

## July 25 – 31, 2025

### Contents

Press Conferences.....	1
Committee News .....	2
Bullet.in.Points.....	4
Cosponsor Memos .....	5
Basic Ed Bill Actions .....	5
Higher Ed Bill Actions.....	6
Upcoming Events .....	6
In the News .....	7

### SESSION STATUS

At 9:03 a.m. on Wednesday, July 16, 2025, the House met briefly in non-voting session and now stands adjourned until Monday, September 22, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 10:21 a.m. on Thursday, July 17, 2025, the Senate recessed to the call of the President Pro Tempore.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

Sept. 22-24 (NV), 29-30  
Oct. 1, 6-8, 27-29  
Nov. 17-19  
Dec. 8-10 (NV), 15-17

#### Senate

Sept. 8-10  
Oct. 20-22, 27-29  
Nov. 17-19  
Dec. 8-9

*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*

### POWER INTERFAITH ADVOCATES FOR EDUCATION FUNDING

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | July 31, 2025

Members of the advocacy group POWER Interfaith called on legislators to fund education at a press conference in the Main Capitol Rotunda today.

Reverend Bill Bloom, director of music, United Christian Church, began the press conference with a rendition of the popular folk song “No Man is an Island,” highlighting the group’s cooperative nature. He noted that POWER Interfaith boasts over 4,700 members who work to fight for racial and economic justice, a healthy planet and a stronger democracy. He asserted that the ongoing budget negotiations have put a strain on school administrators who can’t adequately plan for the upcoming school year. “We are here today to remind our lawmakers of the importance of fully and fairly funding public education,” he said. “Children, parents, students, teachers and voters across the commonwealth are looking to them to fulfill their promise.” He stressed the importance of education as Americans grapple with “the possible dismantling of our governing system as we’ve come to know it.” He said providing children with a quality education is a “moral obligation.”

Kia Johnson, a Norristown parent, described the “whiplash” felt by her and her son when moving from the well-funded Upper Marion School District to the struggling Norristown Area School District, just 10 minutes away. “Essential resources were scarce, and my son struggled,” she said. “I had to fight for the additional assistance that was given freely at Upper Marion.” She remarked that it broke her heart to see her son discouraged by his educational experience. “Navigating the system felt like a full-time job,” she said. “No parent should have to choose between providing their child with a quality education and meeting their basic needs.”

Brenda Morales, a retired educator from Lancaster, discussed her experiences teaching English language classes to students who were often immigrants and refugees. She emphasized the impact underfunding has on the entire school day, including cold classrooms, low staffing and a lack of extracurricular activities for students. She argued that all students should be provided with a quality education, no matter their zip code. She urged the audience to ignore certain stigmas surrounding public education and highlighted its support among the public. She urged the General Assembly to quickly pass the budget and support public education.

Keith Miles, superintendent, School District of Lancaster, stated he was proud that his school district was one of the plaintiffs in the landmark education lawsuit where the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania found that the current funding of public schools is unconstitutional. “The court confirmed what our families, teachers and students have known for decades,” he said. “That our children have been denied the basic resources they need simply because of where they live.” He asserted that delays in state budget negotiations will have “real and immediate consequences” for his school district. He stated that programs such as mental health services, English language development programs and special education services are currently under threat. He noted that the school district is facing a possible loss of \$1.5 million in frozen federal funds. “We’re asking for... the resources our students have been denied for too long,” he said. “We urge our state legislature to finalize a budget that honors the court’s ruling and our commitment to every child in Pennsylvania.”



## Committee News

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

### **House Republican Policy Committee**

*07/29/2025, 11:00 a.m., Upper Bucks Technical School, 3115 Ridge Road, Perkasie*

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing entitled “Child Care: Challenges and Solutions.”

Rep. Shelby Labs (R-Bucks) remarked, “This child care issue is not new, and quite frankly, it’s at a critical crisis level.” She discussed her and Rep. Joe Hogan’s (R-Bucks) [upcoming bill](#) to develop the early educator pipeline through dual enrollment opportunities.

Rep. Hogan emphasized the need for sustainable solutions to child care issues and highlighted the regulatory challenges child care providers face. He stressed that Pennsylvania must put families first.

