

## May 9 – 15, 2025

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### SESSION STATUS

At 3:52 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, the House stands adjourned until Monday, June 2, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 2:19 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, the Senate recessed until Monday, June 2, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

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

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*

### ARTS & CULTURE CAUCUS CELEBRATES ARTS ADVOCACY DAY IN THE CAPITOL

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | May 13, 2025

The Pennsylvania Legislative Arts & Culture Caucus celebrated Arts Advocacy Day in the East Wing Rotunda today, encouraging support for arts and culture grant funding in the 2025-2026 legislative budget.

Kelley Gibson, president, Cultural Alliance of York County, thanked the attendees for supporting the Arts & Culture Caucus press event. She noted the importance of being in the Capitol to “hold the line on supporting arts and culture across all of our state.” Gibson added that collaboration and advocacy for the arts can protect artists, creative businesses and arts and culture organizations. “We are urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enact a \$10.59 million line item for grants for arts and culture,” Gibson stated. She mentioned discussions at the federal level revolving around arts and culture that are impacting local communities and accessibility to the arts in libraries and schools. Gibson then introduced Rep. Joe Ciresi (D-Montgomery) and Rep. Lee James (R-Venango), the House co-chairs of the Pennsylvania Legislative Arts & Culture Caucus.

Rep. Ciresi spoke alongside Rep. James, stating it’s “important that we show that the arts are not political.” He noted the “universal” nature of art doesn’t recognize party lines. Rep. James emphasized there must be a “balance” between work and play. “It’s important to embrace the arts for a variety of reasons, but having balance of time is terribly important,” he said.

Sen. Jay Costa (D-Allegheny), Senate co-chair, Pennsylvania Legislative Arts & Culture Caucus, thanked all his colleagues for being part of “one of the largest” caucuses in the Capitol. He mentioned that arts and culture are an “economic driver” for Pennsylvania. Sen. Costa stated that arts advocates are requesting support for Gov. Josh Shapiro’s line-item budget regarding arts and culture grants. “The increase is approximately a \$1 million increase over last year, and this is a line item that hasn’t been introduced or increased for a number of years,” he continued. Sen. Costa highlighted local organizations and their impact, not only on the state level, but also at the federal level. He added it’s “critically important” to maintain and ensure arts and culture’s value in Pennsylvania in order for it “to grow and thrive.” Sen. Costa additionally emphasized the significance of art in schools. He described his tenure serving on the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA), mentioning their focus on keeping art involved in education. Sen. Costa noted it is especially important to continue these discussions with respect to the “uncertainty” regarding federal funding for both the arts and education. “Arts in education may provide self-esteem to students,” he said. Sen. Consta added that when kids’ self-esteem improves, so does their academic performance. “That’s why it’s important to have these programs,” he emphasized. Sen. Costa then introduced two principal dancers from the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Tommie Lin Kestin and Colin McCaslen, who performed two ballet numbers from The Nutcracker.

Adam McKinney, artistic director, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, thanked Sen. Costa for his work with the Arts & Culture Caucus. He mentioned he “very much appreciated” his remarks on the intersection of art and education. “As we know, the arts save lives and remind us that we are not alone,” McKinney stated. “The arts sit at this beautiful intersection of community, peace, justice, health and wellness.” He added it was an “honor” to work alongside the Arts & Culture Caucus to bring increased advocacy and awareness to the arts in Pennsylvania.

Of the ballet performance, Gibson said, “It’s really important to understand that what we just saw is beautiful and magical, but it is a huge economic generator in the community.” She stated that for every ticket the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre sells, it generates “an average of \$28 of economic impact.” Gibson urged the crowd to consider that impact across the entire state. She also stated that Pennsylvania spends an average of “81 cents on the dollar” per resident for arts and culture. “That is grossly below New York, New Jersey and Virginia,” she said. Gibson questioned, “Are we worth less than New Jersey residents?” She also mentioned how Pennsylvania is “one of the biggest generators” of music therapy graduates, though most move out-of-state to practice due to other states’ resources and job availability. “We’re already making do with too little,” Gibson stressed. “We not only need to hold the line on the line item for Pennsylvania grants in this new budget— we need \$1 million more.” Gibson emphasized she wants to see the arts thrive in Pennsylvania, rather than just survive.

Rep. Ciresi acknowledged the efforts of PCA, mentioning they “continue to support on a limited amount of money across the commonwealth.” He noted how he is a product of the arts, stating, “Without the arts, I wouldn’t be here today.” He added that art gave him the “courage” to participate in his community. Rep. Ciresi highlighted the different kinds of art all around the Capitol building but criticized how “the first thing that we cut out of the budget is the humanities.” He emphasized that the arts are equally as important as athletics or science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Rep. Ciresi reiterated the significance art has in all areas of community, including government and municipal buildings. “We tend to forget that as we walk to these halls and say that it’s okay not to fund the arts,” he said. “Let’s just imagine the architect that designed this building had no arts background. What would this building look like?”

McKinney highlighted Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre’s performances of The Wizard of Oz this weekend. He mentioned checking the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre’s [website](#) for performance details. “Thank you again for all of your support of the arts across the state,” he added.



## Committee News

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

### **House Intergovernmental Affairs & Operations Committee**

*05/12/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building*

Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to discuss several bills and a resolution.

Chairman David Delloso (D-Delaware) welcomed the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Affairs & Operations Committee since 2011. He stated he “looked forward” to his first chairmanship as well as working with committee members and the minority chairman. Chairman Delloso also noted the committee will operate pursuant to the standard committee operating rules.

Minority Chairman Craig Staats (R-Bucks) expressed his excitement at “resurrecting” the committee. He provided a few introductions, noting Rep. Thomas Kutz (R-Cumberland) as the vice chair and Rep. Brian Rasel (R-Westmoreland) as the Republican secretary for the committee.

**HB 41 -** (PN 20) Amends the Public School Code, in interscholastic athletics accountability, providing for playoffs and championships. Adds section 1606-A for playoffs and championships. Permits the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association (PIAA) to establish separate playoffs and championships for athletics for boundary schools and nonboundary schools. Requires at least one joint meeting in each PIAA district and provides meeting requirements including for meetings to be made public, sworn testimony and what the meetings will discuss. Establishes the procedures for the board when deliberating and deciding any changes to playoffs and championships. Defines “board,” “boundary school,” “nonboundary school” and “oversight committee.” Effective in

30 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Chairman Staats and Reps. Aaron Bernstine (R-Lawrence), Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton), Wendy Fink (R-York), Mike Jones (R-York) and Rasel voting in the negative.

Rep. Scott Conklin (D-Centre), the bill's prime sponsor, commented that before COVID-19, "about a third of high schools in Pennsylvania" were considering dropping out of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) due to an "imbalance within the playoff system." He noted the issue of both border and non-border schools within a school district, where border schools operate within the state education system and non-border schools operate independently. Rep. Conklin described a story from a former classmate detailing how his daughter's basketball team played against a private school in their semifinals, where the private school players "were 6'4" or above." He continued, stating his former classmate wanted to discuss the "unfair atmosphere" and bring attention to the issue. "For full disclosure, I have Catholic schools, Christian schools, private schools [and] charter schools all in my district. In no way am I saying anything derogatory about any of these non-boundary schools," Rep. Conklin stated. He noted HB 41 is meant to "allow those teams to play in their own championships." Rep. Conklin mentioned this has worked "very, very well" in states such as Connecticut, New Jersey and Maryland.

Chairman Delloso stated the bill is "genuinely good" and "worthy of our consideration."

Rep. Jeff Olsommer (R-Wayne) mentioned the relevancy of his brother's role as a public high school football coach. "I can't tell you how many times he's gone into the state playoffs, faced a charter or a private school that is loaded with talent and just gets mowed down," he said. Rep. Olsommer noted the problem is "widely prevalent" throughout the commonwealth and commended Rep. Conklin on his bill.

Rep. Rasel asked if the percentage of state championships won by private schools is "significantly higher" than that of public schools. Rep. Conklin stated private and charter schools represent about "5% of the schools in the state, and they win, I believe, 70% or 75% of championships." He noted he did not have the exact numbers in front of him.

Rep. Nikki Rivera (D-Lancaster) mentioned her concern regarding this issue in her district. "I'm in support of what you're doing here," she added.

Chairman Staats remarked that the Athletic Oversight Committee was created to "be a legislative oversight for PIAA." He questioned why HB 41 requires the PIAA board and the Athletic Oversight Committee to have joint meetings. Rep. Conklin responded, "It's always technicalities." He stated he would be able to get into the "minutia" of Chairman Staats' question after the meeting when he convenes with his executive director. "You'll find out as a chairman, the longer you're there, the more you'll depend on your staff," he mentioned humorously. Chairman Staats then inquired about the appeal process if schools don't agree with PIAA's final board decisions. Rep. Conklin mentioned he "wished" he had legal counsel to answer accurately. He stated he could get that information to him. Chairman Staats also asked when HB 41 would go into effect. In response, Rep. Conklin mentioned he has worked on his bill for so long, and he "never thought it was going to get into a committee," and noted he would work with the PIAA on that. Rep. Conklin reiterated HB 41 is "giving them the legal authority... to put a clear playoff system together that would put non-boundary and boundary schools in the playoff division which they belong."

Chairman Staats stated he has questions regarding the language of the bill and said he would be a no vote today. "Although I will be a no vote, this is not a mandate on PIAA," Chairman Staats highlighted. "The General Assembly is simply allowing them to further study the issue and make any decisions that they deem necessary." He added he hoped for further clarification regarding the bill on the House floor. Rep. Conklin expressed his enthusiasm for working with Chairman Staats. "I want to make this a good bill that's bipartisan," he said. He emphasized his hope for HB 41 in having all schools "play in a competitive district and be able to be rewarded for their hard work."

