



**DELAWARE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT**  
**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**  
**January 2, 2025**

**Session Information**

As of 3:25 p.m. on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

As of 4:24 p.m. on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, the Senate stands recessed until Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

**Session Days**

Month	House	Senate
January	7, 27, 28, 29	7, 27, 28, 29
February	3, 4, 5	3, 4, 5
March	17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26	24, 25, 26, 31
April	7, 8, 9, 22, 23, 24	1, 2
May	5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14	5, 6, 7, 12, 13
June	2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30	2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
July		
August		
September	22 (NV), 23 (NV), 24 (NV), 29, 30	
October	1, 6, 7, 8, 27, 28, 29	
November	17, 18, 19	
December	8 (NV), 9 (NV), 10 (NV), 15, 16, 17	

**Upcoming Meetings, Hearings, and Press Conferences**

- **TUESDAY – 01/28/2025**  
 10:00 a.m., Families and Educators Come Together in Support of National School Choice Week  
*Press Conference*
  
- **TUESDAY – 02/04/2025**  
 Gov. Josh Shapiro’s fiscal year 2025-2026 state budget address.
  
- **MONDAY – 02/24/2025**  
 10:00 a.m., House Appropriations  
*Budget Hearing, House Floor*  
 Budget hearing with the Department of Education (PDE)
  
- 1:00 p.m., House Appropriations  
*Budget Hearing, House Floor*

*Submitted by Rebecca Smith, Coordinator of Innovation, Partnerships, and Special Projects. Sources: PLS, PA General Assembly, Capitolwire, PASA, PSBA)*

Budget hearing with the Department of Education (PDE)

- **THURSDAY – 03/06/2025**

1:00 p.m., House Appropriations

*Budget Hearing, House Floor*

Budget hearing with the Governor’s Office of the Budget/Executive Offices

## News and Updates

- **Eyes on PA education reform as 2025 nears.** Students, parents, and teachers are anxiously watching and waiting to see how the state’s billion-dollar education funding increase and new adequacy formula will impact struggling school districts, even as property taxes continue to rise. In the meantime, success measures reflect the depth of learning loss since the beginning of the pandemic, and administrators search for talent amidst a severe labor shortage. Throughout these fundamental challenges, Pennsylvania schools, both K-12 and post-secondary, have repeatedly found themselves at the center of the political clashes pulling at the nation in 2024.  
*Read the rest of the story: “[Eyes on PA education reform as 2025 nears](#)” (from *Bedford Gazette*, 12/28/2024)*
- **New Pa. commission quietly delves into ‘transforming’ state approach to education.** Quietly, after a couple of hiccups and despite the imminent departure of its first leader, a broad-based and bipartisan effort to create a new proposed approach to education in Pennsylvania is underway. Acting under the umbrella name Pennsylvania Commission on Education and Economic Competitiveness – and brought to life by a law signed in mid-2022 by then-Gov. Tom Wolf – dozens of power players in various segments of society are meeting regularly. The plan, as spelled out on the commission’s Republican-controlled website, is to “create a shared long-term vision to redesign Pennsylvania’s education system.”  
*Read the rest of the story: “[New Pa. commission quietly delves into ‘transforming’ state approach to education](#)” (from *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 12/23/2024)*
- **PA’s teacher of the year is a Delaware County high school educator. PA interim acting Education Secretary Fitterer, PSEA head Chapin cited.** Pennsylvania’s teacher of the year is a Haverford High educator, Leon Smith, who has worked for 22 years in the Delaware County district, teaches 9<sup>th</sup> grade Honors and Advanced Placement Social Studies, as well as 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade African American Studies. He also serves as the high school’s African American cultural enrichment adviser and coaches the freshman boys’ basketball team.  
*Read the rest of the story: “[PA’s teacher of the year is a Delaware County high school educator](#).” (from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 12/11/2024)*

## Regulatory Actions

- **State Board of Education, Reg No. 6-354: Academic Standards and Assessment**  
The Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) met on December 5, 2024 and announced the State Board of Education, Reg No. 6-354 was deemed approved. The final-form regulation makes both substantive and clarifying revisions to Chapter 4. Substantively, the rulemaking updates the Commonwealth’s current *Academic Standards for Career Education and Work, Academic Standards for Economics, and Academic Standards for Family and Consumer*

*Submitted by Rebecca Smith, Coordinator of Innovation, Partnerships, and Special Projects. Sources: PLS, PA General Assembly, Capitolwire, PASA, PSBA)*

*and Sciences.* The rulemaking also establishes standalone *Academic Standards for Personal Finance*. The proposed new standards and updates would take effect on July 1, 2026. The final-form amendments to Chapter 4 also would shift the administration of the state’s elementary-level science assessment from grade 4 to grade 5 and would require school entities to post various strategic plans online for public transparency.

*12/05/2024 – Deemed approved*

### Legislative Actions

- **H.R. 6829 – HEARTS Act of 2024, Rep. Pallone (D-NJ-6), Now Public Law No: 118-176**

This bill establishes a series of programs and requirements relating to cardiomyopathy. (Cardiomyopathy refers to a collection of diverse conditions of the heart muscle that can affect the ability of the heart to pump blood.) Specifically, the Department of Health and Human Services must disseminate information about cardiomyopathy and the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to certain school professionals, families, and others, and it must develop specified risk assessment tools for cardiomyopathy. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention must report on certain research and surveillance activities, and the National Institutes of Health must report on its research relating to cardiomyopathy. This bill also establishes a grant program to provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training and AEDs in public schools.

*Passed Senate without amendment by Unanimous Consent 12/10/2024. Signed by President 12/23/2024, became Public Law No: 118-176.*

### New Legislation

None

### Co-Sponsorship Memoranda

- **Incentivizing Inactive Educators to Return to Teaching, Rep. Lisa A. Borowski (D)**

Allows certified, inactive educators the option of earning college credits to return to service at a free or reduced cost.

