

## May 2 – 8, 2025

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### SESSION STATUS

At 5:10 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, the House stands adjourned until Monday, May 12, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 1:08 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, the Senate recessed until Monday, May 12, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

May 12-14  
June 2-4, 9-11, 16-18, 23-27, 30  
Sept. 22-24 (NV), 29-30  
Oct. 1, 6-8, 27-29  
Nov. 17-19  
Dec. 8-10 (NV), 15-17

#### Senate

May 12-13  
June 2-4, 9-11, 23-30

*The Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government, as compiled and edited by PLS. Additional information, including video, transcript and testimony, is available to [PLSGovTrac](https://www.plsgovtrac.com) users. For more information, contact [sales@mypls.com](mailto:sales@mypls.com).*

## Press Conferences

*PLS coverage of Capitol events including press conferences, bill signings and media availabilities*

### SEN. HUGHES, REP. HARRIS ANNOUNCE PA PROMISE LEGISLATION

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | May 5, 2025

Lawmakers joined labor and education leaders to announce the reintroduction of legislation that aims to make higher education less expensive in the commonwealth in the East Wing Rotunda today.

Ken Mash, president, Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (APSCUF), mentioned the “threats” to higher education but said the press conference is an opportunity to “talk about something that is positive.” He explained who his organization represents and said he was “proud” to be with his “union siblings.”

Rep. Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia), majority chairman, House Appropriations Committee, talked about the [PA Promise legislation](#) and said he’s been advocating for the legislation for “a long time.” He talked about the “selling of the idea of the American dream,” but said the dream is “unattainable” for learners due to the finances attached to higher education. He emphasized the “responsibility” of the legislators to “remove the burden” and how it can affect the economy and the “workers we need.” He also told a brief story of a discussion he had with former governor Tom Wolf, who asked him not to forget “the promise.”

Sen. Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia), minority chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee, stated, “We’re not going to forget the promise.” He provided statistics from 1975 to compare the number of hours needed to be worked for a minimum wage earner to pay for college today. He emphasized the importance of making higher education “more affordable, or perhaps free, for every student, young and old, no matter their situation.”

Sen. Art Haywood (D-Montgomery) talked about his experience being on the State System Board of Higher Education and the “promises” he made to his children and to himself. He also discussed student loans and the differing opportunities between the 1975 and 1995 generations due to student loan debt. He remarked, “While I don’t have the authorization to speak on behalf of the Board of Governors of the State System of Higher Education, I can as a member state that I fully endorse every effort to achieve affordable higher education.”

Aaron Chapin, president, Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), explained who his organization represents and emphasized the importance of “access to affordable higher education.” He voiced his support for PA Promise and said the legislation would assist in bringing the “vision” of affordable higher education. He added, “We need those teachers, nurses, counselors, entrepreneurs, engineers and first responders.”

Mash praised the attendance of a representative from the Keystone Research Center and mentioned the organization’s work on college affordability.

Jeff Coyne, director of government and political Affairs, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Pennsylvania, called on the General Assembly to end the “student debt crisis” and to pass PA Promise and to fund it through the state budget.

Maurice Cobb, secretary treasurer, Pennsylvania American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), discussed his organization and regarded higher education as a “great equalizer,” but noted “rising costs” as a challenge for students and families. He expressed his support for PA Promise and argued the legislation would assist those students to have a chance and help “build the working class.”

Mash said the press conference and the announcement of PA Promise is the “starting line” and also said his organization is seeking to establish a “broad coalition of parents, students and concerned citizens.”

Reps. Josh Siegel (D-Lehigh) and Nathan Davidson (D-Dauphin) were also in attendance.



## Committee News

*Comprehensive coverage of the House & Senate public hearings and voting meetings*

### House Education Committee

*05/02/2025, 10:00 a.m., Johnstown High School Auditorium, 222 Central Ave., Johnstown  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services*

The committee held the second of three informational meetings to discuss cyber charter education in Pennsylvania.

Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh) opened the meeting by thanking Johnstown High School for their facility and reminded testifiers to be brief in their remarks.

Minority Chairman Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) noted that while he and his children all attended public school, he acknowledged the importance of utilizing alternative forms of education to address students’ needs. He also noted the need for cost-effective education that meets high standards.

Chairman Schweyer thanked Rep. Frank Burns (D-Cambria) for hosting the committee in his district before introducing the first panel of speakers.

Rob Gleason, president, Westmont Hilltop School Board, discussed the financial and educational challenges posed by cyber charter schools, including the high costs to districts and the lack of support services for students in cyber schools. “We have 79 students attending third-party cyber schools costing the district \$1.2 million,” he explained. Gleason added that since “many” students repeat grade levels in cyber charter schools, it’s an expensive cost the school district shoulders. “They have to go back again to the cyber charter school and be enrolled in the same grade, and the practice of repeating students is very expensive and it’s very difficult,” he said. Gleason also mentioned cyber charter schools not having access to behavioral and mental health services provided by public schools. He highlighted mental health services as an integral part of repeating a grade for students.

Michael Dadey, assistant to the superintendent, Greater Johnstown School District (GJSD), shared the financial strain on his district due to rising cyber school tuition costs. He mentioned a projected “nearly \$7 million in taxpayer money leaving our district to fund cyber school” for the current 2024-2025 school year. Dadey called for reform in cyber charter school funding to ensure equitable use of taxpayer money. “Tuition rates must reflect the annual cost of providing online education, and stricter accountability measures must be put in place to ensure that tax dollars are being used responsibly,” he stated. Dadey expressed his concerns that cyber charter schools will continue receiving “excessive” funding without immediate action.

Rep. Brian Rasel (R-Westmoreland) asked about the possibility of having “state dollars follow the student versus the institution” to address funding and student mobility issues. Dadey agreed that would be helpful.

Rep. Roman Kozak (R-Beaver) shared his experience as a public school educator and his work in a cyber charter school, emphasizing the mental health support provided by these schools and the challenges faced by students who enroll in them. “The school that I was a part of put a significant amount of resources into that, providing counseling, a student assistance program in which teachers as well as guidance counselors were involved, regularly checking up on students,” he explained. He discussed the financial aspects of cyber charter schooling, including the debate over the equitable distribution of per-pupil funding. Dadey explained the costs of educating students in cyber charter schools, mentioning his school district pays \$16,000 per regular education

student and \$32,000 per special education student. He highlighted the need for a better funding formula and suggested that a more efficient funding approach is possible, as demonstrated by the GJSD's own cyber program, which costs "roughly \$6,500" per student. Gleason criticized the financial operations and educational value of cyber charter schools and advocated for the elimination of cyber charter schools due to concerns over educational quality and financial management.

Rep. Kozak responded to Gleason's remarks by emphasizing the choice of many Pennsylvanians to send their children to cyber charter schools. Gleason discussed the inefficiencies within Pennsylvania's education system, mentioning alternative education methods and criticizing the structure of having numerous school districts and charter school districts. He stressed the need for a comprehensive review of the education system and better engagement from school board members. Rep. Kozak defended parents' choices in their children's education, emphasizing that it's their money funding education while acknowledging the need for reforms.

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R-Cumberland), drawing on her experience as a former school board member, disagreed with previous comments regarding cyber charter school elimination, highlighting the performance and satisfaction of students in charter schools. She asked about the current Average Daily Membership (ADM) cost per student. Gleason mentioned that Westmont Hilltop operates with one of the lowest costs in the commonwealth, at \$11,000 a year. Rep. Gleim highlighted a discrepancy in student costs, stating, "You have 79 students attending cybers at a cost of \$1.2 million. And when I do the math, that's over \$15,000 per student." Gleason mentioned that the cost discrepancy is caused by special education students, as they cost more money than "regular" education students. He also stated the difference is due to "the formula to pay the charter school." Dadey responded to Rep. Gleim's question regarding ADM, stating the cost within GJSD is about \$9,500 to \$10,000. Rep. Gleim also inquired about the appropriate cost for cyber charter schools for both regular and special education students, though Gleason did not have a comment. Dadey also declined to answer, stating he did not want to "misrepresent" his school district's opinions. Rep. Gleim then asked about the number of students enrolled in private schools and if the money is retained even when a student is not present, to which Dadey confirmed.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson (D-Montgomery) discussed the impact of cyber charter schools on local taxes and proposed a cap on property tax money that follows a student to a charter school. He emphasized the need for school districts to adapt to various learning modalities, including cyber programs. Gleason criticized the performance and oversight of some cyber charter schools, mentioning his district's own cyber charter program costs about \$5,000, and stressed the need to address flaws in the cyber charter law. Dadey highlighted their cyber program's proactive approach in monitoring student performance and the flexibility it offers, allowing students to combine online education with vocational and technical education programs. Gleason also criticized the financial demands placed on districts by cyber charter schools, especially when a student is "suddenly" designated as needing special education. "You send the student there and, all of a sudden, you get a letter that says, here's a speech impediment, we're making him special education. Send us another \$25,000... This is not a good system," Gleason explained. He questioned whether these schools are adequately preparing students for life beyond academics.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) challenged the use of graduation rates as the sole measure of success, mentioning a school with high graduation rates but low proficiency in math and reading, and questioned the effectiveness of cyber schools' growth. Gleason discussed the reasons behind the increasing enrollment in cyber charter schools, attributing it to parental dissatisfaction with public schools. He noted the trend of rising costs and stagnant outcomes in cyber education and emphasized the importance of services provided by schools, such as hiring psychologists and addressing special education needs. He acknowledged the variability in graduation standards and the necessity of having some form of measurement to gauge educational achievement. Rep. Anderson criticized the suggestion to eliminate cyber schools, expressing concern for the 60,000 students potentially affected by such a decision. Gleason retracted his previous statement, acknowledging it as "extreme."

Rep. Anderson emphasized his belief that every child deserves the best opportunity for success and expressed concern over what he perceives as an attack on alternative education avenues, such as cyber schools. He questioned the fairness of scrutinizing cyber schools for financial issues by comparing them to practices in traditional schools. Dadey confirmed that GJSD administrators get reimbursed for travel and, if funds allow, for conference attendance. Rep. Anderson discussed the perception of wasteful spending by administrators of charter and cyber charter schools on conferences, contrasting it with his findings of numerous conferences available for public school administrators. He emphasized the importance of scrutinizing how all schools spend tax dollars equally. Dadey acknowledged the complexity of budget cuts, emphasizing the potential impact on social workers, counselors and the necessity of retaining quality teachers. Rep. Anderson mentioned that in his area, a school district increased its administrative staff by 14, despite losing 300 students over the past decade, and suggested that cuts should be considered uniformly across the board.

Chairman Cutler asked about the costs associated with cyber schools, specifically if the per-student cost includes services like administrative and information technology (IT) support, mentioning figures of \$5,000 and \$6,500 per student. Dadey specified that their cyber program's costs are exclusively for the program itself and do not include administrative expenses. Chairman Cutler further discussed the costs related to cyber programs, questioning Gov. Josh Shapiro's proposed statewide base cyber tuition rate of \$8,000. He pondered the actual costs versus policy rates. Chairman Cutler also inquired about the accounting behind Cyber Academy costs, the integration of cyber students into district testing numbers and tracking of student performance.

Chairman Schweyer asked if either of the school districts the panelists were from had transferred \$326 million from a fund balance into a restricted account, mentioning an auditor general's report about the Commonwealth Charter Academy (CCA) transferring \$354.3 million for purchasing or renovating buildings. Gleason expressed astonishment upon discovering that CCA owned buildings and questioned why they possessed them. Chairman Schweyer discussed the importance of maintaining a healthy fund balance for school districts and charter schools, questioning what constitutes a reasonable amount for a healthy fund balance and when it becomes excessive. Gleason discussed the importance of community involvement in school district financial decisions and expressed concern over the increasing attacks on public schools in the U.S., calling for greater support of public schools. Dadey agreed with Gleason on the notion that determining a healthy fund balance is a decision for individual school districts.

Chairman Schweyer highlighted the commonwealth's recent \$100 million investment in school construction and renovation, contrasting it with a cyber school's \$196 million transfer over several years, and questioned the efficiency of funding for cyber schools. He then introduced the next panelist.

Hannah Barrick, executive director, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO), discussed the challenges and opportunities for reform in cyber charter school funding, highlighting the unchanged tuition calculation since 1997 and the need for further reform. She proposed several solutions for a fairer, more predictable funding system and advocated for a reimbursement system to support school districts.

Rep. Rasel asked if direct state funding to students would solve many issues discussed in previous testimony. Barrick agreed, stating it would be sensible for the state to assume full responsibility for funding cyber charter schools since it oversees them. Rep. Rasel then mentioned the concept of "dollars following students." Barrick elaborated on the complexity of funding formulas, explaining that state takeover of financial responsibility would require removing ADM counts from current funding formulas for basic and special education.

Rep. Nelson asked for clarification on who decides on contracts for salaries and benefits that a school district cannot afford. Barrick responded that the school board negotiates contracts. She also mentioned that while salaries and benefits are a large part of a school district's budget, they might not be the biggest driver of expenditure growth. Rep. Nelson highlighted the school board's responsibility for managing district expenses and taxpayer dollars but noted their lack of control over cyber charter and charter school tuition rates. Barrick explained that the methodology for determining school district expenditures is defined in the Public School Code.

Rep. Nelson then discussed the challenges of managing tax dollars and school budgets due to the lack of control over charter school tuition rates and enrollment. Barrick acknowledged that charter school tuition is a mandated cost for school districts, often covered by property taxes, and may lead to shifts in budget priorities. Rep. Nelson pointed out the challenges of school districts being underfunded and "overtaxed," emphasizing the state legislature's responsibility to address these issues. He questioned the adequacy of the \$100 million allocated for cyber charter reimbursement in the current fiscal year. Barrick mentioned that for fiscal years 2024-2025, \$100 million is allocated to 500 school districts based on their share of cyber charter tuition in 2022-2023, which amounts to 9.3% of the total expenditure for that purpose. Rep. Nelson mentioned that this reimbursement covers only 9% of the increasing budget deficit, implying it is insufficient. Barrick agreed, highlighting that school districts are paying \$1.2 billion in expenditures for charter schools and lack control over various factors. She noted that while additional funds are being provided to school districts, including an adequacy supplement, these often do not remain within the districts due to being factored into charter school tuition costs. Barrick recalled that Pennsylvania had a cyber charter reimbursement program eliminated in 2011 and noted that the current \$100 million allocation is a positive step, but still only a fraction of the total cyber charter tuition costs.

Rep. Gleim emphasized the importance of parental choice and student needs in education, suggesting that addressing areas like pensions and employee retirement could be solutions to school funding issues. She highlighted the financial impact of [House Bill 411](#) on pension benefits and costs per student and questioned the proposal of decoupling cyber charter funding from school districts. Barrick supported the idea of the state taking financial responsibility for cyber charter students to create a more equitable funding system. She mentioned that addressing mandates increasing school district costs could contribute to equity without additional financial investment.

Rep. Anderson asked if the organization represents both brick-and-mortar public schools and public cyber schools. He inquired about the accuracy of information regarding a flat rate of \$8,000 for tuition, which could increase to \$12,000, and questioned the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) figures reporting a total reserve fund balance of \$6.8 billion for public brick and mortar schools or school districts. Barrick explained that tuition rates vary annually and most school districts have tuition rates above \$12,000 and \$15,000. She specified that the total fund balance increase from \$6.8 billion includes committed, assigned and unassigned funds, with only the unassigned funds being available for use as determined by the annual audit.

Rep. Jim Prokopiak (D-Bucks) asked about the process for school boards to dispute bills related to transient students not living in their district. Barrick outlined the charter school tuition process and the administrative dispute resolution process involving hearings

to determine the residency of students and the rightful allocation of funds. She further explained that the charter school law does not permit an investigation into the redirection of subsidy payments to charter schools as requested. Rep. Prokopiak asked whether cyber charter schools must provide PDE with information on their average cost per pupil. Barrick responded that charter schools are required to submit annual financial reports to PDE, which include data such as ADM and total expenditures.

Stephanie Smith, parent, Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School (PALCS), shared her positive experience with cyber schooling for her two children, emphasizing its flexibility, educational opportunities and preparation for college and careers. "With our district being so small and so limited, the benefits of our cyber school are... huge for us," Smith explained. Smith argued that cyber charter schools are more effective at preparing students for their next steps. "[My daughter's] classes don't change by the tone of a bell and then a bunch of chaos in the hallways. In reality, colleges aren't like that. Careers aren't like that. We're not all herded around," she stated. Smith expressed her belief that the funding for cyber schooling is a legitimate use of her tax dollars.

Rep. Prokopiak asked about the level of interaction Smith has with the charter school board and whether there is an opportunity for input in selecting its representatives. Smith mentioned that her school board meetings are virtual, allowing flexibility in attendance, but she does not think she has any interaction in selecting the board members.