Rep. Steven Mentzer (R-Lancaster) asked if the Catholic Conference had a position on the bill. Rep. Conklin responded, "Of course they're against it." After voting commenced, Rep. Conklin added that the Catholic Conference orally opposed the bill over a phone call rather than with a written statement.

[HB 169](#) - (PN 127) Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Department of General Services (DGS) and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for a program for the sale of used pursuit vehicles and creation of a form. Directs DGS to create a program designed to allow a local or regional police department within Pennsylvania to purchase select used pursuit vehicles at a fixed price no later than 20 days prior to the next scheduled sale date. Directs the Pennsylvania State Police to allocate up to 10% of its available used pursuit vehicle inventory for the program. Requires payment for a used pursuit vehicle under the program prior to obtaining the vehicle, further limiting payment to organization checks only. Directs DGS to notify the local or regional police department when vehicles matching the description within the submitted form become available for purchase through the program at a fixed price. Provides DGS shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the administration of this section. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **passed over**.

Chairman Dellosa stated HB 169 will be held back for reworking after “conversations with stakeholders.” He added that it will be considered at a future committee meeting.

[HB 276](#) - (PN 220) The Employee Misclassification Working Group Act provides for interagency cooperation regarding employee misclassification; and establishes the Employee Misclassification Working Group to coordinate enforcement strategies involving state agencies and employee misclassification, provides for working group representatives. Allows the Department of Revenue to provide state tax information to the Department of Labor and Industry’s Office of Unemployment Compensation Tax Services, and other offices to assess or investigate employee misclassification. Directs state agency business applications to include and use federal employer identification numbers. Directs the working group to meet at least quarterly. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Dellosa, the bill’s prime sponsor, mentioned he has been “passionate” about addressing employee misclassification. He noted HB 276 “simply establishes a committee to study and make recommendations.” Chairman Dellosa added that this is a “hot button” issue with building trades unions.

Chairman Staats mentioned some concerns, including his belief that individual data should remain private. He added it’s “not clear what new information the tax sharing provisions of this bill will lead to.” Chairman Staats also stated the bill does not “clarify existing law” or provide education to business owners. He criticized the bill for “trying to force” a business relationship between employers and independent contractors. Chairman Staats said he would prefer discussing the bill further.

Rep. Nathan Davidson (D-Dauphin) thanked Chairman Dellosa for the bill, mentioning worker misclassification and its need for further investigation have been “long discussed” in the Capitol building.

Chairman Dellosa remarked his bill will create a group to investigate and report results, not to establish law. He noted the importance of addressing this issue, stating worker misclassification “cheats the commonwealth of its rightful tax money and workman’s compensation money and unemployment compensation money.”

[HR 166](#) - (PN 1222) Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to continue its support of Taiwan and recognizing the friendship between the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Taiwan. The resolution was **reported as committed** with Reps. Borowicz and Fink voting in the negative.



### **House Education Committee**

*05/12/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing*

Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 1401](#) - (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. The bill was **reported as committed** with Republicans voting in the negative, except Reps. Jill Cooper (R-Westmoreland), John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) and Dane Watro (R-Schuylkill).

[A00661](#), by Schweyer, adds that the alternative teacher preparation providers have the same 2.8 minimum GPA requirement. The amendment was **adopted** with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Schlegel and Watro.

Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh) said the amendment was requested by the Department of Education (PDE).

Rep. Schlegel asked for an explanation of the wording of the phrase “alternative program providers.” Kathryn Krueger, Democratic executive director, explained those include “anything from emergency certification or just any alternative preparation program to

lump that in with the traditional certification pathways.” Rep. Schlegel asked if a particular type of training program applies as well. Chairman Schweyer replied that it did to his understanding.

Rep. Regina Young (D-Philadelphia), the bill’s prime sponsor, talked about the “several factors” regarding an individual’s grade point average (GPA). She talked about the importance of students making connections with their teachers and noted the “decline” of the education system. She suggested lowering the GPA requirements to “increase the presence of qualified, passionate and creative individuals in these spaces,” but understood some of the “immediate push back” from colleagues.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) criticized the bill as “lowering standards.” He said, “One of the serving trends in education is we’ve stopped doing the hard part, which is helping a kid go over the barrier, go through the barrier and to go around the barrier.” He said the bill was “bad” for teachers and students, and the bill “makes no sense to me whatsoever.”

Rep. Milou Mackenzie (R-Northampton) agreed with Rep. Anderson and said teachers “lost respect in recent years, and I’m very sorry to see it happening.” She encouraged having the “best and brightest” in the classroom to “inspire” students. She added, “If you don’t even have a B average, it says something about the quality of your dedication to education and learning.”

Rep. Jim Prokopiak (D-Bucks) told his story of entering law school with a lower GPA and not getting into a teaching program. He regarded a GPA as “just a number that doesn’t stop nor prevent you.” He remarked, “Some of the best people I know had very low GPAs and have been very successful in business.” He emphasized the need for teachers.

Rep. Schlegel talked about his own experience with his GPA and said he was “willing to listen to other people’s perspectives and ideas” to address teacher shortages.

Rep. Barbera Gleim (R-Cumberland) said she likes getting the policy “right” before it goes out of committee. She criticized the bill as “painting with a broad brush.” She noted the teacher shortage is with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and language teachers, and disagreed with Rep. Prokopiak’s comment about the GPA being “just a number.” She suggested amending the bill “in a better way” before going out of committee.

Rep. Young voiced appreciation for the feedback from Reps. Anderson, Mackenzie, Schlegel and Gleim. She said the comments “indirectly prove my point in terms of the number itself.” She talked about an example of someone who may have a higher GPA and doesn’t connect with students. She also criticized the “teaching to test” approach and added, “We’re still going to have shortages.” She voiced support for her bill and said, “The bottom line for me is really about us revisiting how we address our educational system— how do we target these students and bring these creative minds into these classrooms?” She further said, “America is losing as it relates to this worldwide platform and industry, and so we have to figure it out.”

[HB 1402](#) - (PN 1601) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, providing for state certificate fee reduction. Asserts that certificate fees assessed by the Department of Education related to the review of certificate eligibility for issuance of certificates under section 1201 and the professional educator discipline fee under section 1216.1 may not be more than \$50. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A00658](#), by Schweyer, removes the teacher discipline fee from the list of fees that are reduced to \$50. The amendment was **adopted** with Republicans voting in the negative, except Rep. Schlegel.

Chairman Schweyer, the bill’s prime sponsor, briefly talked about the package of bills the committee brought up. “Nothing that we’re going to do today is hitting a grand slam, and we’re trying to make it easier for more folks that are qualified and capable and interested to join the field of education in one form or another,” he said.

Rep. Jason Ortity (R-Allegheny), filling in for Minority Chairman Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster), believed the bill is “a good bill.” He said he preferred not to have the amendment added, but he would still support it.

[HB 1403](#) - (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. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A00660](#), by Schweyer, provides a technical amendment. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Lisa Borowski (D-Delaware), the bill's prime sponsor, explained the origins of her introducing the bill and said her bill was "part of a package of bills to get teachers into the classroom." She provided some details of her bill and thanked the committee for considering it and the committee staff for their help.

Rep. Roman Kozak (R-Beaver) thanked Rep. Borowski for her bill and talked about his experience with "scrambling" to take online education courses to attain a job. He voiced praise for the bill and said, "I just wish I would have had it at that time."

Rep. Schlegel said, "I could probably make this comment to any one of these, these bills, because I'm a firm believer that regardless of anything else, there are three pillars to being an effective teacher— number one, we need to have teachers that can connect positively, build positive relationships with students, number two, they absolutely must know their content and number three, they absolutely must know and be able to deliver on effective instructional strategies." He added, "When we interview for prospective teachers and those that I can think of that have been the most successful, they have all three of those pillars."

[HB 1404](#) - (PN 1603) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for certificates qualifying persons to teach, for standard employment application, for career and technical instructional certificate and for postbaccalaureate certification; and abrogating regulations. Revises the list of certificates for qualifying persons to teach to include second career certificates. Updates standard employment applications to include second career or career and technical second career teaching certificates in applying for employment with school districts within this commonwealth. Provides standards for the issuance of the Career and Technical Second Career Certificate. Replaces the word "intern" with "second career" throughout the act. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Gina Curry (D-Delaware), the bill's prime sponsor, provided an overview of her bill and statistics to detail the number of teachers leaving the profession. She mentioned the statistics to emphasize the importance of the bills being voted on in the committee.

Rep. Schlegel reiterated his "three pillar" point and noted a story about an individual he knows with a superintendent's letter of eligibility who is not eligible to run a career technical institute. He expressed hope that the committee could address it.

Chairman Schweyer said he was "95% confident" that legislation is being worked on.

Rep. Paul Friel (D-Chester) voiced support for the bill and talked about a cousin of his who works as a union electrician. "I think we need to think about folks who have a high degree of discipline who are actually teaching that at a professional level," he said.

Rep. Gleim asked if the bill keeps an intern certificate under the code. Chairman Schweyer explained "confusion" with the terminology and said the bill replaces language and changes the number of years. Rep. Gleim noted in the bill the phrase "career and technical intern certificate." Krueger said that phrase is in the code, and the point was to "make the correct reference."

