



August 31, 2020

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

The Senate remains in recess although the House is scheduled to return to voting session on Tuesday, September 1.

Tuesday and Wednesday, according to Capitolwire, include "education bills seeking to allow parents to decide if children should repeat a year of education due to lost education and/or extra-curricular opportunities relative to COVID-19 school shutdowns or hybrid learning models; ensure decisions about school sports and whether spectators may be allowed are made at the local level; and give the state Department of Education temporary flexibility with regard to teacher certification issues."

Heading into the fall legislative session, Gov. Wolf recently called on the legislature to take immediate action on a series of proposals. His [fall legislative agenda](#) includes "worker and family support and protections, COVID-19 recovery, and government reform." Among the initiatives, the governor is proposing "\$3 million for institutions of higher education to partner with local education agencies (LEA) to support educators during the 2020-21 school year. The goal of these partnerships is to provide targeted professional development and reduce learning gaps."

Pennsylvania Treasurer Joe Torsella also unveiled a proposal of his own — the "[Pennsylvania Skills Compact](#)." His proposal is "eant to address the existing skills gap, provide a fair shot to both new and returning students regardless of means, boost postsecondary attainment, and expedite Pennsylvania's economic recovery."

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education welcomes ideas aimed at supporting educators and reducing attainment gaps, especially if they provide opportunities that enable the System to address

its financial challenges while making public higher education affordable and accessible to as many Pennsylvanians as possible.

In Chancellor Greenstein's latest blog post, "[The Role of Responsibility](#)," he discusses the responsibility we all have to each other during this extraordinary academic year. "[W]e not only feel the gravity of our situation but also a sense of opportunity to build upon our enormous collective and historic strengths, to vigorously and creatively re-imagine public higher education as it ought to be in the 21st century," writes Greenstein.

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate is scheduled to return to session on Monday, September 8.

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

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

The House returns to session this week; highlights of this week's voting calendar include "safe and secure elections and excellence in education." [View](#) the voting agenda.

Session begins at Tuesday, at 11 a.m., and activity is expected on these bills of interest:

- [HB 434](#) (Solomon): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, providing for a cultural competence continuing professional development course; and, in terms and courses of study, further providing for Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction.
- [SB 1216](#) (Langerholc): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for instructional certificate grade spans and age levels and duties of department and providing for special provisions applicable to 2020-2021 school year. As amended recently by the House Education Committee, the bill would allow a teacher preparation program to permit an individual enrolled at the institution of higher education or the approved alternative preparation program prior to December 31, 2021, and who remains continuously enrolled, to complete the program for the grade level limitations provided under current law. In addition, the Department of Education may issue the appropriate special education pre-kindergarten through eighth grade or seventh through twelfth grade certificates to an applicant who completes the program under these conditions and meets all other certification requirements.

Aside from the Appropriations Committee meeting, there is no other committee activity of particular interest to the State System.

At the conclusion of this week's legislative work, the chamber will stand adjourned until Monday, Sept. 15.

Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

Executive Actions:

[HB 2463](#) (Grove): Amends Administrative Code, providing for access to public records during disaster declaration. *Last Action:* 07-26-20 G Became law without Governor's signature (Act: 77)

In the House:

[HB 2683](#) (Schroeder): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, providing for special provisions applicable to 2020-2021 school year. *Last Action:* 07-13-20 H Introduced and referred to House Education

[HB 2696](#) (Owlett): Amends the Public School Code, establishing the Back on Track Education Scholarship Account Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Education and the State Treasurer. *Last Action:* 07-14-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2710](#) (Warren): Amends the Public School Code, in community colleges, further providing for tuition; and, in the State System of Higher Education, further providing for powers and duties of the Board of Governors. *Last Action:* 07-30-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2713](#) (Schlossberg): Act establishing the Grow Our Own Educators Program; providing for grants to eligible school entities; and imposing powers and duties on the Department of Education and the State Board of Education. *Last Action:* 07-30-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2714](#) (Burns): Amends Title 62 (Procurement), in general provisions relating to general procurement provisions, providing for preference for bid or proposal. *Last Action:* 07-30-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House State Government

[HB 2720](#) (Roebuck): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, for continuing professional development; and for est. of the Access to Advance Placement Courses for Students Program; and imposing duties on the department & school entities. *Last Action:* 07-30-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2748](#) (Rowe): Amends the Public Employee Relations Act, in employee rights, for payments and resignation; in representation, for exclusive representation & for recertification; in scope of bargaining, for membership dues deductions & maintenance. *Last Action:* 08-06-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Labor and Industry

[HB 2763](#) (Kim): Amends the Workforce Development Act, in industry partnerships, further providing for industry clusters. *Last Action:* 08-07-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Labor and Industry

[HB 2784](#) (Neilson): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for continuing professional development and for program of continuing professional education. *Last Action:* 08-27-20 H Introduced and referred to House Education

[HB 2824](#) (Innamorato): Amends the Public School Code, in miscellaneous provisions relating to institutions of higher education, providing for menstrual hygiene products. *Last Action:* 08-27-20 H Filed

[HB 2827](#) (Rabb): Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in COVID-19 disaster emergency, providing for student tenant relief. *Last Action:* 08-26-20 H Filed

[HR 610](#) (Kinsey): A Resolution honoring the legacy of Cheyney University as the oldest historically black university in the U.S. and supporting its reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. *Last Action:* 08-13-20 H Set on the House Calendar

In the Senate:

[HB 2438](#) (Owlett): Amends Title 68 (Real and Personal Property), providing for broadband services. *Last Action*: 07-15-20 S Set on the Senate Calendar

[SB 1226](#) (Tartaglione): A Supplement to the General Fund, for public debt and public schools, for additional appropriations for the fiscal year of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. *Last Action*: Introduced and referred to Senate Appropriations

[SB 1230](#) (Ward, J): Amends the Public School Code, establishing the Back on Track Education Scholarship Account Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Education and the State Treasurer. *Last Action*: 07-13-20 Introduced and referred to Senate Education

[SB 1241](#) (Argall): Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Department of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased. *Last Action*: 07-27-20 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate State Government

[SCO1726](#) (Phillips-Hill): Grants Commonwealth school entities, municipalities, and government authorities the option to choose whether they wish to pursue a moratorium on the existing Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act requirements. *Last Action*: 08-25-20 S Filed

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.

Jennifer Hoover
Director of Governmental Relations
jhoover@passhe.edu
(717) 720-4021



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