

DELAWARE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

November 25, 2025

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News and Updates

[SEARCH: See how much money your Pa. school district will receive to close adequacy, tax burden gaps](#) by Kate Huangpu and Katie Meyer of *Spotlight PA*

Pennsylvania’s 500 school districts will each receive a slice of \$565 million that lawmakers put in this year’s budget to aid schools with large “adequacy” gaps and high tax burdens. The legislature first created these supplements in the 2024 budget in response to a Commonwealth Court ruling that found Pennsylvania’s public school funding system to be unconstitutionally inequitable. However, unlike the 2024 payments, all school districts will be guaranteed at least \$50,000 from this pot of money. (Search the full list [here](#).)

[The Federal Government Shutdown is Over. What Comes Next for Schools?](#) By Mark Lieberman at *EdWeek*

The longest federal government shutdown in American history came to an end earlier this week—but education will be feeling its effects for months and years to come. K-12 schools, which derive most of their funding from state and local revenue sources, were largely able to carry on as usual during the shutdown. But the congressional standoff did disrupt some education funding, and could lead to further disruption because of work that didn’t happen during the lapse in funding.

Submitted by Rebecca Smith, Coordinator of Innovation, Partnerships, and Special Projects. Sources: PA General Assembly, Capitolwire, P1050

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[Trump administration launches plan to dismantle Education Department](#) by Juan Perez Jr. of *Politico*

The Trump administration is implementing its widely telegraphed plan to shutter the Education Department by transferring critical responsibilities to other federal agencies. Six department offices will be affected by plans to move operations to four separate agencies, according to a department official and two people familiar with the discussions who were granted anonymity to discuss the details.

[What the Department of Education's Professional Degree Proposal Really Means for Employers](#) by Suzanne Lucas of *Inc.*

There is a panic spreading across social media about the reclassification of many graduate degrees as non-professional, and how that could affect pay scales, as well as the amount people can borrow to pay for those degrees. If you're an employer, the two questions you actually need answered are: "Do I have to reclassify anyone?" (no), and "Will this make it harder or more expensive to hire in certain professions?" Probably. [...] The [affected] degrees are all graduate degrees in the following areas:

- Nursing
- Physician assistants
- Physical therapists
- Audiologists
- Architects
- Accountants
- Educators
- Social workers

Federal Updates

Federal Government Shutdown Over

The federal government shutdown ended after 43 days with an agreement to fund the federal government through January 2026. Federal education funding for the 2026-27 school year remains to be determined as lawmakers continue to negotiate a longer-term budget.

U.S. Department of Education Changes

On November 18, 2025, the Trump Administration announced that a majority of the U.S. Department of Education's funding and oversight for K-12 schools will be administered by the U.S. Department of Labor under an interagency agreement the two agencies have signed.

The Elementary and Secondary Education programs affected include:

- Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies
- Title I, Part B: Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged – State Assessment Grants
- Title I, Part C: Education of Migratory Children
- Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
- Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants
- Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition State Grants
- Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE)
- Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Title V: Small, Rural School Achievement and Rural and Low-Income School Programs
- Impact Aid

- Education for Homeless Children and Youths

The agreement does not yet include transferring federal authority over special education. Civil rights work was also not affected by this announcement. Officials did not rule out future efforts to move these operations.

The agreement is dated September 30, the day before the federal government shutdown began.

[Department of Education and Department of Labor Fact Sheet](#)

State Updates

Session Information

Both the House and Senate were recalled into session days on November 11th and 12th for the final passage of the state budget.

The House stands adjourned until December 15, 2025, unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

The Senate stands recessed until December 8, 2025, unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

Session Days

**Additional days added (in red)*

Month	House	Senate
November	11 (NV), 12, 17, 18, 19	11, 12, 17, 18, 19
December	15 (NV), 16, 17	8, 9, 10

State Budget and School Code Bill

Pennsylvania has a budget! The education budget includes:

- \$565 million increase in adequacy and tax equity payments
- \$105 million, or 1.3% increase, for basic education funding
- \$40 million, or 2.7% increase, for special education funding
- \$28.5 million, or a 6.7% increase, for early intervention
- \$125 million for school facilities, with no less than \$25 million set aside for Solar for Schools
- \$100 million for school safety and mental health grants
- \$9.5 million more for Pre-K Counts, which will be used to increase the per-student reimbursement rate for full-time students from \$10,500 to \$10,748, or 2.36%
- \$5 million, or a 7.1% increase, for the public library subsidy
- \$50 million increase for the EITC program
- An estimated savings to school districts of \$178 million, or 14.6%, in cyber charter discounts.

