

Education Recap



Nov. 14 – 20, 2025

Contents

Press Conferences.....	1
Committee News	3
Bullet.in.Points.....	16
Cosponsor Memos	16
Basic Ed Bill Actions	17
Higher Ed Bill Actions.....	23
Upcoming Events	24
In the News	24

SESSION STATUS

At 2:36 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, the House stands adjourned until Monday, December 15, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. for non-voting session, unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 2:42 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, the Senate recessed until Monday, December 8, 2025, at 2:30 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

House

Dec. 15 (NV), 16, 17

Senate

Dec. 8-10

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.

Press Conferences

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

ZONTA SAYS NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, HIGHLIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | November 17, 2025

Zonta Club of Harrisburg-Hershey members, alongside legislators and food pantry organizers, gathered in the Main Rotunda of the Capitol today to discuss links between domestic violence (DV) and food insecurity.

Heather Jackson, vice president, Zonta Club of Harrisburg-Hershey, explained the connection between food insecurity and DV against women. “It can be caused by a lack of knowledge as to where to go, job loss, isolation, transportation, supply chain challenges and educational and geographical challenges,” she stated. Jackson noted that food insecurity disproportionately affects women and single-mother households more than any other group in Pennsylvania.

Sen. Elder Vogel (R-Beaver), co-chair, Legislative Hunger Caucus, noted that one out of eight Pennsylvanians experiences food insecurity. He highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic, along with economic fluctuations, has exacerbated the issue. Sen. Vogel stated investing in state programs for food assistance is one solution to combat food insecurity. He commended the 2025-2026 state budget, recently passed last Wednesday, for including funding increases for food welfare programs. Sen. Vogel mentioned the end of the federal government shutdown, which occurred last week, and praised the reinstatement of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. He noted Pennsylvania’s SUN Bucks grocery benefits program, which provides monetary assistance for children during summer breaks from school. Sen. Vogel commended the presence of the Food Policy Council within the Department of Agriculture (PDA) to address issues related to food insecurity and supporting “food sovereignty.” He mentioned the Food Policy Council’s social and physical media outreach and community engagement as central pillars to educating and finding solutions for food insecurity. Sen. Vogel highlighted the Capitol Hunger Garden as another factor to combat food insecurity and mentioned it recently produced over 1,000 pounds of produce that went toward local food pantries. He announced his annual district office’s food drive in September each year and stated that it assists his surrounding communities in and around Beaver County. Sen. Vogel added that the public “cannot rely on government alone” to solve the issues of food insecurity. “Each of us must be part of the solution,” he continued.

Sen. Judy Schwank (D-Berks), co-chair, Women’s Health Caucus, emphasized the impact of withholding SNAP benefits and called it “heartless” to use food as a “bargaining chip” for a political issue. She mentioned food insecurity is not only a national challenge, but a Pennsylvania challenge. Sen. Schwank contrasted the idea that food insecurity is viewed as a “distant” problem and highlighted that food insecurity occurs in every commonwealth community regardless of race, gender or socioeconomic status. She mentioned the problem “disproportionately” affects women and single-mother households more than any other group in Pennsylvania. “Women eat last and eat the least,” Sen. Schwank stated. She added that “hunger shapes generations” and continues harmful cycles of food insecurity. Sen. Schwank noted children experiencing hunger often have developmental delays and issues with learning in school. “We cannot allow an empty stomach to limit the child’s potential,” she stated. Sen. Schwank added that the legislature “must support women who nourish communities.” She emphasized that food insecurity and violence against

women are linked, and hunger is sometimes used as a tool to “trap” women in abusive situations. Sen. Schwank explained that access to healthy food should be a right rather than a privilege. She thanked the organizations present for their dedication to addressing food insecurity in Pennsylvania.

Rep. Nathan Davidson (D-Dauphin) stated, “Dignity at the dinner table is under siege.” He noted that in Pennsylvania, one in six children experiences food insecurity. Rep. Davidson mentioned that seniors are another group who struggle with hunger and explained the difficulty of choosing between paying for necessary medications or food. He highlighted food insecurity is a “consequence of political gridlock” and noted how SNAP benefits were “held hostage” by the federal government. Rep. Davidson described the history of SNAP, going back to World War II, as a system to feed hungry individuals while eliminating food waste in the agricultural sector. He commended the General Assembly for passing a state budget last week that addresses food challenges. Rep. Davidson mentioned that state funding and local agencies “fill gaps” in food insecurity amid the “shortcomings” of the federal administration. “Charity should supplement the safety net,” he said. “It should not be our safety net.” Rep. Davidson emphasized the General Assembly’s recent \$11 million increase to food services and noted it is a 40% increase compared to last year’s budget. He urged the state legislature to pass [HB 180](#) and [HB 764](#) to combat food insecurity challenges in Pennsylvania. Rep. Davidson additionally highlighted his upcoming [legislation](#) with Rep. Emily Kinkead (D-Allegheny) to eliminate school meal debt for students. He thanked both chambers for bipartisan efforts to address food insecurity challenges and highlighted public and nonprofit groups for their dedication to the issue.

Rep. Kinkead, co-chair, Legislative Hunger Caucus, stated the issue of food insecurity in the commonwealth is “getting worse” over time. She mentioned the challenge was “almost solved” for the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic when the federal government invested in additional SNAP benefits, though those investments were halted and food insecurity progress moved “backwards.” Rep. Kinkead criticized the federal government for passing new work requirements for SNAP as well as cutting benefits. “The vast majority of adults who receive SNAP benefits are already working,” she said. Rep. Kinkead stated those who receive SNAP benefits and are not working are “because they have a disability, because they are elderly, because they’re children.” Rep. Kinkead noted that hunger touches every community in Pennsylvania. “You know people who are food insecure, whether you know it or not,” she continued. Rep. Kinkead praised the “historic” investment within the current state budget for food assistance but added the impact was “wiped out” and “neutralized” by cuts made on the federal level. She criticized the “lost” \$13 million investment from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) toward the Local Food Purchase Assistance Program, and said states cannot “carry the burden” to fill the gap. Rep. Kinkead mentioned food banks were becoming overwhelmed with the added need. She noted food banks have had to lay off workers while they struggle with financial resources to stay open, while food shelves remain empty. Rep. Kinkead encouraged those who are able to donate to their local food banks, whether it be food items or monetary donations, and mentioned people can call their local food banks to ask what is needed. She remained committed to working with key partners on the legislative level to address food insecurity. “For the wealthiest nation in the history of the world, food insecurity is a policy choice,” Rep. Kinkead expressed.

Shila Ulrich, CEO, Central PA Food Bank, explained that the food bank serves 27 counties in the commonwealth. She discussed the intersection between domestic violence and food insecurity. Ulrich mentioned that victims of DV often struggle to leave abusive situations due to the absence of resources and support, including food insecurity. She mentioned that food is often the first resource to be used as a tool against others for power and control. Ulrich added that food assistance programs are a “lifeline” and “reduce pressure points” for families and victims of DV. She added that consuming nutritious and healthy food can be used for healing for those who have experienced trauma. Ulrich commended the Central PA Food Bank for working with key partners to provide healthy food as well as nutritional education. She praised Central PA Food Bank’s collaborations with local agencies that help them expand their reach. Ulrich advocated for additional investments in food assistance programs to create healthy communities.

Kristen Herman, executive director, Downtown Daily Bread (DDB), explained that the core of DV relies on power and control. “Food insecurity is directly connected to that same dynamic,” she said. Herman stated that experiencing food insecurity “makes people more vulnerable to control.” She highlighted that food insecurity is preventable. She questioned, “Do we want hunger to be the thing that forces people, anyone, into unsafe choices, unsafe housing or unsafe relationships?” Herman emphasized that DDB’s mission is to feed every hungry individual who walks through their doors. She noted that instability spreads to every aspect of people’s lives rather than being an isolated issue. Herman reiterated that women and single-parent households are disproportionately affected by food insecurity. She added that people can’t make safe and clear choices while facing hunger. “We know that food directly affects how we feel and how we function,” Herman said. She called on the General Assembly to continue supporting and investing in food assistance programs. Herman stated that ending hunger and violence is the same commitment.

Kevin Keefer, CEO, Jewish Family Service of Greater Harrisburg (JFS), highlighted the connection between DV and food insecurity as being “deeply intertwined.” He explained abuse related to food insecurity is known as “nutritional abuse” or “food coercion.” Keefer stated that abusers use food as a tactic for control, including food monitoring and other forms. “It’s not only a lack of money, but a deliberate tactic for control.” He mentioned local agencies can help advocate for food security. Keefer commended JFS for being a “food choice pantry” where people have more varied choices on what food they receive, rather than getting a standard box of food. He explained that it wastes less food due to people being able to choose what they prefer to eat. Keefer added that senior

Pennsylvanians suffer from food insecurity as well and stated JFS serves 105 seniors every month. He noted people can donate their time, food or money to local food banks to contribute to food insecurity solutions. "It's the most basic human necessity," Keefer stated.



