



March 27, 2020

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

Earlier today, "Governor Tom Wolf signed four bills today to fight the COVID-19 pandemic in Pennsylvania that bolster the health care system, benefit workers and schools, and reschedule the 2020 primary election for June 2." [Read more >>](#)

[SB 751](#) (Aument) is included among the bills he signed. In addition to its original provisions, Act 13 of 2020 adds a new section to the Public School Code concerning the pandemic of 2020, applicable only to the 2019-2020 school year. The legislation provides a variety of flexibilities, including empowering the Secretary of Education to waive:

- career and technical education program hours,
- the use of performance data in professional employee evaluation systems,
- prekindergarten instruction hours, and
- the 12-week student teacher preparation program requirement.

The governor also signed [SB 422](#) (Vogel), moving the 2020 primary election; [HB 68](#) (Ryan), amending the Unemployment Compensation Law to help Pennsylvania workers; and [HB 1232](#) (Dunbar), amending the Fiscal Code to permit the Secretary of the Budget to transfer up to \$50 million to purchase medical equipment and supplies for hospitals, nursing facilities, and emergency medical services to meet patient and staff needs to respond to COVID-19.

As it relates to the economic impact of this crisis on the State System and its universities, the Office of the Chancellor is actively having conversations with critical legislative stakeholders to ensure state lawmakers fully understand the challenges, financial and otherwise, System universities are facing.

The Office of the Chancellor is also reviewing the latest details about the federal stimulus package, including statements from the [American Association of Colleges and Universities](#) and the [State Higher Education Executive Officers Association](#), to determine its benefit to Pennsylvania's public higher education sector institutions.

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate stands in recess until the call of the President Pro Tempore. The next planned session days are April 6, 7, and 8.

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

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

The House stands in recess until the call of the Chair. The chamber is presently expected to convene April 6 and 7.

Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

Executive Actions:

[SB 751](#) (Aument): Amends the Public School Code, in professional employees, further providing for rating system and for persons to be suspended & providing for a revised rating system; & in terms & courses of study, for pandemic of 2020. *Last Action*: 3-27-20 Approved by the Governor (Act:13)

In the House:

[SB 327](#) (Argall): Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Dept. of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased. *Last Action*: H 3-24-20 Rereferred to House Appropriations

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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