Along with the budget, the state has approved the School Code bill that directs the implementation of the state education budget and sets related policies. This year's school code bill has several important changes:

- **Evidence-Based Reading Instruction, Screening, and Intervention**

- New Statewide Literacy Framework
 - By March 31, 2026, school entities must report the reading curricula in use in 2025-2026.
 - Beginning July 31, 2027 (and annually), districts must report adopted evidence-based curricula and the number of educators who have completed the required PD.
 - By 2027-2028, every school entity must adopt an evidence-based reading instruction curriculum.
 - By 2028-2029, districts must approve a PDE-vetted PD program aligned to the new reading requirements and ensure all relevant educators complete this training.
- Universal Screening K-3
 - Beginning in 2027-2028, school entities must screen all K-3 students three times per year (beginning, mid-year, and end-of-year) using a PDE-approved universal reading screener.
 - Students with disabilities, English learners, and gifted students are included unless screening conflicts with their IEP/504/GIEP or other legally required plans.
 - A K-3 student is identified as having a reading deficiency if the screener flags them as at-risk for reading failure; they keep that designation until they meet a threshold based on at least three data points (screener results, teacher judgement, progress-monitoring, diagnostic, benchmark, or other assessments).
 - Schools must notify parents:
 - Of kindergarten students who show a deficiency in the third (end-of-year) screening, and
 - Students in grades 1-3 who are identified with a deficiency, with updates at least three times per year on the child's progress.
- Reading Intervention Plans
 - Districts must provide a reading intervention plan to every K-3 student with a reading deficiency, with the goal that they read on grade level by the end of grade 3. Plans must include additional reading interventions beyond regular classroom instruction and must be grounded in evidence-based curriculum.
 - PDE may run a grant program to support implementation.
 - Beginning in 2028, school entities must report annual K-3 reading deficiency data; PDE must publish an annual public report starting November 30, 2028, and monitor district compliance and progress.
- **Teacher Preparation, Certification, and Grade Spans**
 - New instruction certificate grade spans:
 - Primary: PreK-Grade 6 (ages 3-11)
 - Secondary: Grades 7-12 (ages 11-21)
 - Specialized areas: Pre-K-Grade12 (ages 3-21)
 - Existing certificates under current regulation will remain valid.
 - Grade-span flexibility for existing early childhood & secondary teachers:
 - Educators with early childhood certificates under current code may teach 5th and 6th grade; secondary certified teachers may teach 6th grade in their subject area.
 - The Secretary of Education may issue guidelines as necessary to implement this.
 - Other certification changes:
 - Caps certification fees assessed by PDE to \$50.

- Clarifies and formally codifies the experience-based Career and Technical Education (CTE) certification pathway by explicitly recognizing CTE certificates as their own category in the School Code, preserving the work-experience route to certification (rather than through a bachelor’s degree).
- **School Safety, Safe2Say, and Student Supports**
 - School Safety & Security / Safe2Say
 - Updates threat assessment and school safety procedures to ensure they reflect best practices and explicitly reference threats reported through the Safe2Say Something program, including coordinated response across partners.
 - Adjusts School Safety and Security provisions and connects them to the 2025-2026 safety and security mental health grant structure set in the budget bill, under which districts receive a base allocation plus student weighted and targeted funds.
 - Recovery High School expansion
 - Increases the maximum number of students who may be served in the Recovery High School program from 20 to 35 students starting in the 2025-2026 school year.
 - Allows students from outside a first-class district (Philadelphia) to enroll if the in-district cap is not met.
 - Truancy procedure updates:
 - Clarifies that judges may enter a sentence after the school year ends for a habitually truant child, but limits penalties to those specified in statute.
 - Requires the Joint State Government Commission to conduct periodic truancy studies at least every five years, including an advisory committee with education, judicial, child welfare, juvenile justice, and cyber charter representation, and to hold informational meetings and issue reports to the education committees.
- **Cyber Charter Changes**
 - Requires that cyber charters ensure attendance during synchronous instruction by requiring students to appear continuously on screen. For asynchronous instruction, requires that students pass Department pre-approved weekly benchmark assessments.
 - When a child is convicted of violating compulsory attendance requirements, courts must determine the child’s ability to transfer to a cyber charter school.
 - Reduces cyber charter tuition via a new formula and a state transition payment.

State Legislative Update

8 new bills were introduced, 6 bills advanced in the legislative process, and 3 bills became law since the last legislative report.

Curriculum & Instruction

Legislative Actions

- **HB17: Cursive Handwriting Instruction, Rep. Watro (R)**
Amends the Public School Code to require that public and private elementary schools teach print, joined italics, and cursive handwriting as part of the mandated English curriculum.