[HB 1405](#) - (PN 1604) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate. Includes evidence that a veteran has served in the United States Armed Forces for a minimum of 8,000 hours, equivalent to four years full-time, in the occupational area to be taught, for the issuance of a career and technical instructional certificate. Defines "veteran." Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Schweyer spoke on behalf of the bill's prime sponsor, Rep. Brian Munroe (D-Bucks), and said, "People get their technical proficiency in a number of different ways, and we wanted to make sure that we are acknowledging that folks are able to get those qualifications absolutely anywhere."

Rep. Anderson voiced praise for the "excellent" bill and said he had been advocating for the matter for "15 years or more."

Chairman Schweyer mentioned a previous conversation he had with Rep. Watro about getting veterans into the education field and regarded the bipartisan conversations as "meaningful."

[HB 1407](#) - (PN 1605) Amends the Public School Code, 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. Designates an expiration date for the subparagraph of three years from the effective date of the clause. Lists and details instructional certificate grade spans and age levels. Applies amendment or addition of sections 1202.1 heading and (b)(1)(i) and 1202.2 of the act beginning with the 2027-2028 academic year. Section 3 shall take effect in three years. The remainder of the act is effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Schweyer talked about the "widespread desire" for flexibility in school districts and also noted the "difficulty" in finding a compromise with stakeholders on the bill.

Rep. Anderson voiced praise for the bill and said the bill “allows administrators to move their teachers around and it also makes prospective teachers more marketable, and that they can get a job at a different school at a different level.”

Rep. Schlegel voiced support for the bill and talked about the importance of “systemic and professional development.”

[HB 813](#) - (PN 843) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in personal income tax, further providing for classes of income to assert that the following are not subject to tax: the discharge of an eligible student loan and amounts paid or incurred by an employer of an employee for educational assistance provided to an employee. Provides for definitions. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **re-referred** to the House Finance Committee.

Chairman Schweyer said the bill was referred to the House Education Committee last year but was also re-referred to the House Finance Committee.



### **Senate Education Committee**

*05/12/2025, 11:00 a.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing to discuss truancy and increasing absenteeism among students in the commonwealth.

Sen. Jarrett Coleman (R-Lehigh) stated he would be acting in place of Chairman Lynda Schlegel Culver (R-Northumberland) for the public hearing. He addressed the issue of student absenteeism, emphasizing the challenges and the increase in chronic absenteeism and truancy, especially post-COVID-19. He outlined the session's focus on understanding the problem nationwide, Pennsylvania's response and potential strategies for improving student attendance.

Minority Chairman Lindsey Williams (D-Allegheny) noted the committee's “packed agenda” and thanked the testifiers for traveling to Harrisburg.

Nat Malkus, senior fellow, American Enterprise Institute, testified about the significant increase in chronic absenteeism nationwide and in Pennsylvania since the pandemic, noting that 28% of K-12 students were chronically absent in 2022. He highlighted, “The surge in chronic absenteeism isn't for a subset of students, but it's a rising tide we see across students and across the nation.” He emphasized the importance of addressing this issue for tackling pandemic learning loss and advocated for a balanced approach of support and reasonable consequences to improve attendance. “At the rate we're heading, we will return to pre-pandemic levels five years from now,” Malkus said, warning about the consequences of facing truancy problems at the “current pace.” He added he believes the central issue around rising absenteeism is the “culture” around school attendance. Malkus stressed the importance of setting “goals and timeframes” to improve these issues.

Sen. Coleman expressed shock at the high rate of chronic absenteeism in the Allentown School District in Lehigh County. He asked about benchmarks for chronic absenteeism and the point at which recovery becomes unlikely. Malkus acknowledged the complexity of addressing chronic absenteeism and suggested that local school system workers might offer more practical insights into resolving these challenges. Sen. Coleman inquired about effective measures being taken in Pennsylvania to address absenteeism and whether any trends appeared positive. Malkus expressed concern about answering Sen. Coleman's question accurately. “I'd hate to make ventures where I couldn't support the answer,” he continued. Malkus added that Pennsylvania's trends in addressing absenteeism are average, and he expressed concern over the effectiveness of the strategies used. Sen. Coleman asked if there are any states particularly successful in reducing chronic absenteeism and if there are states Pennsylvania should avoid emulating. Malkus highlighted Rhode Island's successful strategies in reducing chronic absenteeism. He mentioned their early public release of attendance data and engaging medical professionals, as well as other relevant state agencies, to discuss the importance of attendance with students and their families.

Sen. Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia) asked if there are identifiable patterns in the data that explain why students are absent. Malkus explained that national data on the reasons for student absenteeism are not collected, but ongoing research aims to understand patterns across states. He highlighted the preliminary findings, which show similar patterns of absences, suggesting a general increase in absenteeism rather than a specific cause related to the pandemic. “I think that there's quite a bit to attribute to... the habits and culture around school attendance that shifted over the pandemic,” he explained. Sen. A. Williams then questioned if

the positive situation in Rhode Island was due to policy or “codified law.” Malkus responded that it seemed to be policy driven by their State Department of Education and their “state chief,” though he mentioned he wasn’t certain. Sen. A. Williams remarked how “alarming” the truancy situation is, adding that a 20% absenteeism rate is a “failure.” Malkus agreed, adding “a new normal” set in after the COVID-19 pandemic that is “unacceptable.” Sen. A. Williams emphasized the importance of understanding the cultural acceptance of children not attending school.

Sen. Coleman expressed concern about low proficiency rates in math and reading in the Allentown School District, as well as the significant absenteeism. He suggested the need for an “unbiased snapshot” of school performance, excluding absent students.

Amy Lena, deputy secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education (PDE), testified about how PDE collects data on truancy, distinguishes between attendance and truancy and addresses truancy. She noted how attendance refers to “attending school, having an excused absence and having an unexcused absence,” whereas truancy solely looks at unexcused absences. Lena stated that, after three unexcused absences, the student’s family is notified of truancy. She added that, upon another unexcused absence, a “student attendance improvement plan” is created by the school. Lena also stated beyond these, schools can use school-based community programs, other state agencies, such as Children & Youth Services (CYS), and the school’s local district magistrate. She also mentioned a new plan for data collection on truancy starting the next school year.

Sen. Coleman asked if PDE can track whether schools are consistently following the protocol for addressing truancy, to which Lena acknowledged the current inadequacy in data collection but mentioned the upcoming improvement in tracking. She also mentioned it could be done “internally.” Sen. Coleman asked about the understanding of case numbers and the success rate of current attendance protocols, emphasizing the need for transparency in educational matters funded by taxpayers. He also inquired about additional measures for enhancing transparency regarding attendance issues. Lena discussed PDE’s concern with transparency and attendance, mentioning recent meetings with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and CYS officials to develop best practices and resources for local education agencies. She highlighted the importance of collaboration across the state. Sen. Coleman discussed the importance of school attendance and pondered the influence of family values on attendance rates as well as the effectiveness of current strategies to engage families.

Chairman L. Williams discussed the complexity of absenteeism and inquired about any correlation between the level of student supports and absenteeism rates. Lena acknowledged the importance of engagement in improving attendance but did not have the requested data, promising to investigate and share findings after the public hearing’s conclusion.

Sen. A. Williams specified his focus on truancy over general absenteeism and expressed concern about the implications of truancy. Lena explained that they currently do not collect truancy data but plan to start next year. Sen. A. Williams expressed alarm at the longstanding issue of declining student attendance before the pandemic and asked for clarification on efforts being made. Lena mentioned collaborating with the management system to develop a data collection system and committed to finding out what specific data will be collected next year. Sen. A. Williams asked about the coordinated relationship between PDE and the School District of Philadelphia regarding the sharing of information about students on probation. Lena shared her experience as a former principal, collaborating with CYS and district magistrates, but did not have specific information about the School District of Philadelphia. Sen. A. Williams then questioned if PDE sees the rising truancy and absenteeism issues as a crisis. Lena stated that PDE does view it as a crisis. She described PDE’s efforts to partner with other agencies and share best practices among schools to improve attendance. Sen. A. Williams highlighted the need to understand the causes of truancy and criticized the lack of a coordinated plan to address it. “You can’t provide solutions if we don’t understand what causes the problem,” he stressed. He urged discussions with the governor to prioritize school attendance.

Sen. Coleman expressed alarm at the inaction on truancy issues and asked about penalties for districts failing to address truancy. Lena responded that districts are not being fined and promised to gather more information. Sen. Coleman raised concerns about taxpayer funds being disproportionately allocated to districts with high absenteeism.

Sen. A. Williams criticized the absence of the Secretary of Education at the public hearing, emphasizing the crisis in education for Pennsylvania’s neediest children. Lena expressed gratitude for the opportunity to understand the concerns raised to guide her decisions as deputy secretary.

Hon. Gary Whiteman, magisterial district judge (MDJ), Lycoming County, spoke on behalf of the judges, highlighting the inconsistency in truancy enforcement, the need for early intervention and advocating for more tools beyond fines to address truancy. “There’s 500 different ways to address truancy, court by court by court, and there’s very little consistency,” he explained. Hon. Whiteman mentioned one benefit of their system is “we get to see how some districts have moved forward and the programs that they’ve put in place and the policies that they’re using and how we get closer to progress.” However, he added that “no progress has been seen yet” regarding absenteeism. He suggested starting the enforcement of absenteeism issues early, before students get to middle school. Hon. Whiteman also mentioned diversionary programs and parental accountability.

