

Jan. 23 – 29, 2026

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SESSION STATUS

At 2:45 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, the House stands adjourned until Monday, February 2, 2026, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 12:31 p.m. on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, the Senate recessed until Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore

UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

House

Feb. 2-4
March 23-25
April 13-15, 27-29
May 4-6
June 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-30
Sept. 28-30
Oct. 5-7, 19-21
Nov. 9, 10

Senate

Feb. 2-4
March 16-18, 23-25
April 20-22
May 4-6
June 1-3, 8-10, 22-26, 29-30

The Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government, as compiled and edited by PLS. Additional information, including video, transcript and testimony, is available to [PLSGovTrac](https://www.pslgovtrac.com) users. For more information, contact sales@mypls.com.

Press Conferences

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

PA POLICY CENTER HOSTS CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF AHEAD OF NEW BUDGET CYCLE

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | January 27, 2026

Legislators and activists joined the Pennsylvania Policy Center’s (PPC) campaign webinar “Pennsylvanians Together: For Our Commonwealth” today to highlight topics ahead of the 2026 budget address.

Marc Stier, former executive director, PPC, announced that he is concluding more than 10 years as executive director of PPC, and thanked staff and partners. He outlined two guiding ideas from his tenure: that Pennsylvania’s tax system is unfair, with the top 1% paying a lower effective tax rate than the bottom 99%, and that this inequity limits funding for public priorities such as K-12 education, health care, child care, postsecondary education, public transit and environmental protection. He then introduced a new campaign, “Pennsylvanians Together: For Our Commonwealth,” focused on reforming the state’s tax and budget systems.

Felicity Williams, executive director, PPC, introduced herself as the new executive director of PPC and thanked staff partners and participants for joining despite severe weather. She acknowledged events in Minneapolis, describing them as unacceptable, and expressed solidarity with those defending constitutional rights. She recognized advocacy efforts in Pennsylvania urging opposition to new federal funding for immigration enforcement agencies. Williams announced the launch of “Pennsylvanians Together: For Our Commonwealth,” a statewide campaign focused on advancing a state budget that prioritizes everyday residents over wealthy individuals and corporations. She argued that Pennsylvania faces a budget shortfall due to an inequitable tax system, corporate tax cuts, reliance on one-time funds and depleted reserves rather than overspending on public needs. She stated that policymakers face a choice between cutting essential services or reforming the revenue system to ensure fair contributions. She emphasized that the campaign calls for investments in schools, health care, housing, public transit, environmental protection and infrastructure as the basis of real affordability and community stability. She noted that budget decisions have tangible consequences for families, seniors and communities across the state.

Dwayne Heisler, campaign director, PPC, acknowledged Williams’ comments on the situation in Minnesota and announced an upcoming policy action call in February focused on immigration that would combine state and federal updates and include organizations working on the front lines. He said the goal of the call was to provide information and clear actions for individuals and organizations seeking ways to help. Heisler explained that the webinar marked the launch of “Pennsylvanians Together: For Our Commonwealth,” a campaign calling on lawmakers to stop budget cuts and raise revenue. He argued Pennsylvania faces a major budget shortfall due to an unfair tax system, reliance on one-time federal funds and constitutional obligations to fully fund public education. He said cuts would primarily harm education, health care, transit and environmental protections, which communities depend on. He stated Pennsylvania has one of the most regressive tax systems in the country, with lower-income residents paying a higher share of taxes than the wealthiest residents. He said the campaign supports raising recurring revenue from the ultra-wealthy and large corporations through measures such as combined reporting, a fair

share tax, severance taxes and other revenue options used in other states. He argued these policies would fund public services while reducing the burden on low and middle-income families. He highlighted that the campaign is about accountability, fairness and investing in communities, so that economic prosperity benefits all Pennsylvanians rather than only the top 1%.

Charlotte Bruce, policy director, Children's HealthWatch, emphasized the importance of centering children in budget and tax policy discussions. She described Children's HealthWatch as a nonpartisan network of pediatricians and researchers that studies how economic hardship and public policy affect the health and well-being of young children and their families. She explained that the organization was founded after welfare reform, based on concerns that cuts to the safety net would harm children's development. She noted that decades of research, including interviews with tens of thousands of caregivers, show that when families lack access to basics like food, housing and health care, children suffer long-term consequences. She argued that cuts to programs such as Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) increase hardship and worsen health outcomes, while strengthening these programs helps stabilize families and protect children's health. She warned that recent and proposed federal cuts would place many Pennsylvania families at risk and lead to higher, long-term costs and inequities. She stated that Pennsylvania lawmakers have a responsibility to offset these harms by raising sustainable state revenue and investing in families. She emphasized that building a fair and adequate budget is essential to ensure that all Pennsylvanians, especially children, can be healthy, stable and able to thrive.

Connor Descheemaker, Transit for All PA, described public transportation as an essential public good that is under threat across Pennsylvania. They stated that the organization works statewide to organize transit riders and workers in all 67 counties to advocate for fully funded transit systems. They argued that the transit funding crisis affects rural and urban areas alike and should not be framed as a partisan or geographic divide. They said that through statewide organizing, the group has heard consistent concerns from riders, workers, employers and local leaders about declining service and infrastructure. Descheemaker noted that multiple transit systems have already cut service and raised fares and warned of severe consequences for larger systems if funding is not addressed. They emphasized that transit is critical for accessing jobs, education, health care and community and supports family-sustaining union jobs. They stated that Pennsylvania funds transit less per capita than neighboring states and relies too heavily on road expansion. They argued that many Pennsylvanians cannot drive, instead depending entirely on transit. They stressed that the transit crisis is a result of state policy choices and can be solved through new dedicated and sustainable revenue sources that treat transit as equal to other public goods.

Amanda Pauley, advocacy and organizing leader, Action Together NEPA, emphasized that public education is a foundation of family and community life, especially in rural areas. She said schools are not just academic institutions, but central community hubs that provide stability, meals, health support and trusted adults for children. She argued that underfunding forces schools to operate in "constant triage," leaving students, particularly those needing special education, without adequate support. She noted that when needs are unmet, families may turn to cyber charter schools, which further drains resources from local districts. She connected fair revenue policies that ask the ultra-wealthy and large corporations to pay their share to protect public education, special education services and rural school stability. She acknowledged recent state efforts to increase adequacy funding, but stressed that schools need stable, predictable and growing funding rather than temporary fixes. She emphasized that budgets should reflect shared values by investing in children, families and communities without shifting the burden onto working families and underfunded districts.