Committee News

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

House Communications and Technology Committee

11/17/2025, 9:30 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building

Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on House Bill 634, Alyssa's Law.

[HB 634](#) - (PN 644) Amends the Public School Code, in school safety and security, further providing for school safety and security coordinator. Direct school safety and security coordinators to consider the implementation of a panic alarm system as part of the review of the school entity's policies. Effective in 60 days.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson (D-Montgomery), vice chair, opened the hearing, highlighting the bill's aim to consider public panic alarm systems in schools for safety reviews. He acknowledged the expertise of the attendees in school safety and law enforcement.

Rep. Gary Day (R-Lehigh), minority vice chair, stressed the importance of the bill, which mandates schools to consider silent panic alarm systems, and acknowledged the contributions of various stakeholders in promoting school safety.

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D-Berks), the bill's prime sponsor, emphasized its goal to enhance school safety by mandating school safety coordinators to consider silent panic alarm systems during safety reviews, inspired by a meeting with Lori Alhadeff, whose daughter was killed in the Parkland school shooting.

Lori Alhadeff, CEO, founder, Make Our Schools Safe, and parent of Alyssa Alhadeff, Alyssa's Law's namesake, *due to audio issues, as seen in the committee video, her remarks were not recorded*. In her written testimony, she recalled the last day she saw her daughter alive and described how Alyssa died in the Parkland shooting because help and lockdown procedures were not activated quickly enough. She explained that the core idea behind Alyssa's Law was that time equaled life and said she believed faster alerts could have saved her daughter and others. She emphasized that HB 634 would provide a critical additional layer of school safety by enabling immediate communication with first responders and rapid lockdowns, supplementing, not replacing, other safety measures. She noted that such technology would also be valuable during medical emergencies and other urgent situations. She described how she and her family created Make Our Schools Safe to prevent other families from suffering similar loss and to advance Alyssa's Law nationwide. She urged Pennsylvania to join the growing number of states that had already enacted similar measures, arguing that students, parents, and teachers deserved the reassurance of prompt access to help. She described Alyssa's life and asked the committee to pass Alyssa's Law.

John Foley, managing director, Safer Building Coalition, advocated for Pennsylvania to establish oversight through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for school safety, proposing a phased implementation for districts and emphasizing the importance of telecommunications infrastructure in school safety.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson asked Alhadeff to talk more about the process as a parent, particularly how she realized that silent panic alarms could be a solution. Alhadeff shared her journey from the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas to the realization of Alyssa's Law as a solution for school safety nationwide, highlighting the frequent use of the panic fund in Broward County Public Schools and the efforts of their organization in promoting a culture of safety in schools.

Rep. Day thanked Alhadeff for her testimony and for sharing such a personal experience with the committee. He requested Foley to provide his remarks and recommendations in written form to the committee, which Foley agreed to.

Rep. Robert Leadbeter (R-Columbia) asked about teacher and staff feedback on the training and implementation of a proposed safety system. Alhadeff described the implementation of a wearable panic button system in Broward County Public Schools, training

30,000 employees and its positive reception. Rep. Leadbeter inquired if the training for the panic button system was based on a standard model and if Alhadeff was referring to a specific district as an exemplary system. Alhadeff emphasized the importance of integrating panic button training into monthly drills and using a demo badge for practice. Rep. Leadbeter thanked the testifiers and Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz, asking if the bill includes standardization of training for staff and teachers. Rep. Napoleon Nelson explained that the bill encourages school districts and security personnel and offered to send it for review. Rep. Leadbeter advocated for standardized training language in the bill.

Rep. Ben Waxman (D-Philadelphia) raised concerns about the misuse of alarm systems by students and mentioned the risk of swatting. Alhadeff shared an example about a false alarm to show how quickly that can be resolved.

Rep. Lindsay Powell (D-Allegheny) discussed the importance of panic buttons across various levels of government and asked about their operation in Pennsylvania public schools with different policing layers. Alhadeff explained that school districts can customize who receives the panic button alert, ensuring appropriate parties are notified and that activation triggers a mass notification system. Foley highlighted that this is why one of the key recommendations is to ensure the system is connected to a centralized platform and supported by an oversight committee with clear standards. "Too many times these laws are passed, which is wonderful, but they don't give sufficient guidance for how to actually implement them in a way that's tailored to the communities," he said. He noted that in Florida, the requirement for central system connection was added two years after the original bill, once the oversight committee recognized its importance. He emphasized that this new iteration aims to fine-tune the system to each school district's needs. He added that drilling locations matter, and that, as another testifier mentioned, the number of times a button is pressed signals varying levels of concern, from routine disciplinary issues to health emergencies to full lockdowns.

Rep. Joanne Stehr (R-Schuylkill) asked a question concerning phone use in schools, pointing to the recent Florida state law banning the use of cell phones during academic time. Alhadeff argued that students in Florida should not use cell phones during academic time but could use them during the 30-minute lunch period. Foley discussed the challenges of enforcing cell phone bans in schools, including parental concerns about emergency communication and the burden on teachers. He suggested exploring automated enforcement methods.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson noted the relevance of the cell phone use discussion, mentioning a hearing in the House Education Committee and expressing his preference to defer to the committee's expertise.

Heather Masshardt, deputy director, School Safety, PCCD, testified on HB 634, focusing on the confidentiality of data related to panic alarm systems funded through school safety and mental health grants. She detailed the administration of these grants since 2018, including \$100 million in state funding for fiscal year 2024-2025 and \$20.7 million for non-public schools. She emphasized the grants' flexibility, the prioritization of basic security measures and the comprehensive approach to school safety, including prevention and mental health supports. She highlighted the recent investments in the school safety and mental health grant program, totaling an additional \$100 million, and over \$20 million for non-public school safety grants.

Crawford Gingrich, director, School Safety, Pennsylvania School Safety Institute, stressed that panic alarms are not a standalone solution for school security, advocating for a tailored approach that considers infrastructure, training and coordination with external services. He supported the grant-funded approach for enhancing school safety.

Rep. Day emphasized the importance of understanding PCCD's safety actions and criticized the practice of leaving school doors open, which undermines security measures like panic buttons. He pushed for progress on the recommended security measures.

Rep. Eric Nelson (R-Westmoreland) shared his approach to understanding school security needs by texting resource officers and superintendents during the hearing. He noted the variation in security priorities among schools and supported local decision-making regarding these priorities. He also underscored the importance of continued funding for school safety, including mental health considerations.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson pointed out that the bill requires school districts to "consider" implementing panic alarm systems and noted that many legislative district offices are now installing such systems as standard practice. He said he is struggling to understand why evaluating a panic alarm system would fall outside what a school district's safety or security team should already be doing. He suggested it seems reasonable to expect a school district to at least consider this kind of system. Gingrich highlighted that most schools have effective panic alarm systems in key areas for timely responses to ensure safety.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson questioned the value of adding panic alarm systems to schools and whether their current implementation meets the bill's intent, which mandates consideration of such systems by school safety coordinators. He raised concerns about districts without panic buttons and the need for legislative clarity. Masshardt emphasized a comprehensive approach to school safety, mentioning the seven hours of training for coordinators that cover a range of topics. She stressed the importance of prioritizing basic security actions and the potential of advanced technologies to enhance safety. Rep. Napoleon Nelson noted that the bill funds

panic alarm systems but does not require districts to consider them. Masshardt specified that the baseline criteria list, tied to the grant program in 2022, directs funding effectively. Rep. Napoleon Nelson summarized that the bill encourages but does not mandate schools to consider panic alarm systems in their safety planning.

Rep. Jim Rigby (R-Cambria) discussed the benefits of panic alarm systems but called for broader security measures, highlighting the limitations of School Resource Officers and the need for a comprehensive approach to address security vulnerabilities.

Rep. Waxman commented on the varying security measures across the state and encouraged looking to Philadelphia for guidance on managing security issues, given its experience with gun violence.

Rep. Day acknowledged the efforts of PCCD and school boards in advising on resource use, emphasizing efficient tax dollar spending and the readiness to work on amendments to address the discussed issues.

Scott Bohn, executive director, Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, explained that the association represents law-enforcement executives and command staff statewide. He stated that the association and municipal police departments across Pennsylvania supported Alyssa's Law. He added that Chief Lash, the association's president and the chief of Northern York Regional Police, was also present and would speak next, given his experience handling several tragedies in the past year.