Sen. Coleman asked how important it was for MDJs to have consistency versus their “own tools” to address this issue. Hon. Ronald Haggerty, MDJ, Fayette County, discussed the variability in handling truancy cases across Pennsylvania, focusing on his approach to avoid fines and instead address underlying issues through probation and monitoring. Sen. Coleman asked about the penalties for truancy, to which Hon. Haggerty explained his practice of not allowing immediate guilty pleas and setting up hearings to understand and address the students' issues before considering fines. He additionally detailed the fines for truancy as up to \$300 for the first offense, \$500 for the second and \$750 for the third. He did not have the exact number of truancy cases handled this year, but estimated between three and 400 last year, with less than 20% resulting in the full fine being issued. Sen. Coleman questioned Hon. Haggerty's discretion in not issuing fines, emphasizing the impact on the education industry. Hon. Haggerty argued that indiscriminate fining would be a disservice, emphasizing solving the root cause over imposing fines. He noted the generational issue of truancy and the importance of early intervention. He added that most fined individuals follow a pattern, with payment plans allowed for fines. Hon. Haggerty confirmed instances of individuals being on multiple payment plans for truancy fines. Hon. Whiteman specified that fines accumulate and must eventually be settled, with payment plans offered up to five years at \$20 a month, extending for those with multiple convictions. Hon. Whiteman discussed the lack of a collaborative approach to truancy in the commonwealth, contrasting it with Rhode Island's “all-hands-on-deck” method. He pointed out the reluctance of various parties to dedicate resources and effort to addressing truancy.

Sen. Coleman asked about the interaction with PDE and whether they communicate positively or endorse solutions. Hon. Whiteman emphasized, “This is our first opportunity here, and we want to grab this opportunity by the throat, because we don't want to let it go.” He mentioned the desire to “formulate plans” to offer information to legislators to address this issue more directly. Sen. Coleman considered alternatives to fines for addressing truancy, noting the unique challenges faced by each district and the ineffectiveness of fines.

Hon. Wilden Davis, MDJ, Delaware County, shared his experiences with truancy in the Chester-Upland School District (CUSD), mentioning a visit to North Carolina to learn about truancy management. He highlighted the complexity of truancy, including socioeconomic factors, and emphasized the need for diversionary programs over punitive measures. “It's not just one thing we see truancy as,” Hon. Davis said. “I'm also seeing the behavioral health aspects of it, not whether just the student dismissing the schools, but those low poverty income areas where there's only one parent in the home... drugs and alcohol [are] also a part of this issue.”

Sen. Coleman asked if MDJs with experience in truancy cases serve as advisors to their peers and if having MDJs specialize in truancy would be beneficial. Hon. Davis discussed his role in handling truancy in CUSD, emphasizing the importance of addressing root causes and the need for collaborative efforts to improve the educational system. Sen. Coleman emphasized the need for creative thinking in addressing family situations within the educational context and acknowledged the ineffectiveness of traditional punitive measures.

Sen. A. Williams criticized the use of fines to address truancy in Pennsylvania, calling it “the dumbest idea I've ever heard of in my entire life.” He questioned why fines should be imposed on children who “know nothing about credit, nothing about debt, nothing about managing their pocketbook.” He stressed the importance of addressing family structure and early education to prevent truancy. Hon. Haggerty specified that in his court, children under 16 are not fined, but their parents are, aiming to change parental habits to ensure school attendance. He added that once children surpass 16, fines may directly apply to them.

Chairman L. Williams highlighted the ineffectiveness of fines and questioned the attendees' understanding of schools' attempts to improve attendance before cases reached them. She inquired about navigating these cases in statute before reaching the court. Hon. Whiteman responded, “The districts are required to put in place a student attendance improvement plan, and that plan requires participation.” He mentioned there are times when parents are unable to get involved, as well as other instances that halt progress. Chairman L. Williams highlighted that some students or families opt for cyber charter schools to avoid attendance issues. Hon. Whiteman pointed out that cyber truancy citations are a significant and problematic issue. He shared a case from his court showing significant truancy issues despite students advancing academically and expressed his willingness to work with the committee on these challenges.

Sen. Tim Kearney (D-Delaware) showed support for youth courts as a diversion method and asked for opinions on their implementation. Hon. Davis supported youth courts and suggested improving operations through direct or indirect court orders from the presiding judge (PJ) in Delaware County, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between youth boards and the MDJ level.

Sen. Coleman inquired about the effectiveness of finding a parent in judicial decisions. Hon. Haggerty shared that the effectiveness varies, with sentencing a parent to jail alongside their child being effective in some cases, highlighting the need for a variety of tools in judicial decisions.

Dr. Sherri Smith, executive director, Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA), discussed the impact of the pandemic on truancy and emphasized the importance of understanding attendance data. She advocated for “closing the loopholes” between district and cyber charter enrollment and expanding support for students. “Once you get into a pattern of a student coming

to school and they get further and further behind, it's harder and harder to get them caught up and for them to feel comfortable in their learning," Smith stressed.

Dr. Adam Oldham, high school counselor, Pennsylvania School Counselor Association, highlighted the role of school counselors in addressing absenteeism and advocated for the Pennsylvania School Counseling Services Act. He mentioned that building relationships with students and their families is one way to better approach the issue of truancy. "Sometimes it's as simple as checking in with a student first thing when they arrive to school each day, so they have a consistent, safe place to begin their day," Oldham explained. He also stated that connecting with students and learning about their interests, strengths and goals can help make students feel comfortable at school. He added that looking at the student's data and meetings with school administrators helps address student absenteeism. "We review what supports we've already put in place, and we try things that we have not yet attempted," Oldham added.

Samantha Murphy, resource services manager, Allegheny County DHS, criticized punitive approaches to truancy, recommended strength-based support and encouraged focusing on the root causes of school absences. "This work is about addressing root cause of school absences and encouraging schools and parents to work together," she explained. Murphy added that no one student or family is the same and "no one-size-fits-all government service can magically fix this issue." Murphy also mentioned that "sending every truancy citation notice to the child welfare organization" is wasteful, as most end up being dismissed. She noted that "aligning state recommendations with a strength-based internal dialog" would be helpful moving forward.

Sen. Coleman asked if schools consider "virtual options or cyber options" for students with truancy issues. Oldham discussed the limitations of virtual or cyber options for students who struggle with attending physical school, highlighting issues of engagement and escapism. Sen. Coleman asked whether data is received from charter schools about students who leave the public system for cyber charter schools. Oldham responded that they do not have that data. Smith emphasized the need for better communication between districts and cyber charters to address attendance and truancy issues, noting that online education requires self-motivation and is not suitable for all students.

Sen. Coleman inquired about the existence of an attendance "purgatory" and the variability in how districts handle it. Oldham noted the variability in district responses to attendance issues and the importance of transparency about the outcomes of students who transfer to cyber charter schools. Sen. Coleman agreed on the need for transparency, especially considering the costs involved. Murphy discussed the inconsistency in handling absenteeism and the importance of community partnerships. Sen. Coleman asked if school counselors conduct home visits, to which Oldham replied that typically school social workers or home school visitors do, though he has also participated in some home visits over the years. Smith pointed out the inconsistency in handling school-related issues among MDJs and CYS groups, emphasizing the need for a collective community effort. Sen. Coleman highlighted the costs and efforts required to re-educate students who have fallen behind. Oldham explained the approach to re-engaging students who have missed significant amounts of school. Sen. Coleman inquired about the practice of social promotion in relation to truancy cases. Smith stated it was up to the specific school districts to make the decisions in those cases.

Sen. Coleman asked about the importance of early conversations and interventions in younger grades to prevent issues discussed in the previous panel. Oldham emphasized the need for streamlining services and ensuring the availability of school counselors and nurses in each elementary school to address truancy, highlighting the necessity of regular meetings to monitor and respond to absenteeism. Sen. Coleman then asked about the barriers to school attendance, distinguishing between external factors and those related to the school building itself. Smith emphasized the complexity of student engagement and the importance of building early relationships with families to foster a positive school culture, noting the challenge of engaging families with long-standing histories of school avoidance.

Chairman L. Williams inquired of Murphy if anything was missing from the discussions, especially from her experience in Allegheny County. Murphy highlighted the issue of stakeholders not collaborating effectively and the critical impact of chronic absenteeism on students' academic achievement, advocating for positive messaging to parents about attendance. Chairman L. Williams shared her experience on the Advisory Committee for Birchfield Elementary School, noting the importance of dedicated staff like school counselors to monitor attendance, but acknowledged that most school districts lack the resources for such personalized support.

Sen. Coleman thanked participants for their contributions, highlighting the importance of improving transparency, accountability and early intervention. He then concluded the public hearing.



## Senate Appropriations Committee

05/12/2025, 1:55 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room  
Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[SB 90](#) - (PN 45) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in commonwealth services, further providing for curriculum, training and education certification management system. Establishes entry-level training and testing for the Firefighter I level. Explains testing options. Effective in six months. 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 226](#) - (PN 179) Amends the Right-to-Know Law, in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions. Provides for the inclusion of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association under "state-affiliated entities." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

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

[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**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

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

[SB 246](#) - (PN 752) 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, nonpublic school or private school 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, nonpublic school's or private school'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. Inserts nonpublic school and private school throughout the language of the act. Defines "nonpublic school," "private school," "school entity" and "school property." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 199). The bill was **reported as committed** with Sens. Amanda Cappelletti (D-Montgomery) and Tim Kearney (D-Delaware) voting in the negative.

