

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## State Update

*The House and Senate returned to session on Monday, May 4.*

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### ***PA Principals Association Provides Testimony for House Education Committee Informational Meeting on Education Workforce***

The Pennsylvania House Education Committee held an informational meeting to discuss and hear testimony regarding the education workforce today at 9:30 AM. ***Dr. Eric Eshbach, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Principals Association, provided written testimony.***

***[Click here](#)*** for the meeting agenda and provided testimony (PDF). ***[Click here](#)*** to watch live (*click on Education Committee*). (***[Livestream on YouTube](#)***)

***Source: PA House of Representatives, House Education Committee, News Release, May 5, 2026.***

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### ***School phone bans boost wellness but not test scores, study says, as Pa. mulls statewide policy***

As Pennsylvania lawmakers continue to try to forge a deal on a statewide school cell phone policy, a wide-ranging study has found that phone bans improve students' well-being, but not necessarily their test scores.

***[Click here](#)*** for full article.  
***Source: PennLive, May 5, 2026.***

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### ***Legislation to Study Alternatives to Keystone Exams Passes House***

The House [today] approved legislation co-primed by Rep. Jason Ortity (R-Washington/Allegheny) that would require a study to determine if it is feasible to allow the ACT, SAT or Smarter Balanced assessments to be used in place of Keystone Exams.

[Click here](#) for full article.

**Source:** *House Republican Caucus Newsroom, Press Release, May 4, 2026.*

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## ***Educators rally for student teacher stipends***

As the school year will soon wrap up, “homework” to get more teachers in classrooms continues.

One effort is with the student teacher stipend program. Advocates rallied in support of them at the State Capitol on [Monday].

[Click here](#) for full article.

**Source:** *ABC27 WHTM, May 4, 2026.*

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## ***PA House passes bill allowing PIAA to split public, private playoffs***

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Scott Conklin (D-Centre) amends the Public School Code of 1949 to add a section on playoffs and championships to include: “The association may establish separate playoffs and championships for athletics for boundary schools and nonboundary schools.”

[Click here](#) for full article.

**Source:** *PennLive, April 29, 2026.*

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## ***PA Cellphone Ban Legislation Update***

- ***Pennsylvania closer to banning cellphones in school classrooms***
- Pennsylvania lawmakers moved one step closer to banning cellphones during school hours. The bell-to-bell classroom cellphone ban passed the Pa. House Education Committee Tuesday and now goes before the entire House.
- [Click here](#) for full article.
- **Source:** *ABC6 Action News, April 28, 2026.*
- ***State House Republicans on education panel resist cellphone ban for Pa. schools***
- Splitting from their colleagues in the state Senate, Republicans on the House Education Committee largely voted against two bills that would restrict cellphone use for public and private school students in the commonwealth.
- [Click here](#) for full article.
- **Source:** *Pennsylvania Capital-Star, April 28, 2026.*

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## ***Pa. House passes bill to set social media literacy standards for Pennsylvania students***

House lawmakers in Pennsylvania on Monday passed legislation aimed at creating statewide standards for social media literacy, seeking to teach

students about both the benefits and risks of using digital platforms and smartphones.

[Click here](#) for full article.

Source: *WGALTV8*, April 27, 2026.

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## **BASIC BILL ACTIONS**

- **HB41** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in interscholastic athletics accountability, providing for playoffs and championships.
- **Sponsor: Rep. Scott Conklin (D)**
- **Action Taken: 04/29/2026 - Third consideration and final passage**

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- **HB158** - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harms suffered by designation.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Gleim (R)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/27/2026 - Re-referred to House Health**

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- **HB455** - An Act providing for grants to organizations that host or offer education, workforce training or skills development to young adults; establishing the Building a Better Future Grant Program; imposing duties on the Department of Labor and Industry; and making an appropriation.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026 - Press Conference Held - YouthBuild Coalition Advocacy Day**

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- **HB830** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in student supports, further providing for policy relating to bullying.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026 - Third consideration and final passage**

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- **HB1077** - 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, establishing the Commission on Children's Vision and providing for duties of Commission on Children's Vision.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026 - Re-committed to House Appropriations**