David Lash, chief of police, Northern York County Regional Police Department, president, Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, testified on the importance of HB 634, Alyssa's Law, for enhancing Pennsylvania student and staff safety through a silent panic alert system in schools. He criticized current systems for their delays and cited successful implementations in other districts, arguing for reduced response times and improved coordination.

Rep. Waxman acknowledged the importance of emergency response systems and raised concerns about their potential misuse through swatting incidents. He asked whether safeguards exist to prevent such misuse. Lash highlighted a recent swatting incident in his jurisdiction and suggested that a monitored panic button system could reduce reliance on phone calls, potentially decreasing swatting risks. He emphasized the need for secure setup and teacher training on the system's use. Rep. Waxman noted that it was reassuring to hear that experts are not concerned with this issue. Lash responded that it could happen but that he does not believe there is going to be a lot of prevalence in it.

Rep. Day asked Lash to expand on his testimony and on the advocacy for the system. Lash specified that in emergencies, typically only one or two individuals would activate their alert buttons. He described a scenario where a teacher could immediately notify the school's security officer and initiate a lockdown, while also advocating for a 911 call for detailed information.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson asked how the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, along with most school resource officers, has been learning from events beyond Pennsylvania. He asked them to explain what was happening nationally and how they were gathering lessons from across the country to ensure that those best practices were brought back to Pennsylvania and shared with local school districts. Bohn emphasized the importance of immediate response and threat elimination in schools, calling for financial support from the state and school districts. He noted ongoing adjustments to protocols based on past experiences. Lash highlighted the importance of school resource officers and their involvement in national organizations to learn from other states. He noted that 10 states have passed related legislation, with eight, including Pennsylvania, considering it. He stressed the critical role of time in saving lives during school shootings or acts of violence and the significance of training educators on student protection within the crucial minutes before law enforcement arrives.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson asked if this discussion is also happening beyond the K-12 education levels at the university level. Lash emphasized the importance of extending the conversation about school safety from kindergarten through college, noting that institutions like York College and Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) York are proactive in implementing safety measures such as emergency notification apps for instructors. He advocated for the broader application of such technologies across all school systems.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson asked about the collaboration between local police and incoming school district security heads, including any training provided to ensure effective cooperation. Lash explained that his department meets monthly with school district superintendents and directors of safety, noting the varied approaches to the role of safety and security director across the seven districts they work with. He emphasized that having someone solely focused on school safety is the most effective model. Rep. Napoleon Nelson asked about the inclusion of panic buttons or alarm systems in school security plans. Lash discussed the implementation of school safety assessments across 32 school buildings, highlighting the use of PCCD funds to enhance facility security and the potential for issuing single rollouts for every employee. He acknowledged the variation in advancements across the state, with rural areas lagging.

Rep. Day acknowledged the contributions of committee members, testifiers and others involved in the school safety process, including PCCD.

Rep. Napoleon Nelson thanked everyone for their participation and noted that testimony from Dr. Beth Sanborn, president, Pennsylvania Association of School Resource Officers (PASRO), was provided to the members despite her absence. He expressed gratitude towards Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz for her contributions to the legislation.



Joint House Education and House Health Committees

11/17/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committees held a joint information meeting on cell phones in schools.

Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh), House Education Committee, discussed the role of state government in shaping policies for school districts, using the Allentown School District's challenges during COVID-19 as an example to emphasize the need for technology education. He expressed openness to legislation and valued input from public health and education experts to improve outcomes in informational hearings, advocating for a conversational approach to enhance learning.

Minority Chairman Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster), House Education Committee, shared his personal experience with limiting his children's cell phone access, expressing concerns about the impact of technology and social media on young people's face-to-face interaction skills. He reminisced about his own childhood and expressed interest in finding a balance between technology access and healthy development.

Dr. Beth Sanborn, president, Pennsylvania Association of School Resource Officers (PASRO), discussed the negative impacts of cell phone use among students. She remarked that the use of cell phones extends conflicts and provides a means for students to avoid supervision. She explained that cellphones often serve to distract students during emergencies. Sanborn described how some students order food deliveries to schools, which creates a security issue. She advocated for cell phone-free policies to improve school safety and student engagement.

Dr. Mitch Prinstein, chief of psychology, American Psychological Association (APA), testified about the dangers of online technology and social media for children and teens, emphasizing the need for policies to limit smart device use in schools. He discussed how device use hinders learning, leads to poor academic achievement, and can cause clinical dependency on social media. Prinstein called for increased research funding, education for parents and teens, and regulation of child manipulation for profit, expressing APA's willingness to collaborate with the committees.

Lisa Graham, school counselor, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School (SVIHS), described the positive effects of SVIHS's new no cell phone policy, noting improvements in student interactions, social skills, academic focus and a reduction in conflict and bullying. She highlighted the policy's implementation and its impact on the school's climate and culture.

Rep. Mary Isaacson (D-Philadelphia) described how, when her son was in school, the district went into a lockdown due to a shooting nearby. She recognized that phones can provide a distraction during emergency situations but noted that it's important for some students with anxiety to contact their parents. Sanborn stated that the presence of staff phones and emergency contact systems reduces the need for student-to-parent communication during school emergencies. She explained that lockdowns typically indicate internal issues and that staff can manage communication without student cell phone use.

Rep. John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) raised the issue of communication challenges for parents with joint custody and questioned the efficiency of having office staff relay messages to students, considering the potential for disruption. Prinstein mentioned alternatives to cell phone communication, such as smart watches and school-issued devices, which have been used in other states to minimize classroom disruptions while allowing parent-child communication.

Rep. Barb Gleim (R-Cumberland) noted she previously introduced [House Bill 1238](#), which restricts cell phone use during instructional time but allows for exceptions. She argued that limiting cell phone use can improve academic performance and supported the bill as a compromise between a total ban and unrestricted access.

Rep. Danielle Friel Otten (D-Chester) expressed concerns about restricting access to personal devices in schools, emphasizing the importance of parental choice and the potential benefits of technology for children with learning disabilities. She advocated for a balanced approach to technology use in schools.

Rep. Milou Mackenzie (R-Lehigh) reiterated the importance of maintaining communication between parents and children during emergencies. She described how her son was in New York on Sept. 11, 2001, and highlighted how he was able to communicate with her before cell phone reception went down. She criticized the enforcement of classroom rules and school security measures, advocating for increased security while keeping communication lines open. Prinstein responded that cell phones cause distraction during dangerous situations. He reiterated that there are ways to work around a cell phone ban that allow students to communicate with parents if needed. He commented that students cannot regulate their use of cell phones, and those who have access to those devices show increased rates of stress and mental health difficulties.

Rep. Roman Kozak (R-Beaver) shared his observations on the decline in students' communication abilities between 2017-2019, attributing it to smartphone use after initially thinking it was due to the pandemic. Upon further research, Rep. Kozak said he read Jonathon Haidt's book *The Anxious Generation*, which details how the use of cell phones and social media causes a myriad of challenges. He asked Prinstein about the correlation between personal device usage and dropping test scores. Prinstein explained that phone use is a preventable cause of academic and mental health issues among students, highlighting that platforms collect and sell data from kids without proper consent. He shared findings from a Canadian study showing the benefits of a phone-free policy in schools.

Rep. Brad Roae (R-Crawford) questioned the necessity of a statewide cell phone ban in schools, pointing out that local school districts have effectively implemented such bans. He suggested focusing on encouraging local action rather than pursuing statewide legislation.

Chairman Frankel deferred the question raised by Rep. Roae to future panelists.

Jeff Ney, vice president, Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), advocated for legislation to restrict the use of personal mobile devices in schools, suggesting local entities decide on possession restrictions. He highlighted the mental health crisis among youth exacerbated by mobile devices and the role of these devices in facilitating cyberbullying.

Laura Morton, director of policy services, Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), discussed the challenges and strategies related to managing cell phone use in schools. She shared how her sister manages cell phones in her classroom by using a system where the phones are stored at the back of the class. She mentioned that PSBA provides a policy guide to help local school leaders develop their own policies, emphasizing the importance of flexibility and local decision-making.

Rep. Roae questioned the need for statewide legislation on cell phone use in schools, suggesting that local districts could handle the issue more effectively. Morton explained that PSBA provides a policy guide to help local schools create customized policies due to the lack of statewide legislation. Rep. Roae further questioned the necessity of a state law for a phone ban policy, arguing that districts could implement such policies independently. Ney explained that a state law would give school districts legislative support, ensuring that any policy they enact is recognized under state law.