Rep. Kozak highlighted the importance of understanding cyber schools' operations and costs, including cybersecurity and student record security. He stressed the value of having the option to choose cyber education for one's children. Smith explained that cyber education offers her more control over her children's learning and access to a broader range of classes than her local district. Rep. Kozak noted that cyber schooling requires self-motivation and discipline from students and suggested that traditional in-person learning might not be the best fit for every student. He continued, sharing his positive experiences with cyber schooling, highlighting the achievements of students who graduated later than usual and emphasizing the need for diverse educational opportunities.

Rep. Rasel discussed the potential impact of changing the cyber funding formula to \$8,000 per pupil, suggesting it would significantly reduce funding for cyber school students and questioned the fairness of this disparity. Smith argued that all children should receive equal funding for their education, sharing her daughter's challenges with participating in co-curricular activities like band after transitioning to cyber school, but noted successful involvement in extracurricular activities.

Chairman Cutler acknowledged the challenges faced by cyber and homeschooling students in participating in extracurricular activities and expressed concern over the financial burden on resident taxpayers.

Chairman Schweyer thanked Smith for her testimony, mentioning the value of her input. He highlighted the legislative efforts to fund schools more equitably without disadvantaging any community and reassured that no student's educational opportunities, including those in cyber education, would be intentionally harmed. He announced future hearings on cyber education and reminded committee members of an upcoming voting meeting on May 7 at 10:00 a.m.



### **Performance-Based Funding Council**

*05/05/2025, 10:00 a.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The council met to vote on their final recommendations.

Chairman Jesse Topper (R-Bedford) stressed the importance of seeing a return on investment in the realm of higher education. He listed the recommendations made by the council in its report.

1. Making the council permanent to oversee the performance-based model.
2. Apply the performance-based model to new funds and use existing funds as a base allocation.
3. Enact the performance-based funding model in fiscal year 2025-2026 with the goal of full implementation by fiscal year 2026-2027.

4. Determine a maximum performance allocation for each university based upon a fixed amount and each university's share of the total weighted student count, which includes undergraduate enrollments, progression at 60 credits, Pell-eligible students, students from low-matriculating high schools, community college transfers and high-priority occupation degrees awarded.
5. Determine each university's performance allocation by evaluating performance based upon four-year graduation rates, six-year graduation rates, six-year Pell-eligible graduation rates and high-priority occupation degrees and incentivizes college affordability and rewards improvement.

The recommendations were unanimously **approved**.

Sen. Jay Costa (D-Allegheny) thanked the council and their respective staffs for their work. He said the recommendations would provide the General Assembly a path for the implementation of performance-based funding. He said he felt the committee met the goals listed in [Act 90 of 2024](#).

Sen. Wayne Langerholc (R-Cambria) thanked the council as well as the stakeholders involved in the process. He said he felt recommendations made by the council were needed. He said he appreciated the temperament of the discussions, acknowledging that the nature of compromising means "no one is entirely happy." He said he felt the commonwealth needed to increase funding for higher education.

Rep. Pete Schweyer (D-Lehigh) expressed gratitude to the council and the staff for their "honest and thoughtful" work. He said he felt the council's recommendations were a step in the right direction for the commonwealth. "I think people are seeing today that so long as we come to the table with [good] intentions and a clear head, we're able to move the ball forward," he said.

Angela Fitterer, executive deputy secretary, Department of Education (PDE), said she appreciated the council's dedication to providing outcomes that will benefit the entire commonwealth. She thanked the staff at PDE for their contributions.

Chairman Topper echoed the council's gratitude. "The idea that we're going to be implementing something that will associate dollars with data is obviously going to be somewhat looked upon with skepticism... but I didn't sense that skepticism throughout this process," he said. "I sense [everyone involved] came into this with the idea of wanting to get this accomplished." He said he sees great things in the future, including restoring trust in higher education.



### **Senate Appropriations Committee**

*05/05/2025, 2:20 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 115](#) - (PN 66) Amends the Human Services Code, in general powers and duties of the Department of Public Welfare, further providing for personal care home and assisted living residence administrators; and abrogating regulations. Requires the department to provide a skills competency examination to individuals seeking employment as a direct care staff person in either a personal care home or an assisted living residence in lieu of successfully obtaining a high school diploma or GED equivalency to include an assessment of interpersonal communication skills, basic writing and reading comprehension, understanding of cultural and diverse communities, awareness of mental and behavioral health needs and other competencies specific to working in a personal care home or an assisted living residence. Adds that nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit a direct care staff person from dispensing, distributing or administering medication. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Scott Martin (R-Lancaster) said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds.

[SB 232](#) - (PN 185) Amends Title 30 (Fish), in fishing licenses, further providing for disabled veterans and former prisoners of war and for deployed Pennsylvania National Guard members and repealing provisions relating to reserve component of armed forces members. Repeals general rules provisions for disabled veterans. Provides the disability is service-connected. Requires documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Revises eligibility requirements for a lifetime license. Includes

licenses for reserve component of armed forces members. Repeals section 2707.2 of Title 30. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds but noted a \$7,414 loss from the Fish Fund.

[SB 308](#) - (PN 324) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in military educational programs relating to medical officer or health officer incentive program, further providing for definitions, for establishment of program, for program stipend, for additional incentives, for recoupment of incentive payments, for adjustment of stipend amounts and for eligibility; and making editorial changes. Revises language throughout the act to replace "Medical Officer or Health" with "Specialty Branch." Removes definitions for "behavioral health officer," "medical officer or health officer," "physician" and "public health officer" or "environmental since officer." Revises definition for "program." Provides several additional definitions. Revises rules for program stipend. Stipulates that medical officers and health care officers assigned to administrative, planning or logistical concentrations are not eligible for the program. Revises requirements in which a specialty branch officer must meet all criteria. Adjusts the lengths of years in which the adjutant general may adjust stipend amounts. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds.

[SB 349](#) - (PN 286) Amends Title 27 (Environmental Resources), in environmental protection, adding a chapter to provide for decommissioning of solar energy facilities. Provides definitions. Mandates a solar energy facility agreement executed after the effective date to provide that the grantee is responsible for decommissioning the grantee's solar energy facility on the surface property owner's property per this chapter no later than 18 months after the facility has ceased producing electricity, except for an instance when the grantee is actively working to recommence production of electricity, including an instance after the occurrence of a force majeure or similar event. Requires proof of financial assurance. Stipulates that the amount of financial assurance shall be equal to the estimated cost to decommission the solar energy facility. Requires a grantee to deliver a decommissioning plan and proof of financial assurance to the county recorder of deeds, providing guidelines. Specifies what shall be an acceptable form of financial assurance. Prohibits a decommissioning plan, the associated financial assurance and the salvage value of a solar energy facility to reduce the financial assurance from being separated from the solar energy facility through a change in grantee ownership. Provides guidelines for the new grantee and the prior grantee. Requires the Department of Environmental Protection, by regulations and in consultation with the solar energy industry, to develop a provisional standard form for a decommissioning plan and financial assurance to be filed with the county recorder of deeds. Specifies what temporary regulations shall not be subject to. Outlines the contents that the provisional standard form and final standard form shall include. Provides for the prevention of forced labor. Provides for the preemption of local ordinances and regulations, asserting that the regulation of the decommissioning of solar energy facilities is a matter of general statewide interest that requires uniform statewide regulation. Establishes what the requirements under this chapter shall not apply to. The addition of 27 Pa.C.S. § 4304 and section 2 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act is effective in 180 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds.

[SB 417](#) - (PN 351) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, further providing for Fort Indiantown Gap; and establishing the Service Members, Veterans and their Families Fund. Adds emergency response training and supporting the quality of life of service members, veterans and their families to subsection (b) regarding the lease of installation of Fort Indiantown Gap. Outlines the business leading requirements and provides for the duties of the Adjutant General if they decide to lease any portion of the real property of Fort Indiantown Gap and allows the Adjutant General to delegate the duties to an employee or office of the department. Replaces language of subsection (d) to quality of life programs. Requires the Adjutant General to design the activities and programs to support military readiness through physical fitness and well-being, personal growth and development, social interaction and camaraderie and opportunities for leisure and recreation and discounts on travel, tickets and lodging. Establishes the Service Members, Veterans and their Families Fund in the State Treasury and requires all revenue generated from lessees to be paid into the State Treasury and deposited into the fund. Allows the department to accept gifts, donations, legacies and usages of money from individuals, organizations and public or private corporations. Outlines the spending requirements from the fund. Provides that money in the fund is appropriated on a continuing basis to the department. Establishes statement of policy requirements. Establishes reporting requirements. Effective in 90 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds.

[SB 466](#) - (PN 485) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in commonwealth services, further providing for powers and duties and for curriculum, training and education certification management system; in grants to fire companies and emergency medical services companies, further providing for award of grants to fire companies and for award of grants to emergency medical services companies and providing for expiration of authority; and repealing Section 1735-E of the Fiscal Code. Imposes on the agency the power and

duty to provide semiannual reports of all grants awarded by the agency from federal disaster assistance or relief funds, homeland security and defense funds, avian flu/pandemic preparedness or other public health emergency funds to the chairperson and minority chairperson of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees which include information relating to the entity receiving grant money from the agency entities that received an award. Requires reports to be submitted by Aug. 20 for grants awarded during the period from Jan. 1 through June 30 and by Feb. 20 for grants awarded during the period from July 1 through Dec. 31. Adds that an individual who successfully completes fire suppression training as a condition of employment may provide a letter or certificate stating the number of hours of training completed to the Office of the State Fire Commissioner for approval to count towards the required number of hours of instruction needed to obtain a Firefighter I certification. Adds exceptions to the applications and written instructions for grants provided by the commissioner, allowing the commissioner to extend the application period for up to 45 additional days and to extend the period to submit required reports for 15 additional days upon request by a fire company or an EMS company. Expires the authority of the commissioner to award grants under Subchapters B (relating to fire company grant program) and C (relating to emergency medical services grant program) on Dec. 31, 2029. The amendment of 35 PA.C.S. § 7383.1(B) is effective in 60 days. The remainder of this act is effective immediately. (Prior PN: 418). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on commonwealth funds.

[SB 481](#) - (PN 439) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in size, weight and load, providing for milk hauling during inclement weather and emergency declaration and further providing for permit for movement during course of manufacture. Provides that a combination of up to 80,000 pounds, combination consistent with section 4968(a.2)(4) (relating to permit for movement during course of manufacture) or farm vehicle which is hauling a milk product shall be allowed to move upon highways during inclement weather or a declared national, state or local emergency. Establishes a decal that identifies the vehicle as a licensed milk hauler. Prohibits a penalty from being imposed on the driver if the operation complies with this section. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Minority Chairman Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia) and Sens. Amanda Cappelletti (D-Montgomery), Tim Kearney (D-Delaware) and Jay Costa (D-Allegheny) voting in the negative.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have no fiscal impact on the Milk Marketing Fund.



### **House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities Committee**

*05/06/25, 10:00 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building*

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 804](#) - (PN 832) Amends the Automobile Lemon Law, further providing for definitions; and applying the act to recreational vehicles sold or leased on or after January 1, 2026, in this commonwealth. Amends the definition of “dealer” or “motor vehicle dealer” to include a person in the business of buying, selling, leasing or exchanging motor vehicles or recreational vehicles. Amends the definition of “new motor vehicle” to include a motorcycle or recreational vehicle. Provides several definitions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[A00431](#), by Burgos, removes the definitions of “house,” “coach,” “house trailer,” “motor home,” “recreational trailer and trunk” and “truck camper,” and replaces the definition of “recreational vehicle” with the definition already found in statute. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A00490](#), by Burgos, changes the date the recreational vehicles will be covered from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027, and specifies the recreational vehicles that do not have an odometer are covered within a period of one year following the actual delivery of the recreational vehicle, or during the term of the warranty, whichever may occur first. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Lisa Hanbidge (D-Montgomery), prime sponsor of the bill, explained that the bill adds recreational vehicles (RVs) to Pennsylvania's Lemon Law, currently covering only new vehicles and motorcycles. She emphasized that many Pennsylvanians, particularly retirees, invest heavily in RVs, often over \$100,000, and deserve the same consumer protections. She added that RV buyers face the risk of dealing with unresolved mechanical issues without legal recourse and that the bill would grant RV purchasers

the right to repair, replacement or refund for persistent defects, and ensure proper title labeling for transparency. She argued that Pennsylvanians should be able to buy RVs with the same confidence as any other vehicle.

Minority Chairman Carl Metzgar (R-Somerset) opposed HB 804, arguing that it addresses a problem that does not warrant legislative action. He contended that RVs are luxury items, not essential transportation like cars or motorcycles, which the Lemon Law was originally designed to protect. He also noted that RVs are complex, mobile homes subject to many potential issues, and argued that extending Lemon Law protections to them is inappropriate. He urged the members to vote against the bill.

Rep. Jim Haddock (D-Luzerne) spoke in favor of HB 804, emphasizing that RVs represent major financial investments for Pennsylvanians and should be protected under the Lemon Law. He argued that consumers deserve a refund or replacement if an RV repeatedly fails to be repaired, just as they would with other vehicles. He challenged the notion that RVs are merely luxury items, pointing out that even second household cars, which are often non-essential, are still covered by the law. He affirmed that this bill is a strong step toward protecting Pennsylvania consumers.

Rep. Craig Williams (R-Delaware) opposed HB 804, arguing that lemon laws were never intended to cover non-essential, non-motorized items like RVs, trailers or pop-up campers. He noted that many high-cost purchases, such as homes, are not covered by lemon laws, despite their value. He stated that the bill's broad definition of RVs includes non-motorized units, potentially allowing consumers to return entire vehicles over minor issues like a faulty microwave after a year of use. He stressed that the original purpose of the Lemon Law was to protect essential transportation, not recreational vehicles, and warned that extending it could set a precedent for items like boats. He urged a no vote on the bill.

[HB 463](#) - (PN 446) Amends the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, prohibiting speculative ticketing acts or practices. Prohibits a reseller from advertising, offering for sale, contracting for the resale of a ticket or accepting full or partial consideration for the resale of a ticket unless the ticket conforms to the description as advertised, the reseller has possession or constructive possession of the ticket, or written contract to obtain the ticket or an official ticket presale or on sale for the event has occurred before the ticket being advertised, listed or offered for resale by the reseller, unless the rights holder or operator has consented in writing to the advertisement, listing or offer for resale. Adds that a secondary ticket platform may not publish an advertisement for a ticket unless an official ticket presale or on-sale for the event has occurred before the advertisement. Prohibits a secondary ticket platform from using a domain or subdomain name in the URL, the name of the exhibition or performance unless authorized, a trademark not owned by the platform, a combination of texts, images, web designs or internet website addresses that are substantially similar to those of the right holder or operator and a name substantially similar to the name specified under clauses (1) through (4). Provides the Attorney General with the authority to enforce the section. Allows for an operator, venue, right holder or primary ticket platform who suffers injury as a result of a violation to bring a private action to recover actual damages plus \$1,000 for each violation. Adds definitions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 967](#) - (PN 1048) Amends the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, further providing for definitions. Expands definitions for "unfair methods of competition" and "unfair or deceptive acts or purchases." Defines several terms in the subclause. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Chairman Metzgar and Reps. Joe Hogan (R-Bucks), Joshua Kail (R-Beaver), Rob Kauffman (R-Franklin), Thomas Kutz (R-Cumberland), Abby Major (R-Armstrong), Natalie Mihalek (R-Allegheny), Alec Ryncavage (R-Luzerne) and Ryan Warner (R-Fayette) voting in the negative.

Rep. Kutz thanked the bill's sponsor for addressing excessive ticket reseller fees but opposed the proposed 5% cap. He argued that while consumer protection is important, the bill may not account for varying market conditions where resellers face third-party fees they cannot control. He said that a blanket cap could disadvantage resellers and create unintended financial losses, especially when they are helping consumers access tickets that are not available through primary vendors. He cautioned against a one-size-fits-all approach and urged a no vote.

Rep. Mary Louise Isaacson (D-Philadelphia), the bill's prime sponsor, specified that the bill capping ticket resale fees are at 10%, 5% for the buyer and 5% for the reseller, and explained that they are a way to protect average fans from being priced out of major events due to excessive fees. She emphasized that the bill still allows for profit but prevents exploitative pricing during high-demand events like the Super Bowl or World Series. She argued that the current fee structure is excessive and excludes everyday citizens and urged support for the bill in order to keep entertainment events accessible.

Chairman Metzgar explained that the 10% resale fee cap mentioned in the bill is split into two separate 5% limits, one for the original ticket seller and one for the bona fide purchaser. He emphasized that Rep. Kutz was referring specifically to the 5% cap applied to the bona fide purchaser, not to professional resellers. He argued that this cap could unintentionally hurt ordinary constituents who are simply reselling tickets they can no longer use and urged a no vote on the bill.