Jess Cadorette, director, Civic Engagement, Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania (CVPA), criticized the state budget for failing to fully fund agencies responsible for protecting public health and safety while lawmakers complain about staffing shortages. She argued that Pennsylvania has prioritized corporate and fossil fuel interests, including attempts to abandon the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), which could have generated billions for workers and community projects. She stated that fossil fuel companies do not pay a fair share for pollution that harms air, water and public health and that Black, Brown and low-income communities are disproportionately affected. She said Pennsylvania faces an energy affordability crisis driven by continued reliance on increasingly expensive and unreliable fossil fuels, while renewable energy options are sidelined. She questioned why the state continues to subsidize fossil fuel companies and executives instead of investing in clean energy. She highlighted an energy affordability agenda developed by CVPA and PennFuture that aims to lower energy costs, protect the environment and ensure wealthy corporations pay their fair share.

Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler (D-Philadelphia) emphasized the urgency of the upcoming state budget as both a lawmaker and a parent and warned against austerity-driven budget cuts that would harm essential services. She said key priorities must include robust and sustainable funding for public transit and public education, noting their importance to daily life across Pennsylvania. She cited the Commonwealth Court ruling that declared the current education funding system unequal and unconstitutional. Rep. Fiedler argued that budget shortfalls should not be addressed through cuts alone and that Pennsylvania has alternative options by raising revenue fairly. She highlighted combined reporting as a long-standing policy solution, noting that a majority of large corporations doing business in Pennsylvania pay no corporate income tax due to loopholes, while working families pay their share. She discussed efforts to repeal the uniformity clause to allow a fairer tax structure that reduces the burden on low- and middle-income residents while asking the wealthiest individuals to contribute more. She stated that multinational corporations benefiting from Pennsylvania's

economy should invest in the state. She said this campaign offers a timely framework to prioritize fairness, sustainable revenue and investment in public goods rather than cuts.

Rep. Nikki Rivera (D-Lancaster) emphasized the importance of a fair and balanced tax system to ensure working people can thrive during their careers and retire with dignity. She highlighted growing wealth inequality, noting that the top 1% in the U.S. own more than 95% of the wealth, and stressed that Pennsylvania's wealthiest residents should contribute their fair share. She discussed co-sponsoring [HB 833](#), proposing a constitutional amendment to impose an additional 4% tax on Pennsylvania residents earning over a million dollars, with adjustments for cost of living. She referenced [HB 1200](#) to legalize and tax adult recreational cannabis with revenues funding housing, job training, child care and substance abuse programs in historically impacted communities. She supported Act 2 of 1971 reforms requiring multi-state corporations to use combined reporting to close tax loopholes. She argued these measures would raise needed revenue to protect schools, health care, transit, infrastructure and environmental protections, stressing that fair taxation of the wealthiest and profitable corporations is essential to ensuring economic stability and shared prosperity across Pennsylvania.

Rep. Chris Rabb (D-Philadelphia) explained that he is entering his 10th year and fifth introduction of the Fair Share Tax Plan. He noted that recent legislative measures have not fully addressed structural inequities in Pennsylvania's tax system, which he described as taxing labor income more heavily than income from wealth. He stated that not taxing the ultra-wealthy fairly results in billions of dollars in uncollected revenue and argued that taxing high-income individuals could help fund public services such as education, transit, health care and infrastructure. He described the plan as a way to align the tax system with shared community needs and to support investments in public goods. He also noted the importance of prioritizing state funding toward essential services rather than other expenditures.

Jeff Garis, outreach and partnerships director, PPC, thanked all attendees for their participation in the webinar, noting that they will host several events across the state in the coming weeks.

Rep. Rivera, could you elaborate on your call for more funding for the Home Care System across Pennsylvania in this year's budget, and could you talk more about any other services and systems that should receive more funding this year?

Rep. Rivera explained that she serves on the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee and has personal experience with home health care, having cared for her husband's grandmother at home from age 98 to 107. She emphasized the importance of home health care workers in enabling older adults to age in place, noting that it can provide better outcomes and be less expensive than nursing home care. She expressed support for increasing wages and improving conditions for home health care workers, stating that this would help attract more workers to the field and support aging Pennsylvanians.

Among Gov. Josh Shapiro's biggest points in the last year was attracting Amazon to Pennsylvania to build two data centers with an unknown cost to taxpayers and an unknown total tax forgiveness they would receive to build this \$20 billion project. What do you see as your role in challenging this development and others like it going forward?

Rep. Rabb stated that he supports a moratorium on data centers, citing concerns about their impact on rural and urban communities, including strain on water supply, public infrastructure, roads and utility rates. He noted that while construction may use union labor, long-term employment opportunities for local communities are minimal. He argued that the primary benefit of these data centers is profit for corporations, not the public, and criticized the policy of courting these businesses as harmful for Pennsylvania. He emphasized his opposition to such policies regardless of political popularity.

Rep. Rivera explained that in Lancaster, two data centers are being built and expressed concern about their impact on local ratepayers. She described holding a public hearing with the Public Utility Company (PUC) and PPL to hear community concerns about potential rate hikes. She added that energy demand from data centers could strain the grid while household expenses rise and wages remain stagnant. She noted that she and Rep. Fiedler circulated a co-sponsorship memo proposing that major electric companies implement grid-sustaining battery backup to store unused energy, maintain stable rates and prevent blackouts caused by high energy demand from data centers.

Cadorette shared concerns about the impact of data centers on Pennsylvania's energy grid and the resulting costs to consumers. She noted that some of these costs are already being passed on to residents and highlighted that CVPA's agenda includes measures to prevent rate increases caused by data centers. She also referenced her colleague, Katie Bloom, the organization's political legislative director, for additional expertise and advocacy on this issue.



‘PUBLIC SCHOOL IS THE LAST MELTING POT,’ SAYS SUPERINTENDENT, WITH PA SCHOOLS WORK COALITION URGING CONTINUED ADEQUACY FUNDING

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | January 29, 2026

The PA Schools Work Coalition discussed the progress made with adequacy funding for rural schools and urged continued funding in the 2026-2027 state budget at the Main Capitol Rotunda today.

Michael Churchill, of counsel, Public Interest Law Center, discussed the 2021 Commonwealth Court trials and how they found unconstitutional and inadequate funding for rural Pennsylvania school districts. He noted that some of the issues facing rural school districts are a lack of teachers and student resources, lower test scores, cut extracurriculars and inadequate numbers of bathrooms. Churchill added that some school districts with the “highest need” are paying the “highest local taxes” but historically have not received equal state support. He mentioned the Commonwealth Court ruling stated Pennsylvania must provide “comprehensive, effective, contemporary public-school education” and fill the gaps created. Churchill described how the adequacy funding formula resulted in a \$4.5 billion gap that must be filled by the state for Pennsylvania’s rural school districts. He added that this number has “not been disputed by any educational research.” Churchill emphasized it is the General Assembly’s duty to continue funding education with the adequacy formula rather than creating new funding gaps.