Rep. Friel Otten asked how a state statute could help or hinder school districts in creating effective policies, considering the diverse needs across urban, suburban, and rural areas. Ney responded that state policy would support school boards by providing the backing of a larger body, which would help them leverage opportunities and ensure policies are consistently followed.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) raised concerns about cell phone addiction among students and the potential dangers of parents rushing to schools during emergencies due to calls from their children. He asked how the majority of the public views a cell phone ban for students. Ney emphasized the need for policies to enforce cell phone bans. He stated that phones could be used by an intruder to gain access to the building.

Rep. Jill Cooper (R-Westmoreland) expressed support for bills addressing cell phone usage in schools, highlighting the importance of legislative action to support educational environments and train students on appropriate cell phone use. She mentioned the Seneca Valley School District's policy as a potential model.

Rep. Paul Takac (D-Centre) discussed the challenge of balancing local control with state mandates in creating effective legislation, emphasizing the need for clear guidance, flexibility, and enforceability. Ney offered to assist in crafting legislation language, advocating for a general framework that districts could adapt to their specific needs rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Dr. Amy Arcurio, superintendent, Greater Johnstown School District, advocated for a statewide policy on student cell phone use

that allows local school districts flexibility. She emphasized the importance of local autonomy, suggesting the state set clear expectations, require districts to adopt a cell phone policy, mandate annual public reporting, and provide grants for professional development.

Matthew Davis, teacher, Penn Manor School District, shared his experiences with cell phone use in his classroom, noting improvements in student work quality and engagement when phones are stored away. He mentioned conducting an informal poll on this policy, with mostly positive feedback from students.

Chairman Cutler asked about the impact of a systematic minimum requirement for cell phone policies and whether consistency across teachers would reduce student complaints. Davis responded that consistency would be beneficial, comparing initial resistance to cell phone restrictions to challenges faced in enforcing mask-wearing during the pandemic.

Rep. Friel Otten discussed the importance of digital literacy in schools and the challenge of device addiction outside of school. She emphasized the need for educational resources to help kids and parents understand and regulate digital media use. Davis acknowledged the importance of incorporating digital literacy into school curricula and expressed a desire for such programs to be adopted across all districts.

Chairman Kath Rapp (R-Warren) highlighted concerns about the impact of cell phones on students' mental and emotional health, attention spans, and communication skills. She debated the merits of a statewide ban versus local decision-making, raised questions about the logistics and costs of enforcing cell phone policies, and emphasized the need for exceptions in any legislation. Chairman Rapp stressed that any bill should start at the beginning of a school year to avoid disruption.

Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) discussed the impact of smart devices in classrooms, noting the harm they cause to education and the challenge of deciding between statewide policy and local control. He mentioned that 20 states have a complete ban, 16 have a partial ban, and 17 leave the decision to individual school districts. Chairman Frankel suggested consulting the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) for insights on implementing bans and expressed his commitment to developing legislation that supports Pennsylvania students.

Chairman Cutler shared his personal experience with managing smart devices and emphasized the importance of parental involvement and rights. He highlighted the need for balance in device management, advocating for local control and cautioning against imposing additional burdens on teachers. Chairman Cutler called for policies that support educators without adding to their responsibilities.

Chairman Schweyer highlighted the complexity of education policy in Pennsylvania and the absence of typical partisan or geographical divides among legislators. He appreciated the nuanced perspectives presented and emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts towards solutions that accommodate the diverse needs of school districts. Chairman Schweyer mentioned the value of additional written testimonies from various organizations and committed to continuing efforts to address the issues discussed.



House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee

11/17/2025, 11:30 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 2034](#) - (PN 2591) Amends Title 3 (Agriculture), providing a chapter for mushroom farming; imposing duties on the Department of Agriculture; and establishing the Mushroom Farming and Composting Fund. Provides definitions. Establishes department duties. Requires posting of the best practices on the department's website within 90 days of the effective date. Mandates the development of a mitigation plan. Requires review and approval. Outlines applicability. Authorizes transferability of plans. Provides for civil penalties. Requires inspections by the department. Appropriates the money in the Mushroom Farming and Composting Fund to the department on a continuing basis. Declares that unexpended money and interest or earnings on the money in the fund may not be transferred or reverted to the General Fund but shall remain in the fund to be used by the department for the purpose specified under this section. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Reps. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton), Joe Hamm (R-Lycoming) and Tom Jones (R-Lancaster) voting in the negative.

Rep. Christina Sappey (D-Chester), the bill's prime sponsor, provided a detailed explanation regarding the challenges in her district and the economic impacts it has on farms.

Rep. John Lawrence (R-Chester) agreed with the seriousness of the issue and believed the bill should be amended. He said he was going to vote in the affirmative.

Minority Chairman Dan Moul (R-Adams) agreed with the notion to amend the bill but also acknowledged the issue that Rep. Sappey explained.

[HB 1768](#) - (PN 2177) The Keystone Fresh Act establishes the Keystone Fresh Program; provides 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 (PDE) and the Department of Agriculture (PDA); and establishes the Keystone Fresh Fund. Provides General Assembly findings and declarations. Provides definitions. Establishes the Keystone Fresh Program and the Fresh Schools Grant Program within PDE in consultation with PDA to provide reimbursement for the purchase of local food for school meals. Outlines eligibility requirements and the evaluation process for applicants. Includes grant amounts based on student enrollment. Explains eligible and ineligible uses for grants and reimbursement of eligible costs. Requires the PDE to monitor the Fresh Schools Grant Program. Includes information grantees must provide for reimbursement. Establishes the Keystone Producer Grant Program and Keystone Assistance Grant Program and outlines eligible uses of grant money. Asserts that PDA will develop an application and process for awarding grants, as well as determine grant amounts. Asserts that PDE and PDA will receive the necessary funds from the fund to cover administrative costs. Requires PDE and PDA to biennially contact an eligible entity for an external review to evaluate the efficacy of this act. Includes nonprofit organizations and academic institutions as eligible entities for external review. Provides the contents of the external report. Establishes the Keystone Fresh Fund as an interest-bearing restricted revenue account and includes eligible usages. Sections 5, 6 and 8 are effective in 245 days. Section 10 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act will be effective in 180 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Rep. Hamm voting in the negative.

[A02152](#), by Moul, provides a gut and replace amendment that changes the title to the Keystone Fresh Farm to School Nutrition Act, updates program names, removes and edits definitions and integrates language from PDA and PDE for consistency. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Danilo Burgos (D-Philadelphia), the bill's prime sponsor, explained the bill's intent, which aims to get more Pennsylvania produce to school students across the commonwealth. He stressed the economic impact on farmers and believed the bill would help the farmers and students.

Chairman Moul explained his amendment. *(Please note that Chairman Moul's comments on his amendment were not recorded due to technical issues, as seen in the committee video.)*

Rep. Burgos said the amendment by Chairman Moul was agreed to.

Nathan Clark, Republican executive director, explained what the amendment does.

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D-Allegheny) called the legislation "critical" and emphasized the issue of food insecurity and making sure students in schools receive high-quality, nutritious food. "Nutritious calories are the best kind of calories," she said.

Rep. Sean Dougherty (D-Philadelphia) thanked Rep. Burgos for his leadership on the issue and provided a brief story about a visit to a farm in his district where Rep. Burgos' bill was discussed.

Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia) mentioned a time when he visited a private school in his district and said the kids there said to him, they "felt better" and they were "more focused during school." He agreed with the bill's concept of getting more fruits, vegetables and dairy into schools.

Rep. Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia) said the issue is "very near and dear to my heart," noting elementary schools in her district. She said she is "very happy" to support the bill.

[HB 1741](#) - (PN 2143) Amends the Fiscal Code, in Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program, further providing for definitions and for powers, duties and administration. Includes the use of cover crops in the definition of "best management practice" or "BMP." Defines "cover crop" and "cover crop project." Adds that no less than 15% of the amount apportioned to each conservation district shall be awarded for cover crop projects, except if a conservation district receives complete applications for cover crop projects in amounts less than that amount, the conservation district may allocate the remaining amount to other best management practices. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Rep. Charity Krupa (R-Fayette) voting in the negative.

Rep. Natalie Mihalek (R-Allegheny), the bill's prime sponsor, explained that her bill is part of the "Healthy PA" package of bills and urged the committee to review other bills in the package. She provided an overview of her bill. "We want to provide that healthier food to everyone, and we want that food to be coming from our Pennsylvania farms," she stated.

[HR 327](#) - (PN 2351) Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study evaluating the feasibility of a multifaceted approach to decreasing food waste, given this commonwealth's current infrastructure. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Reps. Borowicz and Hamm voting in the negative.



