requires schools to establish a curriculum for students to participate in physical education courses. Instead of telling schools in specific detail the aspects of physical education which must be taught, the law recognizes that local school leaders and trained educators are in the best position to make decisions related to curriculum. Similarly, section 1511 of the Public School Code requires schools to teach "English, including spelling, reading and writing..." and not the specific aspects of reading and writing they are required to teach. However, SB 1243 prescribes, in great (yet often vague) detail, the financial literacy curriculum which schools would be required to teach.

Another important note is that Section 1551 of the Public School Code currently provides a fairly detailed requirement for the Department of Education to provide comprehensive resources and other supports to assist public schools in providing personal finance/economic instruction, and our members believe that this is sufficient and the best approach.

PSBA is also compelled to oppose any new state-imposed graduation requirement, especially when school leaders, teachers, and students are just starting to implement the graduation requirements of Act 158 of 2018. As the pandemic winds down and school leaders, teachers, and students are working hard to make up for missed learning opportunities and wade through the new graduation requirements and pathways created by Act 158, adding a new graduation requirement at this time would be counterproductive. Further, PSBA and its members believe that graduation requirements should remain local decisions.

SB 1243 also imposes a new and unnecessary mandate for public schools to provide a standalone professional development course devoted specifically to financial literacy instruction. Because the state has imposed so many other professional development requirements for school employees, the state House unanimously passed a resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish an advisory committee to study the issue of training mandates for public educators. Before the state imposes any new requirements for professional development or training for school employees, the General Assembly should wait for the results of this study and any recommendations stemming therefrom.