Dr. Erich May, superintendent, Brookville Area School District, stated that they have been “firing on all cylinders” to provide their students with an appropriate learning environment. He mentioned the buildings’ cleanliness, the array of extracurriculars and the supportive nature of the teachers, counselors and other staff. “Our little town couldn’t afford to do it all without help from the state,” May said. He mentioned that the adequacy funding dedicated toward his school district goes toward student transportation, employee health care and retirement. May emphasized that the “overwhelming majority” goes toward educators. He described it as a “labor-intensive industry” where educators are expected to write curricula, teach their students, meet with families, advocate for students and make accommodations as necessary. May mentioned that student classrooms are an “increasingly important place” for diversity. “Public school is arguably the last place bringing together different ethnic and economic groups and people of different political persuasions,” he explained. “Public school is the last melting pot.” May added that public schools help people “bring out the best in each other” and find common ground. “It’s not just for the kids that we need this funding,” May continued. “It’s for the future of this country.”

Jason Moser, superintendent, Lehigh Area School District, discussed the progress his school district has made since receiving adequacy funding installments. He mentioned they were able to retain their level of staffing, lower the average class size from 26 to 20 and provide a social worker in each school building. Moser described the progress as “critically important,” considering “schools are expected to do more and more,” while discussing the “challenges of being able to do those things with less and less.” He added that the adequacy funding has allowed his district to acquire high-quality assessment tools and resources, which have resulted in academic progress in early literacy and mathematics. “What students have access to should never be decided by their address,” Moser emphasized. He explained the district has “much more to do” and noted the next goal is offering more competitive wages for educators. Moser remarked that wage increases are “absolutely necessary.” He mentioned that if schools lose their adequacy funding, it will create a “domino effect” where rural districts are unable to retain educators. Moser called on the General Assembly to continue adequacy funding in the 2026-2027 state budget. He added that this is “not a partisan ask” and that students deserve appropriate learning environments and resources regardless of where they reside.

Dave McAndrew, superintendent, Panther Valley School District, noted how his district “didn’t waste a dollar” of their two installments of adequacy funding. He stated they added an elementary science teacher, a social worker, a guidance counselor and a special education teacher for their district. McAndrew said the adequacy funding has been helpful and mentioned Panther Valley is still owed \$14 million in funding. “Local taxpayers have done their part,” he stated. “They have paid their fair share, but we don’t have the ability to raise taxes again and again to fill a gap created by an unfair system.” McAndrew added that while his district has “stretched every dollar,” they are limited in what they can offer. He mentioned they cannot offer competitive wages, especially compared to other school districts. “We’ve waited, we’ve been patient, we’ve proven we can do more with less,” McAndrew said. “Now it’s time to do what’s right.”



Committee News

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

House Republican Policy Committee

01/23/2026, 10:00 a.m., St. Anselm School, 12670 Dunks Ferry Road, Philadelphia
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on educational choice and affordability for Pennsylvania families.

Chair David Rowe (R-Union) highlighted the importance of ensuring every child has access to quality education. He introduced the topic of the proposed federal scholarship tax credit, also known as the [Educational Choice for Children Act \(ECCA\)](#), emphasizing its potential to complement state programs. He mentioned the bipartisan support in other states and the necessity for the governor's approval for Pennsylvania to participate.

Rep. Martina White (R-Philadelphia) expressed excitement about the discussion on school choice, aligning with the upcoming School Choice Week and Catholic Schools Week. She highlighted the importance of providing students with quality education opportunities, pointing to the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and the federal school choice tax credit as topics of discussion.

Rep. David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) commented on the low rating of Philadelphia's public school system compared to the high rating of Catholic schools in the area, expressing pride in the achievements of the Catholic schools.

Chair Rowe framed the hearing around ensuring that all children in Pennsylvania have access to high-quality education regardless of income or location. He argued that while Pennsylvania has been a leader in expanding educational opportunity through programs like EITC and the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC), demand for these programs continues to exceed supply, as many students struggle in the public school system. He described the federal scholarship tax credit as a complement to existing state programs that would expand school choice. He emphasized that participation requires the governor to opt the state into the program and opined that doing so should not be a partisan issue, noting that governors from both parties in other states have opted in. He warned that the federal funding will be distributed regardless of Pennsylvania's participation and that failure to opt in would leave the state and its students at a disadvantage.

Stephen Bloom, vice president, The Commonwealth Foundation, emphasized the importance of expanding school choice in Pennsylvania, referencing the state's success with tax credit scholarship programs that served over 101,000 low-income students. He discussed the federal scholarship tax credit as an opportunity for Pennsylvania to lead by opting into this program by the end of 2026. He advocated for the removal of caps on these programs.

Dr. Patrick Graff, senior fellow, the American Federation for Children (AFC), shared his experiences on the impact of school choice programs and advocated for the expansion of school choice in Pennsylvania. He emphasized the potential of a new federal tax credit scholarship program that could benefit students across all types of schools in Pennsylvania and urged the state to opt into this uncapped, permanent program. Graff presented data on national support for the program across political lines and discussed his upcoming research report, which suggests that school choice programs offer a better return on investment for improving student achievement compared to increasing school spending.

Keisha Jordan, president and CEO, Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia (CSFP), discussed the organization's role in providing over \$17 million in scholarships to more than 6,800 students under the EITC and OSTC tax credit programs. She highlighted the positive impact of these scholarships on academic performance and college enrollment rates, advocating for the expansion of scholarship programs through the federal tax credit. She urged Gov. Josh Shapiro to opt in to benefit Pennsylvania students.

Rep. White raised concerns about middle-class families in northeast Philadelphia struggling to afford private school tuition. She asked for clarification on the combination of federal tax credit with EITC scholarships and the income limits for the federal tax credit scholarship program. Rachel Langan, senior education policy analyst, The Commonwealth Foundation, explained that the income limits for federal tax credit scholarships are based on HUD income levels, with the lowest qualification at \$198,600 in Forest County and the highest at \$358,200 in the collar counties. She confirmed that these scholarships can be combined with EITC, OSTC and private scholarships, making private education accessible to most low-income families. Langan emphasized that the program aims for universal school choice, with 80 to 90 percent of Pennsylvania families qualifying.

Rep. Kristin Marcell (R-Bucks) highlighted the issue of 69,000 scholarship applications being turned away and over 200,000 students attending low-achieving schools, questioning the governor's reluctance to opt into the federal scholarship tax credit program and inquiring about possible impediments to its adoption. Langan reported that eight states have or will opt into the federal scholarship tax credit program, suggesting it would be "politically expedient" for Gov. Shapiro to lead on this issue. She added that she does not

know whether Gov. Shapiro will opt in or provide his reasons for potentially choosing not to. Jordan expressed support for Pennsylvania opting into the federal scholarship tax credit program, emphasizing the benefits to the state and the importance of Pennsylvania becoming a leader among Democrat-led states in recognizing school choice. She mentioned her efforts to advocate for the program and remains hopeful for its adoption in Pennsylvania. Bloom said that polling conducted by the Commonwealth Foundation and others shows strong public support for the proposal even without an extensive public education campaign. He argued that the results indicate broad, instinctive approval, stating that seven out of 10 respondents want the governor to opt into the program. He suggested this level of support should signal to state leaders that the policy is already popular and does not require significant effort to build public buy-in. Graff aimed to correct misconceptions about the use of “voucher program,” explaining that it is a tax credit for scholarships under the federal tax code, not a voucher program. He argued that better awareness could increase its popularity.