House Health Committee

11/18/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building
By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider three bills.

[HB 1652](#) - (PN 2005) Amends the Newborn Child Testing Act, further providing for Newborn Child Screening and Follow-up Program. Provides for newborn screening tests and follow-up services for Gaucher disease. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Abigail Salisbury (D-Allegheny), the bill's prime sponsor, explained Gaucher's disease and the prevalence of the disease in the Ashkenazi Jew population. She noted Pennsylvania used to test for the disease but it is no longer on the newborn screening panel. She said she aims to correct the "bizarre" issue by describing a scenario where a child born in New Jersey that is diagnosed with Gaucher's is sent to Pennsylvania for treatment, but if the child is born in Pennsylvania, the child is not tested "at all" and parents "may spend years trying to figure out" why their child is sick. She explained that the test is simple and the technology is already programmed to test for Gaucher.

Rep. Arvind Venkat (D-Allegheny) voiced his support for the bill but noted a concern he had regarding the technical screening panel. He said he hoped the panel would review an expedited application for Gaucher's.

Minority Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) discussed the importance of newborn screenings. She praised a previous public hearing on the issue and regarded the information provided by testifiers as "very informative." She said she had some concerns with a fiscal note of a prior bill, but said, "I can't imagine that this would be costly."

Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) agreed the hearing was "very helpful" and with Rep. Venkat's sentiments about expediting through the panel. "It would be quicker than probably going through this legislative process, but seeing if that doesn't happen, this is a kind of a fallback position," Chairman Frankel said.

[HB 1715](#) - (PN 2111) Amends the Newborn Child Testing Act, further providing for Newborn Child Screening and Follow-up Program. Adds Duchenne muscular dystrophy to the list of screening tests and follow-up services for newborns. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Ann Flood (R-Northampton), the bill's prime sponsor, explained the effects of Duchenne muscular dystrophy on newborns. She explained the condition is not listed on the newborn screening panel, which she said is a "missed opportunity for early detection, diagnosis and preventative treatment." She urged the committee for an affirmative vote.

Chairman Rapp thanked Rep. Flood for bringing the bill to the committee and said her sentiments are like the previous bill. Chairman Frankel said he was joining Chairman Rapp in asking for an affirmative vote.

[HB 1043](#) - (PN 1132) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for definitions, for possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors, for school access to emergency epinephrine and for administration of epinephrine auto-injectors by school bus drivers and school crossing guards. Defines "epinephrine delivery system." Replaces references to "auto-injectors" throughout the act with "delivery systems." Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Venkat, the bill's prime sponsor, stressed the seriousness of allergic reactions in communities and cited the Public School Code's language that mentions epinephrine auto-injectors. He listed the different forms of epinephrine, such as the nasal spray. "It's important that our statutory framework is updated to reflect that, and this legislation would allow us to do so by using the term 'epinephrine delivery system,' which would be a comprehensive term for future formulations and prevent us from needing to make further statutory fixes in the future," he explained.

Chairman Rapp emphasized the importance of the "life-saving drug" and reiterated what the bill would amend in the Public School Code. She said she would be supporting the bill out of committee. Chairman Frankel said he would again join Chairman Rapp in asking for an affirmative vote.



House Children & Youth Committee

11/18/2025, 9:30 a.m., Room 523, Irvis Office Building

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 1873](#) – (PN 2321) Amends Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses), 23 (Domestic Relations) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in offenses against the family, further providing for the offense of endangering welfare of children; in child protective services, further providing for definitions and for exclusions from child abuse; and, in juvenile matters, further providing for definitions. Provides an exception for endangering the welfare of children, as not considered an offense if the conduct does not constitute abuse as defined in 23 Pa.C.S. § 6102 (relating definitions) or the child is not a dependent child as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 6302 (relating to definitions). Adds supervision and independent activities to the exclusions from child abuse, adding that nothing in this chapter is construed to restrict the rights of a parent to determine the level of supervision given to a child in a manner that is appropriate, considering the child's development and abilities. Outlines permissible supervision and independent activities. Provides that a decision by a parent relating to supervision or independent activities of a child under paragraph (2) shall not constitute serious physical neglect, child abuse as defined under section 6303 or an offense under 18 Pa.C.S section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children) unless the parent willfully or recklessly disregards an obvious danger to the child for which a responsible and prudent parent would take precautionary measures to prevent subjecting the child to. Makes editorial changes. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Rep. Brenda Pugh (R-Luzerne) voting in the negative.

[A02144](#), by McNeill, changes an obvious danger to a foreseeable danger and removes "and likely" from the phrase "serious and likely risk of harm." The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Jeanne McNeill (D-Lehigh), the bill's prime sponsor, said HB 1873 allows children to engage in independent activities within reason, without the potential for a parent to be charged with neglect or child endangerment. She noted that 11 states have already enacted similar legislation.

Rep. David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) praised the legislation, recalling his own childhood experiences on his family's farm. He said the bill "allows kids to be kids."

Rep. Rick Krajewski (D-Philadelphia) said the bill allows a diverse range of children and families to achieve independence without risk of being accused of negligence.

Rep. Pugh expressed concerns that the bill may allow irresponsible parents to avoid being penalized. She said she felt confident that she would eventually support the bill after a few changes.

Minority Chairman Kate Klunk (R-York) said she felt the bill was "important" as a mother of two girls. She expressed concern regarding the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators' (PCYA) lack of support for the bill. She said she hoped the bill would be refined at a later date.

[HB 144](#) – (PN 2445) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in juvenile matters, further providing for informal adjustment; and making an editorial change. Updates the reference to section 6323 (relating to informal adjustment and diversion). Adds local government agencies and other diversion programs to the list of recipients the agency may return the referral to. Provides that social agencies and the probation officer or other officer in the court shall offer the child an opportunity to complete an informal adjustment or other diversion program and outlines the qualifications. Adds that no detention, authorized or admission of guilt, requires an admission of guilt as a prerequisite to any informal adjustment or diversion program. Adds that no monetary obligations other than restitution are authorized. Removes fees and costs from the terms and conditions. Establishes requirements for notification and input to the involved parties. Adds a definition for "diversion program." Makes editorial and technical changes. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Chairman Klunk and Reps. Pugh, Gary Day (R-Lehigh), John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) and Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne) voting in the negative.

[A02140](#), by McNeill, replaces "complaining witnesses" and "witnesses" with "victims." The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Krajewski, the bill's prime sponsor, emphasized the importance of diversion in juvenile justice. "Diversion balances accountability with compassionate rehabilitation," he said. He cited statistics claiming that youth who participate in diversion are less likely to reoffend.

Rep. Scott Barger (R-Blair), recalling his time as a vocational minister, spoke about the effectiveness of diversion programs in juvenile justice.

Chairman Klunk disagreed with mandating diversion in juvenile justice due to concerns with the availability of diversion options in certain areas of the commonwealth.

[HB 1936](#) – (PN 2435) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in juvenile matters, further providing for release or holding of hearing, for disposition of delinquent child and for limitation on and change in place of commitment and disposition review hearing. Provides a procedure for scheduling a hearing. Asserts that a child can spend additional time in shelter care after the period specified in subsection (a) if the court finds the child has no reasonable assurance of public safety in their release conditions or community-based alternatives, or if the harm to the child by taking them out of their home, school and community substantially outweighs the harm of keeping them in secure detention. Outlines summons information. Requires the court to consider the child's cumulative time spent in secure detention when determining the duration of detention and the best interests of the child. Defines "cumulative secure detention time." Stipulates that a child committed to an institution or other facility will transition to the institution or facility no more than seven business days after the court's order. Provides details on the release pending transfer. Outlines court considerations for a disposition review hearing. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Chairman Klunk and Reps. Day, Pugh, Schlegel, Walsh and Jamie Flick (R-Lycoming) voting in the negative.

Rep. Anthony Bellmon (D-Philadelphia), the bill's prime sponsor, said many children in the juvenile justice system wait up to 18 months to be assigned. He said the time spent waiting is not counted toward their sentence. He said the purpose of the bill is to consider alternatives to secure detention pending the availability of placement.

Chairman Klunk said most children wait less than 20 days, with only 12 children in the commonwealth on the waiting list. She noted that the problem has been addressed in recent years by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC).

[HR 367](#) – (PN 2555) Resolution designating the 36th month of November 2025 as "Children's Grief Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Klunk thanked the bill's prime sponsor, Rep. Danielle Friel Otten (D-Chester), for introducing the bill.



House Children and Youth Committee

11/18/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 523, Irvis Office Building
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on House Bill 133.