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

[SB 310](#) - (PN 753) Amends the Public School Code, in high schools, providing for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Requires a student who attends a school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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 a legally emancipated student may complete and submit to the school entity, nonpublic school or private school. Directs the Department of Education (PDE) to make the opt-out form available to school entities, nonpublic schools and private schools and post it on PDE's website. Requires a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to provide a copy of the opt-out form to parents, legal guardians and students. Directs a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to make reasonable efforts 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, nonpublic school or private school with information indicating whether a student of the school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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, nonpublic school or private school. Inserts nonpublic schools and private schools throughout the language of the bill. Adds language stating that the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) will provide student FAFSA completion information if the agency has access to the information. Defines "agency," "department," "FAFSA," "nonpublic school," "private school" and "school entity." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 206). The bill was **reported as committed** with Sen. Kearney voting in the negative.

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

[SB 327](#) - (PN 297) Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), in employees, further providing for automatic certification. Adds that an installation police officer at Fort Indiantown Gap is eligible to maintain certification if they satisfactorily completed the basic educational and training requirements, satisfactorily completed the minimum number of in-service training hours established by the commission and required to maintain certification and either has an active certification on or after the effective date or was previously

certified as a police officer by the commission, which certification lapsed within the last two years, and has been employed, with no lapse in service, as an installation police officer at Fort Indiantown Gap. 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 367](#) - (PN 748) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in neighborhood improvement zones, providing for contracting authority membership and further providing for confidentiality. Provides that 30 days after the effective date, the term of office of all members of the board of directors of the contracting authority shall expire and all seats shall be considered vacant. Outlines what a contracting authority shall have a board of directors consisting of nine members in accordance with. Provides for board member terms, vacancies and compensation. Includes taxpayer identification numbers of a qualified business located in the neighborhood improvement zone in what the contracting authority shall have access to. Adds that the independent auditing firm hired under section 1904-B(h) shall have access to any State or local tax information filed by a qualified business located in the neighborhood improvement zone, including taxpayer identification numbers, solely to perform an audit required by section 1904-B(h). Provides that all activities initiated by the contracting authority in existence on the effective date of this section shall continue and remain in full force and effect and may be completed by the contracting authority established 30 days after the effective date of this section. Adds that contracts, obligations and collective bargaining agreements entered into by the contracting authority in existence on the effective date are not affected nor impaired by the expiration of the contracting authority in existence on the effective date. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 315). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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

[SB 731](#) - (PN 749) Amends the State Lottery Law, in pharmaceutical assistance for the elderly, providing for short title of chapter and further providing for determination of eligibility; and making an editorial change. Designates the title of the chapter as the Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly Act. Updates the years of eligibility. Extends eligibility expiration to December 31, 2027. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin said the bill's enactment will have a state cost of \$4.9 million, but the costs are assumed by the department.

[SB 160](#) - (PN 529) 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. Section 8101 shall take effect immediately. The remainder of this act shall take effect July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Martin requested the appropriation bills to be voted on in a "block" and explained the numbers in the bills are based on previous session and the committee has done this practice before. He noted the bills would be discussed further.

Minority Chairman Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia) voiced no objection to Chairman Martin's request.

[SB 161](#) - (PN 530) An Act making appropriations from the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account and from restricted receipts 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 \$72,812,000 for the operation of the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs for fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026; \$11,025,000 from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Medicine for the operation of the board for fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026; \$3,204,000 from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine for the operation of the board for fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026; \$454,000 from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Podiatry for the operation of the board for fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026; \$997,000 from the Athletic Commission Augmentation Account for the State Athletic Commission for the operation of the commission for fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Stipulates each appropriation listed in subsections (a), (b), (c) and (d) shall not be treated as an augmentation to the Department of State, a general government appropriation or any other appropriation, but shall be treated and accounted for as separate appropriations respectively. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 162](#) - (PN 531) An Act making appropriations 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. Appropriates \$87,302,000 from the workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Department of Labor and Industry for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the administration of the Workers' Compensation Act, and the Pennsylvania Occupational Disease Act, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June; \$550,000 from the restricted revenue account within the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development as provided in the Workers' Compensation Act, for the operation of that office 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**.

[SB 163](#) - (PN 532) An Act making an appropriation from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development. Appropriates \$2,262,000 from the restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development to provide for the operation of that office 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**.

[SB 164](#) - (PN 533) An Act making an appropriation from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Consumer Advocate in the Office of Attorney General. Appropriates \$6,752,000 from the restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Consumer Advocate in the Office of Attorney General to provide for the operation of the office for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 165](#) - (PN 534) An Act making appropriations from the Public School Employees' Retirement (PSERS) Fund and from the PSERS Defined Contribution Fund to provide for expenses of the PSERS 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. Appropriates \$61,403,000 from the PSERS Fund to the PSERS Retirement Board for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of the employees and members of the PSERS Retirement Board, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the proper conduct of the duties, functions and activities of the board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; \$1,282,000 from the PSERS Defined Contribution Fund authorized under section 1799.8-E of the Fiscal Code, to the PSERS Retirement Board for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of the employees and members of the PSERS Retirement Board, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the proper conduct of the duties, functions and activities of the board related to the administration of the School Employees' Defined Contribution Plan established under 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 84 (relating to School Employees' Defined Contribution Plan) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, 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**.

[SB 166](#) - (PN 535) An Act making appropriations from the State Employees' Retirement Fund and 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. Appropriates \$39,795,000 from the SERS Fund to the SERS Board for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of the employees and members of the SERS Board, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the proper conduct of the duties, functions and activities of the board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; \$5,979,000 from the SERS Defined Contribution Fund authorized under section 1799.7-E of the Fiscal Code, to the SERS Board for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of the employees and members of the SERS Board, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the proper conduct of the duties, functions and activities of the board related to the administration of the SERS Defined Contribution Plan established under 71 Pa.C.S. Ch. 58 (relating to SERS Defined Contribution Plan) for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, 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**.

[SB 167](#) - (PN 536) An Act making an appropriation from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Appropriates the sum of \$2,269,000 from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 168](#) - (PN 537) 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. Appropriates \$88,386,000 for the salaries, wages and all necessary expenses for the proper operation and administration of PUC. Appropriates \$4,200,000 for Natural Gas Pipelines Safety, \$2,016,000 for Motor Carrier Safety and \$1,500,000 for IRA – Transmission Siting Program. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 169](#) - (PN 538) 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, the Pennsylvania State Police and the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board 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. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 427](#) - (PN 540) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provides appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of certain agencies of the Executive Department 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. Makes a state appropriation of \$34,000,000 for agricultural preparedness and response. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 428](#) - (PN 541) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provides appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of certain agencies of the Executive Department 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. Makes a state appropriation of \$15,000,000 for workforce development. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 429](#) - (PN 542) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provides appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of certain agencies of the Executive Department 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. Makes a state appropriation of \$11,921,000 for rape crisis programs. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 430](#) - (PN 543) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provides appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of certain agencies of the Executive Department 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. Makes a state appropriation of \$22,593,000 for domestic violence programs. Effective July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.



### **Senate Rules & Executive Nominations Committee**

*05/12/2025, 2:05 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room*

Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider one resolution and certain [executive nominations](#).

[SR 82](#) - (PN 651) Resolution adopting a temporary rule of the Senate relating solely to amendments to the General Appropriation Bill and other appropriation bills for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, including any amendments offered to or for supplemental appropriations for prior fiscal years. Asserts that for the purpose of this temporary rule, the Legislative Reference Bureau, in drafting any amendment to the General Appropriation Bill or any other appropriation bill, shall append the "statement of intent" required for a proposal that involves more than one bill. Allows this temporary rule to be temporarily suspended only by a vote of the majority of the members elected to the Senate. Declares that this temporary rule shall expire upon the enactment of a General Appropriation Act for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Sen. Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) provided the list of certain [executive nominations](#) to be re-referred to the appropriate committee for the purpose of a public hearing.

Certain [executive nominations](#) were unanimously **reported from committee to be re-referred to the appropriate committee** for the purpose of a public hearing.



### **House Democratic Policy Committee**

*05/15/25, 10:00 a.m., Crowne Plaza Harrisburg, 23 S. 2nd St., Harrisburg*  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held an informational meeting on “Power in the Margins - Funding What's Always Mattered.”

Rep. Regina Young (D-Philadelphia) opened the meeting, thanking everyone for coming. She briefly outlined the structure of the meeting and introduced the testifiers.

Edison Freire, vice president for extension and engagement, School of Adult & Continuing Education, Lincoln University, discussed the role of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in advancing equity, workforce readiness and economic mobility, highlighting the challenges of underfunding at Lincoln University. He emphasized the importance of HBCUs in supporting students through a holistic approach and expressed concern over the shift in funding priorities away from equity and inclusion.

Chad Lassiter, executive director, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, emphasized the importance of funding for HBCUs in supporting Black students against systemic and structural racism. He shared his personal journey, stressing the need for critical funding to create educational pipelines and expand recruitment efforts. Lassiter concluded by reflecting on the historical significance of HBCUs and the necessity of struggle for progress.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson (D-Montgomery) discussed the challenges faced by HBCUs in dealing with students from underfunded K-12 education systems in Pennsylvania. He asked how HBCUs manage the transition from remediation to producing graduates prepared to succeed. Freire emphasized the importance of meeting students where they are and valuing their commitment to education. He highlighted initiatives like dual enrollment with urban school districts and partnerships to support students. He stressed the necessity of acknowledging each student's individual journey and advocating for additional funding to meet students' needs.

