



DELAWARE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 4, 2026

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News and Updates

[Rebuking Trump, Congress Moves to Maintain Most Federal Education Funding](#) by Mark Lieberman in *EducationWeek* on January 20, 2026

Federal lawmakers from both parties are moving toward approving a new spending plan that maintains the U.S. Department of Education and rejects the Trump administration’s proposal to slash billions of dollars in education investments. Even so, Congress appears to be leaving the door open for the Trump administration to continue some of the unilateral funding and agency staffing maneuvers it implemented in the last year. Budget writers from both chambers of Congress on Jan. 20 – the one-year anniversary of President Donald Trump’s second inauguration – released what they’re calling a “bicameral, bipartisan” bill covering federal spending for education and several other agencies for fiscal 2026, which is already underway. If lawmakers and the president approve the bill as written, funding next school year for key federal programs serving low-income students and students with disabilities would remain virtually the same as in the current and previous school years. And numerous programs the Trump administration as moved to other federal agencies or proposed to eliminate would continue to exist.

[House Passes FY 2026 Spending Package Preserving Education and Research Funding as Senate Showdown Looms](#) from *American Council on Education* on January 26, 2026

Submitted by Rebecca Smith, Coordinator of Innovation, Partnerships, and Special Projects. Sources: PA General Assembly, Capitolwire, Bill Track 50)

With a Jan. 30 funding deadline fast approaching, the House last week passed and sent to the Senate a bipartisan FY 2026 spending package that would largely sustain, and in several areas modestly increase, federal support for education and research. While the substance of the bill reflects a clear congressional rejection of the Trump administration's proposed cuts, Senate floor dynamics driven largely by disputes over Department of Homeland Security funding now pose the biggest risk to avoiding a partial government shutdown.

[Live Updates: Government shutdown deadline just hours away as Senate works to pass funding deal](#) by Caitlin Yilek and Stefan Becket at *CBS News* on January 30, 2026, 2:10 p.m.

What to know about a possible government shutdown:

- Dozens of federal agencies are set to see their funding lapse at midnight despite a spending deal in the Senate, since the agreement to avoid a partial shutdown will need the approval of the House, which is not expected to return to Washington until Monday.
- On Thursday, Democratic senators reached a deal with the White House and Republican leaders to strip funding for the Department of Homeland Security from a package of six spending bills. The agreement will involve passing the remaining five bills and an extension of DHS funding at current levels for two more weeks to allow for talks over reforms to immigration enforcement.

[Trump signs budget bill bringing an end to partial government shutdown](#) by Bridget Brown, Michael Warren, Luena Rodriguez-Feo Vileira, Nell Clark, and Peter Orsi at *Associated Press* on February 3, 2026

President Donald Trump signed a roughly \$1.2 trillion spending package to end the partial government shutdown on Tuesday, just hours after the House passed the bill in a bipartisan vote.