[HB 133](#) - (PN 2320) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in proceedings prior to petition to adopt, further providing for relinquishment to adult intending to adopt child, for alternative procedure for relinquishment and for petition for involuntary termination; and providing for reinstatement of parental rights. Asserts that when a petition for reinstatement of parental rights has been filed under Chapter 30 (relating to reinstatement of parental rights), the parent(s) of the child can petition the court for permission to relinquish forever all parental rights to their child. Provides an alternative procedure for relinquishment using a petition to confirm consent to reinstatement of parental rights. Allows any party under section 3001(a) (relating to petition) or an attorney representing the party to petition to terminate parental rights with respect to a child under 18. Outlines persons who can file a petition with the court to reinstate the parental rights of a former parent whose parental rights were previously terminated. Requires the contents of the petition for reinstatement of parental rights to be sworn by the petitioner and provides content requirements. Requires the court to serve the petition for reinstatement of parental rights and provide proper notice of the hearing. Asserts that the court will appoint counsel or a guardian ad litem to represent the child in a proceeding under this chapter. Specifies that the court will appoint counsel for a former parent in a proceeding under this chapter under specified circumstances. Provides procedure for prehearing conferences. Outlines additional considerations by the court and related procedures. Outlines consent information when a child is adopted. Provides information on court-written orders granting or denying the petition. Requires a separate decree if a child is adopted. Asserts that the reinstatement of parental rights for one former parent does not affect or restore the parental rights of another former parent. Asserts that a parent whose rights are reinstated is not responsible for child support during the time period in which the parental rights were terminated. Specifies that this section applies retroactively to a child who is under the court's jurisdiction at the time of the hearing. Effective in 60 days.

Chairman Jeannie McNeill (D-Lehigh) noted the bill is designed to standardize the pathway toward parental rights reinstatement. She said the bill was sponsored by Reps. Rick Krajewski (D-Philadelphia) and Sheryl Delozier (R-Cumberland).

Marisa McClellan, attorney, Tucker Arensberg Law, shared her experience in child welfare, discussing a case that illustrated the benefits of legislation like HB 133 for reunifying children with biological parents whose rights had been terminated. She described a situation where a son was reunified with his mother after her parental rights were terminated. She detailed how a lack of legal structure made the process difficult. She emphasized the need for legal frameworks to support such reunifications.

Marcia Hopkins, program manager, Support Center for Child Advocates, testified in support of the legislation. She emphasized the importance of creating pathways for healing and reconnection with families. She highlighted the challenges faced by youth aging out of foster care and argued that HB 133 offers an opportunity to regain lost family connections. She described how she spent seven years in a foster family and still wished to reconnect with her family despite her positive foster relationships. "We must always create pathways for healing, reconnection and restoration with families when it's safe in the child's best interest and the child has identified this as something that they want," she said.

Sarah Katz, clinical professor of law, Temple University Beasley School of Law, testified in support of HB 133, highlighting its importance in providing legal mechanisms for the reinstatement of parental rights. She discussed the limitations of current laws and noted that since the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, over 1.5 million children have left foster care without new family ties. Katz argued that HB 133 is unique because it was written for and by families who are most impacted by families that have had their parental rights terminated. She noted that 25 other states have implemented similar legislation.

Rep. Delozier explained that the legislation was designed to highlight the best interests of the children. She explained the bill is not about changing what has already happened but observing when someone has changed and deserves a second chance. "I do believe that in certain circumstances, and after a court review, that a determination can be made that someone has righted their life and made sure that they want to be better for their child," she said. Rep. Delozier pointed out that the legislation has been successful in other states. She noted that there are some concerns regarding the language in the bill, and she is working to address those issues.

April Lee, co-founder, Philly Voice for Change, shared her story of overcoming addiction and regaining custody of her children, emphasizing the organization's mission to prevent family separation and empower families impacted by the child welfare system. She advocated for HB 133, which aims to offer hope and the possibility of reconnection for youth in the foster system, highlighting the importance of family healing and stability. "HB 133 is not just legislation, it's an acknowledgment that people can grow, families can heal and children deserve an opportunity for connection, stability and belonging," she said.

Rep. Brenda Pugh (R-Luzerne) expressed concerns about HB 133, particularly the potential for parents with a history of sexual or severe physical abuse to regain custody and the possibility of foster children using the petition process to retaliate against foster or adoptive parents. Katz responded that the bill includes considerations to ensure a child's best interest and aims not to disrupt adoptive homes but to provide relief for children without an adoption plan or where plans have failed.

Rep. Scott Barger (R-Blair) asked why HB 133 allows children to file petitions for reinstatement, unlike other states' statutes. Lee explained that HB 133 was developed with input from former youth and parents, focusing on children in limbo within the foster care system. She emphasized the importance of allowing these youth to advocate for themselves.

Rep. Barger expressed concern about ensuring that children are provided with legal representation when filing a petition to prevent them from being uninformed or manipulated. Hopkins said she supports the bill for ensuring children receive legal representation in court. "Part of our job is to advocate both for best interest and what our client wants, and we always want them to have an opportunity to do that, and for us to provide counsel and legal representation as zealously as we possibly can so they can make the best-informed decision," she said. Katz commented that many children age out of the system while they are still seeking to engage their biological families.

Rep. Krajewski (D-Philadelphia) highlighted the bipartisan nature of the issue of parental rights and the importance of family reunification. He criticized the bureaucracy that impedes compassion and care in the process of parental rights, advocating for a system that prioritizes humanity, care and compassion. Rep. Krajewski expressed his commitment to addressing concerns while emphasizing the goal of reinstating parental rights and removing bureaucratic barriers to family reunification.

Minority Chairman Katie Klunk (R-York) emphasized the importance of the bill aimed at family reunification, not re-traumatizing children, and maintaining the stability of adoptive situations. She highlighted ambiguities in the bill, especially regarding physical neglect, sexual abuse and the provision of attorneys for the child and the terminated parent. She questioned why adoptive parents were not also provided an attorney. Katz explained that the existing adoption act provides a right to counsel for parents in cases of involuntary termination of parental rights and that the bill in question focuses on situations without an adoptive parent or where the adoptive relationship is failing. She explained that adoptive parents already have the right to legal counsel if their parental rights are being involuntarily terminated, which is why the bill did not include provisions for them.

Chairman Klunk asked whether the bill could include provisions for supervised visits and trial in-home placements with terminated parents, questioning if such language could be added. Katz explained that the bill does not include trial placements or supervised visits because it aims to cover various situations beyond children in foster care. She noted that the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act allows for such decisions but acknowledged challenges in accessing resources and benefits due to the distinction between custodial and parental rights.

Chairman Klunk emphasized the need for further clarification in the bill and expressed optimism about working in a bipartisan manner to amend the bill and gain broader support.

Chairman McNeill expressed gratitude for the discussion on the legislation and thanked Reps. Delozier and Krajewski for introducing the legislation.



Senate Appropriations Committee

11/18/2025, 2:25 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 1050](#) – (PN 1284) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child protective services, further providing for exclusions from child abuse and for persons required to report suspected child abuse. Adds that unlawful dissemination or intimate image, as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 3131 (relating to unlawful dissemination or intimate image); and sexual abuse of children as defined in 18 PA.C.S. § 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children) are subject to reporting requirements under this chapter. Includes staff members of institutions, etc., under persons required to report suspected child abuse. Establishes additional reporting requirements to include a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with section 6313 via the statewide toll-free telephone number or by electronic submission if the mandated reporter comes into contact with or has reasonable cause to suspect the existence of child sexual abuse material or artificially generated child sexual abuse material. Adds that the subsection applies whether or not the material was created, displayed or exhibited to others by a minor. Requires the department to transmit a copy of the report to the appropriate law enforcement agency and may transmit a copy of the report to the appropriate county agency. The amendment of 23 PA.C.S. § 6304(f)(2)(l) is effective in 60 days. Section 3 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act is effective in 90 days. (Prior PN: 1224). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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

