

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## State Update

*Both chambers of the Pennsylvania General Assembly are currently in recess. The Senate is scheduled to return on Monday, March 16, 2026, and the House will reconvene on Monday, March 23, 2026.*

*Due to inclement weather, the Department of Education hearing originally scheduled for Monday, February 23 has been postponed to Thursday, March 5 at 9:30 a.m.*



### ***Western Pa. school districts tally expected savings from cyber charter tuition reform***

Three months after the state approved changes to the cyber charter tuition formula, administrators from Western Pennsylvania's K-12 public schools are beginning to tally the expected savings.

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

Source: *Trib Live*, March 3, 2026.

### ***Shapiro moves to protect Pennsylvanians using AI***

Delivering on promises he made in the budget address earlier this month, Gov. Josh Shapiro is launching a multi-agency AI Literacy Toolkit with guidance for kids, parents, teachers, and communities on how to safely use artificial intelligence.

The announcement strengthens Pennsylvania's position as a national leader in responsible AI use.

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

Source: *Times Leader*, **LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP**, March 1, 2026.

## ***Educators, policymakers discuss ways to bring more people into teaching***

A roundtable including lawmakers, local educational administrators and student teachers met [Wednesday] at the Fayette County Career & Technical Institute to discuss ways to address the teacher shortage crisis, teacher stipends, barriers for career and technical education teachers and ways to improve the CTE certification process.

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

**Source: *Observer-Reporter*, February 26, 2026.**

---

## ***Shapiro invests millions for free personal hygiene products in Pennsylvania schools***

Governor Josh Shapiro's administration announced that it has allocated \$3 million for the 2025-26 budget to continue providing free [personal hygiene] products for hundreds of Pennsylvania school districts.

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

**Source: *ABC27 WHTM*, February 25, 2026.**

---

## ***School Entity Duties Related to Evidence-Based Reading Instruction***

**Act 47 of 2025** amended the Public School Code of 1949 by amending **Article XV-N** and adding Sections 1503-N through 1511-N, establishing statewide requirements related to Structured Literacy professional development, evidence-based reading curriculum materials, universal screening, and reading intervention for students in grades K-3.

The purpose of this communication is to provide guidance to school entities, including school districts, charter schools, cyber charter schools, regional charter schools, career and technical centers, and intermediate units, regarding implementation requirements and timelines.

### **Structured Literacy Professional Development**

#### **Section 1503-N requires each school entity to:**

- Approve a professional development training program from the Professional Development Training Programs for Evidence-Based Reading Instruction list developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), in consultation with the Reading Leadership Council, by the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year.
- Ensure that each educator completes the approved training by the beginning of the 2028-2029 school year. Per Section 1501-N, an individual who is included within the definition of educator is responsible for providing or supervising reading instruction, intervention or coaching. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - elementary teacher
  - school reading specialist
  - reading interventionist
  - English as a second language teacher
  - special education teacher
  - literacy coach
  - principal
  - chief school administrator.
- Report, by July 31, 2027, and annually thereafter, the number of educators trained and the type of training in use through the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCP).

### **Evidence Based Reading Curriculum Materials**

#### **School entities are required to:**

- Complete the [mandatory survey](#) to report the K-3 reading curriculum materials used during the 2025-2026 school year. Submissions are due by **March 31, 2026**.
- Report, by July 31, 2027, and annually thereafter, the evidence-based reading instruction curriculum adopted by the school entity.
- Adopt an evidence-based reading curriculum for students in grades K-3 no later than the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year. An evidence-based reading curriculum material is a comprehensive program of literacy instruction that integrates Structured Literacy practices with High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Such curriculum materials must:
  - Align with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and the Science of Reading.
  - Include a logical scope and sequence for explicit, systematic, and cumulative instruction.
  - Incorporate phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, decoding, encoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and content knowledge development.

### **Universal Reading Screening and Parent Notification**

A universal reading screener is a brief assessment administered to all students in the early elementary grades to identify those at risk for reading difficulties and to guide further diagnostic assessment and intervention.

**No later than the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year, school entities must:**

- Screen all K-3 students three times per year, once at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, using a PDE-approved universal screener.
- Screen English learners, students with disabilities, and gifted students unless the assessment conflicts with their IEP or service plan.
- Identify students with reading deficiencies and follow these additional steps:
  - The student remains identified as having a reading deficiency until the student meets or exceeds benchmark expectations using at least three data points.
  - School entities must provide written or electronic notification to the parents of kindergarten students who exhibit a reading deficiency in the third screening at the end of the school year.
  - School entities must provide written or electronic notification to parents of students in grades 1–3 who exhibit a reading deficiency during the school year following the identification of the deficiency including periodic updates three times per year regarding the student's progress.

### **Reading Intervention Plans**

Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, school entities must develop a reading intervention plan for each K-3 student identified as having a reading deficiency. Intervention plans should align with statutory requirements and integrate into existing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) frameworks.

### **Additional Requirements**

**By the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year, each school entity must:**

- Designate an educator responsible for assisting each school with the implementation of evidence-based reading curriculum. Educator is defined as an individual who has completed approved professional development under section 1205.8 of the School Code and is responsible for providing or supervising reading instruction, intervention or coaching. This includes but is not limited to an elementary teacher, reading specialist, reading interventionist, English as a second language teacher, special education teacher, literacy coach, principal or chief school administrator.
- Report annually, beginning July 31, 2028, the number and percentage of K-3 students identified as having a potential reading deficiency at the beginning and end of the school year and the number of students excepted from the universal reading screening.