Rep. Isaacson acknowledged the previous distinction made between individual resellers and professional ticket resellers but stated that the majority of resold tickets are not from individuals with one-off circumstances. She argued that companies engage in bulk

purchasing and resale practices, driving up prices and limiting access for average fans. She noted that the intent of the bill is to target those market distortions, not penalize casual resellers.

[HB 921](#) - (PN 970) Amends the Human Services Code, in general powers and duties of the Department of Public Welfare, providing for Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program; and making an editorial change. Updates the agency name in the article title. Mandates the department to establish the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) no later than July 1, 2026, in consultation with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC). Explains the purpose of the program. Requires the development of eligibility requirements. Mandates the department to review applications and award grants. Requires reporting. Authorizes the department to promulgate and rules, regulations or guidelines necessary. Provides definitions. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed** with Chairman Metzgar and Reps. Hogan, Kail, Kauffman, Kutz, Major, Mihalek, Ryncavage and Warner voting in the negative.

Rep. Nate Davidson (D-Dauphin), the bill's prime sponsor, stated that HB 921 addresses water affordability issues in Pennsylvania, particularly the burden of water and wastewater costs on low-income households. He highlighted that Pennsylvania ranks among the top five states for customer water utility debt, with average debts near \$474 for families living near the poverty line. He argued that, since the federal LIHWAP has ended, the bill would create a permanent state-level program to help low-income households manage overdue bills. He noted that the program would be administered by the Department of Human Services (DHS), in consultation with PUC, and proposes that local municipal authorities could apply for grants on behalf of eligible customers, simplifying the process. He emphasized that the program would help prevent shut-offs, restore services and promote community stability. He asserted that the bill would also benefit municipal governments by reducing arrears and supporting more stable revenue. He urged the committee to support the bill, calling it a win-win for both families and municipalities.

Chairman Metzgar asked if the grant program proposed in the bill would be a state-administered grant program that municipalities would apply for. Rep. Davidson confirmed that it is a state program. Chairman Metzgar asked how big the program would be. Rep. Davidson stated that the cost of the proposed program would be subject to negotiation at the budget table. He noted that, with revenues coming in about 7% over projections, he believes there is the ability to fund this initiative. He added that he is seeking input from DHS, the administration and colleagues in the Senate regarding the details. Chairman Metzgar noted that although they are above projections, the multi-year landing shows the state is in a deficit, asking where the money would then come from. Rep. Davidson acknowledged that the out-year structural deficit has been a long-standing issue in the state but highlighted that current fiscal year revenues are performing well. He expressed hope that the program could be established and sustained in future years, though noting that future funding will depend on economic factors and could be reassessed. He argued that the program would benefit consumers, water utilities and other ratepayers and would help low-income individuals facing water debts, improve the financial health of water utilities and relieve the burden on the broader ratepayer community. Chairman Metzgar raised a concern that the increased revenues have already been proposed for allocation to address the transit crisis in the Philadelphia region and the school funding crisis, issues that the Republican caucus frequently discusses. He questioned whether taking money from those areas would be the approach to fund the new program. Rep. Davidson acknowledged that this is part of the ongoing budget negotiations and expressed hope that the state can balance addressing both the transit needs and the water affordability program. He emphasized that transit issues are not just a concern in Philadelphia but also affect other areas in the state. He argued that it is possible to address both challenges simultaneously, benefiting all water customers.

[HB 1216](#) - (PN 1364) Amends the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, further providing for definitions and for unlawful acts or practices and exclusions. Adds to the definitions of "unfair methods of competition" and "unfair or deceptive acts or practices" and defines "accommodations booking platform," "food delivery platform," "homestay platform," "hotel platform," "lodging platform," "primary ticket platform," "secondary ticket platform" and "ticket." Makes technical adjustments. Effective in 180 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.



## Senate Education Committee

05/06/2025, 10:30 a.m., Room 8-EA, East Wing  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

Chairman Lynda Schlegel Culver (R-Northumberland) welcomed the committee and gave a reminder regarding Senate Rule 10, prohibiting members from questioning another's motives.

**SB 10** – (PN 692) Amends the Public School Code, adding Article XVII-E to establish the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success (PASS) Scholarship Program as a program in the State Treasury to provide scholarships to help eligible students pay tuition, school-related fees and special education services fees for attendance at a participating nonpublic school and the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success Scholarship Fund in the State Treasury. Provides several definitions. Provides the purpose of the program. Requires notification to parents and lists required contents. Requires a notice to the State Treasury. Mandates the State Treasury to develop an application form. Provides the application and approval process. Stipulates that for the 2026-2027 school year, scholarships shall be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis considering money available in the fund, and for the 2027-2028 school year and each school year thereafter, priority for scholarships shall be given to prior year scholarship recipients. Asserts that new applicants shall be awarded a scholarship on a first-come, first-served basis, considering the money available in the fund. Provides for entering into agreements, the terms of the agreement and the termination of agreements. Allows agreement renewal. Permits multiple agreements. Requires a written explanation to parents. Asserts that the PASS scholarship account is administered by the State Treasurer. Provides money deposit into the account and lists deposit amounts. Permits payments to participating nonpublic schools. Establishes a general rule for qualified education expenses, listing the expenses. Asserts that a participating nonpublic school that receives a payment for qualified education expenses authorized under subsection (a) may not refund, rebate or otherwise directly share any portion of the payment with the parent who made the payment. Declares the money in a PASS scholarship account as not taxable income to the parent or scholarship recipient under state law. Explains that an award made to, or payment from, a PASS scholarship account may not be construed to be an appropriation or financial assistance to a participating nonpublic school. Specifies the purpose of the PASS fund. Explains that the funding of the fund consists of money appropriated, given, granted or donated by the commonwealth or any other government or private agency or person for the purpose established under this article, and the money is appropriated on a continuing basis. Establishes duties of the State Treasury. Permits contracting with a third-party administration to administer the program. Provides temporary regulations that are deemed necessary. Establishes duties of the Auditor General and of participating nonpublic schools. Provides prohibitions and reporting requirements. Permits the barring of certain participating nonpublic schools and requires the posting of a notification on the State Treasury website. Permits a nonpublic school to appeal the decision. Provides for the duties of resident school districts. Requires reporting and outlines the required contents. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed** with Minority Chairman Lindsey Williams (D-Allegheny) and Sens. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester) and Tim Kearney (D-Delaware) voting in the negative.

Sen. Judy Ward (R-Blair), the bill's prime sponsor, emphasized the bill's necessity due to the poor educational outcomes in these schools and argued it would provide opportunities for students in failing schools.

Sen. Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia), a co-sponsor of the bill, highlighted the crisis in America's education system and the importance of school choice, advocating for supporting both public education and parental choice. He stressed the need for an honest conversation about educational choice to better prepare children to compete globally.

Chairman L. Williams criticized the bill for directing public funds to private schools without addressing the funding needs of public education and expressed concerns over transparency and potential discrimination in private schools receiving these funds. She confirmed her vote against the bill.

Sen. Greg Rothman (R-Cumberland), a co-sponsor of the bill, supported the bill, emphasizing the importance of directing taxpayer money towards the benefit of children and not institutions. He argued that the bill aims to assist children in failing schools, particularly mentioning his connection to public schools and the situation in Harrisburg.

Sen. Jarrett Coleman (R-Lehigh), a co-sponsor of the bill, expressed his excitement for the opportunity this legislation will give to his constituents in the Allentown School District, which he says is "a school district that is getting millions and more dollars every year, yet, while the increased money comes in, the student performance just continues to tank." He remarked, "If that's not failure for taxpayers, I don't know what is." He stated he is "thrilled" to have the opportunity to let some students "escape" the current school system and get into a school that better fits their needs.

Sen. Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland), a co-sponsor of the bill, stressed the importance of addressing the educational needs of children in failing districts and the government's duty to assist these children. She expressed strong support for the bill and thanked Sens.

A. Williams, J. Ward and others for their contributions.

[SB 114](#) - (PN 65) Amends the Nurse Aide Resident Abuse Prevention Training Act, providing for training for long-term care, for criteria for nurse aides and for limitation on department. Requires the development and implementation of a long-term care curriculum for nurse aides that implements a train-the-trainer model so that trainers are able to deliver the long-term care curriculum to nurse aides in this commonwealth and establishes qualifications for individuals to conduct training of the long-term care curriculum. Includes department regulations for reviewing a facility's application for approval to establish a training program. Specifies that criteria for nurse aides include a competency examination receiving the minimum approved score as determined by the department as well as having a degree from an accredited nursing program or being a student nurse or graduate nurse that has completed courses through a nursing program that is equivalent to the requirements of the nurse aide training program. Adds that the department may not impose on a provider of a state-approved nurse aide program a waiting period between approval of the training program and the offering of any portion of the training online as authorized under section 9. The addition of sections 3.1(1), (2) and (3) of the act shall be effective in one year, while the addition of section 3.2(b) of the act shall be effective in 60 days; the remainder of this act shall be effective in 30 days. The bill was **reported as amended** with Chairman L. Williams and Sens. Kearney, Dawn Keefer (R-York) and A. Williams voting in the negative.

[A00552](#), by Argall, specifies that to become a nurse aide in Pennsylvania, the applicant must successfully complete one of the three criteria set forth on pages two and three of the bill. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

On his bill, Sen. David Argall (R-Schuylkill), the bill's prime sponsor, said, "Basically, we want to expand the availability of long-term training courses for nurse aides and expand eligibility for individuals to take the nurse aide competency exam." He continued, "According to the Department of Labor, we are down 14% in this workforce." He noted that this bill passed by "an overwhelming bipartisan vote last session" and asked for the committee's support.

Chairman L. Williams stated, "This bill requires that the department evaluate new programs within 45 days, and if they can't, that program is deemed approved by default." She expressed how she was "not comfortable" with that policy and added that patients deserve high-quality care. Chairman L. Williams also noted her concern with potential employers administering exams for potential employees.

[SB 127](#) - (PN 76) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, repealing provisions relating to Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction and providing for Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction required. Requires instruction on the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations to begin with the 2026-2027 school year. Provides that the instruction should be age-appropriate, sequential in the method of study, communicate the connection between national, ethnic, racial or religious intolerance and the subjects described, and communicate the impact of personal responsibility, civic engagement and societal response within the context of the subjects described. Permits the usage of public and private materials. Requires reviewing and updating existing curriculum. Requires training programs beginning with the 2026-2027 school year. Provides several definitions. The repeal of section 1554 of the act shall be effective June 30, 2026, and the remainder of this act shall be effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed** with Chairman L. Williams and Sens. Comitta, Kearney, Keefer and A. Williams voting in the negative.

Sen. A. Williams expressed concerns about the financial burden of SB 127 on underfunded schools. He proposed amendments to include education on other atrocities beyond the Holocaust for a more inclusive approach.

Chairman L. Williams criticized the bill for its requirement to post curriculum online, echoing Gov. Josh Shapiro's opposition that it could restrict truthful instruction. She supported Sen. A. Williams' amendment for a more comprehensive bill.

[SB 227](#) - (PN 173) Amends the Public School Code, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, further providing for state convention or association, delegates, expenses and membership to add that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association shall be considered a state-affiliated entity under the Right-to-Know Law. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Sens. Comitta and Kearney voting in the negative.

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York), the bill's prime sponsor, stated SB 227 addresses the status of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) as a private nonprofit that is part of the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS) despite not being a government entity. She noted that no other private membership association has this benefit and argued that PSBA should be subject to the state's Right-to-Know Law.

Sen. Rothman asked if "public tax dollars are being diverted from our schools into a private organization," to which Sen. Phillips-Hill stated that was correct. She added that public dollars would go toward the organization's pensions and Social Security, "similar to what the commonwealth pays for educators and administrators."

Sen. Coleman expressed concern about PSBA's significant role in drafting policy for school boards and supported the bill for increasing transparency regarding PSBA's involvement.

Sen. Keefer emphasized the need for transparency in the dues paid to associations by school districts, funded by taxpayer dollars.

Sen. A. Williams asked about meetings with PSBA to understand their opposition to the bill. Sen. Phillips-Hill explained her legislation to remove PSBA from the state pension system, highlighting the issue of taxpayers funding lobbyists and government affairs personnel's pensions and Social Security payments.

[SB 246](#) - (PN 199) Amends the Public School Code, in student supports, adding a section to provide for parental and employee notification of weapon incidents. Outlines the violations in which a school entity shall notify parents and guardians and school employees of an incident involving the possession of a weapon on any school property and establishes what shall apply. Specifies what nothing in the section shall be construed to do. Asserts that the school entity's notification to parents or guardians or school employees under this section shall not contain personally identifiable information about a student in compliance with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (relating to family educational and privacy rights), providing exceptions. Defines "school entity" and "school property." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Chairman L. Williams and Sens. Kearney and A. Williams voting in the negative.

[A00457](#), by Coleman, updates definitions. The amendment was **adopted** with Chairman L. Williams and Sen. A. Williams voting in the negative.

Sen. Coleman, the bill's prime sponsor, summarized the bill, advocating for a requirement for schools to notify parents, guardians and staff within 24 hours of discovering a weapon at school or a school-sponsored event, emphasizing the importance of transparency and trust for children's safety.

Chairman L. Williams opposed [A00457](#) due to not having "the opportunity to fully understand" the impact of the definition changes proposed.

Sen. A. Williams expressed concerns about the broad definition of a weapon in the legislation, mentioning instances in Philadelphia where children were suspended for items like sharpened pencils or scissors. He emphasized the need for clear definitions to avoid arbitrary decisions and committed to working on refining the weapon definition, despite expecting the amendment to pass. Sen. Coleman agreed with Sen. A. Williams on the need to define what constitutes a weapon in schools. He expressed his willingness to work on the issue.

Following the amendment's adoption, Chairman L. Williams then expressed concerns about SB 246, stating it fails to differentiate between a student who accidentally brings a pocketknife to school and one who brings a gun. She mentioned this could lead to unnecessary fear and anxiety among parents and reaffirming his opposition to the bill.

Sen. Coleman expressed his belief that parents should be informed if their child brings a gun or a knife to school, regardless of the child's intent, due to the potential harm.

[SB 310](#) - (PN 206) Amends the Public School Code, in high schools, adding a section to provide for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Requires a student who attends a school entity in this commonwealth to file a FAFSA with the U.S. Department of Education or submit an opt-out form beginning with the 2025-2026 school year and prior to completing high school. Provides for the opt-out form that a parent, legal guardian, student of 18 years of age or legally emancipated student may complete and submit to the school entity. Directs the Department of Education (PDE) to make the opt-out form available to school entities and post it on PDE's website. Requires a school entity to provide a copy of the opt-out form to parents, legal guardians and students. Directs a school entity to make reasonable effort to contact parents or legal guardians if a FAFSA is not filed or an opt-out form is not submitted in order to exempt the student from these provisions. Directs the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency to provide a school entity with information indicating whether a student of the school entity has completed the FAFSA. Specifies that nothing contained in this section shall be construed to require a parent, legal guardian or student to provide personal financial information to a school entity. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended** with Sens. Kearney and Keefer voting in the negative.

[A00388](#), by Culver, adds language stating that FIA will provide student FAFSA completion information if the agency has access to the information. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A00507](#), by Culver, provides separate definitions for non-public schools and private schools and makes the appropriate related changes throughout the bill. The amendment was **adopted** with Chairman L. Williams and Sen. Kearney voting in the negative.

Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster), the bill's prime sponsor, introduced SB 310, aiming to amend the public school code to require FAFSA filing as a high school graduation requirement, with a parental opt-out option. He highlighted that \$4.4 billion in federal Pell Grants were unclaimed by the high school class of 2024, including \$147 million in Pennsylvania. Sen. Martin stated the bill is connected to the Grow PA program and [Act 89 of 2024](#), emphasizing the importance of FAFSA completion for scholarship eligibility in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Sen. Keefer expressed concerns about mandatory financial aid forms for students, mentioning potential misunderstandings and questioning the necessity of college for all. Sen. Martin responded by emphasizing the decline in Pennsylvania's young population and the importance of the opt-out option for financial aid information.

Sen. A. Williams expressed strong support for the bill, emphasizing the importance of providing information to help communities navigate challenges.

Sen. Martin commended the committee's efforts in supporting non-traditional post-secondary education and highlighted the lack of awareness among families about federal funding.