[HB 439](#) – (PN 996) Amends the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, further providing for definitions. Defines “race” and “protective hairstyle.” Revises the definition of “religious creed.” Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 397, 508). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 923](#) – (PN 958) Amends the State Lottery Law, in pharmaceutical assistance for the elderly, further providing for determination of eligibility. Asserts eligible individuals who, as of December 31, 2024, were enrolled in the PACE or PACENET program are still eligible if the maximum income limit is exceeded due solely to a Social Security cost-of-living adjustment. Declares eligibility in the PACE and PACENET program pursuant to this subsection to expire on December 31, 2027. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1176](#) – (PN 2599) Amends Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries), in intestate succession, further providing for shares of others than surviving spouse; and, in dispositions independent of letters, family exemption, probate of wills and grant of letters, further providing for payments to family and funeral directors. Provides for the order of succession and includes the order for an endowed community fund. Adds that if no community fund exists within the municipality, county or school district, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will receive the share of the estate. Defines “community foundation” and “endowed community fund.” Provides for a total standing to the credit of the decedent in that institution that does not exceed \$20,000. Increases the payment amount under unclaimed property of the funds or the value of the property to \$20,000. The amendment of section 2103 is effective in 60 days. The amendment of 20 PA.C.S. § 3101(b) is effective in 60 days. The amendment of section 3101 (e)(1)(i) is effective in 180 days. The remainder of the act is effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1313, 2382). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1359](#) – (PN 2613) Amends Title 12 (Commerce and Trade), in the Entertainment Economic Enhancement Program, further providing for definitions, for procedure and for limitations; adding Chapter 56 to provide for regulation of self-service storage facilities; and making a repeal. Amends several definitions. Prohibits an occupant from using a self-service storage facility for residential purposes. Requires access by owner request. Defines “emergency.” Provides an owner’s lien and for late fees. Asserts that an owner may not initiate an action to enforce the owner’s lien established under section 5605 (relating to owner’s lien) until the occupant has been in default continuously for a period of at least 30 days. Provides the rights of the owner. Authorizes towing. Establishes a duty to provide to written notice and lists the required contents. Provides advertisement and location of sale. Stipulates that before a sale or other disposition of the personal property, the occupant may pay the amount necessary to satisfy the owner’s lien and other reasonable expenses incurred under this chapter and redeem the personal property and upon the payment and satisfaction of the amount necessary to satisfy the owner’s lien and the reasonable expenses incurred, the owner shall return the personal property and after that action have no liability to any person with respect to the personal property. Requires conformance with the notice. Permits the owner to purchase the personal property to enforce the owner’s lien. Provides for the excess balance from the sale. Establishes liability limitations of an owner and prohibitions. Provides repeals and makes technical changes. Asserts that the amendment or addition of 12 PA.C.C. §§ 3202, 3203(b)(2) and 3205(c)(2), (3), (4), (5) and (6) shall apply retroactively to

January 1, 2025. The addition of 12 PA.C.S. Ch. 56, as well as sections 5 and 6 of this act, is effective in 60 days. The remainder of this act is effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1527). The bill was **reported as committed**, with Sen. Kearney voting in the negative.



Bullet.in.Points

STATE BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE: EDUCATION AND VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The State Board of Osteopathic Medicine proposed amendments relating to education and volunteer services. Additional information is available on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

Cosponsor Memos

HCO2874 - Ensuring Lifesaving Asthma Medication is Available for Students

Sponsor

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

Summary

Authorizes Pennsylvania schools to maintain a supply of short-acting asthma medications, such as albuterol or a nebulizer, and permit a licensed healthcare practitioner or trained school employee to administer them to students in respiratory distress with the permission of a legal guardian.

Intro Date

11/17/2025

Last Action

11/17/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

HCO2876 - Investing in local news and civic literacy as public goods

Sponsor

Rep. Christopher Rabb (D)

Summary

Legislative package creating the Pennsylvania Civic Information Consortium (CIC) and a state fellowship program for local news.

Intro Date

11/18/2025

Last Action

11/18/2025 H - Introduced HB2048

HCO2880 - Protecting Schools, Nonprofits, and Human Services from Budget Impasse Fallout

Sponsor

Rep. Sean Dougherty (D)

Summary

Back fill any interest accrued by entities that receive state funding which were forced to take out loans during the recent budget impasse.

Intro Date

11/18/2025

Last Action

11/18/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

Basic Ed Bill Actions

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

Sponsor

Rep. Dane Watro (R)

Summary

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

Intro Date

01/08/2025

Actions

07/17/2025 S - Second consideration

07/17/2025 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations

11/17/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 11/18/2025 - Voting Meeting (Senate Appropriations), Rules Committee Conference Room

11/18/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations

11/18/2025 S - Re-reported as committed - Senate Appropriations

HB180 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, further providing for Nonprofit School Food Program, repealing provisions relating to school lunch and breakfast reimbursement and establishing the Universal School Meal Program and the Universal School Meal Fund; and making appropriations.

Sponsor

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D)

Summary

(PN 1796) Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, further providing for Nonprofit School Food Program, repealing provisions relating to school lunch and breakfast reimbursement and establishing the Universal School Meal Program and the Universal School Meal Fund; and making appropriations. Defines “school meal.” Removes language allowing the Department of Education or any board of school directors to accept any gift for use in connection with any school food program. Removes language allowing schools to provide a student with alternative meals if a student owes greater than \$75 in a school year. Directs the board of school directors to provide parents or guardians of students who owe money for five or more school meals with information on resources for applying for social service assistance programs. Removes language regarding communications regarding low balances for students. Stipulates that students may not be forced to be publicly identified as having school meal debt. Prohibits penalizing a student with detention, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension for eating a school meal for which the student could not pay. Prohibits denying a student the opportunity to participate in curricular or extracurricular activities or graduation or to receive a diploma or withhold a grade report as a result of outstanding school meal debt. Prohibits the use of collection agencies to threaten or damage the credit scores of parents or guardians to recover school meal debt. Prohibits the application of interest, fees or other penalties to outstanding school meal debt. Prohibits filing legal action over school meal debt. Prohibits profiling criminal charges over school meal debt. Prohibits the reporting of a student or a student’s parent or guardian to the county children and youth agency for outstanding meal debt. Prohibits the use of the nonprofit food service account to pay off student meal debt. Prohibits the refusal to provide the signature of an issuing office for a completed application for a work permit. Prohibits the refusal to provide any material request by a student, parent or guardian for the student’s application for postsecondary education, training, volunteer or military service. Removes language directing the department to provide state reimbursement to schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program. Provides definitions. Asserts that the Universal School Meal Program is established with the goal of providing two free meals each school day to each student of a school. Provides the purpose of the program. Stipulates that each school that participates in the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program provide all enrolled students of the school a meal that meets the requirements of the program during each school day at no cost. Stipulates that students may be required to pay for additional snacks that are not included in the free lunch or breakfast. Directs the Department of Education to administer the program. Permits the department to use 3.5% of appropriated money for administrative purposes. Stipulates that each school report to the department regarding the program. Directs the department to monitor schools that receive state reimbursement. Directs each school to maximize the amount of federal reimbursement available. Directs school ineligible for the Community Eligibility Provisions to make all reasonable efforts to promote and collect household applications for students who are not categorically eligible for free or discounted meals. Directs the department to provide state reimbursement to schools equal to the sum of the difference between the federal free and paid reimbursement rates, plus the difference between the reduced-price and the paid reimbursement rates under the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Stipulates that each school provide a meal in which the cost of the meal is equal to or less than the federal free reimbursement rate during any given school year, as determined annually by the United States Department of Agriculture. Establishes the Universal School Meal Fund as a non-lapsing fund in the State Treasury. Provides for uses and contributions to the fund. Stipulates that the act applies to the 2025-2026 school year and each school year thereafter. Effective immediately.

Intro Date

06/02/2025

Actions

06/02/2025 H - Introduced

06/02/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

06/24/2025 H - Discussed at the SNAPA Press Conference

11/17/2025 H - Press Conference Held - Zonta says No to Violence Against Women with a Focus on Food Insecurity

HB1043 - 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 definitions, for possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors, for school access to emergency epinephrine and for administration of epinephrine auto-injectors by school bus drivers and school crossing guards.

Sponsor

Rep. Arvind Venkat (D)

Summary

(PN 1132) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for definitions, for possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors, for school access to emergency epinephrine and for administration of epinephrine auto-injectors by school bus drivers and school crossing guards. Defines “epinephrine delivery system.” Replaces references to “auto-injectors” throughout the act with “delivery systems.” Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

03/25/2025

Actions

11/10/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 11/18/2025, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Health), Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

11/18/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health

11/18/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Health

11/18/2025 H - First consideration

11/18/2025 H - Laid on the table

HB1238 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, providing for restricting possession and use by students of mobile devices.

Sponsor

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R)

Summary

(PN 1389) Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, providing for restricting possession and use by students of mobile devices. Prohibits students from using mobile devices during instructional time. Directs governing bodies of school entities to adopt a policy that restricts students from possessing or using mobile devices during instructional time. Provides exceptions. Directs school entities to inform parents of the policy. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

04/17/2025

Actions

04/15/2025 H - Introduced

04/17/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

11/17/2025 H - Discussed during informational meeting - House Health

11/17/2025 H - Discussed during informational meeting - House Education

HB1663 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, establishing the Statewide Imagination Library Program and the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.

