



**Eric Hagarty**

Acting Secretary of Education



Pennsylvania Department of  
Education

## **Please See the Message from Sec. Hagarty Below:**

Dear colleagues,

I hope you are enjoying your summer and have had a chance to refresh a bit!

I wanted to make sure you were aware of some important policy updates included in the [School Code](#) signed by Governor Wolf as part of this year's budget in addition to the \$1.8 billion increased funding to education.

There are dozens of provisions, but these are the ones (in no particular order) I thought might be of most immediate interest to you:

### **Dual Enrollment**

School districts, charter schools, cyber charter schools, regional charter schools, and CTCs must have at least one dual enrollment agreement with a Pennsylvania postsecondary institution.

### **Educator Workforce**

Establishes a Committee on Education Talent Recruitment within PDE to develop programs of study for high school students interested in pursuing careers in education, requires PDE to collect and annually post information on the educator pipeline, waives the Basic Skills assessment for three years, and provides pathways to Pennsylvania certification for out-of-state teachers, including career and technical education teachers.

### **Student Meals**

All schools must assist students and families with applying for free/reduced-price lunches, and staff are prohibited from throwing out a meal after it has been served to a student – even if that student has an outstanding balance – in order to end the practice of “lunch shaming.”

### **Industry Credentials**

LEAs must include industry recognized credentials on student transcripts moving forward.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students in the class of 2023 can now meet the statewide graduation requirements through a two-test Keystone Exam composite pathway if they were impacted by the federal assessment waiver in 2020.

### **Keystone Diploma**

Students who experienced educational instability during the 2021-22 school year may apply to PDE for a Keystone Diploma for the 2022-23 school year.

### **Continued Professional Education Requirements**

Teachers, administrators, school professionals, and paraprofessionals have one additional year (until July 8, 2023) to complete their Act 45/48 continuing professional education requirements.

### **Services for Homeschooled Students**

By the start of the 2023-24 school year, school districts must establish policies that allow homeschooled students to participate in courses, co-curricular activities, and career and technical education programs through the district.

### **School Safety**

- LEAs must designate a school administrator to serve as a school safety coordinator with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency (PCCD) and designated coordinators must complete training within one year of PCCD making the training available. Additionally, \$190 million in grants for new physical security and mental health initiatives are available, and applications for this funding are due to PCCD by August 31.
- Educator prep programs will be required to include at least 3 semester hours on trauma-informed approaches, suicide, bullying, and substance use awareness beginning July 2025.
- Lastly, all colleges, universities, and postsecondary private licensed schools must adopt a definition of consent as part of the school's code of conduct or sexual misconduct/harassment policy.

### **Student Financial Aid**

Public colleges may no longer reduce a student's institutional financial aid unless that aid exceeds the cost of attendance or requirements related to athletics. In addition, the annual household income eligibility requirement for PHEAA's Ready to Succeed Scholarship has been increased to \$126,000.

### **Dance Certification**

A PreK-12 standalone Dance Certificate has been established.

### **Cambridge Advanced Exams**

Cambridge Advanced Exams now count as an eligible type of credit for prior learning that transfers among colleges participating in the statewide college credit transfer system.

We'll continue to provide more detailed guidance and additional updates in the coming weeks, but please reach out with any questions in the meantime!