[SB 700](#) - (PN 714) Amends the Public School Code, in evidence-based reading instruction, further providing for definitions and for evidence-based reading instruction curriculum and providing for reading screening, for reading deficiency and identification, for school entity duties and reading intervention plan, for parent notification, for grants to school entities, for funding and for reporting; and establishing the Evidence-based Reading Instruction Restricted Account. Adds definitions for "core curriculum" and "parent." Requires the department to collect and post on their website a disaggregated list of school entities that have adopted an evidence-based reading instruction curriculum, are using reading screeners or are undergoing or have completed a structured literacy professional development training. Increases the expiration date to 10 years for the reporting requirement subsection. Replaces subsection (b) regarding the list of screeners, to outline the duties of the school entity, including approving, beginning with the 2016-2027 school year, a professional development training program, ensuring students in kindergarten through grade three who are identified for reading deficiencies are provided intervention plans and, no later than the 2030-2031 school year adopting an evidence-based reading instruction curriculum and identifying an education responsible for assisting with the implementation. Provides for reading screenings, requiring school entities to screen each student from kindergarten through grade three for reading competency three times each school year. Requires school entities to provide educators time during the contractual school day to complete data entry and compilation associated with the screenings. Provides for exceptions and outlines the list of screeners. Outlines the reading deficiency and identification processes. Provides for the school entity duties and reading intervention plan, outlining content requirements. Requires parent notification for each student who exhibits a deficiency in reading in the third screening at the end of the school year. Establishes grants to school entities, requiring the department to establish a program to aid school entities with initial costs associated with training and other resources necessary to implement the article. Outlines the application and eligibility requirements. Establishes the Evidence-based Reading Instruction Restricted Account within the General fund, outlines the uses and funding origins, including appropriations from the General Assembly, funds from the federal government and funding from other public and private sources. Establishes reporting requirements. Effective in 90 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Sen. Keefer voting in the negative.

Sen. Devlin Robinson (R-Allegheny), the bill's prime sponsor, stated the bill focuses on early literacy and the continuation of bipartisan efforts from [Act 135 of 2024](#). He emphasized the bill's aim to improve reading proficiency through effective curricula, educator training and intervention plans for struggling readers. Sen. Robinson mentioned Mississippi's success with a similar bill.

Sen. Keefer questioned how much SB 700 would cost to implement. Sen. Robinson responded that it would require about \$100 million. Sen. Keefer supported the bill's intent but expressed concerns about the unspecified funding sources and the potential \$100 million cost. She suggested integrating the program into existing continuing education to avoid additional costs. Sen. Robinson defended the need for a grant program to support the adoption of evidence-based reading programs.

Sen. Coleman highlighted the importance of the bill, referencing the Allentown School District's low reading proficiency rates despite increased funding. He argued that more money is not the solution but supported the bill as a step towards improvement.

Chairman Culver expressed concern over the stagnant reading proficiency rates, advocating for structured literacy and reading screenings as successful strategies in other states, and urged support for SB 700. She then declared that the Senate Education Committee recessed until further notice.



## House Health Committee

05/07/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider two bills and several resolutions.

[HB 1269](#) - (PN 1422) Amends the Administrative Code, in administrative organization, further providing for advisory boards and commissions; and, in powers and duties of the Department of Health and its departmental administrative and advisory boards, establishing the Brain Injury Advisory Board. Outlines the membership of the Brain Injury Advisory Board. Stipulates that the members of the board shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for travel and other actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Provides for board meetings and for the meetings to be publicized. Establishes board duties. Requires the issue of an annual report. Defines “brain injury.” Effective in 180 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A00488](#), by Frankel, makes technical changes, amends nomenclature and reduces the members of the Brain Injury Advisory Board. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Minority Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) stated it is her “understanding this has been agreed to,” referring to the amendment. Regarding the bill itself, Chairman Rapp commended the bill’s prime sponsor, Rep. Shelby Labs (R-Bucks), for her bill. She mentioned how the current Brain Injury Advisory Board is “valuable” for veterans, but there is “no statutory framework governing how it functions.” Chairman Rapp also noted the importance of making sure veterans are represented within the Brain Injury Advisory Board, “given what veterans with brain injuries have experienced.”

Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) also thanked Rep. Labs for her “commitment” to supporting veterans with traumatic brain injuries (TBIs).

[HB 681](#) – (PN 695) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for health services, for reports and for interagency coordinating council for child health, nutrition and physical education. Provides for student confidentiality. Exempts a student from height and weight measurement if the student’s parent or guardian requests an exemption in writing. Does not permit height and weight measurements to be calculated and reported as body mass index (BMI) and asserts that they may only be reported as aggregate information from a scientifically drawn sample of students in a manner that protects student confidentiality. Includes the Department of Human Services (DHS) secretary as a member of the interagency Coordinating Council for Child Health, Nutrition and Physical Education. Requires council to include recommendations from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education program. Mandates the final report to be available on the websites of DHS, Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (PDE) and Department of Agriculture (PDA). Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as amended** with Rep. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton) voting in the negative.

[A00503](#), by Friel-Otten, ensures that the Department of Health can still use the body mass index (BMI) data to apply for grants for schools, and allows parents to receive the BMI data if they request it in writing. The amendment was **adopted** with Rep. Borowicz voting in the negative.

Regarding [A00503](#), Chairman Rapp stated she will be supporting the amendment, adding she wants to ensure “our districts still get funding.”

On the legislation, Rep. Danielle Friel-Otten (D-Chester), the bill’s prime sponsor, described a situation she was made aware of last year when a student “received information on her BMI and sent her into a tailspin.” Rep. Friel-Otten noted her bill would protect BMI information and allow parents to request it in writing if necessary. She stated, “Calculating BMI in schools was initially intended to help identify students at risk for weight related health issues, but research has increasingly shown that this practice is not only ineffective, but it can also be harmful.” Rep. Friel-Otten added that using BMI as a sole indicator on health can be “inaccurate.” She mentioned a study from the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) PolicyLab that indicated BMI was more reflective of “a snapshot of a moment in time” where a child could be going through a growth spurt or experiencing puberty hormones. “BMI does not take into account a child’s bone density, muscular composition, body fat percentage or hydration,” Rep. Friel-Otten added. She also stated that receiving BMI information in front of other students can be harmful, leading to instances of bullying and potentially causing mental health issues. “When children are singled out based on their weight, it can create an unhealthy obsession with body image,” she said, adding that eating disorders are more common among students who are subjected to BMI screenings in school. Rep. Friel-Otten emphasized her bill would continue allowing schools to collect BMI data to provide to DOH, with the option for parents to opt their child out of data collection.

Chairman Rapp gave her support for HB 681, stating parents should have more input regarding their children’s health in schools.

Chairman Frankel added, “[Body Morph Assessment] BMA may be a fine indicator when we’re talking about populations, but we know it’s much less needed for what we’re talking about.”

[HR 188](#) - (PN 1373) Resolution recognizing May 6, 2025, as "World Asthma Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 194](#) - (PN 1434) Resolution designating the week of May 4 through 10, 2025, as "Tardive Dyskinesia Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 199](#) – (PN 1430) Resolution recognizing the month of October 2025 as "Breast Cancer Awareness Month" and October 17, 2025, as "National Mammography Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 222](#) - (PN 1575) Resolution recognizing the month of May 2025 as "Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 225](#) - (PN 1572) Resolution recognizing May 13, 2025, as "Cancer Action Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Rep. Borowicz voting in the negative.



## House Education Committee

*05/07/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building*

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider three bills.

[HB 17](#) – (PN 2) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, further providing for subjects of instruction and flag code. Provides for every elementary public and private school to teach writing in print, joined italics and cursive handwriting. Allows the secretary of education to provide the teaching of subjects in a language other than English. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Dane Watro (R-Schuylkill), the bill’s prime sponsor, outlined the benefits that learning to read and write in cursive provides children with, including the preservation of key historical documents. He noted that 24 other states have similar laws.

Minority Chairman Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) said he felt that learning cursive teaches children cognitive and developmental skills.

Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh) humorously discussed his daughter’s struggle to endorse her first paycheck. He argued that reading and writing in cursive is a “human skill.”

[HB 191](#) – (PN 138) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instructions; and, in school health services, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) and adding sections to provide for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, for Automated External Defibrillator Program and for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators. Provides that a school entity shall provide certified instruction for CPR and AEDs to employees and volunteers at least once every two years and requires at least one adult certified in CPR and AED usage to be present in a school building at all times. Requires each school nurse or designee, coach of an athletic activity, marching band director, physical education teacher, athletic trainer and athletic training student aide within each school entity must participate in the instruction of and maintain certification in the use of an AED and CPR. Provides that each school entity must develop or amend existing cardiac emergency response plans to meet criteria outlined in section 1423.1(3)(e). Requires the Department of Education (PDE) to establish the Automatic External Defibrillator Program to ensure the presence of AEDs in eligible school entities under the program by issuing an invitation to bid for the cost of AEDs and other necessary equipment on a biennial basis. Provides that PDE, in consultation with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), shall develop guidelines for the availability of AEDs at athletic activities. Provides several definitions. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Reps. Joseph D’Orsie (R-York), Barbara Gleim (R-Cumberland) and Brian Rasel (R-Westmoreland) voting in the negative.

[A00465](#), by Schweyer, removes the phrase “private schools.” The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Schweyer said the amendment was introduced due to possible complications within the education code.

Rep. Tim Brennan (D-Bucks), the bill’s prime sponsor, said the bill was inspired by Buffalo Bills safety and Allegheny County native Damar Hamlin, who suffered from cardiac arrest on *Monday Night Football*. He noted that AEDs increase survival rates to 90%. He noted that cardiac arrests happen for several reasons, including eating disorders, dehydration, heat exhaustion and collisions in contact sports.

Rep. Tarah Probst (D-Monroe) discussed an instance 20 years ago in East Stroudsburg where a student died from cardiac arrest at a basketball game where an AED was not available. She noted the student’s family is still advocating for the availability of AEDs.

Chairman Cutler recalled performing CPR on a man who suffered from cardiac arrest at a Public Utility Commission (PUC) hearing where an AED was not present on-site. He noted the man unfortunately died.

[HB 1326](#) – (PN 1518) Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, further providing for when transportation provided and for computation of distances; and, in reimbursements by commonwealth and between school districts, providing for pupil transportation data. Allows the board of school directors in any school district to provide for the free transportation of pupils as long as the school is either located within district boundaries or located within the commonwealth but outside the district boundaries, not exceeding 10 miles by the nearest public highway. Asserts that these distances will be calculated using technology capable of accurate measurements of distances. Prohibits the Department of Education (PDE) from requiring the manual recording of distances. Requires school entities who are entitled to reimbursement for pupil transportation to provide specified data to PDE beginning with information from the 2025-2026 school year and annually thereafter. Requires school entities who are entitled to reimbursement for pupil transportation to provide a detailed breakdown of pupil transportation expenditures to PDE, beginning with information from the 2025-2026 school year and annually thereafter. Requires PDE to post data collected under this section on their public website. Requires PDE to notify the chairmen and minority chairmen of both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees and the Senate and House Education Committees when the information is posted under subsection (c). Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A00544](#), by Friel, removes the provision prohibiting school districts from transporting students to schools outside of state boundaries, instead requiring school districts to annually report the number of students transported outside of state boundaries. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Paul Friel (D-Chester), the bill’s prime sponsor, noted that school transportation regulations have not been updated since 1971. He said bus drivers are required to manually write down mileage between routes and individual stops. He said there is current technology available to make this process much easier for drivers.

Rep. John Schlegel (R-Lebanon), a co-sponsor of the bill, said the bill ensures that data is available to make future decisions on school transportation regulation.

Chairman Cutler thanked Chairman Schweyer and the sponsors of the bill for addressing the concerns raised by Republicans. He said the current process does not keep pace with current technology and rising transportation costs.

Chairman Schweyer praised the respective staffs of both caucuses for their work on the bill. He said a good school transportation policy cannot be made from “guesswork” and that the bill is a step toward eliminating that.

[HB 538](#) - (PN 531) Amends the Public School Code, Article XX-G, in sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking education, prevention and response at institutions of higher education and private licensed schools, further providing for scope of article, for definitions, for education program and for follow-up; and making an editorial change. Includes provisions relating to human trafficking. Defines “human trafficking,” “human trafficking organization,” and “involuntary servitude.” Includes a nonprofit organization that specializes in outreach and education programs on human trafficking in the development of an overall education program. Provides contents of human trafficking subject matter and requires human trafficking component of an education program to begin with the 2027-2028 school year. Adds the phrase “human trafficking” throughout the act. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Robert Leadbetter (R-Columbia), the bill’s prime sponsor, said the bill is an effort to fight back against human trafficking efforts in Pennsylvania through education. He said Pennsylvania ranked ninth in 2024 in new cases, according to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. He stressed that the education would not be mandatory.

Chairman Cutler noted that one of the worst human trafficking corridors, U.S. Route 222, runs between his and Chairman Schweyer's districts. He said human trafficking was a very real problem, and the bill was a good solution.



### House Appropriations Committee

05/07/25, 12:20 p.m., Room 140, Main Capitol

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 96](#) - (PN 1627) Amends the Real Estate Tax Sale Law, in sale of property, providing for delinquent real estate tax notification to designated individual; and imposing duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development. Provides that the department shall develop a designation form to be used by an owner to assign a designated individual to receive a notification regarding delinquent real estate taxes on the owner's property if the owner is unable to or has limited ability to receive or manage the delinquent real estate tax notice or otherwise chooses to assign a designated individual to receive the notification. Provides for form content requirements. Outlines the department's duties to post the designation form and distribute copies. Provides for confidentiality, notice requirements and review procedures. Adds further definitions. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 79). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 103](#) - (PN 1113) Amends Title 30 (Fish), adding a chapter to provide for at-risk, derelict and abandoned boats; and imposing penalties. Provides definitions. Establishes that a boat is presumed to be abandoned if the owner of the boat cannot be contacted and the boat is physically inoperable and is left unattended on waters of this commonwealth or other public property, is left unattended on or along waters of this commonwealth or other public property and does not bear a valid registration or has remained on the private property of a salvor for 30 calendar days. Stipulates that the presumption is rebuttable by a preponderance of the evidence. Authorizes investigations. Requires notices within seven calendar days of the discovery of the at-risk boat, derelict boat or abandoned boat to the commission and the owner, as well as public notice. Makes editorial changes. Provides for actions by the owner within 14 calendar days of receipt of the notice. Specifies recovery costs. Adds that a person involved in the notification, investigation, recovery or storage of a boat under this chapter shall not be liable for any claim of property damage related to the boat. Provides for the development, posting and submittal of forms. Provides for nuisances. Provides rules and regulations. Effective in 180 days. (Prior PN: 82). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 986](#) - (PN 1076) The Unfair Real Estate Service Agreements Act provides for transparency in realty agreements; prohibits unfair real estate service agreements; and imposes penalties. Provides definitions. Asserts that unfair real estate service agreements are void, unenforceable and considered deceptive. Asserts that the recording of an unfair real estate service agreement is prohibited with additional specifications. Allows parties interested in the real property regarded in an unfair real estate service agreement may apply to a court of jurisdiction in the county where the recording exists to record a court order declaring the agreement unenforceable. Allows the right to recovery for consumers interested in the real property regarded in an unfair real estate service agreement by bringing civil action against the real estate service provider with additional guidelines. Mandates that nothing in this section will alter any part of the Real Estate Licensing and Registration Act. Provides penalties for violations of this section. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 992](#) - (PN 1083) Amends Title 30 (Fish), in Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, further providing for Boating Advisory Board. Asserts the Boating Advisory Board will consist of the Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources, or a designee of the Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the two at-large members of the commission as described in section 301(b). Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Minority Chairman Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana) said HB 992, HB 986, HB 103 and HB 96 do not have any fiscal impact.

[HB 492](#) - (PN 481) Amends the Fiscal Code, in fiscal supplements to statutory programs, repealing provisions relating to regulation of rodeos or rodeo-related events. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Struzzi said his caucus is concerned that the bill was implemented as part of the Fiscal Code in last year's budget and has not gone through another committee. "It's the first time we're seeing it today," he said.

[HB 504](#) - (PN 1628) The Community Energy Act provides for community energy facilities; imposes duties on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC), electric distribution companies and subscriber organizations; and provides for prevailing wage and labor requirements. Outlines General Assembly findings and declarations. Provides definitions. Includes cases of a renewable natural gas device with an anaerobic digester in the definition of "community energy facility." Allows a community energy organization or subscriber administrator to develop, build, own or operate a community energy facility. Allows for a subscriber to a community energy facility to receive a monetary bill credit for every kilowatt hour produced. Requires PUC to establish a price determined under 66 PA.C.S. § 2807 (E) and further promulgate regulations providing for the protection and participation of a residential customer who has a subscription with a community energy organization or subscriber administrator, electric distribution companies and subscriber organizations. Provides for community energy projects. Requires enforcement by the Department of Labor and Industry for violations. Stipulates that this act shall be construed to minimize direct or indirect costs related to community energy facilities to ratepayers of an electric distribution company that are not subscribers. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1481). The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[HB 754](#) - (PN 778) Amends the County Pension Law, further providing for supplemental benefits. Revises the cost-of-living to be reviewed at least once every three years by the board which may adjust the current monthly benefit by up to, but no more than, the percentages in accordance with the cost-of-living index at the time of review. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Struzzi said he is concerned with potential fiscal impacts to the General Fund and retirement funds for county pensions in HB 754 and HB 504.