Rep. Kate Klunk (R-York), minority chairman, House Children and Youth Committee, said she has made access to child care a forefront issue since becoming minority chairman. She argued that the industry was over-regulated and hoped that the panel would be able to provide solutions by sharing their experiences.

Rep. Kristin Marcell (R-Bucks) emphasized the importance of addressing child care issues, referencing a [hearing](#) last month that discussed the same topic. She shared a story provided to her by Ambria Salavantis, the director of Small Wonders in Wilkes-Barre, highlighting the challenges the school is currently facing.

Aaron Riggleman, manager of government affairs, Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry (PA Chamber), highlighted PA Chamber’s focus on making the commonwealth competitive for business, pointing out a \$3.4 billion annual loss due to child care challenges. He called for a comprehensive approach to address the crisis, including modernizing credentialing requirements and streamlining licensing processes.

Tami Unger, branch director, Allentown YMCA, discussed the challenges child care providers face, including regulatory and workforce issues. She called for reforms in staff-to-child ratios and playground usage requirements to align with the Department of Education (PDE) standards. She recommended allowing for increased staffing flexibility and emphasized the need for a sustainable child care system in order to bolster community economic health. She advocated for practical changes to current industry regulations.

Tiffany Martin, owner and director, Teddy Bear College, spoke about the staffing crisis exacerbated by low wages and high turnover. She advocated for reducing age restrictions for child care workers. Martin discussed the financial burdens of onboarding new staff and the loss of Keystone Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources and Supports (STARS) supports. She highlighted challenges in accessing grants for for-profit centers and systemic issues with subsidy usage. She expressed hope that the upcoming early educator pipeline bill would be able to alleviate staffing issues. She emphasized the need for training in neurodivergent inclusive practices and trauma-informed care.

Marissa Christie, president and CEO, United Way of Bucks County, discussed providing pre-K scholarships to 450 students annually. She highlighted the child care workforce crisis, with over 930 classroom closures due to staffing shortages. She highlighted the potential of the early educator pipeline bill to create a scalable workforce model, reduce student debt and improve early childhood education quality.

Bernadette Rodrigo, director, Children’s Village of Doylestown, emphasized the professionalism of early childhood educators and the staffing crisis in the industry. She shared her experience and the high demand for spots at her center, arguing against lowering standards for child care staff. She stressed the importance of competitive wages to attract and retain qualified teachers, underscoring the importance of early childhood education.

Rep. Hogan discussed the diversity of roles within child care centers and the educational requirements for these positions. He noted Gov. Josh Shapiro's removal of college degree requirements for state jobs and suggested similar reform for the child care industry. He questioned whether industry regulators have direct experience in the fields they oversee. Martin shared her positive experiences with a state licensing representative and the deputy secretary of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), both of whom had direct industry experience. She emphasized the importance of having people in regulatory positions with firsthand experience in the industry.

Rep. Labs asked about the impact of filling vacancies at Children's Village on the existing waitlist of over 200 families. Rodrigo explained that the capacity to reduce the waitlist depends on the age of the children due to varying ratios and that the center can hold 270 children, indicating the potential to add three or four more classrooms. Rep. Labs asked the panel to share specific regulatory burdens they face in their operations. Unger discussed the regulatory challenges faced in running licensed child care centers within schools, including requirements for hands-free, lidded trash cans, separate refrigerators for children's lunches and inconsistencies in playground usage due to differing interpretations of regulations by licensing representatives. Riggleman highlighted the challenges faced by child care providers due to varying interpretations of regulations by different reviewers. Martin pointed out the administrative burden of preparing for multiple inspections throughout the year. She also mentioned a specific incident involving a colleague who was suddenly required to remove bushes at a significant cost due to a regulation against poisonous plants.

Rep. Jamie Barton (R-Schuylkill) highlighted the common regulatory challenges faced by child care providers. He criticized current barriers to entry into the industry, including age and experience. Rodrigo emphasized the importance of distinguishing between school-age child care and the care for infants and toddlers, highlighting the necessity of specific safety measures like covered trash cans for younger children, and argued against having young, inexperienced individuals unsupervised in classrooms with infants. Martin emphasized the importance of maintaining specific child-to-teacher ratios for different age groups.