Rep. Marcell asked whether Gov. Shapiro’s decision to opt into the program would affect basic education funding or other state funding sources. Graff responded that opting into the federal tax credit program would not impact the state budget. Jordan stressed the importance of ensuring that accepting the federal tax credit doesn’t exclude participation in other state-based choice support programs.

Rep. Robert Leadbeter (R-Columbia) shared his personal connection to school choice and noted a knowledge gap among the public about school choice terminology. He sought advice on educating Pennsylvanians about school choice. Jordan discussed the challenge of educating the public about school choice in Philadelphia, mentioning efforts to improve communication and the role of organizations in clarifying concepts and sharing stories. Langan talked about the potential of a federal program to attract a broader audience to school choice by funding various educational expenses. She suggested that support from school districts and the teachers’ union could help realize the program. Graff argued that school choice benefits all students—not just scholarship recipients—and that it should not be seen as a zero-sum game. He emphasized the importance of providing educational options for various needs.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) followed up on a question from Rep. Leadbeter, discussing the challenges of advancing school choice legislation and citing opposition from teachers’ unions and a partisan divide. He asked Graff for advice on swaying public opinion based on his experiences in Arizona and Florida. Graff acknowledged the complexity of the issue but argued that the federal scholarship tax credit presents a unique opportunity. He noted that many organizations already support public school students through tutoring and after-school programs, often with the backing of superintendents. Drawing on examples from other states, he explained that even some rural superintendents who have traditionally been skeptical of school choice are now advocating for the federal scholarship tax credit. He emphasized that this creates an opening for broader coalitions, including community foundations and local school leaders, and that demonstrating this kind of home-district support will be key to persuading legislators and the governor to opt into the program.

Rep. Anderson expressed agreement with the effectiveness of using individual stories to advocate for school choice and encouraged sharing these stories with legislators who oppose school choice. He appreciated the efforts of those working on school choice.

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R-Cumberland) discussed her work on [HB 1763](#), aiming to integrate a federal scholarship tax credit program into Pennsylvania’s state EITC program. She highlighted the collaboration with EdChoice and support from the Catholic Bishops, offering two paths for implementing the program and specified that it is a tax credit system, not a voucher system. She asked whether school boards could set their own policies under this bill. Graff explained that the Treasury’s rules for the scholarship program are pending, with publication expected in the spring or early summer. He stated that approved scholarship organizations must allocate 90% of their business to scholarships and highlighted the program’s donor accountability aspect. Jordan discussed her organization’s input to the Treasury, advocating for a simple opt-in process for states and a 90% income allocation for scholarships, similar to the EITC OSTC program. She expressed hope for the program’s creative use by new nonprofits and foundations.

Rep. Zimmerman shared that over 40% of school-age children in his district choose schooling options outside of public schools. He asked Graff about the key factors contributing to the success of Florida’s education program. Graff described Florida as the largest private school choice state in the U.S., with its success in educational choice and academic achievement. He credited Florida’s comprehensive approach, including robust charter and magnet school systems and significant public school reforms, for its academic success.

Rep. Donna Scheuren (R-Montgomery) criticized the governor for having “negated on his promise to the public” to follow through on school choice promises. She inquired about the specifics of a federal bill, particularly whether tax credits donated by Pennsylvanians would remain in the state and if states not opting in could influence Pennsylvania’s ability to claim additional scholarship funds. Langan argued that a major benefit of the federal program is that it would allow schools to tap into their alumni networks nationwide. She explained that under current state programs, alumni living out of state cannot contribute through EITC or OSTC, which represents a missed opportunity. She said the federal scholarship tax credit would allow schools to solicit donations from alumni regardless of where they live, particularly in states that do not opt in. She emphasized that this could significantly expand

donation streams to Pennsylvania schools and described the potential impact as substantial and highly promising. Graff discussed the potential for out-of-state donors to contribute to Pennsylvania scholarship organizations and receive federal tax credits, benefiting Pennsylvania children. Jordan expressed concerns about ambiguities in the federal program and emphasized the need for scholarship organizations to control fund allocation to benefit Pennsylvania. She also mentioned the potential for raising funds from states not participating in the program and stressed the importance of all states joining to benefit children nationwide.

Rep. Scheuren appreciated the feedback and marketing strategies, committing to forwarding the talking points to Gov. Shapiro and expressing hope that he would prioritize the initiative. Jordan emphasized the importance of early opt-in deadlines for states to allow scholarship organizations time for preparation and warned that delays could hinder fundraising efforts. Rep. Scheuren agreed that delays would disadvantage Pennsylvania.

Chair Rowe raised concerns about the financial burdens on parents, even with existing programs. He inquired how the new program would address these gaps. Jordan explained how stacking EITC, the economically disadvantaged schools' program and the federal tax credit program could help families afford private education and encourage private schools to invest in financial aid. Chair Rowe discussed the 2023 Commonwealth Court ruling on Pennsylvania's education funding system and questioned whether increased spending would address inequality. Graff discussed the limitations of state school choice programs and suggested that tax credits and federal opportunities could supplement funds to provide equitable education. Jordan emphasized the importance of providing students with a variety of educational options and argued for increased advocacy and funding for school choice programs to create competition among schools. Chair Rowe said that a conversation with a mother during the last budget cycle illustrated the value of educational choice, noting that her three children attended different types of schools and were all thriving. He argued that this example showed how ensuring every child has access to multiple educational options helps set them up for long-term success. Langan discussed how a federal program offers a new revenue stream for school districts, enabling them to enhance basic education funding through their own fundraising efforts, which she sees as a beneficial opportunity for districts and children in underfunded areas.

Rep. White shared her experiences advocating for school choice in Harrisburg, expressing frustration with the opposition to education vouchers while noting the bipartisan support for other tax credit programs. She asked for clarification on the difference between vouchers and tax credits to better inform the public. Graff specified the difference between voucher programs, which provide direct state funding for private education, and tax credit scholarships, which involve private donations with state or federal tax credits for donors. He supported educational choice initiatives and called for the expansion of federal scholarship tax credits. Rep. White highlighted the challenges in Philadelphia's public education system, noting that around 36% of third graders are not at reading grade level. She stressed the importance of quality education for all children and asked for insights on the impact of scholarships on families, using a family's story as an example. Jordan shared a story about a family benefiting from the Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia, detailing their educational and personal achievements after receiving a scholarship for private education. She emphasized the transformative impact of the scholarship and encouraged viewing a detailed account on their YouTube page. Rep. White thanked Jordan for her story and stressed the importance of educational options. She urged Gov. Shapiro to support "nearly a billion dollars" for Pennsylvania's education system and highlighted the significance of educational choice.