[HB 1332](#) - (PN 1630) The Capital Budget Act of 2025-2026 provides for the capital budget for fiscal year 2025-2026. Appropriates a total of \$1.57 billion for public improvement projects, furniture and equipment, transportation assistance projects, redevelopment assistance projects and flood control projects. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1333](#) - (PN 1631) An Act making appropriations from the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account and from restricted revenue accounts within the General Fund to the Department of State for use by the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs in support of the professional licensure boards assigned thereto. Appropriates \$73,093,000 for the operation of the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$10,191,000 for the operation of the State Board of Medicine for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$2,553,000 for the operation of the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$474,000 for the operation of the State Board of Podiatry for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$1,396,000 for the support and operation of the State Athletic Commission for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1334](#) - (PN 1632) An Act making appropriations of \$75,802,000 and \$550,000 from the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Department of Labor and Industry and the Department of Community and Economic Development to provide for the expenses of administering the Workers' Compensation Act, the Pennsylvania Occupational Disease Act and the Office of Small Business Advocate for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1335](#) - (PN 1633) An Act making an appropriation of \$2,243,000 from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1336](#) - (PN 1634) An Act making appropriations of \$64,523,000 from the Public School Employees' Retirement Fund and \$1,405,000 from the PSERS Defined Contribution Fund to provide for expenses of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1337](#) - (PN 1635) An Act making appropriations of \$43,249,000 from the State Employees' Retirement Fund and \$4,836,000 from the SERS Defined Contribution Fund to provide for expenses of the State Employees' Retirement Board for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1338](#) - (PN 1636) An Act making appropriations of \$2,193,000 from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1339](#) - (PN 1637) An Act making appropriations from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund and from Federal augmentation funds to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Makes a state appropriation of \$95,392,000 for the salaries, wages and all necessary expenses for the proper operation and administration of PUC. Makes federal appropriations of \$4,739,000 to enforce the regulations of the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act, \$500,000 for Motor Carrier Safety and \$2,500,000 for the IRA - Transmission Siting Program. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously reported as committed. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1200](#) - (PN 1641) The Cannabis Health and Safety Act provides for the regulation and treatment of cannabis, for exemption from criminal or civil penalties, for effect on cannabis convictions and expungements and for membership and duties of the Liquor Control Board; establishes Pennsylvania Cannabis Stores and establishes limits on the amounts a store can sell to a cannabis consumer in a 24-hour period; provides for social and economic equity, for license, permit or other authorization, for packaging, labeling, advertising and testing, for recordkeeping and inspection, for prohibitions and penalties and for tax and tax administration; establishes the Cannabis Revenue Fund as a separate fund in the State Treasury, the Communities Reimagined and Reinvestment Restricted Account as a restricted account within the Cannabis Revenue Fund and the Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment and Education Restricted Account as a restricted account within the Cannabis Revenue Fund which shall be administered by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs; provides for the issuance of bonds; imposes duties on the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Revenue; and repeals Section 13(a)(30) and (31) of the Controlled Substance Act insofar as they are inconsistent with this act for conduct when the controlled substance is cannabis and no probable cause exists to believe that the conduct alleged is punishable by a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment or subject to a sentence enhancement, Section 13(a)(32), (33) and (34) of the Controlled Substance Act insofar as they are inconsistent with this act for conduct when the controlled substance is cannabis and all acts and parts of acts insofar as they are inconsistent with this act. Aims to legalize and regulate adult-use cannabis and prioritize expungement and restorative justice, reinvestment of funds into communities, public health protections, prohibiting predatory marketing and packaging, preventing accidental ingestions by children and other recommendations and providing sustainable cannabis businesses opportunities for local and diverse operators. Includes "medical marijuana" in the definition of "cannabis." Sections 202(2), (3) and (4), 202.1, 205 and 2104(2)(i) are effective 90 days after the specific date noticed by the board under section 405(b)(1) for the commencement of sales in cannabis stores. The remainder of this act is effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1578). The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Struzzi said he has fiscal and procedural concerns regarding the bill. He said he is unsure how it would function and the costs related to selling marijuana through the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB). He stated the implementation of the state store model for legalized recreational marijuana would cost \$260 million over the first two years, while the Department of Revenue estimates that sales would provide \$15 million in revenue in the first year. "This is a serious topic that will affect our commonwealth for years to come," he said.

Chairman Struzzi asked what a conversion license fee is. He noted the fees are estimated to generate \$1 billion. Gueorgui Tochev, Democratic senior budget analyst, explained that the bill provides for 25 processor and 25 cultivator licenses, which PLCB could issue at a fee of \$25 million each. He said those revenues would be earmarked for the General Fund. He suggested those revenues would likely come in the first year. Chairman Struzzi stated that the bill mentioned a 12% excise tax for cannabis. He asked if sales tax also applies. Tochev said both excise and sales taxes would apply for a combined tax of 18%. Chairman Struzzi said the legislation includes a \$100 million bond for start-up and grant costs. He said there is no mention of debt service and asked how the bond would be repaid. Tochev said he estimates that there would be no debt service in the first year, but there would be a debt service of \$10.9 million. He added that the fiscal note indicates it is a 5.99% revenue bond for 20 years at a level principle. He said the revenue that the bill brings in would pay for the bond's debt service.

Chairman Struzzi said he doesn't believe he has enough information to support the bill.

Chairman Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) said the General Assembly has been considering the legalization of marijuana for years, and all the states near Pennsylvania have already legalized the drug. He explained that other states' officials thank Pennsylvanians for going across the border to purchase marijuana.

[HB 1330](#) - (PN 1143) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provides appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Departments of the commonwealth, the public debt and the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; to provide appropriations from special funds and accounts to the executive and judicial departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025;

to provide for the appropriation of federal funds to the executive and judicial departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; and to provide for the additional appropriation of federal and state funds to the executive and legislative departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

**HB 1340** - (PN 1638) The Gaming Control Appropriation Act of 2025 makes appropriations from the restricted revenue accounts within the State Gaming Fund and from the restricted revenue accounts within the Fantasy Contest Fund and Video Gaming Fund to the Attorney General, the Department of Revenue (DOR), the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Makes state appropriations of \$1,700,00 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of the Attorney General related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. II (relating to gaming), of \$8,032,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of DOR related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. II (relating to gaming), of \$41,857,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of PSP related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. II (relating to gaming) and of \$60,423,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses for the proper operation and administration of PGCB. Makes state appropriations of \$280,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of PGCB related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. I (relating to amusements generally) and of \$418,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of DOR related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. I (relating to amusements generally). Makes state appropriations of \$475,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of PGCB related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. II (relating to gaming), of \$6,000,000 for skill games administration, of \$683,000 for salaries, wages and all necessary expenses of DOR related to 4 Pa.C.S. Pt. II (relating to gaming) and of \$9,000,000 for skill games operations. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was reported as committed, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Struzzi noted that HB 1330 is the general appropriations bill. He commented that the spending level is beyond estimated revenues. He added that HB 1340 assumes revenues from skill games based on regulations that do not exist.



### **House Education Committee**

*05/08/2025, 10:00 a.m., Stroudsburg High School Auditorium, 1100 W. Main St, Stroudsburg, PA 18360*  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held an informational meeting on the governance of cyber charter schools.

Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh) stated the meeting would focus on cyber charter school governance, emphasizing the importance of expert testimony and encouraging presenters to engage in Q&A for a more dynamic session.

Minority Chairman Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) highlighted the need for a fact-based discussion on the funding and governance of schools. He shared his personal connection to the issue through his children's education in a rural district. He pointed out the challenges faced by such districts under current funding formulas and the impact of COVID-19 on school choice. He emphasized the importance of focusing on student outcomes.

Rep. Tarah Probst (D-Monroe) expressed appreciation for the Stroudsburg Area School District hosting the meeting and acknowledged the House Education Committee's efforts in disseminating information across the state.

Chairman Schweyer noted the absence of Lauren Bluequest, a senior policy analyst for the Education Commission of the States (ECS), due to a scheduling issue, stating her testimony was available in binders and via a QR code.

Maura McInerney, legal director, Education Law Center (ELC), called for reforms in cyber charter school funding, transparency and oversight in Pennsylvania. She criticized the current funding model as "inefficient, wasteful, costly and fails to recognize the distinct cost structure of cyber charters" and advocated for a state-level funding approach that recognizes the distinct cost structure of cyber charters. She discussed the financial and educational challenges of the current funding model for cyber charter schools. She highlighted the variation in tuition rates and the "Special Education charter school loophole." She argued that the current scheme wastes taxpayer money and disproportionately affects underfunded districts, noting that students often return to their home districts

academically behind. She supported Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget proposal for a statewide flat rate for cyber charter school payments. She called for a tiered Special Education rate and greater fiscal oversight to prevent misuse of funds. She detailed the poor academic outcomes of students in cyber charters, particularly among black and brown students in underfunded districts. She stressed the need for legislation to ensure transparency and accountability. She detailed that reports should address financial performance expectations and consider a moratorium on cyber charters as introduced in [SB 27](#) due to their failure to assist students at a high financial cost for the commonwealth.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) emphasized the importance of unbiased exploration in education reform and expressed his intention to understand the financial aspects of cyber charter schools. He questioned the spending per student compared to public schools. McInerney explained that the amount paid to cyber charters varies across districts and that cyber charters have a distinct cost structure due to the lack of physical classroom-related expenses. Rep. Anderson countered by noting that some cyber charter schools do have physical facilities that incur costs. McInerney specified that cyber charter schools in Pennsylvania are required to provide education virtually, which significantly reduces their operational costs. Rep. Anderson questioned the accuracy of individualized education plan (IEP) implementation in cyber schools. McInerney responded that her remarks were based on anecdotal evidence from ELC, highlighting instances where IEPs were not properly implemented in cyber charter schools, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rep. Anderson wondered if similar issues could occur in brick-and-mortar schools. McInerney stated that the ELC receives a disproportionately high number of cases from cyber charters concerning students with disabilities but still receives cases from brick-and-mortar schools. Rep. Anderson asked whether students who transition to cyber charters already have pre-existing academic difficulties. McInerney explained that issues often become apparent when students return to their home school districts, emphasizing the need for accountability in cyber charters. She noted that these students are often at the lower end of graduation rates and standardized test scores.

Rep. Anderson spoke about the need to treat cyber charters equally and hold them accountable. He wondered if these penalties should come in the form of funding or a moratorium. McInerney highlighted the issues with cyber charter schools, emphasizing their low performance and lack of accountability compared to brick-and-mortar schools. She noted that cyber charters often lack up-to-date renewal processes and oversight from a school board, leading to less accountability than brick-and-mortar charter schools. Rep. Anderson asked whether public brick-and-mortar schools are required to apply every five years to continue their existence. McInerney explained that the School District of Philadelphia conducts annual reviews of brick-and-mortar charter schools through public hearings and performance evaluations during their renewal process. She contrasted this with the oversight of cyber charter schools, which are authorized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) without the same level of accountability or governance. Rep. Anderson commented on the need for equal accountability between brick-and-mortar and cyber charter schools. He referenced an audit that highlighted 12 brick-and-mortar public schools had manipulated the law to raise property taxes 37 times over four years, increasing their general funds to \$390 million. He argued for an aggressive approach towards ensuring both types of schools are equally accountable. McInerney highlighted the discrepancy in funding between cyber charter schools and brick-and-mortar schools, emphasizing that the financial support given to cyber charters does not match their educational costs. She advocated for a common-sense approach to ensure that the funding for cyber charters aligns with the actual cost of educating students.

Rep. Mary Isaacson (D-Philadelphia) emphasized the difference in funding between cyber charter schools and traditional public schools, including brick-and-mortar charters, within the School District of Philadelphia. She highlighted the disparities in funding and the broader implications for educational resources. McInerney agreed with Rep. Isaacson's description of the funding and expense differences between cyber schools and traditional public schools. Rep. Isaacson highlighted that Pennsylvania has 500 school districts, each maintaining a system with administration, students, employees and teachers who utilize the buildings for five days a week of educational experience. McInerney agreed that the costs associated with maintaining a system of buildings and support for traditional public schools are significantly greater and very different from those for a cyber charter school. Rep. Isaacson explained that the current funding formula for cyber charter schools results in discrepancies in per-pupil funding based on the school district's size. She highlighted that the cost to educate a student in a cyber charter is likely significantly lower than in a traditional school district. McInerney agreed that virtual learning at the school district level might incur lower costs depending on the provisions for students. She emphasized the need to examine the expenses involved in educating students in cyber charter schools.

Rep. Isaacson mentioned that the Philadelphia school district operates its own cyber charter school alongside traditional brick-and-mortar schools. She suggested that many of the 500 school districts in Pennsylvania have adopted similar cyber programs post-COVID. She discussed the concept of maintaining a funding balance for school districts to ensure they have reserves in case of a state budget standoff. She contrasted this with cyber charter schools, which do not require such a balance due to their funding structure. McInerney stated there were no caps on unassigned fund balances for cyber charters, noting the discrepancies with brick-and-mortar school budgets.

Rep. Danielle Friel-Otten (D-Chester) highlighted a significant discrepancy in tuition rates for IEP students between Downingtown Area School District and Coatesville Area School District in Chester County, despite the districts being only 15 minutes apart. McInerney confirmed the accuracy of this discrepancy. Rep. Friel-Otten added that there is no difference in the services provided

to the students despite the tuition difference. She questioned the legality of using taxpayer dollars for non-educational expenses in public schools and asked if the same rules for spending apply to cyber charter schools. McInerney emphasized the lack of specific guidelines for school spending and the need for legislation to ensure transparency and accountability for cyber charter schools. She noted that in Stroudsburg, the cost of special education to a cyber charter school is \$40,000.

Rep. Probst emphasized the importance of maintaining school choice while ensuring fairness in the funding of cyber charter schools. She advocated for transparency and fairness in the funding system to ensure that all schools are treated equally. McInerney argued for fairness in payments for educating students in public schools. She stressed the importance of accountability for cyber charter schools, both financially and academically.

Chairman Cutler shared his personal experiences with public and cyber schooling during COVID-19, noting the varying impacts on his children. He emphasized the importance of focusing on student outcomes. He acknowledged the existence of different types of public schooling options, including local district cyber programs, statewide public cyber schools and brick-and-mortar charter schools. He noted funding for cyber charters in the early 2010s but wondered about the tension at the local level and categorizing the cyber school funding. McInerney disagreed with his view on cyber charter school funding, proposing a uniform cap of \$8,000 for cyber charter costs to ensure state-level accountability. Chairman Cutler highlighted the need for a specific budget line item for education funding in Harrisburg to address proficiency and cost per student, which could help alleviate local tensions over education costs. McInerney explained that cyber charter special education costs are based on the average spending of the student's local school district, leading to a prorated amount that reflects district spending. Chairman Cutler questioned the fairness of the state's reimbursement system for cyber charter special education, suggesting adjustments to reflect cost differences. McInerney argued for a uniform reimbursement cap that aligns with the actual cost of educating students. Chairman Cutler discussed the complexities of funding for cyber schools. He emphasized the need for accurate accounting of costs and referencing budget proposals from Gov. Shapiro and former governor Tom Wolf. McInerney supported capping funds to cyber charters to link funding to accountability and performance. She noted that cyber charters do not incur many traditional schooling expenses.

Chairman Cutler inquired about distributing food resources to students in cyber schools who qualify for universal breakfast and reduced lunch programs. McInerney acknowledged the importance of the question but did not have an answer. Chairman Cutler emphasized the need for accountability across all educational platforms and expressed interest in continuing discussions on applying the same standards to cyber, hybrid and traditional schools. McInerney agreed that all public schools should be held to the same standards, highlighting additional accountability layers for school districts. Chairman Cutler agreed on the importance of uniform standards but expressed reservations about standardized testing. He emphasized the need to focus on student outcomes and the impact of the funding formula on educational competition. McInerney stated that the standards should be the same but recognized that the cost of educating students in different environments leads to different funding priorities. She emphasized the importance of giving all students the same opportunities, no matter where or how they attend school. Chairman Cutler emphasized the need to focus on student outcomes rather than the distribution of funds among districts. He recounted an example from Lancaster County where wealthier districts received funding while poorer ones did not, despite similar academic performance. He stressed the importance of aiming for student proficiency and opportunity by focusing on students rather than segregating resources by district or charter type. McInerney agreed, noting the issue relates to metrics of poverty.