Rep. Kathleen Tomlinson (R-Bucks) asked for examples of conflicting regulations that negate each other and inquired about experiences seeking clarification from the state on such contradictions. Rodrigo discussed the differences between the Department of Human Services' (DHS) basic safety requirements and Keystone STARS' quality advancement measures, noting the cessation of financial incentives for higher quality levels and the resulting lack of oversight for maintaining quality standards. Christie shared the challenges her organization faced, including a specific issue with conflicting terms for achieving the necessary quality ranking to secure funding, which threatened the opening of a new site. Unger highlighted the challenges of navigating regulatory interpretations and compliance across multiple counties, mentioning specific issues with obtaining a National Sex Offender Registry check from New York State and the arbitrary requirement to purchase 20 garbage cans based on an inspector's interpretation. Rep. Tomlinson acknowledged the need for a balance between common sense and necessary regulations, expressing hope of finding a solution to the issues discussed.

Rep. Milou Mackenzie (R-Northampton) shared her personal experiences to highlight the challenges of finding reliable child care, the societal undervaluation of early child care providers and the financial disparities between child care workers and other professions. She called for more immediate action to address the child care crisis and highlighted the example of a major company providing on-site child care as a model for supporting working parents.

Rep. Doyle Heffley (R-Carbon) discussed the challenges in early childhood education, including staffing shortages and the impact of high-paying jobs in other sectors on the availability of child care workers. He emphasized the importance of societal change to support families wanting more children but deterred by child care costs. He advocated for dual enrollment programs to aid those entering early childhood education and called for a reevaluation of regulations and education funding to improve child care and family life. He stressed the importance of legislative efforts to address these issues.

Rep. Klunk expressed gratitude towards child care workers for their dedication. She shifted focus to seeking solutions for improving the onboarding process for child care workers, specifically asking about ways to streamline and reduce costs. Martin expressed support for the proposed early educator pipeline bill. She mentioned efforts to organize forms and checklists to simplify the process for newcomers and addressed various onboarding challenges. She noted improvements in making some processes quicker, like moving clearance procedures online. Rodrigo mentioned the importance of required training for individuals working in child care. She highlighted the efficiency of hiring a student from a technical program who had already completed the trainings compared to individuals from different career backgrounds. Martin discussed the financial burden of training new child care workers. Rodrigo mentioned that meeting all training requirements through a structured program before employment would greatly assist new hires. Rep. Klunk discussed the potential benefits of Reps. Hogan and Lab's proposed bill for young people to gain pre-clearances and understand their career interests early, particularly in education. She raised concerns about existing regulations possibly hindering the bill's implementation and asked for suggestions on ensuring its effective implementation. Christie discussed the integration of career and technical education (CTE) programs in Bucks County, highlighting that students in these programs can work towards a Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. She addressed the challenge of students graduating early at age 17 and the

potential need for waivers to allow them to participate fully in dual enrollment programs. She expressed hope that the program would retain students in the education system, despite acknowledging that age restrictions could pose challenges.

Rep. Klunk highlighted the need for policies supporting children with additional learning needs, such as ADHD or autism. She discussed [HB 74](#), which would establish autism screening procedures for children who are 18, 24 and 36 months of age. She asked for suggestions on supporting these children. Martin shared her plans to start a nonprofit for neurodiverse children, discussing the financial challenges of providing for these students in for-profit programs, including the need for sensory equipment and qualified staff. She stressed the importance of in-house screenings for autism to address long waitlists for external evaluations. Unger discussed the difficulties of supporting neurodiverse children in early childhood centers, mentioning the backlog in rapid response teams and the importance of maintaining staff-to-child ratios. She suggested additional funding for centers with a higher population of neurodiverse students. Christie shared her personal struggle with finding suitable early education for her child, who was asked to leave three programs before receiving a diagnosis. She pointed out the lack of regulatory support for private-pay families and emphasized the need for nonprofit support for both nonprofit and for-profit early education centers. Rep. Klunk inquired about the challenges of providing child care for families with non-traditional work hours, asking about the availability of extended hours and if regulations hinder the ability to offer such services. Rodrigo mentioned her facility's operating hours and the challenges of covering these hours with part-time staff. She said she did not see the merit in extending hours beyond their current schedule. Unger discussed her organization's partnership with health networks operating during traditional hours and the preference for private care outside these hours. Christie discussed the challenges of providing affordable child care during non-traditional hours and highlighted the work of a nonprofit, *Along the Way*, in supporting working single mothers. She mentioned the economic difficulties faced by single mothers and the potential insights from the nonprofit's experience.

