

Dear Colleagues,

This afternoon, the Pennsylvania Senate confirmed my appointment as Secretary of Education. I am grateful for their confidence, and I am deeply honored to continue serving the Commonwealth in this role. Since February, I have had the privilege of working alongside many of you as Acting Secretary, and I look forward to strengthening those partnerships in the months ahead.

Over the past several months, PDE has advanced key priorities that reflect our shared focus on strengthening opportunity, including expanding dual credit access, helping more students earn high school equivalency credentials at no cost, supporting libraries as essential community anchors, redesigning our educator certification experience, and investing in mental health supports across postsecondary campuses. These efforts are part of a broader vision to modernize our systems and ensure that communities in every corner of Pennsylvania have the tools they need to help learners thrive.

As Secretary, I will continue to focus on five strategies that respond to what you have told us you need, such as improving literacy, supporting and diversifying the educator workforce, expanding school nutrition so hunger never hinders learning, strengthening postsecondary access and affordability, and promoting transparency in how we allocate resources. These priorities reflect both research and lived experience; align with Governor Shapiro's vision for public education in Pennsylvania; and were shaped by the conversations I have had with school leaders, faculty, librarians, teachers, students, and families across the Commonwealth.

Moving forward, you can expect a leadership approach grounded in listening, partnership, and clarity. As someone who grew up in Pennsylvania's public schools and universities, I know firsthand what becomes possible when communities invest in students, educators, and the institutions that support them. I also know that this work is never simple. You navigate shifting needs, limited resources, and rising expectations, all while keeping students at the center. I have seen your commitment up close, and it motivates my own. My goal is to create conditions where you can do your best work, because the success of our education system is built on your expertise and the trust communities place in you. Whether you lead a public library, a university, a district, a career and technical center, or a charter school, your voice will continue to guide our work.

Thank you for all you do and for the care you bring to the people you serve. I look forward to our continued collaboration and to building a future for public education in Pennsylvania that reflects both our highest expectations and our shared commitment to opportunity.

With gratitude and appreciation,

**Carrie Rowe, Ed.D.**

Secretary of Education

Department of Education