Chairman Schweyer discussed the issue of cyber schools maintaining significantly higher fund balances compared to traditional school districts. He expressed concern over whether these funds were being overspent on cyber charter schools or not being invested back into students and families, especially given lower test scores. He highlighted the need for updated data on this matter and questioned the justification for such large reserves. McInerney mentioned that the information about fund balances could be found in the auditor general's report and that she would check for more details. Chairman Schweyer expressed concerns about the allocation of funds by cyber schools, questioning the justification for their significant fund balances when their test scores are generally lower. He also raised the issue of whether reported fund balances take into account encumbered money for ongoing projects. McInerney stated she does not believe the data reflects encumbered money from schools but promised to verify this information.

Chairman Schweyer discussed a statistic indicating that about 20% of students in state cyber charter schools received approximately 17% of the funding allocated to students in school districts. He questioned whether this figure included students with IEPs who transferred from public schools to charter schools or if it accounted for new IEPs issued after the transfer. McInerney explained that there is no available data from Penn Data regarding whether students were first identified in a cyber charter. She suggested that PDE could obtain this information from the cyber charters it authorizes. Chairman Schweyer requested that PDE research or send an email regarding the inquiry made earlier about cyber charter schools and students with IEPs. McInerney noted that the question regarding whether the statistics reflect students with an IEP who moved from school districts to cyber charter schools or new IEPs issued might need to be directed elsewhere, as such details are not included in the Future Ready Index for students with or without disabilities.

Chairman Schweyer inquired about the origins of students enrolling in cyber charter schools, specifically whether they come from high or low tuition districts and from districts with higher or lower Special Education blended rates. He questioned if there is a pattern in the enrollment of students into cyber charter schools similar to higher education recruitment strategies. McInerney explained that cyber charters primarily serve students from struggling school districts, which are not the wealthier, higher-funded per-pupil districts. Chairman Schweyer asked about the correlation between the recruitment of students and the financial incentives associated with each student, expressing curiosity about whether recruitment efforts are influenced by financial considerations. McInerney stated the students are more likely to have disabilities, noting the amount of money provided to cyber charters is based on the average spent on special education.

Chairman Schweyer discussed the significant variance in charter tuition payments, highlighting that these amounts do not correlate with the services provided to each child. He referenced findings from the PA Educational Budget Funding Commission hearings and a court case, emphasizing the unique costs associated with educating different students. McInerney agreed that not all students learn the same way. Chairman Schweyer highlighted the unique costs associated with educating non-English speakers and students from rural poverty, contrasting these needs with those of English speakers from suburban areas. He recognized his district's diversity and emphasized the need for schools to provide specific support to bring these students to English proficiency. He suggested that cyber schools do not meet these specialized teaching requirements. McInerney explained that tuition is determined by the local school district, highlighting a lack of transparency regarding how those funds are specifically utilized. Chairman Schweyer discussed the accountability and spending of funds for educating children in cyber schools, contrasting it with traditional and brick-and-mortar cyber schools. He highlighted statewide blended tuition spent on cyber school students, pointing out that this approach does not adjust spending based on the specific needs or circumstances of students from different areas. He argued that there is effectively a statewide tuition spent due to the blending of funds from various districts. He questioned the logic against a statewide tuition rate and emphasized it as an equity issue among school districts. He suggested that leveling the playing field among the 500 school districts could be a fairer approach. McInerney agreed that leveling the playing field among the 500 school districts is a fair approach, stating that it would prevent wasteful expenditures on advertising and other non-educational expenses.

Kevin Busher, chief advisory officer, Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA), acknowledged the cyber charter reforms included in Act 55 of 2024 as historic. He emphasized that PSBA views cyber charter schools as an essential part of the public education system. He expressed concerns about governance differences between cyber charter schools and traditional school districts, noting the lack of public accountability in cyber charter schools. He stated that it is not well known who cyber board members answer to, as they are only accountable to themselves and are less willing to challenge the status quo. He emphasized the differences in debates, such as school facility discussions and how much the board is willing to spend on a project, noting limited opposing viewpoints from cyber charter boards. He detailed that PSBA sees this as an opportunity to have public cyber charters and traditional public schools work together to see if funding issues can be fixed through collaboration opportunities. He noted that PSBA wants to build off the historic cyber charter school reforms to find fair solutions for all students, families and taxpayers in the commonwealth.

Cosmas Curry, superintendent, Stroudsburg Area School District, discussed the need for cyber charter school reform, focusing on governance issues. He cited data showing low academic achievement and growth in cyber charter schools compared to traditional public schools, despite some having high attendance rates. He praised his district's Cyber Academy for its attendance and accountability policies, including daily logins and assignment completion. He highlighted the success in improving attendance rates post-COVID adjustments to 94%. He raised concerns about tracking student attendance and performance in cyber programs. He noted the financial implications of improper enrollments and the challenges of students enrolled in multiple programs. He highlighted the district's higher graduation rates compared to cyber programs, emphasizing issues with enrollment and residency verification. He spoke about the financial burden of students participating in extracurricular activities without cyber program reimbursement. He referenced the increase in special education designations among students transferring to cyber programs, raising costs without transparency on the services provided. Curry discussed the challenges for students with IEPs, noting that 34% of their cyber school students have them. He expressed concerns about the adequacy of support compared to traditional schools. He advocated extending special education timelines due to a shortage of psychologists and called for a standardized funding formula for cyber charter schools, which could save his district over \$4 million annually. He urged lawmakers to reform cyber charter funding, increase academic accountability and enhance transparency for these institutions.

Rep. Probst criticized the unfair funding of schools in Monroe County, stating that Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg rank lowest in fair funding among Pennsylvania's 500 school districts. She highlighted the negative impact of cyber charter costs on local school budgets, leading to program cuts. She questioned the financial impact of outside cyber charter schools on Monroe County's education budget, noting the county spends between \$4 and \$6 million annually on these schools. She asked whether reallocating these funds could result in tax reductions or rebates for Monroe County residents, especially considering the \$8.5 million spent on 183 students. Curry emphasized that this is the real problem of the cyber charter schools.

Rep. Anderson emphasized the need for fair discussions on public education funding and noted the repetitive nature of hearings. He defended his support for public schools, highlighting his background in education and called for equal scrutiny of cyber charter schools and traditional schools regarding financial management. He discussed the challenges of educating English as a Second Language (ESL) and severely ill students, referencing auditor general reports that call for reform in both cyber charters and brick-and-mortar schools. He expressed concern over the increasing number of students attending cyber charter schools. He questioned the governance and legal compliance of these schools compared to traditional public schools. Busher confirmed that both cyber charter schools and brick-and-mortar public schools must adhere to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and cannot discriminate. He noted differences in financial reporting and auditing obligations between the two, recalling Act 55's requirement for a board of trustee's member to file an ethics form. Rep. Anderson recounted when administrative tasks were manual and both public schools and cyber charter schools submitted the same forms and reports to the PDE. He asked how to best fix the "flawed trustee oversight" at a cyber charter. Curry addressed the Auditor General report's mention of a school with a \$390 million fund balance, suggesting legitimate reasons for such reserves. He emphasized the importance of transparency and compliance with legal standards in managing public funds. He highlighted the increase in state mandates and the lack of school improvement plans in cyber programs compared to public schools. He emphasized the need for equal expectations for both types of schools.

Rep. Anderson agreed that Pennsylvania imposes too many mandates on the public school system, calling the increase to 99 pages of mandates "absolutely ridiculous." Busher discussed the lack of oversight and accountability in cyber charter schools compared to traditional public schools. He noted the state's ability to intervene in failing public schools but not in cyber charters. He highlighted the public's ability to influence school budgets and policies through referendums, contrasting this with the operations of cyber charter schools. Rep. Anderson expressed interest in the number of school districts under state control due to failure or poor performance. He discussed the need for self-scrutiny among representatives from both cyber charters and brick-and-mortar schools. He questioned the origin of the \$8,000 flat rate for fund balance, noting discrepancies in rates suggested by Wolf and the Commonwealth Court.

Rep. Friel-Otten emphasized the need for fair funding across the commonwealth and shared concerns about the challenges parents face in securing resources for their children, especially those with IEPs. She highlighted the frustration that often drives parents to choose cyber charter schools and questioned how to better meet students' needs. She discussed the financial inefficiency of school districts litigating with parents over IEPs and the importance of improving relationships between parents and schools. She expressed concern over the financial impact of sending IEP students to cyber charter schools that are not publicly accountable, stating a cost of \$60,000 per IEP student. Busher shared his personal experience as a parent of a second grader with an IEP and his frustrations with the litigation atmosphere surrounding IEPs. He emphasized the need for collaboration rather than litigation and highlighted a successful autistic support program in Lower Dauphin. Curry stated that his district has seen an increase in special education students since before COVID-19, with a significant portion of their cyber school students having an IEP. He expressed concern that the current approach might not adequately prepare students for real-world challenges without accommodations. He criticized the excessive focus on paperwork in special education, suggesting revisions to Chapters 14 and 16 to reduce paperwork and improve classroom education. Rep. Friel-Otten noted the frustration from all sides on the issue. She recalled working with other superintendents with a policy on no parental litigation and wondered how to get to a place where that did not occur. She emphasized her issues with the amount of paperwork as a mother of a child with an IEP and expressed interest in working with the testifiers more on this issue.

Rep. Regina Young (D-Philadelphia) stressed the importance of focusing on educational investments and setting clear goals for student success. She expressed concerns about the financial disparities between traditional and cyber schools. She highlighted an instance where cyber schools spent over \$600,000 on non-educational items. She advocated for implementing financial guardrails to ensure that spending directly benefits students. Curry outlined that a significant portion of school district budgets is dedicated to salary and benefits, with his district allocating 73% to salaries and 14% to bond payments, leaving a small fraction for other expenses. He questioned the feasibility of spending \$600,000 on non-educational expenses and emphasized the importance of spending that directly contributes to student achievement. He highlighted the significance of recognizing teachers' efforts with meaningful gifts for Teacher Appreciation Week. Rep. Young thanked Curry for his insights and reiterated the importance of investing in children and navigating the legal complexities of educational spending. She expressed a desire to continue the conversation via email. Busher stressed the need to differentiate between educational expenses and operational costs in cyber charter system funding. He referred to the auditor general's report, advocating for a focus on actual educational expenses to avoid skewing funding perceptions. He emphasized assessing the true cost of education separately from operational expenses.

Chairman Cutler thanked the testifiers for their contributions and expressed interest in further analyzing the data, specifically the breakdown of salary and benefits costs. He raised concerns about policymakers' lack of input in local salary negotiations and the impact on pension payments. He acknowledged the value of teachers and sought clarification on the attendance and product approach in education. Curry confirmed that his approach requires both logging in and work progress from students. Chairman Cutler inquired about the reporting of cyber student scores and whether they are separated from the home district's scores. Curry explained that cyber student scores are combined with district scores, highlighting the logistical challenges and costs associated

with testing. He agreed with concerns about managing pension rates. He noted his association's support for a 3.1% extension to address cost-of-living increases. Busher acknowledged the budgeting process at the school board level, noting the importance of the number of teachers, salaries and the potential growth of the schools. He stated the PSBA does not have the same capabilities as the cyber charter tuition payments.

Chairman Cutler expressed concerns about the future reappropriation of funds intended for property tax reduction due to decreasing pension costs in the 2030s, stemming from past decisions. He emphasized the importance of using these funds for property tax reduction and sought confirmation on the cost per student for cyber education versus regular education in a school district. Curry provided details on the costs associated with cyber education, noting figures around \$6,300 for regular education cyber costs from 2017 to the present. He stated that special education costs for the same period were outlined on the second page of the document and a summary of total costs was on the third page of his testimony. Chairman Cutler asked whether the special education rate paid to cyber education per student was approximately \$40,000, as indicated in a chart. Curry confirmed the accuracy of the cost per student for regular education mentioned earlier. Chairman Cutler inquired about the average cost per student for in-person education. Curry responded that it falls within the \$13,000 to \$14,000 range. Chairman Cutler asked if the opportunity for cyber students to participate in extracurricular activities was exclusive to students attending Curry's cyber school or available to all cyber students. Curry confirmed the opportunities were available to any cyber student. Chairman Cutler noted discrepancies between the information presented and what was heard in the last hearing. Curry responded by highlighting that their policy encourages student interaction and is supported by the board. Chairman Cutler inquired about the lack of a mechanism to reclaim funds when billing is not paid. Curry confirmed there was no such mechanism.

Jonathon Shiota, business administrator, 21st Century Cyber Charter School, discussed the finance policy, accountability and the role of cyber charter schools. He emphasized that the schools are part of the public school system and subject to the same requirements as traditional schools. He highlighted that cyber charter students represent 3.84% of statewide public school enrollment and argued against building policy based on outliers or averages. He discussed the financial and operational challenges faced by cyber charter schools, including variability in tuition rates and rising costs. He addressed recent legislative changes and warned of potential unintended consequences for disadvantaged students. He referenced the *William Penn v. Commonwealth* case to underscore the need for equitable funding discussions. He emphasized the need for all parties to have a seat at the table, highlighting his organization's willingness to collaborate.

Rep. Probst asked for clarification on his vision regarding uniform payments and what the payment system should look like. Shiota emphasized the importance of evaluating the costs of educating regular and special education students in cyber schools individually. Rep. Probst inquired about a tiered system for special education funding and asked about the number of buildings the cyber school operates within the commonwealth and its current student enrollment. Shiota discussed the special education funding for cyber charter schools and expressed support for a tiered funding system. He stated his schools operate out of one main building in West Chester and a satellite campus in Murrysville, acknowledging the average student count is about 1,200. Rep. Probst highlighted the disparity in operational costs between regular school districts and cyber charter schools, asking for acknowledgment of this cost difference. Shiota recognized the unique costs associated with traditional school districts compared to cyber charters.

Rep. Anderson acknowledged the rigorous process of providing forms and information to the PDE every five years and recalled that there had been no response from PDE yet regarding renewal. Shiota confirmed the accuracy of Rep. Anderson's statements and understood the situation regarding the renewal process with PDE. Rep. Anderson expressed surprise at the state government's slow response and highlighted the discrepancy in the renewal process between cyber charter schools and brick-and-mortar public schools. He criticized the idea of a moratorium on cyber charter schools, arguing it unfairly impacts 60,000 students. He noted the issues with unreasonable fund balances for cyber charters, but thanked Shiota for coming to the hearing and sharing his perspective.

Rep. Friel-Otten detailed living near 21st Century Cyber Charter School in West Chester and asked about its performance, specifically for fourth graders in English Language Arts (ELA), and whether it was above, below or on average. Shiota responded that 21st Century often ranks below or on average in several areas but highlighted areas where the school is above average, noting their graduation percentage is approximately 86%. Rep. Friel-Otten asked about the areas in which 21st Century Charter is above average. Shiota admitted he could not recall specific details about performance indicators and explained his limitations due to not being an academic specialist. Rep. Friel-Otten requested a follow-up with information on the performance of 21st-century charter schools, emphasizing the importance of understanding both strengths and weaknesses to support student success. She highlighted the committee's commitment to education and the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. She emphasized the importance of identifying what works well in cyber charter schools to ensure effective stewardship of taxpayer dollars and the need for oversight to ensure cyber charter trustees meet standards. Shiota provided insight into the composition and evolution of his school's board of trustees. He noted the inclusion of members with a broader educational background and the parents of a student. He discussed the benefits and challenges of online education, acknowledging that not all students thrive in a virtual environment. He emphasized the importance of not solely defining student success by test scores. He shared a personal story about "a sibling who dealt with some drug issues, and she ended up overdosing just 10 days after high school graduation, and she died," questioning if her story was a "success story" because she graduated and scored well on assessments. He challenged the conventional narrative that academic

achievements alone constitute success. Rep. Friel-Otten expressed condolences for Shiota's loss and acknowledged the complexity of measuring student success beyond academic achievements. She stressed the importance of meeting basic educational standards for all students and the potential of every child to meet these standards with the right support. She thanked Shiota for participating in the conversation and expressed interest in continuing the discussion.

Chairman Cutler thanked Shiota for his participation in order to gather as much information as possible. He wondered about the onboarding process for students and how they are initially screened. Shiota stated that while not all students are screened upon arrival, a majority are screened to determine their appropriate academic and curriculum placement. Chairman Cutler asked whether schools are required to report students' academic levels in any reports filed with the PDE or other entities. Shiota responded that the charter school's annual report, which is published on their website and submitted to the PDE, might include information on students' academic levels, but he was uncertain about the specifics. Chairman Cutler asked if the school has programs for low-income students who qualify for free and reduced lunch and breakfast. Shiota explained that the school does not always reach out in regard to food services. He noted that his school encourages these students and their families to apply for other benefits, such as technology insurance, which covers the cost of the first device breakage without charge for economically disadvantaged students. Chairman Cutler expressed appreciation for the discussion on special education and student outcomes, emphasizing the need for more collaboration rather than competition among educational institutions. He cited the Open Campus experiment in Lancaster County as a positive example of resource sharing. Shiota discussed the inefficiencies and costs associated with the current educational system, advocating for savings through collaboration between cyber schools and traditional districts. He suggested that cyber schools' investment in digital curricula and learning management systems could be shared to reduce costs. He called for increased dialogue among school business and finance professionals. Chairman Cutler thanked Shiota for his testimony and vision regarding collaboration, aligning it with his own perspective. He expressed his intention to connect with Shiota and acknowledged the potential for general improvement and opportunities for students that Shiota's approach could bring.