Chair Rowe thanked participants for their insights on Pennsylvania's EITC OST programs and urged Gov. Shapiro to support these initiatives without waiting for budget negotiations. He emphasized the committee's commitment to expanding educational opportunities and empowering parents and students.



House Appropriations Committee

01/28/2026, 12:30 p.m., Room 140, Main Capitol

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

Before conducting the agenda, Chair Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) welcomed Rep. Jim Rigby (R-Cambria) to the committee and a fellow from Millersville University who will be working in the committee. Chair Harris acknowledged alumni of Millersville, including both majority chairs of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, Rep. Justin Fleming (D-Dauphin) and Rep. Fleming's son, and jokingly referred to Millersville as the "Harvard of the State System."

Minority Chair Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana) jokingly replied he was going to "bite his tongue." Chair Harris said, "We love Indiana University of Pennsylvania." Chair Struzzi said, "Go Hawks." Chair Harris replied, "How about this—we all love the state system."

[HB 348](#) - (PN 303) Amends the Human Services Code, in departmental powers and duties as to licensing, providing for notice of legal representation for medical assistance. Requires a long-term nursing facility operator to provide a resident of the facility or a designated representative at the time of admission, the right to an attorney notice. Outlines the language of the notice. Provides for additional requirements including clear and legible language or format, detached presentation of the notice from the resident agreement, public accessibility on the internet in multiple languages and allows facilities to craft their own form. Adds a definition for "designated representative." Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1129](#) - (PN 2065) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in corporate net income tax, repealing provisions relating to penalties and to repealer and effective date; adding Part IX to establish the Net Operating Loss Transfer Program; and adding Part X to impose penalties. Revises and removes several definitions. Permits a taxpayer to sell eligible net losses and a purchasing taxpayer may receive tax benefits under the program. Stipulates a purchasing taxpayer may apply the tax benefits to the purchasing taxpayer's tax liability for the taxable year during which the tax benefits were purchased, except that any tax benefits received by the purchasing taxpayer plus any other net loss deduction allowable under this article may not cause the purchasing taxpayer's total net loss deduction to exceed the limits established under section 401(3). Authorizes the department to approve the sale and purchase of eligible net losses. Stipulates that private financial assistance provided by a purchasing taxpayer under this article must assist in funding expenses incurred in connection with the operation of the eligible business in the commonwealth, including the expenses of fixed assets. Requires the Department of Revenue (DOR) to equally distribute tax benefits based on the amount of tax benefits approved for sale and the amount of private financial assistance committed by purchasing taxpayers during a taxable year. Authorizes the department to approve the sale of eligible net losses. Establishes eligibility, including an eligible business certifying that as of the date of the application, the applicant is operating as an eligible business and has no current intention to cease operating as an eligible business. Requires an application for selling and purchasing taxpayer. Revises the required contents of applications. Mandates a review of applications. Provides for approval or denial of applications. Establishes limitations. Stipulates that a maximum of \$200,000,000 in transferrable net losses shall be available for sale per taxable year. Provides repayment of exchange funds. Permits exception for forfeiture requirement. Mandates a penalty for submission of fraudulent application information. Requires reporting and adds required report contents. Mandates the department to promulgate regulations and develop guidelines. Adds that a person who violates section 409 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding \$1,000 and costs of prosecution, or to imprisonment for not more than six months, or both; willfully makes a false and fraudulent return of taxable income made taxable by this article, shall be guilty of willful and corrupt perjury and, upon conviction, be subject to punishment as provided by law; and willfully fails, neglects or refuses to make a report or to pay the tax as prescribed or refuses to permit the department to examine the books, papers and records of any corporation liable to pay tax under this article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than \$1,000 and costs of prosecution, or to imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. Establishes that the penalties shall be in addition to any other penalties imposed by this article. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1258). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1304](#) - (PN 1498) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for stress test of system; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for stress test of system. Directs the State Employees' Retirement System of Pennsylvania (SERS) to conduct an annual stress test of the system and submit the results of the stress test to the Governor, the General Assembly and the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) no later than April 1 of each year. Directs the IFO to produce a report no later than June 1 of each year. Directs the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) to conduct an annual stress test of the system and submit the results of the stress test to the Governor, the General Assembly and the IFO no later than October 1 of each year. Directs the IFO to produce a report no later than December 1 of each year. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1525](#) - (PN 2542) Amends the Underground Utility Line Protection Law, further providing for definitions. Amends the definition of “line” or “facility,” adding that the term includes pipelines transporting steam or hazardous material located in public rights-of-way. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1782). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 327](#) – (PN 1360) Amends the Public School Code, in the state system of higher education, further providing for definitions and for powers and duties of councils of trustees. Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), in employees, further providing for automatic certification. Defines “campus police.” Makes a repeal under powers and duties. Adds that an installation police officer at Fort Indiantown Gap is eligible to maintain certification if they satisfactorily completed the basic educational and training requirements, satisfactorily completed the minimum number of in-service training hours established by the commission and required to maintain certification and either has an active certification on or after the effective date or was previously certified as a police officer by the commission, which certification lapsed within the last two years, and has been employed, with no lapse in service, as an installation police officer at Fort Indiantown Gap. Asserts that a resolution adopted by a council of trustees of an institution within the state system of higher education under section 2009-A(A)(13) of the Public School Code that authorizes campus police to carry firearms shall be void and of no effect as of the effective date of this section. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 297). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1526](#) – (PN 2719) Amends Title 66 (Public Utilities), in powers and duties, providing for degraded natural gas pipeline prevention plans. Provides duties of the Public Utility Commission (PUC). Replaces the phrase “distribution company” throughout the act with “public utility.” Directs the natural gas public utility to issue a degraded natural gas pipeline prevention plan to the commission, featuring an inventory of all Aldyl A polyethylene natural gas assets and procedures. Provides definitions for “natural gas asset” and “natural gas public utility,” repealing the definition for “natural gas distribution company.” Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1783). The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chair Struzzi referenced a recent action taken by PUC, which he says makes the bill not necessary.