*12/13/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Act 48 Teacher Continuing Education Extension, Rep. Robert E. Merski (D)**

Two bills will be introduced granting Act 48 Teacher Continuing Education extensions. The first provides all teachers with a one-year extension to complete their Act 48 requirement. The second aims to encourage those who have left teaching to reenter the profession by providing them with a new five-year window to complete their required Act 48 continuing education credits.

*12/13/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Increasing Access to PreK for PA Kids, Rep. Tarik Khan (D)**

Requires schools to provide Pre-K for all eligible children.

*12/13/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Free-Play Recess, Rep. Tim Briggs (D)**

Requires elementary schools in the commonwealth to provide a minimum of 30 minutes per day for this recess or unstructured recreational play (“free-play recess”).

*Submitted by Rebecca Smith, Coordinator of Innovation, Partnerships, and Special Projects. Sources: PLS, PA General Assembly, Capitolwire, PASA, PSBA)*

*12/16/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Mental Health Awareness – Students and Coaches, Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D)**

To help provide students and coaches with mental health resources and training by requiring: (1) each school entity to notify athletic staff, extracurricular advisors, students, and their parents/guardians of mental health services available within the school entity or within the community in which the school entity is located twice each school year; (2) a school entity's student assistance program be notified if a student's participation in a school-sponsored athletic or extracurricular activity is interrupted so that mental health services could be made available to the student; (3) the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association to review its existing coaching education requirements and revise the required educational courses for the training of coaches to include student mental health awareness.

*12/17/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Media Literacy, Rep. Tim Briggs (D)**

HB 473 of last session, this legislation would require the Pennsylvania Department of Education to establish a media literacy curriculum for Pennsylvania students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

*12/19/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **School Library Restoration Pilot Program, Rep. Ismail Smith-Wide-El (D)**

Establishes a five-year School Library Pilot Program to ensure Title 1 and underserved schools across the Commonwealth have access to libraries and certified librarians. This pilot project would also measure student outcomes of the impact of these libraries in schools.

*12/19/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **School Bus Video Monitoring, Rep. Jose Giral (D)**

Requires all school buses to be equipped with a video monitoring system that includes an internal camera positioned so that every seat is visible. In addition, requires that school buses be equipped with either an external camera or an internal camera positioned outward so that the road ahead can be seen.

*12/20/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Charter Enrollment Cap, Rep. Carol Kazeem (D)**

Requires that every brick-and-mortar and regional charter school, along with the school district(s) in which they are chartered, to establish an enrollment cap specified in the charter approved by the school board of directors.

*12/20/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- **Subjecting Cyber Charter Schools to State Audits, Rep. Tarah Probst (D)**

Subjects all cyber charter schools, cyber management companies, and other entities that operate cyber charter schools to audits by the Pennsylvania Auditor General.

*12/23/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

- Increasing the Signature Requirements for School Board Candidates, Rep. Marci Mustello (R)**  
Increases the number of signatures needed for a candidate to file to run for school board director to 100. Currently, the Pennsylvania Election Code of 1937 requires school board director candidates to collect 10 signatures.  
*12/30/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*
- Allowing Intermediate Units to Own Facilities for Instructional Use, Rep. Joe Ciresi (D) and Rep. Kristin Marcell (R)**  
While intermediate units are authorized to own facilities themselves, this is limited to only office space and warehouse facilities. Many IUs operate classrooms and other instructional spaces as providers of important special education, pre-school programs, and other educational services. This legislation removes this limitation on intermediate units owning facilities, allowing them to own instructional space and use facilities they already have for instructional purposes. This legislation passed in the House last session with broad bi-partisan support.  
*12/30/2024 – Cosponsor memo filed*

### National/Federal News and Updates

- Championed by Damar Hamlin, HEARTS Act to provide resources for CPR and AEDs in schools.** About 23,000 kids and teens experience a cardiac arrest every year in the U.S. If that cardiac arrest takes place in a school with an automated external defibrillator, or AED, on site, those kids have a 70% chance of survival – more than seven times the overall survival rate. A new federal bill called the HEARTS Act will establish a grant program to make it easier for schools to obtain AEDs and conduct training on AEDs and in CPR. It would also provide assistance for schools to develop cardiac response emergency plans. [...] About 40% of cardiac arrests in school-age children occur during athletic competitions or practices. While medical advocates are pleased with the progress of passing the HEARTS Act on the federal level, they are hoping for reforms at the state level as well. The Smart Heart Sports Coalition, a group stated by the NFL following Damar Hamlin’s cardiac arrest, advocates for three policies at the state level: AEDs at or within minutes of high school athletic venues, an updated and active athletic Emergency Action Plan specific to each athletic venue, and education in CPR, including AED use, for coaches and other key personnel. Pennsylvania is one of only five states to have adopted zero of the three policies.  
*Read the rest of the story: “[Championed by Damar Hamlin, HEARTS Act to provide resources for CPR and AEDs in schools](#)” (from *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 12/26/2024)*
- 3 Ways Trump Can Weaken the Education Department Without Eliminating It.** President Donald Trump’s proposal to axe the U.S. Department of Education appears unlikely to find sufficient support to clear procedural hurdles in an incoming Congress under Republican control. But the steps Trump – and his first education secretary, Betsy DeVos – took to diminish the agency during the president’s first term had a real impact on states and districts. Experts expect Trump and his incoming education secretary, former wrestling executive Linda McMahon, to make similar moves this time around – and perhaps go even further.  
*Read the rest of the story: “[3 Ways Trump Can Weaken the Education Department Without Eliminating It](#)” (from *Education Week*, 12/13/2024)*