Rep. Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia) expressed concern about the lack of early education for parents and students on the realities of funding, enrollment and recruitment in higher education. She noted that discussions in the 12th grade are too late and emphasized the shift in perception of college from a path to higher earnings to one of higher learning. She asked, “How are we preparing this generation?” Freire discussed the need to adapt to the new reality of higher education by expanding post-secondary education and training opportunities beyond high school. He mentioned Lincoln University’s initiative to develop the Lincoln Community Academy for intergenerational solutions, including career changes or upskilling for parents, understanding the university life process and financial preparation. Lassiter highlighted the importance of utilizing existing best practices within Black churches for educational outreach and mentioned a partnership with the UNCF local chapter in Philadelphia and the mayor's mass ball as examples of ongoing educational efforts. He emphasized the need for universities to engage with communities outside the classroom.

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D-Berks) challenged attendees to inventory local resources and potential partnerships around Lincoln University to address funding limitations and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) challenges creatively. Freire described Lincoln University's efforts in rethinking its value proposition and exploring strategic partnerships for additional resources, mentioning the launch of a center of excellence for workforce development. Lassiter discussed leveraging contacts and philanthropic communities to support HBCUs, highlighting the importance of partnerships with organizations like Independence Blue Cross, Pico Electric and the Philadelphia Eagles Foundation.

Rep. Young brought up a question from the audience regarding policy and programmatic strategies from government and other institutions to support the sustainability of HBCUs. Rep. Parker, a former alumnae association president, discussed the challenges faced in raising funds for HBCUs, highlighting the discrepancy between the spending habits of African American alumni on luxury items and their contributions to their alma maters, suggesting reallocating such expenditures towards donations to HBCUs. Lassiter discussed Ivy League universities benefiting from capitalism, colonialism and imperialism. He noted a quote from Henry Kissinger regarding “no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, just permanent interests.” He stated, “Some of us, we leave the HBCU, and we're like, I'm not giving to them because I had a bad experience. Yeah, but you graduated in 1986, and we're in 2025, and I'm not saying that experience is not still lingering, but we have to be able to fight through that because we have bad experiences at

restaurants and we still go.”

Rep. Joe McAndrew (D-Allegheny) discussed the impact of student loan debt on young people's ability to donate, sharing his personal experience of still paying off student loans at 34.

Rep. Young emphasized the importance of engaging with local police through Community Relations meetings, noting the participation of members from Lassiter's organization in these meetings.

Dr. Crystalline Barger, guard president, PGH HBCU Collaborative, shared her journey as a second-generation college student and the significance of HBCUs in her life, emphasizing their historical importance and the financial challenges they face. She called for creative financial support solutions for HBCUs.

Omar Rice, youth program manager, Office of Youth and Education, Urban League of Philadelphia, highlighted the role of organizations in bridging community with legislative and corporate entities. He noted the Urban League's nationwide presence and its efforts in supporting students, especially those attending HBCUs, through scholarships and partnerships.

Rep. Parker expressed pride in her HBCU background and concern over reduced funding for initiatives associated with Black communities, questioning how to prepare families for these challenges in the era of AI and social media. Barger emphasized the importance of grassroots efforts in promoting HBCUs, highlighting her organization's work in schools, the role of Black churches and community organizations in raising awareness about HBCUs. She shared her experience in engaging with HBCU days and the support of Pittsburgh Public Schools in facilitating HBCU College Fairs. Rice emphasized that branding is a major issue affecting how students perceive HBCUs. He explained that despite the strong legacy and value of schools like Lincoln, Howard and Morehouse, many students are drawn to Ivy League names due to a perceived prestige. He stated that he is working to change this narrative by promoting HBCUs, offering scholarships and encouraging pride in these institutions, which have shaped successful leaders and offer a meaningful, empowering college experience. Barger revealed that school counselors were advised against promoting HBCUs, emphasizing the need to present all higher education options equally and to debunk myths about HBCUs being inferior.

Rep. Young then highlighted the importance of utilizing the current moment for effective discussion, inviting questions from the audience and encouraging the sharing of organizational affiliations and perspectives.

Marimba Milliones, alumna, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, discussed the potential for establishing small satellite locations for HBCUs in communities, suggesting an international strategy for HBCU expansion and strategic partnerships to pipeline HBCU alumni into state universities. Barger talked about her organization's engagement with major institutions and the creation of an office to facilitate engagement between HBCU representatives and students. Rep. Young shared her background and emphasized the importance of utilizing local schools and community meetings to disseminate information.

Sierra Dunn, executive director, Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs, highlighted funding disparities between HBCUs and other institutions, asking for strategies to ensure equitable funding. Rep. Young emphasized the responsibility of constituents to pressure legislators for equitable funding for HBCUs and suggested focusing efforts on economic drivers as a common ground. She stressed the importance of recognizing and accepting the diverse experiences within the Black community to achieve common goals and motivate those in districts with a history of voting against community interests. She highlighted the need for dialogue to foster growth, referencing Lassiter's point about the formation of HBCUs.

Rep. Parker discussed the importance of engaging with legislators creatively and strategically to secure support for community projects. She advised against viewing the government as an ATM and encouraged groups to consolidate their requests for more substantial funding. She highlighted the effectiveness of events like breakfast briefings and the value of inviting decision-makers to see projects firsthand.

Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz shared her experience of advocating for a teacher certification bill by providing tools and information to make it easier for people to help with legislative efforts. She suggested printing out legislators' faces, names and contact information to facilitate support from the community.

Shateria Franklin, founder, Destiny of Our Daughters Inc., shared her journey and the challenges faced by her school, which has a 75% minority student body but only two African American teachers. She expressed concerns about building relationships with HBCUs to provide more exposure and opportunities for her students and asked for advice on improving these efforts. Yolanda Goodwin Humphrey, retired director of special education, Harrisburg School District, suggested that Franklin reach out to Alumni Associations to establish necessary relationships with HBCUs if she is not hearing back from universities directly.

Carla Hill, executive director, South Central Pennsylvania Sickle Cell Council, emphasized the importance of focusing educational outreach and engagement efforts on middle school students in underserved communities. She argued that high school might be too late for effective intervention and advocated for starting college preparation and awareness in middle school.

Rep. Young thanked everyone for the interactive committee meeting.



## **Bullet.in.Points**

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD: REORGANIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

The Executive Board approved a reorganization of the Public School Employees' Retirement System effective May 7, 2025. Additional information is available on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

## **Cosponsor Memos**

### **HCO2089 - Helping Local Broadcasters by Keeping Sports Coverage Fair (former HB 30)**

#### **Sponsor**

Rep. James B. Struzzi (R)

#### **Summary**

Aims to allow visiting teams and their local broadcasters in high school athletic competitions the same rights to broadcast, stream and provide telegraphic play-by-play accounts as the home team.

#### **Intro Date**

04/21/2025

#### **Last Action**

05/14/2025 H - Introduced HB1462

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

#### **Sponsor**

Rep. Jason Ortitay (R)

#### **Summary**

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

#### **Intro Date**

05/06/2025

**Last Action**

05/13/2025 H - Introduced HB1448

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**HCO2188 - Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program – Former HB 52****Sponsor**

Rep. Marc S. Anderson (R)

**Summary**

Aims to establish the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program.

**Intro Date**

05/09/2025

**Last Action**

05/14/2025 H - Introduced HB1461

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**HCO2201 - Gender-Based Bullying Prevention****Sponsor**

Rep. Paul Takac (D)

**Summary**

Requires school entities to adopt or update bullying policies to specifically address bullying based on perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

**Intro Date**

05/13/2025

**Last Action**

05/13/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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**HCO2202 - Reorganizing the Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees****Sponsor**

Rep. Ryan Warner (R)

**Summary**

Reforms the composition of the Board of Trustees for the Pennsylvania State University to make its membership consistent with the other State-Related Universities.

**Intro Date**

05/13/2025

**Last Action**

05/13/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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**SCO389 - Clarifying the Plumbing System Lead Ban****Sponsor**

Sen. Patrick J. Stefano (R)

**Summary**

Focuses on the creation and distribution of educational materials to raise awareness about the dangers of lead exposure.

**Intro Date**

12/13/2024

**Last Action**

05/13/2025 S - Introduced SB672

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**SCO558 - Cash Entry for School Sponsored Activities****Sponsor**

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

**Summary**

Requires schools to accept cash as payment for entry into school-sponsored activities.

**Intro Date**

01/09/2025

**Last Action**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced SB625

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**SCO936 - Put Down Roots in PA****Sponsor**

Sen. Steven J. Santarsiero (D)

**Summary**

Introduces the Put Down Roots PA Pilot Program which aims to provide student loan relief for individuals making their first home purchase in Pennsylvania.

**Intro Date**

04/02/2025

**Last Action**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced SB753

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**SCO1017 - Honoring Pennsylvania's 2025 NCAA Division I National Wrestling Champions, All-Americans and the Pennsylvania State University's National Team Championship****Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

**Summary**

Resolution to recognize the Pennsylvania State University's (PSU) Wrestling Team for earning its 13th NCAA Team Title.