[HB 331](#) – (PN 2718) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in budget and finance, further providing for expenses; and, in facilities and supplies, further providing for deposits into account and for surcharge. Increases the registration fee amount. Asserts that beginning July 1, 2025, and notwithstanding section 3571 (relating to commonwealth portion of fines, etc.) or this section, any costs charged by magisterial district judges under section 1725.1 (relating to cists) otherwise paid to the commonwealth shall be deposited into the restricted account established in section 3731 (relating to establishment of restricted receipt account). Declares that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as affecting the amount payable to counties under section 3572 (relating to county portion of fines, etc.). Removes the section on exceptions for the imposition of a surcharge. Applies the addition of 42 PA.C.S. § 3733(A)(3) retroactively to July 1, 2025. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 286). The bill was **reported as committed**, with Reps. Eric Nelson (R-Westmoreland) and Ryan Warner (R-Fayette) voting in the negative.



Bullet.in.Points

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE: REGULATORY AGENDA

The Governor's Office released a list of regulatory agendas for all agencies in the commonwealth. Additional information is available on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

Cosponsor Memos

HCO3042 - Easing Restrictions on Dental School Faculty

Sponsor

Rep. Maureen E. Madden (D)

Summary

Expands where a dentist with a restricted faculty license may practice to include clinical facilities owned and operated by a dental school or an affiliated nonprofit academic health care center. Allows licensees to practice for continuing education purposes for up to one year without a Pennsylvania license.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Last Action

01/28/2026 H - Introduced HB2163

HCO3044 - Mental Health Screener

Sponsor

Rep. Aerion Abney (D)

Summary

Provides for mental health screening for students in grades six through 12 at schools.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Last Action

01/23/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

HCO3046 - Approved Private Schools name change

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

Changes the name of Approved Private Schools to Approved Special Education Schools.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Last Action

01/28/2026 H - Introduced HB2169

HCO3058 - Social Media Literacy

Sponsor

Rep. Jim Prokopiak (D)

Summary

Requires that the academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education include social media literacy.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Last Action

01/28/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

HCO3061 - Free Transit Passes for Community College & PASSHE Students in Pennsylvania

Sponsor

Rep. Morgan Cephas (D)

Summary

Creates a grant program that would provide free public transit passes for all Community College and PASSHE students in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Last Action

01/28/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

SCO1500 - Designating February 2026 as Career and Technical Education Month in Pennsylvania

Sponsor

Sen. Lynda Schlegel Culver (R)

Summary

Resolution designating February 2026 as "Career and Technical Education Month" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Last Action

01/23/2026 S - Cosponsor memo filed

SCO1511 - Repealing the State Board of Higher Education

Sponsor

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R)

Summary

Repeals the State Board of Higher Education.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Last Action

01/28/2026 S - Cosponsor memo filed

Basic Ed Bill Actions

HB1375 - An Act amending Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the State Employees' Retirement Board.

Sponsor

Rep. Brett R. Miller (R)

Summary

(PN 1571) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for administrative duties of the State Employees' Retirement Board. Directs the board to livestream all public meetings and post an unedited video and written record of all public proceedings on its website. Mandates that videos and records remain online for a period of at least three years and be maintained for a period of at least seven years. Directs the Office of Administration to promptly revise its management directives relating to record management policies to conform to requirements. Provides for information to be submitted to the General Assembly by the board. Provides definitions for "carried interest" and "Institutional Limited Partners Association Fee Transparency Initiative." Provides for information regarding an alternative investment vehicle to be subject to public access under the Right-to-Know Law. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

05/02/2025

Actions

05/02/2025 H - Introduced

05/02/2025 H - Referred to House State Government

01/28/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/03/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House State Government), Room 515, Irvis Office Building

HB1648 - 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 definitions and providing for mental health days.

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 2002) Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, further providing for definitions and providing for mental health days. Provides for policy adoption to provide an excused absence from compulsory school attendance designated as a mental health day when a student's well-being is at risk due to mental or physical fatigue, regardless of whether an underlying mental health-related condition triggering the fatigue is certified or uncertified. Requires the policy to be in place no later than the 2026-2027 school year by the board of directors or a governing body or a public, nonpublic or private school. Establishes that the policy adopted in this subsection is based on the model policy developed by the department under subsection (d). Provides that a student can use up to two consecutive days for a mental health day but shall not use three or more mental health days in a week or in two or more consecutive weeks. Provides for additional days needed for mental or physical fatigue should be permitted under policies and procedures adopted by the school under section 1329. Requires the department to develop and publish guidelines for schools to implement mental health days and a model policy to meet the requirements for adoption under subsection (a). Outlines the guidelines, including evidence-based guidance to integrate the student-excused absences for a mental health day into the school's support systems for student well-being. Provides for evidence-based practices for school employees to contact a student who uses two or more mental health days and connect them to mental health support. Requires the department to consult with a student advisory group and school administrators whose members are directly impacted by student absence rules and policies and those representing the diversity of the public school population including gender identity, family income, race and ethnicity, geography and any other factors deemed relevant by the department when developing the guidelines. Defines "certified mental health-related condition," "extended family," "fatigue," "immediate family," "mental health day," "school" and "uncertified mental health-related condition." Outlines qualifications for certified and uncertified mental health-related conditions. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

06/24/2025

Actions

06/23/2025 H - Introduced

06/24/2025 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB1706 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, providing for student mental health awareness.

Sponsor

Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D)

Summary

(PN 2091) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, providing for student mental health awareness. Directs the State Board of Education to review existing state standards for health, safety and physical education and revise them as necessary to address student mental health awareness. Requires the Department of Health and the Department of Education to develop and post guidelines and other relevant materials to inform and educate students in athletic activities, their parents or guardians and coaches about the nature and warning signs of mental health distress, illness and related issues. Establishes notification requirements. Requires that no later than 90 days after the effective date, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association review existing coaching education requirements for coaches engaged at a member school. Outlines training requirements. Adds definitions. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

07/07/2025

Actions

07/07/2025 H - Introduced

07/07/2025 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB1763 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in educational tax credits, further providing for definitions and providing for compliance with Federal tax credit for contributions to scholarship organizations.

Sponsor

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R)

Summary

(PN 2173) Amends the Public School Code, in educational tax credits, further providing for definitions and providing for compliance with Federal tax credit for contributions to scholarship organizations. Defines "secretary." Designates the department as the agency to make elections on behalf of the commonwealth with respect to federal tax benefits related to contributions of individuals to scholarship-granting organizations. Requires the Secretary of Community and Economic Development to transmit notice to the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury by Oct. 1, 2026, and each Oct. 1 thereafter, opting into the federal tax credit for contributions of individuals to scholarship-granting organizations as required under 26 U.S.C. § 25F. Requires the submission of information from scholarship organizations. Outlines information to be submitted. Establishes compliance deadline. Permits the performance of random audits. Requires issuance of guidelines but prohibits the addition of other guidelines beyond what is required under 26 U.S.C. § 25F. Directs the department to transmit guidelines to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication as a statement of policy in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin and post the guidelines on the department's website. Effective immediately.