Rep. Hogan highlighted the complexity of child care issues, emphasizing the need for dialogue and coordination among regulatory agencies. He discussed his and Rep. Lab's upcoming bill on the subject aimed at reducing the financial burden of education for early educators. He stressed the importance of addressing Pennsylvania's demographic crisis and retaining young families to foster growth in sectors like energy and artificial intelligence (AI). He encouraged continued conversation and offered his support for future issues.

Rep. Labs emphasized the importance of the bill in fostering young people's passion for entering the profession, highlighting its aim to provide hands-on experience in established classrooms with certified teachers for safety and support. She expressed excitement about the legislation and looked forward to future collaboration.

Rep. Marcell thanked everyone. "It's very important, as we have talked about this kind of looming crisis that's unfortunately in front of us," she said. "Now is the time to make the difference."



## **Bullet.in.Points**

### **[GOVERNOR'S OFFICE: CATALOG OF NONREGULATORY DOCUMENTS](#)**

The Governor's Office issued Executive Order 1996-1, directing all agencies under the jurisdiction of the governor to catalog and publish nonregulatory documents such as policy statements, guidance manuals, decisions, rules and other written materials that provide compliance-related information. Additional information is available on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

## Cosponsor Memos

### SCO1244 - Phone-Free Schools

#### Sponsor

Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)

#### Summary

Requires schools to adopt and implement a policy that prohibits the use of phones during the school day.

#### Intro Date

07/28/2025

#### Last Action

07/28/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

## Basic Ed Bill Actions

**HB1767 - An Act amending Titles 24 (Education), 71 (State Government) and 72 (Taxation and Fiscal Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in membership, contributions and benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025; in benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025; providing for special funds and for disposition of Budget Stabilization Reserve Fund; establishing the Budget Stabilization Reserve Fund Interest Account; and making a repeal.**

#### Sponsor

Rep. Kathleen C. Tomlinson (R)

#### Summary

No summary available yet.

#### Intro Date

07/28/2025

#### Actions

07/28/2025 H - Introduced

---

**HB1768 - An Act establishing the Keystone Fresh Program; providing for the Fresh Schools Grant Program, for the Keystone Producer Grant Program, for the Keystone Assistance Grant Program and for the administration of the Keystone Fresh Program by the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture; and establishing the Keystone Fresh Fund.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Danilo Burgos (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

07/28/2025

**Actions**

07/28/2025 H - Introduced

---

**HB1770 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, providing for supplemental mathematics program for kindergarten through grade five.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Robert Freeman (D)

**Summary**

No summary available yet.

**Intro Date**

07/29/2025

**Actions**

07/29/2025 H - Introduced

**Higher Ed Bill Actions**

No Bill Actions this Week.

**Upcoming Events**

No Upcoming Events this Week.

## **In the News**

[07/25/2025 - Martin Supports Trump Executive Order to Better Protect College Sports, Student-Athletes](#)

[07/29/2025 - DCED: Expanding Our Workforce: Shapiro Administration Invests \\$40,000 to Train Nearly 200 Pennsylvania Highlands Community College Students in Manufacturing](#)

[07/29/2025 - House Republicans: Lawmakers Host Hearing on Child Care Crisis, Explore Solutions to Expand Access and Support Providers](#)

[07/30/2025 - PEMA: Shapiro Administration Highlights Upgraded Weather Monitoring and Alerting System that Aligns with New K-12 Education Curriculum](#)

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

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

Copyright © 2024. All materials contained in the Education Recap are protected by US copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published, broadcast, modified, electronically forwarded or copied, in whole or in part, without prior written permission from Pennsylvania Legislative Services to purchase the rights to make or forward additional copies.

Provided by Pennsylvania Legislative Services  
409 N. 2nd Street, Suite 212  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
Phone: 717.236.6984  
[www.mypls.com](http://www.mypls.com)