**Intro Date**

04/22/2025

**Last Action**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced SR107

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**SCO1102 - Nursing Education Capacity Legislation****Sponsor**

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

**Summary**

Provides targeted funding for accredited nursing programs, enabling them to expand nursing faculty and increase the number of nurse preceptors

**Intro Date**

05/14/2025

**Last Action**

05/14/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

## Basic Ed Bill Actions

**HB865 - An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Military Family Education Program, further providing for definitions, for eligibility, for Military Family Education Program grants and for limitations.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Arvind Venkat (D)

### Summary

(PN 1705) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in Military Family Education Program, further providing for definitions, for eligibility, for Military Family Education Program grants and for limitations. Revises the definition of "eligible member." Makes editorial changes. Stipulates that a Military Family Education Program benefit shall only be renewable with each subsequent six-year service commitment in the Pennsylvania National Guard. Revises the general rule and assignment of benefits to include each benefit earned. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 890)

### Intro Date

03/10/2025

### Actions

05/13/2025 H - Placed on HVS

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05/14/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Appropriations

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05/14/2025 H - Re-reported as committed - House Appropriations

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05/14/2025 H - Laid out for discussion

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05/14/2025 H - Third consideration and final passage

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**HB1131 - 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, providing for prohibited substances in competitive foods.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Natalie Mihalek (R)

### Summary

(PN 1416) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, providing for prohibited substances in competitive foods. Prohibits public schools from selling or offering certain competitive foods on school grounds during a school day. Provides definitions. Effective July 1, 2027.

### Intro Date

04/17/2025

### Actions

04/17/2025 H - Introduced

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04/21/2025 H - Referred to - House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities

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05/13/2025 H - Discussed during public hearing - House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities

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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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05/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported as amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - First consideration

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05/12/2025 H - Laid on the table

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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**

(PN 1663) Amends Title 24 (Education), in preliminary provisions relating to retirement for school employees, further providing for definitions. Redefines "government entity." Details the applicability of the definition of "governmental entity." Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/07/2025

**Actions**

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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05/13/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House State Government

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05/13/2025 H - Reported as committed - House State Government

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05/13/2025 H - First consideration

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05/13/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1437 - 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**

Rep. Andrew Kuzma (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1676) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax. Excludes the sale at retail or use of excluded tangible personal property during the exclusion period by a purchaser for nonbusiness use from the imposed tax. Requires the department to post on its website a list of the excluded tangible personal property qualifying for the exclusion under the clause. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/09/2025

**Actions**

05/09/2025 H - Introduced

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05/12/2025 H - Referred to - House Finance

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**HB1447 - 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 possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors and providing for school administration of adrenal insufficiency medication.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Perry S. Warren (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1692) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors and providing for school administration of adrenal insufficiency medication. Directs each school entity to develop a written policy to allow for the possession and self-administration by children of school age of adrenal insufficiency medications. Provides definitions. Requires the Department of Health to provide technical assistance and resources regarding the administration of medication for adrenal insufficiency in coordination with the Department of Education. Allows a school entity or nonpublic school to authorize a trained school employee to administer to a student an adrenal insufficiency medication that the student's parent or legal guardian has provided to the trained school employee. Requires a school entity or nonpublic school that authorizes the administration of adrenaline insufficiency medication to designate one or more school employees at each school who shall be responsible for the storage and use of the medication. Directs the responsible school employees to successfully complete a training program. Outlines how the medication may be utilized. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/12/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 H - Introduced

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1448 - 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, providing for financial transparency data and reporting system.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Jason Ortity (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1693) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for financial transparency data and reporting system. Directs the Department of Education to develop and implement a basic education funding transparency data and reporting system. Mandates that the system consists of a longitudinal data system and incorporates basic education funding subsidies and appropriations, revenue and expenditure data for no less than the last 10 years disaggregated by school entity and data visualization dashboards that simulate changes to the basic education funding formula. Provides for the reliability of the data and accuracy of reporting. Permits the department to expand the system to include allocations, revenues, disbursements and expenditures at the local school entity level. Permits the department to contract with third parties to develop the system. Permits the department to use federal, state and other money otherwise made available for the program. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/13/2025

**Actions**

05/13/2025 H - Introduced

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1461 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Marc S. Anderson (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1721) Amends the Public School Code, providing for the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program. Provides definitions. Provides a declaration of policy. Permits schools to participate in the program by October 1, 2025, and each January 1 after. Provides responsibilities for participating schools. Provides for qualifications for contributions. Directs the Department of Education to post and update a list of each qualified career and technical education partnership organization. Provides for the designation of contributions made by a business firm. Directs participating schools to keep all cash contributions in a restricted account to only be used for program-related costs and enrollment expansion programs. Permits business firms to apply for a tax credit certificate for contributions. Provides for the time of application for credits. Directs the Department of Revenue to grant tax credits on a first-come, first-served basis. Directs the department to grant a tax credit certificate of up to 90% of the total amount contributed during the taxable year if the business firm demonstrates a written commitment to provide the career and technical education partnership organization with the same amount for at least two consecutive tax years at the time of application. Directs the department to maintain a tax credit waiting list. Provides for a temporary increase in maximum tax credits available. Asserts that contributions must be made no later than 20 days following the approval of an application. Provides that the total aggregate amount of all tax credits approved for contributions from business firms to career and technical education partnership organizations may not exceed \$15,000,000 in a fiscal year. Mandates that no more than 10% of the total aggregate amount of tax credits can be distributed to a business making a contribution to be used for an enrollment expansion program. Asserts that no less than 90% of the total aggregate amount of tax credits can be distributed to a business making a contribution to pay program-related costs and for services and personal property contributions. Prohibits the department from approving a tax credit for activities that are a part of a business firm's normal course of business. Asserts that a tax credit granted for a taxable year may not exceed the tax liability of a business firm. Provides that a tax credit not used by the applicant in the taxable year the contribution was made or in the year designated by the shareholder, member or partner to whom the credit was transferred may not be carried forward or carried back and is not refundable or transferable. Directs the department to provide all career and technical education partnership organizations with a list of each participating school located within each county. Directs the Secretary of Community and Economic Development to submit a report each December 1. Provides the contents of the report. Directs the Department of Community and Economic Development to transmit notice to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin within 10 days of the development of the guidelines under section 2010-N. Asserts that the addition of Article XX-N of the act applies to taxable years commencing after December 31, 2025. The addition of sections 2001-N, 2002-N and 2010-N, Section 2, Section 3 and Section 4 are effective immediately. The remainder of the act will be effective upon the publication of the required notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

**Intro Date**

05/14/2025

**Actions**

05/14/2025 H - Introduced

05/14/2025 H - Referred to - House Finance

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**SB160 - An Act to provide 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.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

**Summary**

(PN 529) 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. Section 8101 shall take effect immediately. The remainder of this act shall take effect July 1, 2025, or immediately, whichever is later.

**Intro Date**

04/03/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - First consideration

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05/13/2025 S - Second consideration

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05/13/2025 S - Re-committed to - Senate Appropriations

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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**

05/12/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - Re-reported as committed - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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05/12/2025 S - Third consideration and final passage

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Intergovernmental Affairs and Operations

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**SB310 - 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, providing for Free Application for Federal Student Aid.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

**Summary**

(PN 753) Amends the Public School Code, in high schools, providing for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Requires a student who attends a school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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 a legally emancipated student may complete and submit to the school entity, nonpublic school or private school. Directs the Department of Education (PDE) to make the opt-out form available to school entities, nonpublic schools and private schools and post it on PDE's website. Requires a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to provide a copy of the opt-out form to parents, legal guardians and students. Directs a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to make reasonable efforts 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, nonpublic school or private school with information indicating whether a student of the school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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, nonpublic school or private school. Inserts nonpublic schools and private schools throughout the language of the bill. Adds language stating that the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) will provide student FAFSA completion information if the agency has access to the information. Defines "agency," "department," "FAFSA," "nonpublic school," "private school" and "school entity." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 206)

**Intro Date**

02/18/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations

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05/13/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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05/13/2025 S - Third consideration and final passage

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**SB604 - An Act authorizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Counseling Compact; and providing for the form of the compact.****Sponsor**

Sen. Lisa M. Boscola (D)

**Summary**

(PN 612) The Counseling Compact Act authorizes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Counseling Compact; and provides for the form of the compact. Provides definitions. Outlines the requirements for state participation in the compact and member duties, including participating fully in the commission's data system, notifying the commission on any adverse action, implementing or utilizing procedures for considering the criminal history records of applicants, complying with the rules of the commission, requiring an applicant to obtain or retain a license in the home state, granting the privilege to practice to a licensee holding a valid unencumbered license in a member state and providing for the attendance of the state's commissioner to the Counseling Compact commission meeting. Establishes the privilege to practice of a licensee and outlines requirements. Outlines the procedure for obtaining a new home state license based on a privilege to practice. Requires active duty military personnel or their spouses to designate a Home State where the individual has a current license in good standing. Establishes compact privilege to practice telehealth and allows for adverse actions. Establishes informing and reporting requirements for adverse actions and investigations taken by a state in the compact. Establishes the Counseling Compact Commission, outlines member guidelines, provides the power and duties of the commission including establishing the fiscal year, bylaws, maintaining financial records, meeting and taking action consistent with the compact, promulgating rules, brining and prosecuting legal proceedings or actions, purchasing and maintaining insurance and bonds, borrowing, accepting or contracting for services, hiring employees, electing or appointing officers, fixing compensation, defining duties, accepting any and all appropriate donations and grants, leasing, purchasing, accepting appropriate gifts or donations, selling, conveying, mortgaging, pledging, leasing, exchanging abandoning or other disposing of real property, establishing a budget, borrowing money, appointing committees, providing and receiving information from law enforcement agencies, establishing and electing an executive committee and performing such other functions as may be necessary. Outlines the composition of the executive committee and outlines meeting requirements. Provides for financing of the commission and for qualified immunity, defense and indemnification. Requires the creation, maintenance, operation and utilization of a coordinated database and reporting system and outlines information submission requirements for member states. Allows the commission to promulgate reasonable rules and outlines the rule requirements. Provides for oversight, dispute resolution and enforcement. Allows for withdrawals and amendments to the compact. Provides for the binding effect of the compact and other laws. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