11/18/2025 – Re-reported as committed from Senate Appropriations



Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2039: Innovative Assessment and Accountability Pilot (ESSA Demonstration Authority), Rep. Schlegel (R)**

Directs the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to develop and submit an application to the U.S. Department of Education for Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority under ESSA by May 1, 2026. The bill requires the creation of a pilot innovative state assessment and accountability system, informed by at least four regional public hearings, a publicly posted draft plan, and a 30-day comment period. The system may incorporate competency-based assessments, performance-based components, and computer-adaptive designs that together produce an annual summative determination of student achievement and growth.

11/17/2025 Introduced and referred to Education

Student Supports, Services, and Special Education

Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2008: School-Based Youth Court Pilot Program, Rep. Kazeem (D)**

Creates a school-based youth court pilot program within the Department of Education to support restorative, trauma-informed alternatives to traditional school discipline. The bill establishes an Education and Justice Resource Center to provide training, technical assistance, youth court guidelines, and statewide coordination. It authorizes the Secretary of Education to award up to six grants per year (up to \$250,000 each) to LEAs or higher education institutions to develop youth courts, requires annual outcome reporting, and transfers \$9.5 million into a new Youth Court Program Account to fund grants and administration.

11/06/2025 – Introduced and referred to Judiciary

- **HR370: Recognizing the 50th Anniversary of IDEA, Rep. Miller (D)**

Recognizes November 29, 2025, as the 50th Anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in Pennsylvania. The resolution honors the historic impact of IDEA, which guarantees all students with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate public education. It also notes that Pennsylvania serves one of the highest percentages of students with disabilities in the nation.

11/17/2025 – Introduced and referred to Education

Student Health & Wellness

Legislative Actions

- **HB1768: Keystone Fresh Act / Farm-to-School Nutrition Program, Rep. Burgos (D)**
(as Amended)

Establishes the Keystone Fresh Farm to School Nutrition Act, a statewide initiative to increase the amount of Pennsylvania-grown and minimally processed foods served in school meals. The bill creates the Local Food Purchasing Incentive Grant Program, allowing school food authorities to receive annual grants based on enrollment to buy local fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products (excluding fluid milk), grains, and other minimally processed PA foods.

11/17/2025 – Reported as amended from Agriculture & Rural Affairs

11/17/2025 – First consideration

11/19/2025 – Second consideration, with amendments and re-committed to Appropriations

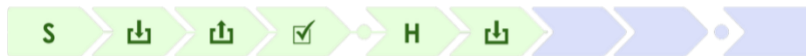


- **SB9: Fairness in Women's Sports Act, Sen. Judy Ward (R)**

Requires all public school entities and public institutions of higher education to designate sports teams as male, female, or coed based on biological sex at birth. Prohibits male students from participating on teams designated for females and allows students or schools to pursue legal action if they experience harm or retaliation related to the policy.

10/29/2025 – Reported from Health with request to re-refer to Judiciary

10/29/2025 – Re-referred to Judiciary



- **SB1050: Expanded Mandatory Reporting for Child-on-Child Sexual Offenses and Child Sexual Abuse Material, Sen. Pennycuik (R)**

Expands Pennsylvania's child-abuse reporting requirements by updating the child-on-child exclusion in Title 23 to require mandatory reporting when minors commit certain serious sexual offenses (including unlawful dissemination of an intimate image and sexual abuse of children) against another child. The bill also creates a new mandatory reporting requirement for all mandated reporters who encounter child sexual abuse material (CSAM) or artificially generated CSAM, regardless of whether a minor created, displayed, or shared it. It further classifies reporting duties for staff within institutions and reinforces protections against intimidation or obstruction during investigations.

11/17/2025 – Re-referred to Appropriations

11/18/2025 – Re-reported as committed

11/19/2025 – Third consideration and final passage (46-0)

In the House

11/19/2025 – Referred to Judiciary



Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2019: Closing Reporting Gaps in Title 23, Rep. Rivera (D)**

*This is a companion bill to [SB1034](#) included in the previous Legislative Report

Amends Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law to expand the list of child-on-child sexual offenses that must still be reported as child abuse. The bill adds two new offenses – unlawful dissemination of an intimate image (including AI-generated images) and sexual abuse of children – to the list of reportable crimes, ensuring these acts trigger mandated reporting requirements even when committed by minors.

11/12/2025 – Introduced and referred to House Children & Youth

School Safety

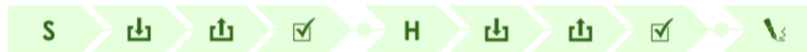
Became Law

- **Act No. 44 of 2025 (SB246): Weapons Notifications in Schools, Sen. Coleman (R)**

Requires public, nonpublic, and private schools to notify parents, guardians, and school employees within 24 hours when certain serious incidents occur on school property, at school-

sponsored activities, or on transportation. These include weapon possession, repeat bullying, harassment, serious bodily injury, or intentional property damage over \$1,000. The law allows schools to limit notifications to affected buildings or campuses and must comply with FERPA privacy rules.

