

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

State Update

The Senate returned to session on Monday, April 20. The House will return next week on Monday, April 27.

The House Education Committee is holding an informational meeting on AI in K-12 Education in Pittsburgh today.



PA State Assessment Provider Update

A Message from Amy Lena, Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, PA Department of Education

On April 9, Pearson was selected to provide PA state assessments after the expiration of DRC's current contract for up to five years, starting with the 2027-28 school year. Pearson was selected through a competitive bidding process in which interested companies submitted requests for proposals which were then scored according to Commonwealth procurement laws and policies. **Pearson will assume the partnering role currently performed by Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) and will supply test development, administration, scoring, and reporting services for the PSSAs, Keystone Exams, Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs) and Firefly benchmark assessments starting July 1, 2027.**

While any transition will naturally carry with it some need for adjustment, we expect this transition to have minimal impact on the field. Pearson was selected to administer PA's assessment program in a manner consistent with current requirements.

1. All of the major components of the system will remain available and be transitioned as seamlessly as possible: PSSAs, Keystone Exams, CDTs and Firefly benchmark assessments.
2. Nothing is expected to change regarding tested content standards or eligible content as a result of this transition.
3. Test designs for both Keystone Exams and PSSAs are expected to remain unchanged during this transition.

4. All products/services supplied through this contracted partnership will remain free to the field.

The essential elements of the assessment system will remain unchanged, and we anticipate only minor procedural changes to transition the testing platform from DRC's Insight system to Pearson's TestNav platform and to transition Reporting from Emetric to Pearson's subcontracted partner, Focal Point.

PDE is dedicated to ensuring that high-quality training materials are available in advance of the July 1, 2027, transition.

The 2026 and 2027 assessments will still be delivered by DRC and administered via DRC's Insight system. With that in mind, we strongly encourage educators to continue to acclimate students to Insight and prepare students for testing using that platform as PDE prepares resources to support the transition.

Source: Amy Lena, Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, PA Department of Education, April 20, 2026.

Pa. Senate Republicans — again — push forward transgender female athlete ban

Following in the footsteps of [more than two dozen other states](#), Republicans in the Pennsylvania Senate are again trying to push a bill that would ban transgender female athletes from playing for a team aligned with their gender. .

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: Pennsylvania Capital-Star, April 20, 2026.

Ciresi, Tomlinson introduce bill to require third parties to evaluate charter school students with special needs

Legislation to strengthen fairness, transparency and accountability in how students are evaluated for special education services in charter schools was introduced on Friday by state Reps. Joe Ciresi, D-Montgomery, and Kathleen C. Tomlinson, D-Bucks.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: Rep. Joseph Ciresi, April 17, 2026.

Pennsylvania Student Teachers Can Now Apply for \$10,000 Stipends

Starting [today], student teachers across the Commonwealth can now apply for a \$10,000 stipend in the 2026-27 school year through the [PA Student Teacher Support Program](#). Stipends are available on a first-come, first-served basis for future educators who enter a student teaching placement and commit to working in Pennsylvania as a teacher for three years. The program also provides up to \$2,500 to cooperating teachers who mentor and assist student teachers.

[Click here](#) to view the full release.

Source: PA Department of Education Newsroom, Press Release, April 16, 2026.

Pennsylvania House passes \$53.3 billion budget proposal

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed its budget proposal on Wednesday, and while it is a budget, it likely won't be the budget.

The **[\\$53.3 billion budget plan](#)** is largely a wish list for Democratic lawmakers and Gov. Josh Shapiro (D), though it received support from three House Republicans, passing by a 107-94 vote in the Democratic-controlled House. It's a \$2.7 billion increase from last year, making it the most expensive in state history.

[Click here](#) to view the full article.

Source: ABC27 WHTM, April 15, 2026.