### **Implementation Timeline Overview**

- **March 31, 2026**
  - Mandatory K-3 curriculum materials survey due for 2025-2026 curriculum materials

- **July 31, 2027, and annually thereafter**
  - Annual reporting of K-3 reading curriculum materials, number of educators trained, and type of trainings through the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCPP)
- **By the beginning of the 2027-2028 School Year**
  - K-3 Evidence-based reading curriculum material use required
  - K-3 Universal reading screening begins
  - K-3 Reading Intervention plans required
  - K-3 Reading deficiency parental notifications required
  - School entity approved professional development training for educators begins
  - Identification of an educator responsible for assisting with curriculum material implementation
- **2028-2029 School Year**
  - Educators complete LEA's approved professional development by the beginning of the school year
  - Annual literacy reporting through FRCPP begins July 31, 2028

### **Additional Support**

PDE, in consultation with the Reading Leadership Council and in partnership with the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) and Intermediate Units, will continue to provide technical assistance and implementation support to school entities. *We encourage you to review the available guidance carefully and share it with the appropriate staff within your organization to support coordinated implementation efforts.*

Additional guidance related to **Act 47 of 2025** will be released in the near future, including a **Structured Literacy specific Frequently Asked Questions document**. If you have questions, please review [PDE's Structured Literacy webpage, Article XV-N](#), consult with your solicitor, or contact [RA-EDSTRUCTUREDRLIT@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EDSTRUCTUREDRLIT@pa.gov).

**Source:** Amy Lena, Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, PA Department of Education, February 23, 2026

## **BASIC BILL ACTIONS**

- **HB 2239:** - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in burglary and other criminal intrusion, further providing for the offense of unlawful use of unmanned aircraft.
- **Sponsor:** Rep. Brenda M. Pugh (R)
- **Action Taken:** 02/25/2026 - Referred to House Judiciary

- **HB 2240:** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in charter schools, further providing for contents of application.
- **Sponsor:** Rep. Marc S. Anderson (R)
- **Action Taken:** 02/25/2026 - Referred to House Education

- **HB 2247:** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in charter schools, further providing for contents of application.
- **Sponsor:** Rep. Paul Friel (D)
- **Action Taken:** 02/25/2026 - Referred to House Finance

- **HB 2250:** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in grounds and buildings,

further providing for referendum or public hearing required prior to construction or lease.

- **Sponsor:** Rep. Tim Brennan (D)
- **Action Taken:** 02/26/2026 - Referred to House Education

- 
- **HB 2253:** - An Act requiring school life support coaches in Pennsylvania high schools; and imposing duties on the Department of Education and school districts.
  - **Sponsor:** Rep. Manuel Guzman (D)
  - **Action Taken:** 02/26/2026 - Referred to House Education

---

**Click on the link below for the full Education Recap.**

## EDUCATION RECAP

[Click here](#) for more.

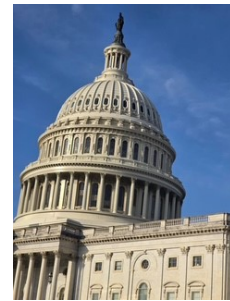
(A weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government.)

## Federal Update

### Q&A

#### **McMahon: Education Department shutdown is still the goal**

A year ago [today], U.S. Education Secretary Linda McMahon came into office, determined to put herself out of a job by leading the closure of the department she had just been sworn in to lead. And twelve months later, the elimination of the U.S. Education Department remains her goal, McMahon told K-12 Dive Monday afternoon.



[Click here](#) for full article.

**Source:** K-12 DIVE, March 3, 2026.

---

#### **Ed. Dept. Wants to Revamp Assistance Program It Calls 'Duplicative,' 'Confusing'**

The U.S. Department of Education is proposing to rework a decades-old program charged with helping states and school districts problem-solve and deploy new initiatives, calling the current structure “duplicative,” “confusing,” and “not responsive to state and local needs.”

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

**Source:** Education Week, March 2, 2026.

---

#### **Education Department loses appeal on mental health grant cancellation**

The [9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals](#) last week blocked the U.S. Department of Education’s push to cancel mental health funds for schools, securing another victory for [16 states that sued](#) the department in 2025 to reinstate the funding.

[Click here](#) for full article.  
Source: *K-12 DIVE*, March 2, 2026.

---

## ***House hearing stresses that AI teacher training is a must***

Teachers need **professional development on artificial intelligence** tools if they want to safely and effectively use the technology in their classrooms, legislators and witnesses agreed in a House subcommittee hearing.

[Click here](#) for full article.  
Source: *K-12 DIVE*, February 27, 2026.

---

## ***U.S. Department of Education releases vision for reshaping federal research after DOGE cuts***

A much-anticipated report on the future of federal education research makes a strong case for the value of the Institute of Education Sciences and calls for significant changes to make research more useful for educators and policymakers.

**The report released Friday by the U.S. Department of Education** praises IES for significantly improving the rigor of education research and contributing to a strong body of evidence about what works in schools. But it also says too much previous work by IES hasn't been put to practical use, has failed to address high-priority issues, or is redundant.

[Click here](#) for full article.  
Source: *CHALKBEAT*, February 27, 2026.

---

## **Pennsylvania Principals Association**

### ***Position Statement on State and Federal Education Issues***

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

**[CLICK HERE FOR POSITION STATEMENT.](#)**

**[FIND YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS](#)**

**[FIND YOUR FEDERAL LEGISLATORS](#)**



PA Principals Association | 122 Valley Road | Enola, PA 17025 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!