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- **HB1752** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in preliminary provisions, providing for Keystone Exam alternative feasibility study.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Gina H. Curry (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026 - Re-committed to House Appropriations**
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- **HB1045** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for seizure recognition and related first aid training.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Carol Kazeem (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026 - Laid on the table**
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- **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: 04/17/2026 - Referred to Senate Education**
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- **HB1814** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, providing for possession and use of cell phones.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Rep. Mandy Steele (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026 - Laid on the table**
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- **HB1877** - 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 Pennsylvania Seal of Biliteracy.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Joseph D'Orsie (R)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026 - Laid on the table**
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- **HB2117** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for definitions, for possession and use of asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors, for school access to emergency epinephrine and for administration of epinephrine auto-injectors by school bus drivers and school crossing guards.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026 - Laid on the table**
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- **HB2148** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, requiring certain school entities to adopt policies and procedures relating to access to school property by individuals or certain enforcement officials; and providing for training, reporting to governing bodies of school entities and for department guidelines.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Joseph C. Hohenstein (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/27/2026 - Press Conference Held - Welcoming Schools Ensuring PA Schools are Safe Places for All Students**
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- **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)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026 H - Discussed during public hearing House Intergovernmental Affairs and Operations**
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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: 04/27/2026** - Third consideration and final passage
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- **HB2218** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for comprehensive school counseling services.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Mandy Steele (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026** - Third consideration and final passage
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- **HB2307** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in reimbursements by Commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for extraordinary special education program expenses.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Emily Kinkead (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026** - Laid on the table
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- **HB2314** - An Act providing for a public education campaign focused on educating the public about artificial intelligence and improving AI consumer literacy.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Joe Ciresi (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/29/2026** - Laid on the table
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- **HB2425** - 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 Career and Technical Education Curriculum Modernization Grant Program.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Jacklyn Rusnock (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026** - Laid on the table
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- **HB2436** - 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, further providing for State certificate fee reduction.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Ana Tiburcio (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/28/2026** - Laid on the table
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- **HB2460** - 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 hunting and trapping education; and imposing duties on the Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
  - **Sponsor: Rep. Anita Astorino Kulik (D)**
  - **Action Taken: 04/30/2026** - Meeting Scheduled - 05/06/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Game and Fisheries), Room 515, Irvis Office Building
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- **HB2474** - An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in child protective services, further providing for exclusions from child abuse and for persons required to report suspected child abuse.
  - **Sponsor:** Rep. Nikki Rivera (D)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/29/2026 - Meeting Scheduled - 05/04/2026, 11:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol
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- **HR368** - A Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a comprehensive study of changes in commercial property values in this Commonwealth, assess the fiscal impact on local governments and school districts and make recommendations.
  - **Sponsor:** Rep. Joe Webster (D)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/29/2026 - Reported as amended House Local Government
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- **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)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/27/2026 - Third consideration and final passage
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- **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)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/29/2026 - Meeting Scheduled - 05/08/2026, 10:00 AM - Public Hearing (Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation), Upper St. Clair Library, 1820 Laughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania
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- **SB1014** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in student supports, providing for bell-to-bell phone-free policy.
  - **Sponsor:** Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/28/2026 - Laid on the table
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- **SB1125** - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for welcoming schools.
  - **Sponsor:** Sen. Katie J. Muth (D)
  - **Action Taken:** 04/27/2026 - Press Conference Held - Welcoming Schools Ensuring PA Schools are Safe Places for All Students
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[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**

### **Feds proceed with \$5.6M special education spending study**

A long anticipated [national study of special education spending](#) by the U.S. Department of Education is taking its first step by asking for clearance from the White House's Office of Management and Budget to begin its work, according to a notice planned for publication in the Federal Register on [Monday].



[Click here](#) for the full press release.  
**Source: K-12 DIVE, May 4, 2026.**

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### **U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Labor Announce Additional Grant Competition Under Elementary and Secondary Education Partnership**

[Today], the U.S. Departments of Education (ED) and Labor (DOL) issued the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 competition for the Competitive Grants for State Assessments (CGSA) Program. This competition represents a further step in the Trump Administration's efforts to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and systems to promote student academic achievement.

[Click here](#) for the full press release.  
**Source: U.S. Department of Education, Newsroom, Press Release, May 1, 2026.**

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### **Education is not a 'professional degree,' Education Department says**

The U.S. Department of Education on [Thursday] [released final regulations](#) excluding graduate education programs from its definition of "professional degrees," making them ineligible for higher federal student loan caps. Consequently, borrowing for these programs will be capped at \$100,000.

[Click here](#) for the full article.  
**Source: K-12 DIVE, April 30, 2026.**

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### **Senate Committee Presses Linda McMahon on Cuts to College Prep, Rural Schools**

It was only three months ago that Congress [rejected](#) the Trump administration's last attempt to slash education spending and roll an array of programs into a block grant.

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

Source: *The 74*, April 29, 2026.

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## ***McMahon: Look to states for new education innovations***

Eliminating the U.S. Department of Education will not come at the expense of essential federal programs, according to Education Secretary Linda McMahon. Lawmakers think otherwise.

McMahon faced intense scrutiny as she testified before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee on the Trump administration's **FY27 budget request**, which includes \$75.7 billion in discretionary authority for the Education Department.

[Click here](#) for the full press release.

Source: *District Administration*, April 28, 2026.

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## ***HHS working to restore LGBTQ+ youth suicide prevention hotline***

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is working to restart a suicide prevention hotline specialized for LGBTQ+ youth less than a year after President Donald Trump's administration discontinued it.

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

Source: *K-12 DIVE*, April 28, 2026.

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## **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:

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