Intro Date

07/24/2025

Actions

07/24/2025 H - Introduced

07/24/2025 H - Referred to House Education

01/23/2026 H - Discussed during public hearing House Republican Policy

HB2152 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in terms and courses of study, providing for delaying secondary school start times.

Sponsor

Rep. Jill N. Cooper (R)

Summary

(PN 2779) Amends the Public School Code, in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in terms and courses of study, providing for delaying secondary school start times. Includes costs associated with the planning, implementation or operation of a later school start time for which the committee shall provide grants to school entities. Permits the governing body of a school entity to adopt a policy to implement an instructional day start time at the secondary school level to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m., imposing duties on the governing body prior to adopting the new start time. Requires the Department of Education to provide guidance and support for school entities. Allows school entities that adopt a policy to use funding to alleviate costs associated with planning, implementation or operation of a later school start time. Defines “department,” “school entity” and “secondary school.” Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

01/21/2026

Actions

01/21/2026 H - Introduced

01/21/2026 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB2157 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in career and technical education, providing for governance of schools and institutes.

Sponsor

Rep. Gary W. Day (R)

Summary

(PN 2791) Amends the Public School Code, in career and technical education, providing for governance of schools and institutes. Asserts that no later than three years after the effective date of this subsection, the administration, governance, operation and management of a school or an institute under this subarticle shall be transferred to a governance board. Lists the governance board membership. Requires the department to establish policies and procedures for the submission and approval of members to a governance board, and lists applicability. Details the length of the term for board members. Considers a governance board as a local agency under the Right-to-Know Law and as an agency under 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings). Defines “department,” “employee organization” and “public official.” Effective immediately.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Actions

01/23/2026 H - Introduced

01/26/2026 H - Referred to House Education

HB2167 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, making editorial changes to delete references to "approved private school" for the purpose of adding references to "approved special education school."

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 2809) Amends the Public School Code, making editorial changes to delete references to "approved private school" for the purpose of adding references to "approved special education school." Effective immediately.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB2168 - An Act amending the act of December 19, 1990 (P.L.1372, No.212), known as the Early Intervention Services System Act, in Statewide system for provision of early intervention services, further providing for administration by Department of Education.

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 2810) Amends the Early Intervention Services System Act, in statewide system for provision of early intervention services, further providing for administration by Department of Education. Makes changes from "approved private schools" to "approved special education schools." Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB2169 - An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, making editorial changes to delete references to "approved private school" for the purpose of adding references to "approved special education school."

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 2811) Amends the Fiscal Code, making editorial changes to delete references to "approved private school" for the purpose of adding references to "approved special education school." Effective immediately.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HR407 - A Resolution recognizing the week of April 11 through 17, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

Summary

(PN 2816) Resolution recognizing the week of April 11 through 17, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Children and Youth

HR408 - A Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as "Financial Literacy Month" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

Summary

(PN 2817) Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as "Financial Literacy Month" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Finance

HR409 - A Resolution designating March 8, 2026, as "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's 345th birthday in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Robert F. Matzie (D)

Summary

(PN 2818) Resolution designating March 8, 2026, as "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's 345th birthday in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House State Government

01/28/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/03/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House State Government), Room 515, Irvis Office Building

SB375 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators.

Sponsor

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

Summary

(PN 934) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators (AEDs). Asserts the School Safety and Security Fund may use grants to provide AEDs and training. Provides additional details regarding the percentage of money appropriated to the fund in that fiscal year that must go toward AEDs and training. Requires any uncommitted moneys to be returned to the fund by September 30 of each succeeding fiscal year. Defines "automated external defibrillator." Requires each school entity and nonpublic school to make available instructions on cardiopulmonary resuscitation and AED usage to its employees and volunteers on school property at least once every two years, with additional details. Outlines requirements for AED locations and training. Provides continuing education requirements. Requires completion of training under this section to be recorded with specified details. Requires the Department of Education (PDE), in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH), to develop guidelines and materials to assist school entities and nonpublic schools in developing a cardiac emergency response plan with additional information. Provides additional definitions. Provides a procedure for a biennial bid for the cost of AEDs and other equipment and necessary supplies. Provides requirements of eligibility to obtain, purchase or loan AEDs under the program. Asserts that the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331.2 apply to school entities and nonpublic school employees who render care with an AED. Allows PDE to offer discounts or loans for AEDs as necessary. Asserts that AED purchases are considered an allowable use of Pennsylvania Accountability Grants under section 2599.2(b), as well as an innovative educational program under Article XX-B and an eligible school safety and security expense in section 1306-B(j). Allows PDE to accept donations under this section with specified requirements. Outlines content requirements for reports under this section. Allows PDE to adopt other guidelines as necessary to implement this section. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools that participate in interscholastic athletics to have an AED readily accessible. Prohibits this section from being construed as establishing any liability against a school entity or nonpublic school or its officers or employees. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools to ensure each AED is properly tested and maintained. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 912)

Intro Date

06/06/2025

Actions

06/24/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee Senate Appropriations

06/24/2025 S - Re-reported as committed Senate Appropriations

06/25/2025 H - Referred to House Education

09/29/2025 H - Placed on HVS

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

SB759 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in grounds and buildings, providing for certified point-of-use filter required; establishing the Safe Schools Drinking Water Fund; and imposing duties on the Department of Environmental Protection.

Sponsor

Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)

Summary

(PN 815) Amends the Public School Code, in grounds and buildings, providing for certified point-of-use filter required; establishing the Safe Schools Drinking Water Fund as a separate fund in the State Treasury; and imposing duties on the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Requires school entities to ensure that all drinking water outlets in each school building within the school entity are equipped with certified point-of-use filters. Directs school entities to remove and replace existing drinking water fountains without certified point-of-use filters with bottle-filling stations or drinking fountains equipped with certified point-of-use filters at the rate of at least one per one hundred students and staff. Requires school entities to set up a filter maintenance and oversight schedule for all certified point-of-use filters. Directs school entities to ensure that all new drinking water outlets purchased for installation at a school building do not leach more than one microgram of lead. Requires DEP to develop a grant program. Directs the department guidelines for the grant program. Asserts that school buildings built before 2014 and school buildings that include students in prekindergarten shall receive preference for grants. Provides required information for the grant application. Directs grant awardees to maintain and post required information on their publicly accessible website. Requires grant awardees to designate an employee to serve as the contact person for communications with the department and the public regarding the certified point-of-use filter installation. Directs grant awardees to publish maintenance schedules at each drinking water outlet. Requires grant awardees to post “not for drinking” at every non-drinking water outlet. Permits the department to award up to \$10 million in grants each fiscal year for three fiscal years. Stipulates that DEP, in consultation with the Department of Education (PDE) and the Department of Health (DOH), shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement this. Mandates DEP, PDE and DOH to share information, databases and analyses. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

05/22/2025

Actions

05/22/2025 S - Introduced

05/22/2025 S - Referred to Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation

01/23/2026 S - Discussed during public hearing Senate Democratic Policy

SR212 - A Resolution designating the week of January 25 through 31, 2026, as "Catholic Schools Week" in Pennsylvania and expressing congratulations and appreciation to Catholic elementary and secondary schools across this commonwealth.