11/06/2025 – Approved by the Governor. Act No. 44 of 2025



Legislative Actions

- **HB1935: Swatting Against a School Entity, Rep. Briggs (D)**

Amends the Pennsylvania Crimes Code (Title 18) to strengthen penalties for terroristic threats made against schools or higher education institutions. It directs the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to create a sentencing enhancement for such threats and requires offenders to pay restitution covering evacuation and emergency response costs, including salaries and overtime for affected employees and first responders. The bill also expands definitions to include all public, charter, nonpublic, and private schools as well as colleges, universities, and licensed postsecondary institutions.

11/17/2025 – Reported as committed from Judiciary

11/17/2025 – First consideration



School Governance & Finance

Became Law

- **Act No. 1A of 2025 (SB160): General Appropriations Act (FY 2025-26)**

The general appropriations bill for the 2025-26 fiscal year, setting state spending levels across all agencies and programs.

11/12/2025 – Re-reported on concurrence, as amended by House Rules

11/12/2025 – House concurred in Senate amendments to House amendments, as amended by the House (156-47)

In the Senate

11/12/2025 – Referred to Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

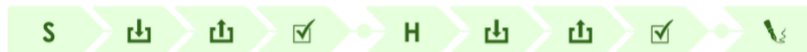
11/12/2025 – Re-reported on concurrence, as committed by Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

11/12/2025 – Senate concurred in House amendments to Senate amendments, as amended by the House (40-9)

11/12/2025 – Signed in Senate

11/12/2025 – Signed in House

11/12/2025 – Presented to and Approved by the Governor. Act No. 1A of 2025



- **SB315: Education Omnibus, Sen. Culver (R)**

SB315 is the omnibus School Code bill that implements key pieces of the state education budget and sets related policies, including: reforms cyber charter tuition, creates a statewide evidence-based reading mandate (with screening and interventions in K-3), adjusts teacher certification rules, updates truancy and recovery high school provisions, and ties future school safety, mental

health, and literacy funds to new requirements and reporting.

11/11/2025 – Re-reported as amended by Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

11/12/2025 – Senate concurred in House amendments, as amended by the Senate

In the House

11/12/2025 – Referred to House Rules

11/12/2025 – Re-reported on concurrence, as committed from House Rules

11/12/2025 – House concurred in Senate amendments to House Amendments

11/12/2025 – Signed in Senate

11/12/2025 – Signed in House

11/12/2025 – Presented to and Approved by the Governor. Act No. 47 of 2025



Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2025: School District Impasse Recovery Fund, Rep. Curry (D)**

Creates the School District Impasse Recovery Fund, a dedicated state fund used to reimburse school districts, intermediate units, and career and technical centers for borrowing money and emergency financial costs incurred during a state budget impasse. The Department of Education must reimburse eligible expenses – including interest on short-term borrowing, line-of-credit fees, penalties from deferred payments, and other emergency costs – in the fiscal year following the impasse. The bill requires PDE to approve applications within 30 days, report aggregate costs to the Governor and legislative committees, and ensures funds cannot be diverted for any other purpose.

11/12/2025 – Introduced and referred to Appropriations

- **HR368: Study on Declining Commercial Property Values & Local Fiscal Impacts, Rep. Webster (D)**

Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a comprehensive statewide study on declining commercial property values and the resulting fiscal impacts on municipalities and school districts. The study must analyze trends in commercial valuations and appeals, assess the effects on local tax bases and school funding, examine state-level mechanisms that mitigate revenue loss, and develop best-practice recommendations for assessment stability. LBFC must complete the study within one year and publish the findings online.

11/12/2025 – Introduced and referred to Local Government

Teacher and Staff Certification

Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB1919: Protecting Public School Employees Injured on the Job, Rep. Mehaffie (R)**

Requires all public schools to provide up to one year of paid student-related injury leave to any school employee who is unable to work due to an injury caused by a student or a student's parent or guardian. During this leave, the employee must receive full salary, full benefits, continued accrual of leave, and full retirement credit without using their own sick or personal time. The bill also coordinates with workers' compensation, requiring employees to turn over workers' compensation wage benefits to the school and delaying certain workers' compensation statutes of limitation until paid leave ends.

10/29/2025 – Introduced and referred to House Education

- **HB2002: Interstate Compact for School Psychologists, Rep. Guzman (D)**

Authorizes Pennsylvania to join the Interstate Compact for School Psychologists, a multistate licensing framework that allows licensed school psychologists to obtain an equivalent license to practice in any member state. The compact establishes uniform licensure standards, enables information-sharing and disciplinary coordination among states, and creates a national governing commission to administer rules, oversight, and dispute resolution. The compact is intended to improve workforce mobility, address shortages, and streamline credential recognition across state lines.

10/29/2025 – Introduced and referred to Professional Licensure