

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

State Update

STATE BUDGET

Education Leaders Hold Press Conference on State Budget Impasse and Impact on Schools



The **Pennsylvania Principals Association**, in collaboration with several educational organizations, held a **Virtual Press Conference** today at noon to highlight the impact of Pennsylvania's ongoing budget impasse on public schools. The discussion focused on growing concerns from schools and districts across the Commonwealth, as well as the uncertain future for education in Pennsylvania without a timely resolution.

Partnering organizations included:

- Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA)
- Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA)
- Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO)
- Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA)
- Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU)
- Pennsylvania Association of Career & Technical Administrators (PACTA)
- Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools (PARSS)

According to Dr. Sherri Smith, PASA Executive Director, "As of today—October 14, 2025—we are on the 106 day of a State Budget Impasse. As a result, public schools are now more than **\$3 billion short** on critical state funding that is needed to operate and educate our students. Our schools can't even access their federal funds that are also tied up in the impasse."

Speaking on behalf of the Pennsylvania Principals Association, Dr. Robert Kartychak, Principal of Hopewell High School in the Hopewell Area School District, highlighted the pressing challenges his district faces as the impasse continues. "The budget impasse has had a significant impact on our district. First, there are open positions district wide, including administrative and support positions that are currently vacant. This has had a negative impact on the student experience at Hopewell. While the district has not had to borrow funds to meet expenses, Hopewell will continue to withdraw from its \$7,000,000 fund balance while waiting for the subsidies

from the state," he said.

Key budgetary concerns discussed included:

- Loss or reduction of student programs
- Staffing and hiring implications
- Reduction of essential services
- Increased borrowing and associated costs
- Lost interest revenue
- Deferred purchases and delayed maintenance
- Use of district fund balances to cover shortfalls

Additional speakers were:

- **Dr. Sherri Smith**, PASA Executive Director (*Opening Remarks*)
- **Brad Whitman**, PAIU Government Relations Co-Chair and Executive Director, Northwest Tri-County IU 5 (PAIU)
- **Sabrina Backer**, PSBA President-Elect and School Director, Franklin Area School District (PSBA)
- **Mike Rawlins**, Teacher, Hollidaysburg Area School District (PSEA)
- **John Augustine**, Administrative Director, Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center (PACTA)
- **Dr. Shawn Fitzpatrick**, Superintendent, Schuylkill Haven Area School District (PARSS)
- **Chris Dormer**, PASA President and Superintendent, Norristown Area School District (PASA)
- **Kevin Busher**, PSBA Chief Advocacy Officer (*Closing Remarks*)

These education leaders underscored the urgent need for a state budget agreement to avoid further disruption to Pennsylvania's public schools.

"This is a call to action! We need lawmakers to pass a budget ... our students and our taxpayers deserve better," said Sabrina Backer, PSBA President-Elect.

A question-and-answer session was held with media representatives in attendance at the conclusion of the press conference.

[**Click here for the press conference recap.**](#)

'We cannot move forward': State budget delay impacting area school districts

"Continued delays in the release of state funding will inevitably have negative impacts on our students," said Brian T. Uplinger, Hazleton Area superintendent. "These funds are critical for maintaining instructional programs, classroom support, and essential student services that directly affect learning outcomes."

[**Click here**](#) for full article.

Source: Centre Daily Times, October 12, 2025.

Pa. is the only state without a budget. Where lawmakers stands 100 days late

In the first public action in nearly two months amidst **the state budget impasse**, lawmakers in the Democratic-led House approved a \$50.25 billion spending proposal and sent it to the Senate for consideration.

[**Click here**](#) for full article.

Source: Go Erie, October 9, 2025.

House Democrats send new budget proposal to Senate on 100th day of impasse in Pennsylvania

In the first public action in nearly two months amidst the state budget impasse, lawmakers in the Democratic-led House approved a \$50.25 billion spending proposal and sent it to the Senate for consideration.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *Pennsylvania Capital Star*, October 8, 2025.

In Lackawanna County visit, governor rips state Senate for failing to adopt budget

A frustrated Gov. Josh Shapiro lashed out at the state Senate Wednesday for failing to finish work on the months-overdue state budget.

On the 100th day without a budget, Shapiro used a Lackawanna County appearance to blame the Senate for meeting only 32 days since he introduced his budget in February.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *WVIA Radio*, October 8, 2025.