Invitation to Submit Public Comments on Elementary Recess - Deadline is 4.28.26

In his budget address to the General Assembly, Governor Shapiro called on the Pennsylvania State Board of Education to develop recommendations for schools to guarantee recess for students. The State Board of Education has appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Recess to review evidence-based best practices related to recess and to formulate draft recommendations for consideration by the Board. **The Ad Hoc Committee held its first public meeting on April 7, 2026, and the Committee will meet again on May 1, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Recess believes educational policy is best made in an open, public process where all perspectives are considered. As such, the Committee invites interested stakeholders to submit written comments on recess to further inform its deliberations on formulating draft recommendations. **Written comments must be submitted to the State Board of Education office no later than April 28, 2026.**

Comments may be submitted electronically to **ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov** or may be sent in hard copy to: **State Board of Education, 607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120**. Individuals with disabilities are invited to submit public comments in alternative formats such as Braille or taped comments and by means of the telephone. Individuals with disabilities should contact **Stephanie Jones, Administrative Assistant to the Board**, at **ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov** or **(717) 787-3787** to discuss how the Board may best accommodate their needs.

Updated Immigration Guidance from the PA Department of Education

Below is an important message from PA Secretary of Education, Dr. Carrie Rowe, regarding the updated immigration guidance from the PA Department of Education.

In light of increased immigration enforcement activities nationwide, the Pennsylvania Department of Education is issuing this **[updated non-regulatory guidance](#)** to local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide general information about federal and state law relating to immigration status and potential immigration enforcement activities at or near schools and other educational facilities. **This guidance replaces the guidance issued on April 11, 2025.**

Every child of school age who is a resident of a Pennsylvania school district is entitled to a public school education. An essential part of this right is a safe and welcoming learning environment in which all children in the Commonwealth have equal access to a basic public elementary and secondary education. Therefore, this updated guidance shares information on the fundamental principals of a public

education, the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), judicial versus administrative warrants and subpoenas, interacting with Immigration Enforcement Agents, considerations for LEAs in formulating policies and additional resources.

The Department encourages LEAs to work with their solicitors to establish a written policy and standard operating procedures for what to do if immigration enforcement agents arrive on LEA property or seek information about students, family members, employees or others for immigration enforcement reasons.

BASIC BILL ACTIONS

- **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)**
- **Action Taken: 04/15/2026 - Third consideration and final passage**

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- **HB2176** - *An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, providing for social media literacy education.*
 - **Sponsor: Rep. Jim Prokopiak (D)**
 - **Action Taken: 04/15/2026 - Re-committed to House Appropriations**

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- **HB2375** - *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 definitions, for charter school requirements, for establishment of charter school, for causes for nonrenewal or termination, for powers and duties of department, for cyber charter school requirements and prohibitions and for establishment of cyber charter school; and, in the State Board of Education, further providing for powers and duties of the board.*
 - **Sponsor: Rep. Nikki Rivera (D)**
 - **Action Taken: 04/14/2026 - Referred to House Education**

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- **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)**
 - **Action Taken: 04/15/2026 - Placed on HVS**

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- **HR408** - *A Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as "Financial Literacy Month" in Pennsylvania.*
 - **Sponsor: Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)**
 - **Action Taken: 04/15/2026 - Adopted**

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- **SB1280** - *An Act directing the Department of Education to establish a career and technical education program of study in shipbuilding and maritime trades; providing for grants and coordination with apprenticeship programs; and imposing powers and duties on the Department of Education.*
 - **Sponsor: Sen. Lisa M. Boscola (D)**
 - **Action Taken: 04/14/2026 - Referred to Senate Education**

Click on the link below for the full Education Recap.

EDUCATION RECAP

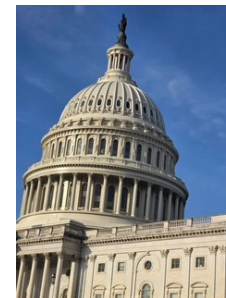
[Click here](#) for more.

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

Federal Update

New Federal Grants Push School Choice and Teacher Pipeline

Federal agencies are launching new education grant competitions aimed at expanding charter schools and strengthening teacher development programs nationwide.



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

Source: *MyChesCo*, April 20, 2026.

Education Department dissolving federal office serving English learners

The Education Department plans to dissolve the office that supports the country's 5 million English learners. The move comes as the Trump administration has called to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education and to stop funding English language acquisition programs in the federal budget.

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

Source: *CHALKBEAT*, April 15, 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**](#)



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