Chairman Schweyer questioned the efficiency of a statewide model and why it exists if deemed inefficient. Shiota said the system, including both cyber charters and school districts, is inefficient due to excessive conversation among other factors. Chairman Schweyer discussed the limited number of cyber schools, capacity issues and his proactive approach in addressing educational challenges through collaboration. Shiota specified that he did not claim there were "vast inefficiencies" in the education system and emphasized the importance of school choice, allowing parents to decide if their local school district isn't meeting their needs. Chairman Schweyer explained the definition of school choice to Shiota and expressed his opinion on the issue. He wondered about the issues of a statewide educational model. Shiota highlighted the shift towards cyber education post-COVID pandemic, noting many students did not return to traditional school districts as they thrived in online environments. Chairman Schweyer explained that the two largest cyber programs refused to participate, thanking Shiota for his willingness to engage in discussion, and questioned the efficiency of monolithic cyber schools versus localized options. Shiota detailed the development of in-house virtual programs by school districts to retain students, emphasizing the specialized staff and resources his school possesses. Chairman Schweyer wondered what Shiota meant by specialized staff. Shiota explained that his school employs staff for curriculum development, tailoring content specifically to their students. He noted the recent resignation of a school nurse and addressed a question about specialized costs by highlighting a 55% increase in healthcare costs, amounting to \$840,000 against a \$23 million budget.

Chairman Schweyer discussed the challenges of budgeting for education and the need for equitable funding, questioning the certification status of teachers in cyber schools. Shiota confirmed a 100% completion rate of certifications, but stated it is not required by the state. Chairman Schweyer asked about the public bidding process compared to traditional public schools. Shiota explained his school's adherence to public bidding standards due to receiving federal funds, despite not being a requirement for all schools. Chairman Schweyer explained that the comparisons between schools are not equal. He emphasized the importance of giving children and taxpayers equal access. Shiota noted that, unlike school districts, his school cannot levy taxes and relies on tuition revenue, federal revenue and any fund balance for operating funds. Shiota agreed with Chairman Schweyer on the need for different funding levels for cyber schools compared to traditional public schools, acknowledging the financial and operational differences between the two.

Chairman Cutler discussed the importance of understanding the cost structures and testing outcomes of various public education methods, including cyber and traditional schools. He explained plans to further discuss the differentiation between cyber and brick-and-mortar schools. He emphasized the need to understand student mobility and its impact on education, especially in areas with high transience near New York City. He stressed the necessity of focusing on students' needs across all public schools to ensure they receive the best educational opportunities. He advocated for a detailed discussion on the cost drivers of different educational models and the development of policies prioritizing student success. He expressed his commitment to improving education for the betterment of the commonwealth and preparing students for future jobs.

Chairman Schweyer reiterated his opposition to competition in education, citing its inefficiency and inequity. He emphasized the bipartisan effort to focus on student outcomes, protecting taxpayer dollars and ensuring equal opportunities for all students. He noted the importance of ongoing discussions, including those from the Basic Education Funding Commission, and the examination

of legislative proposals to address issues identified in cyber hearings. He highlighted the urgency of addressing educational inequities and detailed efforts to organize an additional hearing to discuss school district operations more thoroughly. He emphasized the need for a more accurate representation of district costs and expressed appreciation for the efforts of all involved in the hearings.



## **Bullet.in.Points**

No Bullet.in.Points this week.

## **Cosponsor Memos**

### **HCO1460 - School Savings Contracting**

#### **Sponsor**

Rep. Valerie S. Gaydos (R)

#### **Summary**

Repeals section 528 of the omnibus School Code bill.

#### **Intro Date**

02/05/2025

#### **Last Action**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced HB1392

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### **HCO2050 - Teacher Certification Fees**

#### **Sponsor**

Rep. Peter Schweyer (D)

#### **Summary**

Aims to ensure that no teacher certification fee exceeds \$50.

#### **Intro Date**

04/11/2025

#### **Last Action**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced HB1402

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## HCO2085 - Veterans' service experience for CTE certification

### Sponsor

Rep. Brian Munroe (D)

### Summary

Allows veterans' service experience in a specific occupational area to count toward the credits necessary for a CTE Instructional 1 certification.

### Intro Date

04/17/2025

### Last Action

05/05/2025 H - Introduced HB1405

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## HCO2120 - Updated Teacher Certification Levels

### Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

### Summary

Provides for a package of bills to reduce barriers to employment, create flexibility for employers, and expand the pool of those eligible to become professional educators.

### Intro Date

04/24/2025

### Last Action

05/05/2025 H - Introduced HB1407

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## HCO2161 - PA Promise - improving college access and affordability

### Sponsor

Rep. Jordan A. Harris (D)

### Summary

Establishes PA Promise to remove substantial financial burdens on students and their families and make college more affordable for students attending Pennsylvania's community colleges, state system universities and state-related institutions.

### Intro Date

05/05/2025

**Last Action**

05/05/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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**HCO2173 - Making Education Funding More Transparent and Smarter in Pennsylvania****Sponsor**

Rep. Jason Ortity (R)

**Summary**

Creates a new Financial Transparency Data and Reporting System for education.

**Intro Date**

05/06/2025

**Last Action**

05/06/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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**SCO396 - Equitable Distribution of EITC Dollars by Regio****Sponsor**

Sen. Michele Brooks (R)

**Summary**

Ensures that tax credits awarded to businesses under the Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program are distributed fairly to all regions of the state.

**Intro Date**

12/16/2024

**Last Action**

05/05/2025 S - Introduced SB706

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## SCO796 - Establishing a Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday

### Sponsor

Sen. Lisa M. Boscola (D)

### Summary

Creates an annual sales tax holiday for school supplies that would take place from the first Saturday in August through the third Saturday in August.

### Intro Date

02/27/2025

### Last Action

05/02/2025 S - Introduced SB717

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## SCO1055 - Recovery Package: SUD Counselor Loan Forgiveness

### Sponsor

Sen. Christine M. Tartaglione (D)

### Summary

Allows qualified substance use disorder (SUD) counselors who have committed to at least 2 years of service and who achieve a minimum of 6 months tenure at a licensed treatment facility to receive student loan forgiveness capped at \$6,250 per year and totaling no more than \$25,000 per applicant.

### Intro Date

05/02/2025

### Last Action

05/02/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

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## SCO1058 - Creating a Level Playing Field for Military Students: GPA Transfers

### Sponsor

Sen. Greg Rothman (R)

### Summary

Provides students from military families with the same GPA consistency afforded to other students within their local school district.

### Intro Date

05/02/2025

**Last Action**

05/02/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

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**SCO1062 - Pennsylvania Promise Scholarship Program (PA Promise)****Sponsor**

Sen. Vincent J. Hughes (D)

**Summary**

Aims to establish a program to remove financial burdens on students and their families and make college more affordable for students attending Pennsylvania’s community colleges, state system universities, and state-related institutions.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Last Action**

05/05/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

**Basic Ed Bill Actions**

**HB17 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, further providing for subjects of instruction and flag code.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Dane Watro (R)

**Summary**

(PN 2) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, further providing for subjects of instruction and flag code. Provides for every elementary public and private school to teach writing in print, joined italics and cursive handwriting. Allows the secretary of education to provide the teaching of subjects in a language other than English. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

01/08/2025

**Actions**

04/30/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/07/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 205, Ryan Office Building

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05/07/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - First consideration

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05/07/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB411 - An Act amending Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in membership, contributions and benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025; and, in benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Steven R. Malagari (D)

**Summary**

(PN 985) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in membership, contributions and benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025; and, in benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025. Provides that an eligible benefit recipient shall be entitled to receive an additional monthly supplemental annuity from the system commencing with the first monthly annuity payment after July 1, 2025, and lists the additional supplemental annuity payable as a percentage of the amount of the monthly annuity payment. Adds that the payments will be made automatically. Provides for the conditions and benefits to beneficiaries or survivors. Provides that the additional liability for the increase in benefits shall be funded in equal annual installments over a period of 10 years beginning July 1, 2026. Outlines eligibility requirements, revising class requirements, and adds that a supplemental annuity provided shall not be payable to an annuitant receiving a withdrawal annuity prior to the first day of July coincident with or following the annuitant's attainment of superannuation age. Provides for supplemental annuity benefits commencing 2025 and the amount of additional supplemental annuity. Provides provisions for payments, conditions and benefits to beneficiaries. Requires the additional liability for the increase in benefits provided to be funded as provided in section 5508(e)(2) (relating to actuarial cost method). Outlines who is an eligible benefit recipient, revising class requirements. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 383)

**Intro Date**

01/29/2025

**Actions**

04/09/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Appropriations

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04/09/2025 H - Re-reported as committed - House Appropriations

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04/11/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Finance

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04/28/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/02/2025, 10:00 AM - Informational Meeting (House Education), Johnstown High School Auditorium, 222 Central Ave., Johnstown, PA 15902

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05/02/2025 H - Discussed during informational meeting - House Education

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**HB538 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking education, prevention and response at institutions of higher education and private licensed schools, further providing for scope of article, for definitions, for education program and for follow-up; and making an editorial change.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Robert Leadbeter (R)

**Summary**

(PN 531) Amends the Public School Code, Article XX-G, in sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking education, prevention and response at institutions of higher education and private licensed schools, further providing for scope of article, for definitions, for education program and for follow-up; and making an editorial change. Includes provisions relating to human trafficking. Defines "human trafficking," "human trafficking organization," and "involuntary servitude." Includes a nonprofit

organization that specializes in outreach and education programs on human trafficking in the development of an overall education program. Provides contents of human trafficking subject matter and requires human trafficking component of an education program to begin with the 2027-2028 school year. Adds the phrase "human trafficking" throughout the act. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/07/2025

**Actions**

04/30/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/07/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 205, Ryan Office Building

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05/07/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - First consideration

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05/07/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB681 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for health services, for reports and for interagency coordinating council for child health, nutrition and physical education.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Danielle Friel Otten (D)

**Summary**

(PN 695) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for health services, for reports and for interagency coordinating council for child health, nutrition and physical education. Provides for student confidentiality. Exempts a student from height and weight measurement if the student's parent or guardian requests an exemption in writing. Does not permit height and weight measurements to be calculated and reported as body mass index (BMI) and asserts that they may only be reported as aggregate information from a scientifically drawn sample of students in a manner that protects student confidentiality. Includes the Department of Human Services (DHS) secretary as a member of the interagency Coordinating Council for Child Health, Nutrition and Physical Education. Requires council to include recommendations from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education program. Mandates the final report to be available on the websites of DHS, Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (PDE) and Department of Agriculture (PDA). Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

02/19/2025

**Actions**

05/01/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/07/2025, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Health), Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

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05/07/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Health

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05/07/2025 H - Reported as amended - House Health

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05/07/2025 H - First consideration

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05/07/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1042 - An Act amending Titles 61 (Prisons and Parole) and 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general administration, providing for earned vocational training and education credit; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for parole power and for short sentence parole; and, in powers and duties, further providing for consideration of criminal convictions.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1131) Amends Titles 61 (Prisons and Parole) and 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)), in general administration, adding Subchapter E to provide for earned vocational training and education credit; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for parole power and for short sentence parole; and, in powers and duties, further providing for consideration of criminal convictions. Provides scope and purpose of subchapter. Allows an inmate sentenced on or after the effective date and incarcerated under the supervision of the department shall earn vocational training and education credit toward sentence reduction. Provides schedule. Establishes limitations. Provides exclusions. Permits parole board to exercise its power to parole an inmate at the expiration of the minimum term of imprisonment fixed by the court sentence less any earned vocational training and education credits as provided under this subchapter. Stipulates eligibility for earned vocational training and education credits shall be considered an element of the disposition and sentence for the purposes of notice requirements under section 213(f) of the act of the Crime Victims Act. Establishes rules and regulations. Revises parole power to include inmate earned credit. Effective in one year.

**Intro Date**

03/25/2025

**Actions**

04/25/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/05/2025, 11:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol

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05/05/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Judiciary

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05/05/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Judiciary

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05/05/2025 H - First consideration

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05/05/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1206 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for school chaplains.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. David H. Zimmerman (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1354) Amends the Public School Code, providing for school chaplains. Adds further definitions. Authorizes a public school entity to employ or approve as a volunteer a certified school chaplain. Adds that no state certification is required and requires the governing board of a public school entity to take a vote on whether to adopt a policy authorizing the public school entity to employ or approve as a volunteer a certified school chaplain, no later than six months after the effective date. Stipulates that this amendatory act shall be known as the Student and Teacher Support Act. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

04/10/2025

**Actions**

04/10/2025 H - Introduced

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04/15/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - Discussed during voting meeting - House Finance

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**HB1372 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in preliminary provisions, further providing for advertising and sponsorships; and, in charter schools, further providing for definitions, for charter school requirements, for powers of board of trustees, for facilities, for enrollment, for funding for charter schools, for funding for cyber charter schools, for powers and duties of department, for assessment and evaluation and for cyber charter school requirements and prohibitions, providing for fund balance limits and for educational management service providers, further providing for school district and intermediate unit responsibilities and for establishment of cyber charter school, providing for renewal of charters, for charter amendments and for causes for nonrenewal, revocation or termination and further providing for State Charter School Appeal Board review, for cyber charter school application, for enrollment and notification and for applicability of other provisions of this act and of other acts and regulations.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Joe Ciresi (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/01/2025

**Actions**

05/01/2025 H - Introduced

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05/02/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1373 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in high schools, further providing for assessment of civic knowledge.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Lou C. Schmitt (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1569) Amends the Public School Code, in high schools, further providing for assessment of civic knowledge. Stipulates that a student must receive a score of at least 60% as a condition of high school graduation. Permits a student to take the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test as many times as necessary to achieve a score of at least 60%. Applies the act to begin with the 2026-2027 school year. Replaces the word "assessment" with "United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Test," throughout the act. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/01/2025

## Actions

05/01/2025 H - Introduced

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05/02/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1375 - An Act amending Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the State Employees' Retirement Board.**

## Sponsor

Rep. Brett R. Miller (R)

## Summary

(PN 1571) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the State Employees' Retirement Board. Directs the board to livestream all public meetings and post an unedited video and written record of all public proceedings on its website. Mandates that videos and records remain online for a period of at least three years and be maintained for a period of at least seven years. Directs the Office of Administration to promptly revise its management directives relating to record management policies to conform to requirements. Provides for information to be submitted to the General Assembly by the board. Provides definitions for "carried interest" and "Institutional Limited Partners Association Fee Transparency Initiative." Provides for information regarding an alternative investment vehicle to be subject to public access under the Right-to-Know Law. Effective in 60 days.

## Intro Date

05/02/2025

## Actions

05/02/2025 H - Introduced

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05/02/2025 H - Referred to - House State Government

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**HB1392 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, repealing provisions relating to third-party services; and, in terms and courses of study, further providing for pandemic of 2020.**

## Sponsor

Rep. Valerie S. Gaydos (R)

## Summary

No summary available yet.