Federal Updates

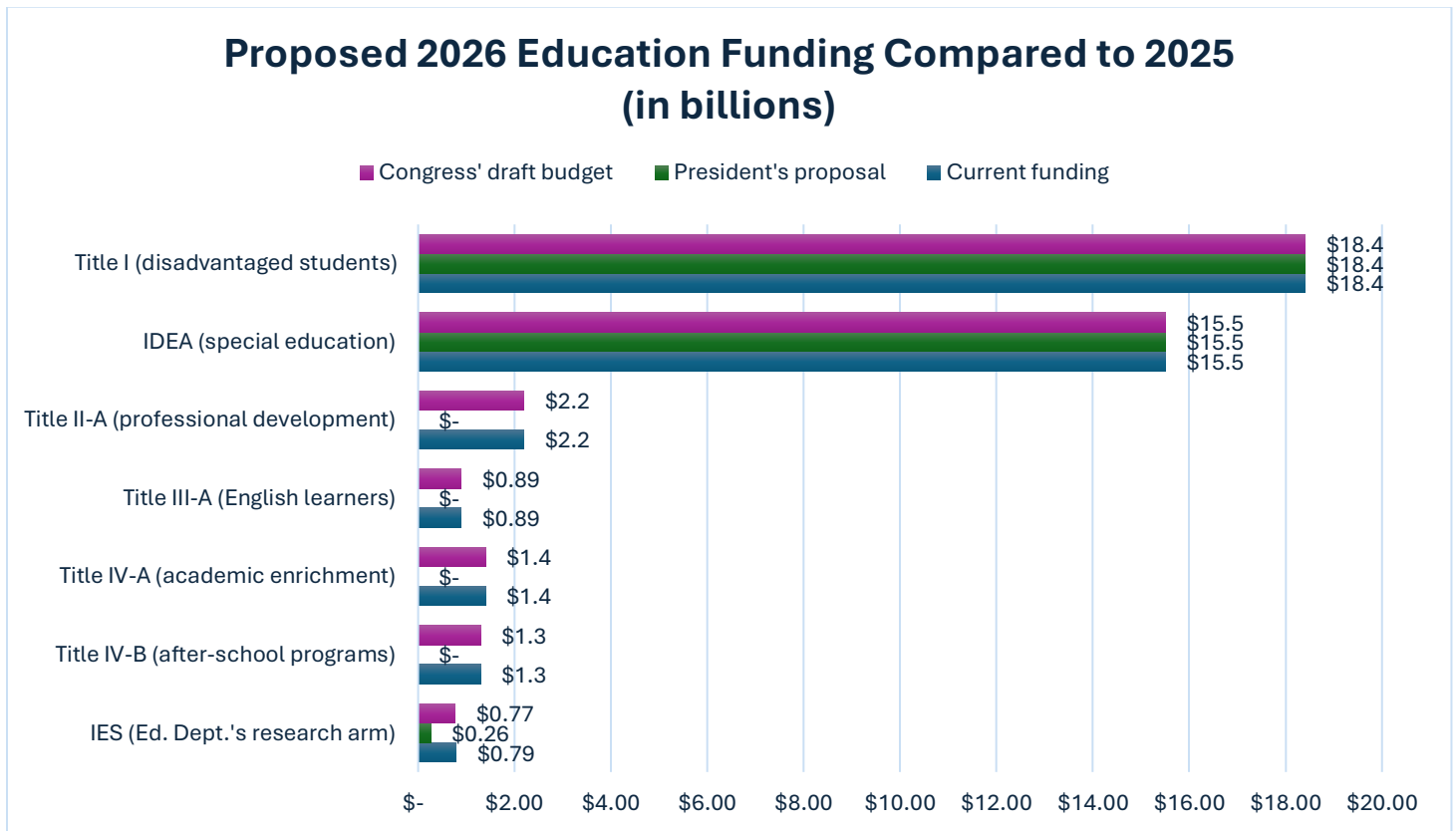
Federal Education Budget

[H.R.7148: Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026, Rep. Tom Cole \(R-OK-4\)](#)

This bill provides FY2026 appropriations to several federal departments and agencies. Specifically, the bill includes 3 of the 12 regular appropriations bills:

- Department of Defense Appropriations Act
- Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Act
- Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act

Here's an overview of the education funding proposal:



Data Source: Education Week reporting

The bill does include modest increases of \$60 million for charter school grants (\$500 million total); \$10 million for the Rural Education Achievement Program (\$225 million total); \$5 million for Impact Aid school districts (\$1.6 billion total); and roughly \$100 million for Head Start (\$12.4 billion).

State Updates

Pennsylvania Budget

Gov. Josh Shapiro presented his 2026-27 proposed budget on February 3, 2026, marking the start of the 2026-27 budget cycle. For education, his proposal includes:

- Adequacy & Equity Funding: \$565 million increase
- Basic Education Funding: \$50 million increase (\$8.21 billion total)
- Special Education Funding: \$50 million increase (\$1.58 billion total)
- Continued cyber charter reforms building on those included in this year’s budget, resulting in an estimated \$75 million in additional savings (\$250 million total)
- \$111 million for School Safety & Mental Health
- \$125 for school facilities, including \$25 million for Solar for Schools
- Beyond funding, the Governor also:
 - Called on the General Assembly to pass the bell-to-bell cell phone ban, and
 - Urged the State Board of Education to provide guidance on guaranteed scheduled recess and breaks.

