PSBA REPORT – Nov 2026

Calendar (may not include events scheduled and expired since last report)
***?Board Reorganization (no date listed)**
***Dec 01 – The Session in Review: Legislative Update**
***Dec 11 – SCOTUS in the Middle**
***Jan 09 – Board Officers' Workshop**
***Jan 16 – Board Candidates' Workshop**
NOTE: myPSBA lists all webinars and new online courses

Programs
New/updated - *Essentials for Board Service
New – *Guide to Student Representatives on a School Board
KER (Keystone Educational Report) – *The Essential Role of the Board Secretary
For details of new programs, log on to PSBA.org
*FRANKLIN: AI powered assistant (board services questions, resources, comprehensive supports) @myPSBS for members; PSBA.org for the public
*PSBA Health Services: member exclusive offering health center sites and virtual services
*ConnectED PA: to improve wireless infrastructure
***Keystone Agenda & Policy Portal**
Keystone Education Report: 1st & 4th Monday on PCN or PSBA You Tube. In depth interviews.
***New Legislative Platform and info on Delegate Assembly to be posted on myPSBA – follow re-registration directions for Engalifii.**

State
All previously legislation considered, but not passed, must new reintroduced. See below
Dr. Carrie Rowe approved as Secty of Education Dept has renamed the Office for Safe Schools to Office for School Climate and Wellbeing
Financial Literacy requirements begin 2026-27, **requires evidence-based reading curriculum**
Special Ed Commission moved from 2024 to 2026
Legislative Considerations (w/ PSBA input)
Flexibility in Advertising Notices: PSBA supports SB 194 (not HB 1291)
Governor's Desk: PIAA may separate boundary-non boundary schools for playoffs – PSBA supports
House: parental notice of bullies and their victims -PSBA neutral
social media literacy/usage; standards rather than mandates – PSBA neutral
management of school counselor services – PSBA opposes
Ed Committee: voluntary seizure training becomes mandatory (passed)
Seal of Biliteracy on diplomas – PSBA neutral; **signed by Governor
special ed contingency fund discussions
CTC curriculum – PSBA supports
Talent Recruitment Act for teacher growth (not in gen'l fund) – PSBA supports
asthma meds suppliers – voluntary -PSBA neutral
cell phone bans -house and senate bills – PSBA opposes **Passed, details to come**
Local Gov't Committee: Commercial Property Value Study -PSBA supports
House & Senate: passed similar child protection laws

State Board of Ed
Issues reported by Ed Committees during budget talks:
Interstate cooperative recognition of teaching credentials

Identification and services for gifted review for consistency among districts
Council of Basic Ed reviewing academic standards for Career Ed & Work, Economics, Family & Consumer SCI, and new Financial Literacy standards as well as math and science standards and all upcoming standards

Federal

****Refer to PA IU letter**

****Depart of Ed required to vacate building; relocate to smaller, private bldg** after 50% staff reduction**
OCR: staff cuts and reorganization
Student Loan Mgmt: (loans reduced); defaulted loans transferred to Treasury Dept.
Office of English Language Acquisition: dissolved
Elem & Secondary Edu: moving to Dept of Labor
Native American Edu: to Dept of Interior

Professional development impacts achievement but unsure what elements applicable
Concern for shortage of space for CTC programs and impact of Nat'l Occupational Competency Testing Instrument (NOCTI)
Superintendent tenure up to 5.4 years, nearly double from three years ago: prepandemic was 6 years
Dept of Labor & Industry offering grants for School-to-Work Programs
Vaccination advisories limited
Shortage of bus drivers, teachers and aides/paras, and subs
***Title IX (transgender) wording adjusted**
Supreme Count rules against money for religious charter schools, related funding issues continue to work their way through the courts
Four-day school week (26 states, 2100 districts): saves money, increases recruitment, alleviates burnout
DOE cuts and dismantling supported as grants continue amid funding cuts and significant policy changes; while still generating educational statistics and issues for what works in classrooms — to some extent.
"Bell to Bell" cell phone bans
Gender gaps for both genders
Update (All Title I - VI withheld) Most spec ed grants reinstated
AI accuracy and impact on lives
Concern for Pre-k funding, Title VI, and Title IV
Before/After school funding reinstated
ESEA waivers considered
FEDERAL TAX CREDITS FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS.
Requires state opt-in. It's complicated. Full review available.
Dept of Ag (USDA) cancels $1billion in funds to purchase locally, judge **blocked, still in courts**
OCR presents anti-discriminatory guidelines for use of AI
Industry/education bridges; Science-based literacy programs
Focus on absenteeism (k-12); Teacher shortages, especially special ed.

PSBA Officers 2027

Pres: Holly Arnold, Tunkhannock Area SD, Lycoming Co.
Pres Elect: Matt Vannoy, Sharon City SD, Mercer Co. (prev. VP)
VP: Kristy Bolte, Northwestern SD, Erie Co.
Treas: David Hein, Parkland SD, Lehigh Co. (prev. officer)
Immed. Past Pres: Sabrina S. Backer, Franklin Area SD

Easter Zone Rep: Jason Mill, Exeter Twp. SD, Bucks Co.

Sectional Advisor (E3): Andrew Kline, Olley Valley SD
Sectional Advisor Co-chairs: selected in Jan

Email communications schedule:

Monday – Newsletter - prior week educational articles
The Board Brief – education news digest
Tuesday: The Countdown - public edu. video under 4 minutes
Wednesday – PSBA Works for You – professional development events and resources;
COSSBA Education & Court Report
Friday – as of 1/16 – Under the Dome – legislative news and developments when Gen. Assy. in session

PSBA Outreach Team (available to answer questions related to the role of school board director including policy, legislation, professional development, etc.). Contact at: TheCountdown@PSBA.org
Office hours: myPSBA, Office Hours Tab for on-screen staff.
Tues 10-11 am; Wed 11-noon, Thur 2-3 pm
Or, log into myPSBA > Office Chat during a live session
Wed: 9 – 10 am (Lena Hanna); Thur: 11 – 12 pm (Jessica Portz)

Crisis Communication Services

24/7 support available; 1-833-PR4-PSBA or Hotline@PR4PSBA.

For service and/or programs:

Senior Director of Member Outreach: Becky Dussinger
Member Outreach Manager – Eastern PA: Colin Dempsey (717-210-3071)

PSBA CONTACTS

***Eastern Zone Rep: includes Lancaster County, Lebanon, Schuylkill and Berks Counties; Vacant**
Section Advisor for E-3: Robin Goodson, School Dist. of Lancaster
Advocacy Advisor program discontinued