PA lawmakers reconvene in Harrisburg as budget stalemate continues

The state budget was due on June 30. The main sticking point is the size of the budget and where that money will come from. This, as school districts and organizations who rely on state funding worry about having to make cuts.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *WFMZ*, October 7, 2025.

Basic Ed Bill Actions

- **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)**
• **Action: 10/08/2025 - Signed in House**
- **HB1701** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in grounds and buildings, further providing for referendum or public hearing required prior to construction or lease; providing for school facilities; establishing the Public School Facility Advisory Committee; in construction and renovation of buildings by school entities, repealing provisions relating to building condition assessments; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.
• **Sponsor: Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler (D)**
• **Action: 10/08/2025 - Third consideration and final passage**
- **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)**
• **Action: 10/07/2025 - Discussed during public hearing with the House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee - House Education**

- **HB1900** - An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, providing for teacher tax credit.
- **Sponsor: Rep. Nikki Rivera (D)**
- **Action: 10/08/2025 - Discussed during public hearing - House Finance**
- **SB246** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in student supports, providing for parental and employee notification of weapon incidents.
- **Sponsor: Sen. Jarrett Coleman (R)**
- **Action: 10/08/2025 - Referred to - Senate Rules and Executive Nominations**
- **SB315** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in career and technical education, further providing for career and technical education equipment grants.
- **Sponsor: Sen. Lynda Schlegel Culver (R)**
- **Action: 10/08/2025 - Third consideration and final passage**
- **SB766** - An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, in departmental powers and duties as to licensing, providing for child care center attendance eligibility; and abrogating a regulation.
- **Sponsor: Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)**
- **Action: 10/08/2025 - Laid on the table**
- **SB1026** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in Safe2Say Program, further providing for definitions and for Safe2Say Program; in postsecondary institution sexual harassment and sexual violence policy and online reporting system, further providing for definitions, for policy for postsecondary institution sexual harassment and sexual violence and for online reporting system; and making an editorial change.
- **Sponsor: Sen. Jay Costa (D)**
- **Action: 10/03/2025 - Referred to - Senate Education**

Click on the link below for the full Education Recap.

EDUCATION RECAP

[Click here](#) for more.

(A weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government.)



Federal Update

NAESP Federal Relations Coordinator (FRC) Report: October 2025 Meeting Summary

*Provided by Melanie Rosenberger, Federal Relations
Coordinator, PA Principals Association*

Government Shutdown Overview

The federal government remains shut down, halting all non-essential activities. About 95 percent of the Department of Education's staff have been furloughed and are not checking emails or reporting to work. Only 5 percent of staff, classified as essential, continue processing college student financial aid applications. All other Department of Education operations, including rulemaking, grants management and civil rights investigations, have been suspended.

NAESP has issued an *Action Alert* urging Congress to support the Senate plan to maintain FY26 education funding at current levels and to reject the House plan to cut and eliminate major K-12 programs.

[Click here](#) for full report.

Ed. Dept. Offices Will Be Virtually Wiped Out in Latest Layoffs

The small team overseeing special education programs at the U.S. Department of Education was thrilled when Education Secretary Linda McMahon announced in May one of her chief priorities would be improving literacy through evidence-based practices.

[Click here](#) for full article. *(Subscription may be required.)*

Source: *Education Week*, October 13, 2025.

RIFs rip through federal Office of Special Education Programs

During this tumultuous year at the U.S. Department of Education that saw about half of the 4,133 employees leave due to layoffs, buyouts and early retirements, the staff at the Office of Special Education Programs stayed mostly stable.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *K-12 DIVE*, October 12, 2025.

Richey confirmed to lead Education Department's Office for Civil Rights

The Senate confirmed Kimberly Richey as the next assistant secretary for civil rights at the U.S. Department of Education in a 51-47 vote along party lines late Tuesday afternoon. The approval came as part of a resolution allowing senators to consider for confirmation Richey and over 100 other federal nominees at once.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *K-12 DIVE*, October 8, 2025.

Pennsylvania Principals Association

Position Statement on State and Federal Education Issues

The **Pennsylvania Principals Association (PA Principals Association)** stands in solidarity with national organizations such as the **National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP)** and the **National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)** in advocating for equitable, well-funded and inclusive education policies at both state and federal levels. In light of ongoing challenges and critiques directed at the education sector, we reaffirm our commitment to the following principles:

[CLICK HERE FOR POSITION STATEMENT.](#)

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