Sponsor

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

Summary

(PN 1402) Resolution designating the week of January 25 through 31, 2026, as “Catholic Schools Week” in Pennsylvania and expressing congratulations and appreciation to Catholic elementary and secondary schools across this commonwealth.

Intro Date

01/23/2026

Actions

01/23/2026 S - Referred to Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

01/23/2026 S - Introduced

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

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

11/17/2025 H - First consideration

11/17/2025 H - Laid on the table

01/27/2026 H - Placed on HVS

01/28/2026 H - Removed from table

HB2084 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for Pennsylvania Promise Program; and establishing the Pennsylvania Promise Program Fund.

Sponsor

Rep. Jordan A. Harris (D)

Summary

(PN 2680) Amends the Public School Code, providing for Pennsylvania Promise Program; and establishing the Pennsylvania Promise Program Fund. Adds definitions. Directs the agency to administer the program and allows the agency to promulgate regulations as necessary. Establishes the Pennsylvania Promise Program Fund in the State Treasury, outlines the administration, contributions and investment and purpose of the plan. Provides for nonlapsing and the reallocation of funds. Provides for an application process for scholarships for tuition and fees, outlining eligibility and requirements. Outlines the review and approval process and the distribution requirements. Provides for limitations and renewals. Provides for scholarships for room and board, outlining application, eligibility distribution and limitation requirements. Provides for aid for adult reeducation, outlining eligibility and

application requirements. Increases the household income limits by a percentage equal to the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index and provides for the coordination of the programs. Establishes annual reporting requirements. Effective immediately.

Intro Date

12/05/2025

Actions

12/05/2025 H - Introduced

12/09/2025 H - Referred to House Education

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

HB2163 - An Act amending the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.216, No.76), known as The Dental Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the State Board of Dentistry, for penalties and for restricted faculty license.

Sponsor

Rep. Maureen E. Madden (D)

Summary

(PN 2800) Amends the Dental Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the State Board of Dentistry, for penalties and for restricted faculty license. Revises definitions. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for certifications in dentistry, dental hygienists and dental assistants. Changes language in the provision for penalties to assert that it is unlawful for any restricted faculty licensee to practice dentistry outside the facilities owned or operated by a dental school, an affiliated academic health care center or a dental school-owned faculty practice in this commonwealth at which the individual is licensed to teach. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for a certification for a restricted faculty license. Revises training requirements. Effective in 60 days.

Intro Date

01/28/2026

Actions

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Professional Licensure

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Professional Licensure), Room 515, Irvis Office Building

SB375 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators.

Sponsor

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

Summary

(PN 934) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators (AEDs). Asserts the School Safety and Security Fund may use grants to provide AEDs and training. Provides additional details regarding the percentage of money appropriated to the fund in that fiscal year that must go toward AEDs and training. Requires any uncommitted moneys to be returned to the fund by September 30 of each succeeding fiscal year. Defines "automated external defibrillator." Requires each school entity and nonpublic school to make available instructions on cardiopulmonary resuscitation and AED usage to its employees and volunteers on school property at least once every two years, with additional details. Outlines requirements for AED locations and training. Provides continuing education requirements. Requires completion of training under this section to be recorded with specified details. Requires the Department of Education (PDE), in consultation with the Department of Health (DOH), to develop guidelines and materials to assist school entities and nonpublic schools in developing a cardiac emergency response plan with additional information. Provides additional definitions. Provides a procedure for a biennial bid for the cost of AEDs and other equipment and necessary supplies. Provides requirements of eligibility to obtain, purchase or loan AEDs under the program. Asserts that the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331.2 apply to school entities and nonpublic school employees who render care with an AED. Allows PDE to offer discounts or loans for AEDs as necessary. Asserts that AED purchases are considered an allowable use of Pennsylvania Accountability Grants under section 2599.2(b), as well as an innovative educational program under Article XX-B and an eligible school safety and security expense in section 1306-B(j). Allows PDE to accept donations under this section with specified requirements. Outlines content requirements for reports under this section. Allows PDE to adopt other guidelines as necessary to implement this section. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools that participate in interscholastic athletics to have an AED readily accessible. Prohibits this section from being construed as establishing any liability against a school entity or nonpublic school or its officers or employees. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools to ensure each AED is properly tested and maintained. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 912)

Intro Date

06/06/2025

Actions

06/24/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee Senate Appropriations

06/24/2025 S - Re-reported as committed Senate Appropriations

06/25/2025 H - Referred to House Education

09/29/2025 H - Placed on HVS

01/29/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/04/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room B31, Main Capitol

Upcoming Events

MONDAY – 02/02/2026

9:00 AM, Penn State Faculty Alliance

Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda

9:30 AM, [House Education](#)

Informational Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

Informational meeting to discuss and hear testimony from stakeholders and experts on the Future Ready PA Index and Student Outcomes.

TUESDAY – 02/03/2026

TBA, [Governor Josh Shapiro's 2026-27 Budget Address](#)

Budget Address, House Chambers

WEDNESDAY – 02/04/2026

10:00 AM, [House Education](#)

Voting Meeting, Room B-31, Main Capitol

To consider: [HB 1648](#), [HB 1706](#), [HB 2084](#), [HB 2152](#), [HB 2167](#), [HB 2168](#), [HB 2169](#), [HR 395](#) and [SB 375](#)

MONDAY – 02/23/2026

9:30 AM, [Senate Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

Budget Hearing with the Department of Education (PDE).

1:00 PM, [Senate Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

Budget hearing with the Department of Education (PDE).

TUESDAY – 03/03/2026

9:30 AM, [Senate Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

Budget hearing with state universities in Millersville, East Stroudsburg, West Chester and Indiana.

1:00 PM, [House Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, House Chamber

Budget hearing with the Department of Education (PDE).

WEDNESDAY – 03/11/2026

10:00 AM, [House Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, House Chamber

Budget hearing with the state-related universities.

1:00 PM, [House Appropriations](#)

Budget Hearing, House Chamber

Budget hearing with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) and community colleges.

In the News

[01/23/2026 - Secretary of Education Visits Red Lion Area School District, Highlights 50 Percent Increase in CTE and STEM Funding During the Shapiro Administration](#)

[01/27/2026 - PDE: Pennsylvania Teacher Named Finalist for 2026 National Teacher of the Year](#)

[01/29/2026 - ICYMI: Governor Shapiro Calls on General Assembly to Send Bill to His Desk Limiting Cell Phone Use in Schools to Keep Students Focused on Learning](#)

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

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

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