



January 29, 2018

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

Governor Wolf will give his annual budget address on Tuesday, February 6, at 11:30 a.m. before a joint session of the General Assembly. In addition to updating Pennsylvanians on the state of the Commonwealth, the governor's address will lay out his budget plan for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. There are several ways to watch the budget address, including [PCN](#) or a caucus website. The budget address may also be available via [live stream](#) and on [Facebook](#).

In October 2017, the State System's Board of Governors agreed to seek \$526.2 million from the state to help fund the universities' daily operations. The amount would represent an increase of \$73.1 million over the current year's funding level, to address expected increases in salaries and wages; higher employee benefit costs, including healthcare and pension contributions; the development and implementation of new academic programs; and other operating expenses.

The additional funding would help push state support per student toward the national average. Currently, the state provides about \$4,000 in funding per full-time equivalent student, compared to a national average of just under \$7,000. The state appropriation this year will fund about 27 percent of the System's total operating budget. The requested increase would boost that figure to about 30 percent. [READ >>](#)

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

[Senate Session Days](#) | [Watch Session Live](#) | [Senate Calendars](#) | [Senate Committee Meeting Schedule](#)

The Senate convenes in session this week, Monday through Wednesday.

There are no bills of interest currently on the Senate calendar.

In legislative activity last week, the Chamber passed [HB 1448](#), legislation providing for higher education accountability and transparency, and adopted [SR 228](#), a Concurrent Resolution establishing a Global Education Task Force. The former bill returns to the House for a vote on concurrence, while the resolution is referred to the House Education Committee for consideration. Additional details are provided below.

Today in committee, the Senate Education Committee meets to consider [HB 1653](#), legislation amending the Higher Education Scholarship Law to provide for the expansion of the PA State Grant

Program for students enrolled in distance education programs. A companion bill, [SB 53](#), passed the House in October 2017.

Funded with \$10 million each year from PHEAA's business earnings, nearly 13,000 students at 91 participating schools have benefitted from the pilot program, receiving over \$24.25 million. At participating State System universities alone, in the most recent year for which data is available (2015/16), approximately 1,000 distance education students received a total of \$1.8 million, an average of \$1,700 per student.

In other committee news, the Senate Republican Policy Committee held a public hearing last week on free speech on college campuses. [CLICK HERE](#) for archived video and testimony.

Regarding executive nominations, Governor Wolf has nominated Janet L. Yeomans to the Board of Governors—to fill the seat recently vacated by Dan Meuser. This nomination is subject to the Senate's confirmation.

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

[House Session Days](#) | [Watch Session Live](#) | [House Calendars](#) | [House Committee Meeting Schedule](#)

The House stands adjourned until Monday, February 5, at 1 p.m.

State System

Bill Tracker Report

Tracking information is updated during legislative session weeks.

In the Senate:

[HB 1448](#)

Amends the Public School Code adding an article providing for higher education accountability and transparency. The Department of Education shall make available on the department's website information that includes: (1) A link to the College Navigator website with a description of the uses and features of the College Navigator website; and (2) A link to the High Priority Occupations website of the Department of Labor and Industry with a description of what high priority occupations are and how they are identified. The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) shall link to the department's website containing the information as well as to the comparison tool and each school entity shall annually provide the information to students in grades nine through twelve. If the US Department of Education discontinues the publication of the College Navigator website, the department shall make available on its website a search tool that allows an individual to compare institutions of higher education that meet certain criteria selected by the individual, including the offering of a particular major or program of study. The bill specifies the contents of the tool and requires that it generate a comparison chart. If the department is required to develop the comparison tool, each institution of higher education shall provide the information listed to the department annually. 01-24-18 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 50/N: 0)

[SR 228](#)

A Concurrent Resolution establishing a Global Education Task Force to issue a report no later than 18 months after the adoption of the resolution. The report would offer recommendations on assessing, measuring, improving upon and developing global competence skills among students to ensure they succeed and thrive in the workforce; identifying current best practices in schools and barriers to educating students; a plan to close the global education gap and ensure global-ready graduates; workforce development practices to ensure primary and secondary students are globally competent and ready to compete in the workforce; courses to be added to the current global competence education; advantages and disadvantages of regionalizing and customizing global education; and program funding methods. The chancellor of the State System or a designee would serve on the task force. 01-25-18 H Received in the House and referred to House Education

In the House:

[HB 153](#)

Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, reducing the size of the General Assembly. 02-05-18 H Set on the House Calendar

[HB 1527](#)

Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child protective services, further providing for persons required to report suspected child abuse by stipulating a duty to report for a mandated reporter who witnesses an abusive act to an identifiable child. 02-05-18 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

[HB 1846](#)

Amends the Breach of Personal Information Notification Act further providing for definitions and for notification of breach; providing for notification; further providing for notice exemption; and further providing for civil relief. The bill establishes notice of the breach of the security of the system shall be made to the affected residents of this Commonwealth, and the entity providing notice may include information about what the entity has done to protect affected individuals and offer advice on what steps affected individuals may take to protect their information and what steps the individual whose information has been breached may take to protect himself or herself. 02-05-18 H Set on the House Calendar

This update is provided as a courtesy of the Office of the Chancellor as a preview of upcoming legislative activity and a review of action on legislative issues of interest to the State System. The Legislative UPDATE is distributed during legislative session weeks.

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