Session Information

The Senate is in session on February 4, 2026. Upon adjournment, the Senate will stand recessed until March 16, 2026, unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

The House is in session on February 4, 2026. Upon adjournment, the House will stand adjourned until March 23, 2026, unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

Session Days

Month	Senate	House
February	2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4
March	16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25	23, 24, 25
April	20, 21, 22	13, 14, 15, 27, 28, 29
May	4, 5, 6	4, 5, 6
June	1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30	1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
July		
August		
September		28, 29, 30
October		5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21
November		9, 10
December		

State Legislative Update

Curriculum and Instruction

Legislative Actions

- HB460: Age-Appropriate Curriculums on Child Abuse, Rep. Daley (D)**
 This bill requires school entities, nonpublic schools, and private academic schools to implement an age-appropriate, evidence-based child abuse awareness and prevention education program for students in grades K-12 beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. It also allows mandatory child abuse recognition and reporting training for school employees to count toward continuing professional education credits. The Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Human Services, must provide model guidelines and instructional materials to support implementation.
 02/03/2026 – Second consideration with amendments and re-committed to Appropriations



- HB17: Mandating Cursive Handwriting, 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.
 02/03/2026 – Third consideration and final passage (42-5)
 02/04/2026 – Signed in House and Signed in Senate



Student Supports, Services, and Special Education

Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2149: Executive Functioning Skills School Grant Program, Rep. O'Mara (D)**
This bill, also known as the STUDY Act, establishes the Executive Functioning and Study Skills Grant Program and a dedicated fund to support public school entities in Pennsylvania. The program aims to equip students in grades 6 through 12 with essential skills like executive functioning, which involves planning, organizing, managing tasks, and regulating emotions; metacognition, the awareness of one's own thinking processes; self-regulation, the ability to control one's behavior; and study skills, such as time management and note-taking. The Department of Education will administer this grant program, creating grant application forms, reviewing applications, and disbursing funds to public school entities (which include school districts, intermediate units, career and technical schools, and charter schools) for programming that addresses these crucial skills.
01/20/2025 – Introduced and referred to Education
- **HB2167: Approved Private Schools Name Change, Rep. Nelson (D)**
This bill makes technical and conforming amendments throughout the Public School Code to replace references to “approved private school” with “approved special education school.” While largely editorial, the changes apply across tuition payment formulas, funding provisions, auditing requirements, reporting, emergency permits, and regulatory references, and direct the State Board of Education and Department of Education to update regulations accordingly. The bill clarifies terminology without altering existing funding formulas, eligibility, or program requirements for special education placements.
01/28/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education
- **HB2168: Early Intervention Terminology, Rep. Nelson (D)**
This bill amends the Early Intervention Services System Act to update terminology related to the placement of eligible young children in approved special education schools. It clarifies the Department of Education's responsibility for funding early intervention services for preschool-aged children placed in approved special education schools or chartered schools, replacing the term “private schools” with “special education schools”. The bill aligns statutory language with existing special education terminology used in the Public School Code.
01/28/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education
- **HB2169: Special Education Fiscal Code Terminology Updates, Rep. Nelson (D)**
This bill amends the Fiscal Code to update terminology by replacing references to “approved private school” with “approved special education school” in provisions governing Department of Education appropriations. The change applies specifically to the allocation of supplemental funding for approved special education schools with historically lower tuition rates and does not alter funding formulas, eligibility, or payment amounts. The bill is technical in nature.
01/28/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education

Student Health & Wellness

Legislative Actions

- **SB1014: Phone Free Schools, Sen. Robinson (R)**
This bill requires each school entity to adopt a bell-to-bell phone-free policy governing student possession and use of personal mobile devices during the school day, to be in effect no later than

the 2027-2028 school year. The policy must prohibit use of mobile devices during the school day, establish how devices are restricted, provide notice to families on how to contact students, and include defined exceptions for medical needs, IEPs/504 plans, English learners, and limited instructional use. The bill also sets requirements for public input, posting and reporting policies to the Department of Education, and clarifies that schools are not required to take possession of a student's mobile device or, if policy permits school employees to do so, the school entity or school employee do not assume liability if devices are secured in good faith.

02/02/2026 – Second consideration, with amendments (49-0) and re-referred to Appropriations

02/03/2026 – Re-reported as committed

02/03/2026 – Third consideration and final passage (46-1)