## Intro Date

05/05/2025

## Actions

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1395 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school directors, further providing for eligibility and incompatible offices.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Valerie S. Gaydos (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1590) Amends the Public School Code, in school directors, further providing for eligibility and incompatible offices. Asserts that individuals are not eligible to serve as a school director of a school district in which an immediate family member is currently employed. Removes exclusions of joint schools or departments that do not include a career and technical school, intermediate unit or community college. Provides definitions for "immediate family member" and "joint school or department." Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1398 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, further providing for grading, classification and promotion of pupils.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Valerie S. Gaydos (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1606) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, further providing for grading, classification and promotion of pupils. Directs that school district grading policies require a classroom teacher to assign a grade that reflects a pupil's relative mastery of an assignment. Prohibits requiring classroom teachers to assign a minimum grade for an assignment without regard to a pupil's quality of work. Permits pupils a reasonable opportunity to repeat a class assignment or examination for which the pupil received a failing grade and to receive a revised grade on the assignment or examination. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/06/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1401 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, providing for educator preparation admission.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Regina G. Young (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1600) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, providing for educator preparation admission. Mandates preparing institutions to recruit and admit applicants who demonstrate potential for professional success in a public school by ensuring that each applicant admitted to an initial preparation program culminating in a bachelor's degree or higher have completed at least 48 semester credit hours or the full-time equivalent of prior college or university coursework with a minimum grade point average of 2.8. Provides criteria for admission to an advanced preparation program. Permits preparing institutions to accept up to 10% of the applicants for admission to the initial preparation program who do not meet the overall minimum GPA requirements. Provides definitions. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/05/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/12/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 60, East Wing

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**HB1428 - An Act amending Title 24 (Education) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in preliminary provisions relating to retirement for school employees, further providing for definitions.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Joe Webster (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/07/2025

**Actions**

05/07/2025 H - Introduced

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05/07/2025 H - Referred to - House State Government

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05/08/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/13/2025, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House State Government), Room 205, Ryan Office Building

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**SB9 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harm suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Judy Ward (R)

**Summary**

(PN 177) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits athletic teams or sports designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Allows students to participate in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Prohibits a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Permits a student who is deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a known violation to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages, psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered, attorney fees and costs and any other relief available under law against the school or institution of higher education. Allows a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school, institution of higher education or athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation to an employee or representative of the school, institution or athletic association or organization or to any federal or state agency with oversight of schools or institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania to bring a cause of action. Permits a school or institution of higher education that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation to bring cause of action. Prohibits a person from bringing a civil action later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs. Provides that if a part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/03/2025

**Actions**

03/31/2025 S - Second consideration

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03/31/2025 S - Press Conference on Trans Visibility Day

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05/06/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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05/06/2025 S - Third consideration and final passage

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05/07/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**SB10 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, establishing the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success Scholarship Program and the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success Scholarship Fund.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Judy Ward (R)

**Summary**

(PN 692) Amends the Public School Code, adding Article XVII-E to establish the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success (PASS) Scholarship Program as a program in the State Treasury to provide scholarships to help eligible students pay tuition, school-related fees and special education services fees for attendance at a participating nonpublic school and the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success Scholarship Fund in the State Treasury. Provides several definitions. Provides the purpose of the program. Requires notification to parents and lists required contents. Requires a notice to the State Treasury. Mandates the State Treasury to develop

an application form. Provides the application and approval process. Stipulates that for the 2026-2027 school year, scholarships shall be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis considering money available in the fund, and for the 2027-2028 school year and each school year thereafter, priority for scholarships shall be given to prior year scholarship recipients. Asserts that new applicants shall be awarded a scholarship on a first-come, first-served basis, considering the money available in the fund. Provides for entering into agreements, the terms of the agreement and the termination of agreements. Allows agreement renewal. Permits multiple agreements. Requires a written explanation to parents. Asserts that the PASS scholarship account is administered by the State Treasurer. Provides money deposit into the account and lists deposit amounts. Permits payments to participating nonpublic schools. Establishes a general rule for qualified education expenses, listing the expenses. Asserts that a participating nonpublic school that receives a payment for qualified education expenses authorized under subsection (a) may not refund, rebate or otherwise directly share any portion of the payment with the parent who made the payment. Declares the money in a PASS scholarship account as not taxable income to the parent or scholarship recipient under state law. Explains that an award made to, or payment from, a PASS scholarship account may not be construed to be an appropriation or financial assistance to a participating nonpublic school. Specifies the purpose of the PASS fund. Explains that the funding of the fund consists of money appropriated, given, granted or donated by the commonwealth or any other government or private agency or person for the purpose established under this article, and the money is appropriated on a continuing basis. Establishes duties of the State Treasury. Permits contracting with a third-party administration to administer the program. Provides temporary regulations that are deemed necessary. Establishes duties of the Auditor General and of participating nonpublic schools. Provides prohibitions and reporting requirements. Permits the barring of certain participating nonpublic schools and requires the posting of a notification on the State Treasury website. Permits a nonpublic school to appeal the decision. Provides for the duties of resident school districts. Requires reporting and outlines the required contents. Effective immediately.

### **Intro Date**

04/28/2025

### **Actions**

04/28/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 05/06/2025, 10:30 AM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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05/06/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - First consideration

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**SB27 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in charter schools, providing for cyber charter school moratorium.**

### **Sponsor**

Sen. Lindsey Marie Williams (D)

### **Summary**

(PN 330) Amends the Public School Code, in charter schools, providing for cyber charter school moratorium. Prohibits the department from reviewing or acting on any application for the establishment of a new cyber charter school regardless of the date on which the application was or is received by the department beginning July 1, 2025, and continuing through June 30, 2038. Effective immediately.

### **Intro Date**

03/06/2025

### **Actions**

03/06/2025 S - Introduced

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03/06/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

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05/08/2025 S - Discussed during informational meeting - House Education

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**SB127 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, repealing provisions relating to Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction and providing for Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction required.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

**Summary**

(PN 76) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, repealing provisions relating to Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction and providing for Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction required. Requires instruction on the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations to begin with the 2026-2027 school year. Provides that the instruction should be age-appropriate, sequential in the method of study, communicate the connection between national, ethnic, racial or religious intolerance and the subjects described, and communicate the impact of personal responsibility, civic engagement and societal response within the context of the subjects described. Permits the usage of public and private materials. Requires reviewing and updating existing curriculum. Requires training programs beginning with the 2026-2027 school year. Provides several definitions. The repeal of section 1554 of the act shall be effective June 30, 2026, and the remainder of this act shall be effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

01/22/2025

**Actions**

01/22/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 05/06/2025, 10:30 AM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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05/06/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - First consideration

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**SB227 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, further providing for State convention or association, delegates, expenses and membership.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R)

**Summary**

(PN 173) Amends the Public School Code, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, further providing for state convention or association, delegates, expenses and membership to add that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association shall be considered a state-affiliated entity under the Right-to-Know Law. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/03/2025

**Actions**

05/06/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - First consideration

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05/07/2025 S - Second consideration

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05/07/2025 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations

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**SB700 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in evidence-based reading instruction, further providing for definitions and for evidence-based reading instruction curriculum and providing for reading screening, for reading deficiency and identification, for school entity duties and reading intervention plan, for parent notification, for grants to school entities, for funding and for reporting; and establishing the Evidence-based Reading Instruction Restricted Account.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)

**Summary**

(PN 714) Amends the Public School Code, in evidence-based reading instruction, further providing for definitions and for evidence-based reading instruction curriculum and providing for reading screening, for reading deficiency and identification, for school entity duties and reading intervention plan, for parent notification, for grants to school entities, for funding and for reporting; and establishing the Evidence-based Reading Instruction Restricted Account. Adds definitions for “core curriculum” and “parent.” Requires the department to collect and post on their website a disaggregated list of school entities that have adopted an evidence-based reading instruction curriculum, are using reading screeners or are undergoing or have completed a structured literacy professional development training. Increases the expiration date to 10 years for the reporting requirement subsection. Replaces subsection (b) regarding the list of screeners, to outline the duties of the school entity, including approving, beginning with the 2016-2027 school year, a professional development training program, ensuring students in kindergarten through grade three who are identified for reading deficiencies are provided intervention plans and, no later than the 2030-2031 school year adopting an evidence-based reading instruction curriculum and identifying an education responsible for assisting with the implementation. Provides for reading screenings, requiring school entities to screen each student from kindergarten through grade three for reading competency three times each school year. Requires school entities to provide educators time during the contractual school day to complete data entry and compilation associated with the screenings. Provides for exceptions and outlines the list of screeners. Outlines the reading deficiency and identification processes. Provides for the school entity duties and reading intervention plan, outlining content requirements. Requires parent notification for each student who exhibits a deficiency in reading in the third screening at the end of the school year. Establishes grants to school entities, requiring the department to establish a program to aid school entities with initial costs associated with training and other resources necessary to implement the article. Outlines the application and eligibility requirements. Establishes the Evidence-based Reading Instruction Restricted Account within the General fund, outlines the uses and funding origins, including appropriations from the General Assembly, funds from the federal government and funding from other public and private sources. Establishes reporting requirements. Effective in 90 days.

**Intro Date**

04/30/2025

**Actions**

04/30/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 05/06/2025, 10:30 AM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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05/06/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Education

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05/06/2025 S - First consideration

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**SB706 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in educational tax credits, further providing for limitations.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Michele Brooks (R)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 S - Introduced

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05/05/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

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**SB717 - An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Lisa M. Boscola (D)

**Summary**

(PN 729) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax. Excludes the sale at retail or use of a tablet and personal digital assistant from the sales tax. Designates the "exclusion period" from the first Saturday in August to and including the third Saturday in August. Provides definitions. Permits the department to promulgate regulations. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/02/2025

**Actions**

05/02/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Finance

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**SB720 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for health services and for vision screening and examinations, providing for eye health and vision examinations and further providing for examinations by examiners of own choice.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Chris Gebhard (R)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/02/2025

**Actions**

05/02/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

## Higher Ed Bill Actions

**HB265 - An Act amending the act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937 P.L.2897, No.1), known as the Unemployment Compensation Law, in compensation, further providing for benefits based on service for educational institutions.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Lindsay Powell (D)

**Summary**

(PN 210) Amends the Unemployment Compensation Law, in compensation, further providing for benefits based on service for educational institutions. Adds that with respect to services performed on and after the effective date of this subclause, benefits shall be paid on the basis of such services to any individual described in subclause (i), regardless of whether or not there is a reasonable assurance that such individual will perform those services in the second of such academic years or terms. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

01/21/2025

**Actions**

04/24/2025 H - Re-committed to - House Appropriations

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05/06/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Appropriations

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05/06/2025 H - Re-reported as committed - House Appropriations

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05/06/2025 H - Laid out for discussion

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05/06/2025 H - Third consideration and final passage

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**HB538 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking education, prevention and response at institutions of higher education and private licensed schools, further providing for scope of article, for definitions, for education program and for follow-up; and making an editorial change.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Robert Leadbeter (R)

**Summary**

(PN 531) Amends the Public School Code, Article XX-G, in sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking education, prevention and response at institutions of higher education and private licensed schools, further providing for scope of article, for definitions, for education program and for follow-up; and making an editorial change. Includes provisions relating to human trafficking. Defines “human trafficking,” “human trafficking organization,” and “involuntary servitude.” Includes a nonprofit organization that specializes in outreach and education programs on human trafficking in the development of an overall education program. Provides contents of human trafficking subject matter and requires human trafficking component of an education program to begin with the 2027-2028 school year. Adds the phrase “human trafficking” throughout the act. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/07/2025

**Actions**

04/30/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/07/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 205, Ryan Office Building

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05/07/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Education

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05/07/2025 H - First consideration

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05/07/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1401 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, providing for educator preparation admission.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Regina G. Young (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1600) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, providing for educator preparation admission. Mandates preparing institutions to recruit and admit applicants who demonstrate potential for professional success in a public school by ensuring that each applicant admitted to an initial preparation program culminating in a bachelor's degree or higher have completed at least 48 semester credit hours or the full-time equivalent of prior college or university coursework with a minimum grade point average of 2.8. Provides criteria for admission to an advanced preparation program. Permits preparing institutions to accept up to 10% of the applicants for admission to the initial preparation program who do not meet the overall minimum GPA requirements. Provides definitions. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/05/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/12/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 60, East Wing

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**HB1403 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, further providing for program of continuing professional and paraprofessional education.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Lisa A. Borowski (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1602) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for program of continuing professional and paraprofessional education. Mandates that inactive certifications be granted at no cost to the professional educator. Directs that inactive certification be removed by the department upon the application of the professional educator and evidence that the professional educator has received an offer of employment. Asserts that professional educators have the same number of hours of continuing professional education and the same amount of time in which to complete the hours as existed for the professional educator at the time inactive certification was granted upon removal of inactive certification. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/05/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/12/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 60, East Wing

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**HB1405 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Brian Munroe (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/05/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/12/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 60, East Wing

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**HB1407 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, further providing for instructional certificate grade spans and age levels and duties of department and providing for instructional certificate grade spans and age levels.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/05/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 05/12/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 60, East Wing

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**SB9 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harm suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Judy Ward (R)

**Summary**

(PN 177) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits athletic teams or sports designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Allows students to participate in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Prohibits a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Permits a student who is deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a known violation to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages, psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered, attorney fees and costs and any other relief available under law against the school or institution of higher education. Allows a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school, institution of higher education or athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation to an employee or representative of the school, institution or athletic association or organization or to any federal or state agency with oversight of schools or institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania to bring a cause of action. Permits a school or institution of higher education that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation to bring cause of action. Prohibits a person from bringing a civil action later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs. Provides that if a part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/03/2025

**Actions**

03/31/2025 S - Second consideration

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03/31/2025 S - Press Conference on Trans Visibility Day

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05/06/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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05/06/2025 S - Third consideration and final passage

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05/07/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**SB717 - An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Lisa M. Boscola (D)

**Summary**

(PN 729) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax. Excludes the sale at retail or use of a tablet and personal digital assistant from the sales tax. Designates the "exclusion period" from the first Saturday in August to and including the third Saturday in August. Provides definitions. Permits the department to promulgate regulations. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/02/2025

**Actions**

05/02/2025 S - Introduced

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05/02/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Finance

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**SB719 - An Act amending the act of May 26, 1947 (P.L.318, No.140), known as the CPA Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the board, for examination and for requirements for issuance of certificate; repealing provisions relating to practice in this Commonwealth by individuals under substantial equivalency; further providing for practice outside this Commonwealth under substantial equivalency and for practice by firms and unlicensed entities under substantial equivalency; providing for practice in this Commonwealth by individuals under automatic mobility; and further providing for licenses to practice, for licensing of firms, for grounds for discipline, for reinstatement and for unlawful acts.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Hutchinson (R)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/06/2025

## Actions

05/06/2025 S - Introduced

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05/06/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure

## Upcoming Events

### **MONDAY – 05/12/2025**

#### **10:00 AM, [House Education](#)**

*Voting Meeting, Room 60, East Wing*

To consider: [HB 1401](#), [HB 1402](#), [HB 1403](#), [HB 1404](#), [HB 1405](#) and [HB 1407](#)

#### **11:00 AM, [Senate Education](#)**

*Public Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Public hearing on truancy and chronic absenteeism in Pennsylvania schools.

#### **11:00 AM, PA Association of School Nurses and Practitioners Tabling & Press Conference**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda*

Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners will hold school health screenings and demonstrations from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in the Main Capitol Rotunda. A press conference for this event will take place at 11:00 a.m. in the Main Capitol Rotunda.

### **THURSDAY – 05/15/2025**

#### **10:00 AM, [Independent Regulatory Review Commission \(IRRC\)](#)**

*Commission Meeting, 14th Fl., Conference Rm., 333 Market St., Harrisburg*

Public hearing on No. 3390 State Board of Medicine #16A-4955: Physician Assistants; No. 3394 State Board of Physical Therapy #16A-6522: Early Exam and CE for Clinical Instruction; No. 3396 State Board of Pharmacy #16A-5433: Pharmacy Technician Registration; No. 3406 State Board of Certified Real Estate Appraisers #16A-7029: Distance Education and PAREA; No. 3431 Department of Labor and Industry #12-121: Uniform Construction Code Supersedes Prior L&I Code Provisions; No. 3355 Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission #57-334: Use of Fully Projected Future Test Year; 52 Pa. Code Chapter 53.51-53.56a (Previously Tolerated) – [Agenda](#)

## In the News

[05/02/2025 - First Lady Lori Shapiro, State Senator Carolyn Comitta, Acting Secretary of Education Carrie Rowe and the Governor's Advisory Commission on Next Generation Engagement Visit West Chester University to Discuss Menstrual Equity Efforts on Campus](#)

[05/02/2025 - Ciresi introduces legislation to refocus Pennsylvania's cyber charter school law on students and taxpayers](#)

[05/05/2025 - Topper: Performance-Based Funding Council Adopts Report, Makes Recommendations](#)

[05/05/2025 - Senators Lindsey M. Williams, Judy Schwank and Rep. Jeanne McNeill Announce Legislation to Address Child Care Worker Shortage](#)

[05/06/2025 - PASA, PASBO Press Conference on Cyber-Charter Reform](#)

[05/06/2025 - Senate GOP: Senate Approves 'Save Women's Sports Act' to Protect Fairness in Female Athletics](#)

[05/06/2025 - Senate Education Committee Advances Structured Literacy and PASS Scholarship Bills](#)

[05/07/2025 - Scholastic, Members of the Pennsylvania State Legislature, and Abbott Elementary Actress Sheryl Lee Ralph Celebrate Expansion of the United States of Reader's Literacy Program Pennsylvania](#)

[05/07/2025 - Hughes' and Robinson Bold Literacy Initiative Passes Education Committee](#)

Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education related legislation in the Pennsylvania Capitol and is compiled and edited by PLS.

For subscription information, questions or more information contact PLS at [mypls@mypls.com](mailto:mypls@mypls.com) or 717-236-6984. Thank you, Deborah, Cheryl, Derek, Hattie, Sam, Grace, Aaron, Christian, Katie, Zoe, Daniel, Kyle, Nicholas, Dominic, Julia and Noah.

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