Sponsor

Rep. Liz Hanbidge (D)

Summary

(PN 2031) Amends the Public School Code, establishing the Statewide Imagination Library Program and the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Education. Provides definitions. Establishes the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account in the General Fund. Permits the State Treasurer to accept outside revenues for deposit into the account. Asserts that money from the account shall be allocated to qualified local entities that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the program. Permits the department to waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement to prevent undue financial hardship. Stipulates that money remaining in the account at the close of the fiscal year will not lapse and instead will be carried forward to the next fiscal year. Stipulates that any interest that accrues in the account will remain. Establishes the Statewide Imagination Library Program within the Department of Education to promote the development of a comprehensive statewide initiative to encourage children from birth to five years of age to develop a love of reading and learning. Directs qualified local entities to use allocated money to provide one age-appropriate book to each registered child from birth to five years of age in participating counties. Asserts that books will be sent monthly to each child's home at no cost to families. Directs the department to match the amount required of local participating programs. Provides departmental duties. Permits the department to promulgate necessary regulations. Directs the department to submit a report to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2026, and each January 1 thereafter. Provides for the contents of the report. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

06/25/2025

Actions

10/29/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Children and Youth

10/29/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Children and Youth

10/29/2025 H - First consideration

11/19/2025 H - Removed from table

12/15/2025 H - Placed on HVS

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

(PN 2638) The Keystone Fresh Act establishes the Keystone Fresh Program; provides 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 (PDE) and the Department of Agriculture (PDA); and establishes the Keystone Fresh Fund. Provides General Assembly findings and declarations. Provides definitions. Adds definition for “institution of higher education.” Redefines “new and beginning farmer or rancher.” Establishes the Keystone Fresh Program and the Fresh Schools Grant Program within PDE in consultation with PDA to provide reimbursement for the purchase of local food for school meals. Outlines eligibility requirements and the evaluation process for applicants. Includes grant amounts based on student enrollment. Explains eligible and ineligible uses for grants and reimbursement of eligible costs. Requires the PDE to monitor the Fresh Schools Grant Program. Includes information grantees must provide for reimbursement. Establishes the Keystone Producer Grant Program and Keystone Assistance Grant Program and outlines eligible uses of grant money. Asserts that PDA will develop an application and process for awarding grants, as well as determine grant amounts. Asserts that PDE and PDA will receive the necessary funds from the fund to cover administrative costs. Requires PDE and PDA to biennially contact an eligible entity for an external review to evaluate the efficacy of this act. Includes nonprofit organizations and academic institutions as eligible entities for external review. Provides the contents of the external report. Establishes the Keystone Fresh Fund as an interest-bearing restricted account. Elaborates on the eligible use of money. Sections 5, 6 and 8 are effective in 245 days. Section 10 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act will be effective in 180 days. (Prior PN: 2596, 2177)

Intro Date

08/04/2025

Actions

11/19/2025 H - Placed on HVS

11/19/2025 H - Removed from table

11/19/2025 H - Laid out for discussion

11/19/2025 H - Second consideration, with amendments

11/19/2025 H - Re-committed to - House Appropriations

HB2039 - 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 innovative assessment and accountability demonstration authority.

Sponsor

Rep. John A. Schlegel (R)

Summary

(PN 2609) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for innovative assessment and accountability demonstration authority. Directs the Department of Education to develop an innovative state assessment and accountability system. Directs the department to hold at least four public hearings and develop a plan prior to May 1, 2026. Defines “department” and “innovative state assessment and accountability system.” Effective immediately.

Intro Date

11/17/2025

Actions

11/17/2025 H - Introduced

11/17/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

SB1090 - An Act providing for disclosures and safeguards relating to the use of artificial intelligence; and imposing duties on the Attorney General.

Sponsor

Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R)

Summary

(PN 1311) The Safeguarding Adolescents from Exploitative Chatbots and Harmful AI Technology Act provides for disclosures and safeguards relating to the use of artificial intelligence (AI); and imposes duties on the Attorney General. Provides definitions. Requires an operator to issue a clear and conspicuous notification indicating that the AI companion is artificially generated and not human if a reasonable person interacting with an AI companion would be misled to believe the person is interacting with a human. Outlines suicide and self-harm safeguards, as well as safeguards for minors. Mandates general disclosure. Specifies that this act shall not apply to the underlying AI model unless the model is directly offered, configured or deployed as an AI companion. Directs the Attorney General to enforce this act. Provides for a civil penalty. Effective in 120 days.

Intro Date

11/14/2025

Actions

11/14/2025 S - Introduced

11/17/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 11/18/2025, 12:30 PM - Voting Meeting (Senate Communications and Technology), Room 8E-A, East Wing

11/18/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Communications and Technology

11/18/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Communications and Technology

11/18/2025 S - First consideration

Higher Ed Bill Actions

HB1935 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in assault, further providing for the offense of terroristic threats.

Sponsor

Rep. Tim Briggs (D)

Summary

(PN 2434) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in assault, further providing for the offense of terroristic threats. Allows the court to order restitution in the amount equal to the cost of supplies, equipment and materials, including the salary, overtime pay or other wages of affected employees and first responders. Requires the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to provide a sentencing enhancement for courts to consider in cases of terroristic threats against a school entity or an institute of higher education. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

10/08/2025

Actions

11/06/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 11/12/2025, 1:00 PM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

11/12/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Judiciary

11/17/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Judiciary

11/17/2025 H - First consideration

11/17/2025 H - Laid on the table

SB998 - An Act providing for the Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development.

Sponsor

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

Summary

(PN 1216) The Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program Act provides for the Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program; and imposes duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Provides definitions. Establishes the program in DCED to expand the capacity of accredited nursing education programs to increase the number of qualified students. Details grant eligibility, specifying what an eligible nursing education program shall have. Stipulates that no grant may exceed \$500,000 to any one nursing education program during the length of the program. Requires the nursing education program application to include a detailed explanation of the proposed use of the grant and lists what proposed uses may include. Directs DCED to develop a standard application for the program and publish guidelines for the administration of the program, and prioritize grant applications from eligible nursing school providers that serve underrepresented student populations and underserved communities. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

10/07/2025

Actions

10/28/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation

10/28/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation

10/28/2025 S - First consideration

11/17/2025 S - Second consideration

11/17/2025 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations

Upcoming Events

TUESDAY – 12/09/2025

1:30 PM, Penn State Faculty Alliance

Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda

In the News

[11/14/2025 - Flood Issues Statement on 2025-26 State Budget](#)

[11/14/2025 - Governor Shapiro Highlights 2025-26 Budget Wins for Pennsylvania Communities in TV Interviews in Every Media Market in the Commonwealth](#)

[11/14/2025 - Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce Applauds New Pennsylvania Investment in Child Care Teacher Recruitment and Retention](#)

[11/17/2025 - Steele: Educators, experts explain benefits of restricting cell phones in schools](#)

[11/17/2025 - House Communications & Technology Committee holds public hearing on school panic alarms legislation](#)

[11/17/2025 - Fiedler celebrates renewed funding for Solar for Schools, urges schools to apply in its second year](#)

[11/18/2025 - Pennycuick, Miller Measure to Protect Children from Harmful AI Chat Interactions Approved by Senate Committee](#)

[11/18/2025 - DMVA Provides Financial Assistance for Post-High School Education to Eligible Children of Veterans](#)

[11/18/2025 - PA Dems: Stacy Garity Lines Up With Doug Mastriano, Against Bipartisan Budget That Delivers for Pennsylvanians](#)

[11/18/2025 - PSEA: Pa. should take statewide approach to prohibiting student use of mobile devices in public schools, PSEA vice president testifies](#)

[11/19/2025 - Senate Passes Bill to Protect Young People from AI Generated CSAM](#)

[11/19/2025 - Senator Lindsey M. Williams, Minority Chair of Senate Education Committee, Denounces Trump Administration's Continued Attempts To Destroy Public Education](#)

[11/19/2025 - Shapiro Administration Secures Major Policy Wins in 2025-26 Budget, Expanding Educator Workforce, Strengthening Literacy Initiatives, & Reforming Cyber Charter Law](#)

[11/19/2025 - In Bucks County, Governor Shapiro Highlights New Recruitment & Retention Bonuses for Pennsylvania Child Care Workers Secured in the 2025-26 Budget](#)

[11/19/2025 - Senator Malone's Legislation to Protect Minors from Sexually Explicit AI Deepfakes Passes Senate in Broader Package](#)

[11/20/2025 - PASNAP Condemns Department of Education Proposal that Locks Working People Out of Advanced Nursing Degrees](#)

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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