In the House

02/04/2026 – Referred to Education



Newly Introduced Legislation

- HB2117: Ensuring Lifesaving Asthma Medication is Available for Students, Rep. Hill-Evans (D)**
 This bill updates the Public School Code to expand and standardize school policies related to short-acting asthma medications and emergency epinephrine. It allows students to possess and self-administer these medications in school, provided they demonstrate capability and responsible use, and requires schools to have policies for this, including provisions for students who cannot self-carry. The bill also permits trained school employees to administer emergency epinephrine and short-acting asthma medications from a school supply to students experiencing anaphylactic reactions or asthma episodes, even if the student doesn't have a specific prescription on file, with certain conditions and training requirements for non-licensed health care practitioners administering asthma medication. Furthermore, it extends civil immunity protections to school bus drivers and school crossing guards who administer these emergency medications in accordance with school policies.
01/08/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education
- HB2152: Delaying Secondary School Start Times, Rep. Cooper (R)**
 This bill expands the School Safety and Security Grant Program to allow funding for costs associated with planning, implementing, or operating later secondary school start times. To access grant funding, a school entity must adopt a policy establishing an instructional day start time no earlier than 8:30 a.m. for secondary schools and engage the community on the health, safety, and academic impacts of adolescent sleep deprivation. The bill also directs the Department of Education to provide guidance and support to school entities considering later start times.
01/21/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education

School Safety

Legislative Actions

- HB1935: Swatting Against a School Entity, Rep. Briggs (D)**
 This bill amends the Crimes Code to strengthen penalties for terroristic threats directed at schools and institutions of higher education. It requires individuals convicted of making terroristic threats to pay restitution covering the full cost of evacuations and emergency response and

directs the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to establish a sentencing enhancement for threats made against school entities or higher education institutions.

02/02/2026 – *Second consideration and re-referred to Appropriations*

02/03/2026 – *Re-reported as committed*

02/03/2026 – *Third consideration and final passage (154-45)*



School Governance & Finance

Newly Introduced Legislation

- **HB2148: Welcoming Schools: Ensuring PA Schools are Safe Places for All Students, Rep. Hohenstein (D)**

This bill establishes a new “Welcoming Schools” article in the Public School Code requiring school entities to adopt formal policies governing access to school property by immigration and law enforcement agencies. School entities must designate specific personnel to handle requests from enforcement officials, who will be required to present a signed judicial warrant to enter non-public areas of school property. The designated personnel must document all interactions, including the official’s identification and the grounds for their request, and provide this information to the school entity’s solicitor. School personnel are prohibited from inquiring about or discussing a student’s or their family’s immigration status. The bill also requires annual professional development, incident reporting to governing bodies following enforcement actions, and Department of Education guidelines to support implementation.

01/20/2025 – *Introduced and referred to Education*

- **HB2153: Data Center Homestead Exclusion, Rep. Olsommer (R)**

This bill amends the Taxpayer Relief Act to define data centers and require school districts to dedicate property tax revenue generated from data centers to funding homestead and farmstead property tax exclusions. In this first fiscal year of full taxation, all data-center-related property tax revenue must be used for these exclusions, and in subsequent years, districts must continue contributing an amount equal to the first-year revenue. The bill also requires school districts to itemize data-center funded exclusions on tax bills.

01/21/2026 – *Introduced and referred to Education*

- **HB2146: Revising the Sunshine Act to Address a Recent PA Supreme Court Decision, Rep. Freeman (D)**

This bill clarifies language of the Pennsylvania Sunshine law concerning open meetings, specifically how agencies notify the public about their business and what exceptions exist. It limits last-minute agenda items to matters arising within 24 hours that are de minimus and do not involve expenditures or contracts, and it requires agencies to publicly announce reasons for agenda changes and post amended agendas by the next business day.

01/22/2026 – *Introduced and referred to Local Government*

- **SB1141: Military Service Buy Back Expansion, Sen. Mastriano (R)**

This bill amends PSERS and SERS statutes to increase the maximum amount of creditable military service that a member may purchase from five years to ten years. The expanded limit applies to both creditable non-school service under PSERS and creditable nonstate service under SERS,

while maintaining the combined cap across both systems for members with service in each. The bill affects retirement benefit calculations by allowing eligible members to count additional years of prior military service toward pension eligibility and benefits.

01/20/2026 – Introduced and referred to Finance

Career and Technical Education

- **[HB2157: CTE Independence Act, Rep. Day \(R\)](#)**

This bill amends the Public School Code to require that the administration, governance, operation, and management of certain career and technical education schools and institutes be transferred to an independent governance board within three years. It establishes membership qualifications, approval procedures, public hearings, and fixed terms for governance board members, with oversight and approval by the Department of Education. Board members may not be an individual who is: (1) a member of a board of school directors; (2) a member of an employee organization; (3) an employee of a school district; or (4) a public official. The government boards would be subject to Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law and Open Meetings Law.

01/26/2026 – Introduced and referred to Education