04/09/2025

**Actions**

04/09/2025 S - Introduced

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04/09/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure

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05/12/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 05/13/2025, 10:45 AM - Voting Meeting (CANCELLED) (Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure), Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

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**SB625 - 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, providing for admission fees for school-sponsored activities.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/12/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced

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05/12/2025 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**

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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05/12/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Labor and Industry

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**HB813 - An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in personal income tax, further providing for classes of income.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D)

**Summary**

(PN 843) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in personal income tax, further providing for classes of income to assert that the following are not subject to tax: the discharge of an eligible student loan and amounts paid or incurred by an employer of an employee for educational assistance provided to an employee. Provides for definitions. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

03/04/2025

**Actions**

03/04/2025 H - Introduced

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03/05/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Voted favorably from committee with request to re-refer House Finance - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported with request to re-refer to House Finance - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Re-referred to - House Finance

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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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05/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported as amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - First consideration

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05/12/2025 H - Laid on the table

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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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05/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported as amended - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Laid on the table

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05/12/2025 H - First consideration

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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**

(PN 1604) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate. Includes evidence that a veteran has served in the United States Armed Forces for a minimum of 8,000 hours, equivalent to four years full-time, in the occupational area to be taught, for the issuance of a career and technical instructional certificate. Defines "veteran." Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - First consideration

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05/12/2025 H - Laid on the table

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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**

(PN 1605) Amends the Public School Code, 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. Designates an expiration date for the subparagraph of three years from the effective date of the clause. Lists and details instructional certificate grade spans and age levels. Applies amendment or addition of sections 1202.1 heading and (b)(1)(i) and 1202.2 of the act beginning with the 2027-2028 academic year. Section 3 shall take effect in three years. The remainder of the act is effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

05/05/2025 H - Introduced

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05/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Education

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05/12/2025 H - First consideration

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05/12/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1448 - 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, providing for financial transparency data and reporting system.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Jason Ortity (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1693) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for financial transparency data and reporting system. Directs the Department of Education to develop and implement a basic education funding transparency data and reporting system. Mandates that the system consists of a longitudinal data system and incorporates basic education funding subsidies and appropriations, revenue and expenditure data for no less than the last 10 years disaggregated by school entity and data visualization dashboards that simulate changes to the basic education funding formula. Provides for the reliability of the data and accuracy of reporting. Permits the department to expand the system to include allocations, revenues, disbursements and expenditures at the local school entity level. Permits the department to contract with third parties to develop the system. Permits the department to use federal, state and other money otherwise made available for the program. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/13/2025

**Actions**

05/13/2025 H - Introduced

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB1461 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Marc S. Anderson (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1721) Amends the Public School Code, providing for the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program. Provides definitions. Provides a declaration of policy. Permits schools to participate in the program by October 1, 2025, and each January 1 after. Provides responsibilities for participating schools. Provides for qualifications for contributions. Directs the Department of Education to post and update a list of each qualified career and technical education partnership organization. Provides for the designation of contributions made by a business firm. Directs participating schools to keep all cash contributions in a restricted account to only be used for program-related costs and enrollment expansion programs. Permits business firms to apply for a tax credit certificate for contributions. Provides for the time of application for credits. Directs the Department of Revenue to grant tax credits on a first-come, first-served basis. Directs the department to grant a tax credit certificate of up to 90% of the total amount contributed during the taxable year if the business firm demonstrates a written commitment to provide the career and technical education partnership organization with the same amount for at least two consecutive tax years at the time of application. Directs the department to maintain a tax credit waiting list. Provides for a temporary increase in maximum tax credits available. Asserts that contributions must be made no later than 20 days following the approval of an application. Provides that the total aggregate amount of all tax credits approved for contributions from business firms to career and technical education partnership organizations may not exceed \$15,000,000 in a fiscal year. Mandates that no more than 10% of the total aggregate amount of tax credits can be distributed to a business making a contribution to be used for an enrollment expansion program. Asserts that no less than 90% of the total aggregate amount of tax credits can be distributed to a business making a contribution to pay program-related costs and for services and personal property contributions. Prohibits the department from approving a tax credit for activities that are a part of a business firm's normal course of business. Asserts that a tax credit granted for a taxable year may not exceed the tax liability of a business firm. Provides that a tax credit not used by the applicant in the taxable year the contribution was made or in the year designated by the shareholder, member or partner to whom the credit was transferred may not be carried forward or carried back and is not refundable or transferable. Directs the department to provide all career and technical education partnership

organizations with a list of each participating school located within each county. Directs the Secretary of Community and Economic Development to submit a report each December 1. Provides the contents of the report. Directs the Department of Community and Economic Development to transmit notice to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin within 10 days of the development of the guidelines under section 2010-N. Asserts that the addition of Article XX-N of the act applies to taxable years commencing after December 31, 2025. The addition of sections 2001-N, 2002-N and 2010-N, Section 2, Section 3 and Section 4 are effective immediately. The remainder of the act will be effective upon the publication of the required notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

### **Intro Date**

05/14/2025

### **Actions**

05/14/2025 H - Introduced

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05/14/2025 H - Referred to - House Finance

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**SB310 - 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, providing for Free Application for Federal Student Aid.**

### **Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

### **Summary**

(PN 753) Amends the Public School Code, in high schools, providing for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Requires a student who attends a school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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 a legally emancipated student may complete and submit to the school entity, nonpublic school or private school. Directs the Department of Education (PDE) to make the opt-out form available to school entities, nonpublic schools and private schools and post it on PDE's website. Requires a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to provide a copy of the opt-out form to parents, legal guardians and students. Directs a school entity, nonpublic school or private school to make reasonable efforts 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, nonpublic school or private school with information indicating whether a student of the school entity, nonpublic school or private school 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, nonpublic school or private school. Inserts nonpublic schools and private schools throughout the language of the bill. Adds language stating that the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) will provide student FAFSA completion information if the agency has access to the information. Defines "agency," "department," "FAFSA," "nonpublic school," "private school" and "school entity." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 206)

### **Intro Date**

02/18/2025

### **Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations

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05/12/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations

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05/13/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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05/13/2025 S - Third consideration and final passage

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05/13/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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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**

(PN 750) Amends 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. Provides definitions. Revises the general powers of the board. Permits an applicant to take each part of the examination in any order and retake a part of the examination that the applicant did not pass. Asserts that the applicant shall receive credit for each part of the examination the applicant passed if the applicant passes all parts of the examination within a 30-month period beginning on the date the applicant passes one part of the examination. Provides for assessing the moral character of an applicant with a criminal conviction, requiring the board to conduct an individualized assessment per 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions). Revises experience requirements. Repeals section for individuals practicing in the commonwealth under substantial equivalency and replaces substantial equivalency with automatic mobility. Establishes practice in the commonwealth under automatic mobility. Provides applicability. Effective immediately.

**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

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05/12/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 05/13/2025, 10:45 AM - Voting Meeting (CANCELLED) (Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure), Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

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**SB733 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in higher education accountability and transparency, further providing for exit counseling.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Vincent J. Hughes (D)

**Summary**

(PN 785) Amends the Public School Code, in higher education accountability and transparency, further providing for exit counseling. Requires each institution of higher education that receives information regarding Federal education loans or other student loans that may require repayment for a student enrolled at the institution of higher education shall make financial aid counseling available to each student at the end of the student's final academic term, unless the individual selects not to participate. Directs an institution to attempt to make financial aid counseling available for students who transfer or withdraw, unless the student has Federal education loans or other student loans known to the institution of higher education that do not require repayment. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/12/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced

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05/12/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

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**SB753 - An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, establishing the Put Down Roots PA Pilot Program; and providing for duties of Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Steven J. Santarsiero (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

05/12/2025

**Actions**

05/12/2025 S - Introduced

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05/12/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

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**Upcoming Events**

No Upcoming Events this Week.

## **In the News**

[05/09/2025 - First Lady Lori Shapiro and Governor's Advisory Commission on Next Generation Engagement Visit Kensington Heath Sciences Academy in Philadelphia to See How State Funding Is Helping Provide Free Menstrual Products in K-12 Schools](#)

[05/09/2025 - Statement from Marcus Hite on the Stroudsburg Cyber Charter Hearing](#)

[05/12/2025 - PDE: Shapiro Administration Makes GED® Tests and HiSET® Exams Available to Pennsylvanians for Free, Breaking Down Barriers for Those Who Want to Advance Their Careers](#)

[05/12/2025 - Conklin's PIAA playoff reform bill advances from committee to full House](#)

[05/12/2025 - Senate Passes Phillips-Hill Measures to Increase Transparency in Public Education](#)

[05/13/2025 - Baker, Pugh Respond to Uncertainty Surrounding Penn State Wilkes-Barre and Other Commonwealth Campuses](#)

[05/13/2025 - Senate Education Committee Holds Hearing on Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy](#)

[05/13/2025 - Senator Tartaglione Applauds Senate Passage of School Safety Transparency Bill](#)

[05/14/2025 - NEW: Arts and Culture Caucus Celebrates Arts Advocacy Day, Features Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Dancers](#)

[05/15/2025 - ACLU of Pa. Sues Pitt on Behalf of Suspended Palestinian Rights Student Club](#)

[05/15/2025 - Testifiers urge sustainable state support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)

[05/15/2025 - May 15, 2025 - Independent Regulatory Review Commission Tentative Public Meeting Agenda](#)

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.

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