

PA EdVentures



February EdVentures: Host a Summer Meal Site, Structured Literacy Webinar, AI Listening Tour, & More

In February, Governor Shapiro delivered his [annual budget address, proposing additional critical funding](#) for all learners in Pennsylvania. This month, we also announced investments of over [\\$56 million across 13 Community colleges for capital projects and renovations](#).

We also celebrated Leon Smith, Pennsylvania's 2025 Teacher of the Year, who has been [named as one of five finalists of the National Teacher of the Year](#) by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Dr. Rowe also recently celebrated with Antietam School District as PDE recognized [Ken Bonkoski, facilities manager, with the Pennsylvania RISE Award](#).



Information & Submissions for RISE Awards Now Open

In March 2019, the Recognizing Inspiring School Employees (RISE) Award was created to recognize and promote the commitment and excellence exhibited by full- or part-time classified school employees who provide service to students in Pre-K through high school.

To learn more about who can be nominated and how to nominate someone, please visit the [RISE Award webpage](#). The 2026 Nomination period will open on February 1. Nominations can be submitted until **August 30, 2026**.



Host a Summer Meal Site

Host a Summer Meal Site

PDE is looking for organizations who want to help provide nutritious meals to children in low-income areas across the Commonwealth during the summer months through the Department's Summer Food Service Program. **New sponsors must apply by May 1, 2026.**

Participating organizations are reimbursed for meals served to children who live in areas in which at least 50 percent of the children qualify for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program.

Participating organizations must be year-round, not-for-profit entities, which include schools, local, municipal or county governments, libraries, churches, fire and police stations, residential summer camps, and national youth sports programs. Organizations approved to sponsor the Summer Food Service Program are responsible for managing the meal service sites that provide the meals to children. Beginning this summer, organizations serving rural areas may be approved to provide non-congregate meals, such as grab-and-go meals or delivered meals, to children in qualifying areas.

For more information on becoming a participating organization or a meal site for the summer Food Service Program, view the website at www.education.pa.gov/sfsp. You can also call 800-331-0129 or email RA-SFSP@pa.gov.

Ramadan Resources for Educators

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy group, we wanted to share a helpful Ramadan resource for educators.

A factsheet is available at [CAIR's Ramadan Factsheet for Educators](#) (PDF), which provides brief guidance on supporting Muslim students during Ramadan through simple, practical, and inclusive classroom considerations.

Teach Plus Pennsylvania 2026-2027 Teaching Policy Fellowship

Impact policy in Harrisburg and
classrooms across Pennsylvania
without leaving the classroom

Join a highly selective cohort of
excellent, experienced, and diverse
educators working toward equity

Accepting applications from
ECE to 12th grade teachers

\$1,500 stipend

Apply by May 11th, 2026



**TEACH
+PLUS**

Teach Plus Pennsylvania Teaching Policy Fellows Application Now Open

This summer, Teach Plus Pennsylvania will welcome its next cohort of Teaching Policy Fellows—a highly selective leadership opportunity for 30 exceptional educators from early childhood through 12th grade who are ready to shape the future of education policy in the Commonwealth.

As a Policy Fellow, teachers will:

- Deepen their understanding of education policy and advocacy
- Amplify teacher voice in state-level policy conversations
- Advance student equity by informing real policy decisions
- Expand their leadership and influence—without leaving the classroom

Fellows receive a \$1,500 stipend in recognition of their time and commitment to strengthening Pennsylvania's education system. To start your application, please visit the [Teach Plus PA Application form](#). If you would like to nominate a teacher, please use the [Teach Plus PA Nomination form](#).

Written applications must be completed and submitted prior to the deadline: **May 11, 2026**.

Teach Plus Pennsylvania will host four virtual information sessions prior to the application deadline:

- [Thursday, March 12, 6-7pm](#)
- [Tuesday, April 14, 7-8pm](#)
- [Thursday, April 30, 7-8pm](#)

Questions? Contact Teach Plus Pennsylvania Policy Manager Emily Sagor at esagor@teachplus.org.



Join the 2026 Students Save Lives: College Challenge

Donate Life Pennsylvania is hosting the 2026 Students Save Lives: College Challenge, a statewide competition that empowers college students to raise awareness and increase organ donor registration.

We encourage you to share this opportunity with any students, student organizations, or faculty who may be interested. The challenge runs from March 1 through April 30, and participating teams can earn prizes while helping save lives.

You can learn more and [register on the College Challenge webpage](#).

Shaping AI in Education Learning & Listening Sessions

Join Penn State AI researchers and K-12 experts for dynamic listening and learning sessions on the future of AI in education, exclusively for K-12 educators and administrators. There will be a combination of 8 in-person and virtual day-long venues for this tour. This event will provide individuals with deeper insights of AI, from AI usage to AI policy, and more.

Participants will engage with knowledge sharing from experts, workforce development, policy implications, professional development, and ethics and sustainability.

- Event Time: 9am - 2pm
- Cost: **Free**
- Act 48 & 45 credits available
- Meal provided
- Event Dates & Locations:
 - March 9 - Virtual
 - March 13 - Penn State, University Park
 - March 20 - Penn State, Greater Allegheny, McKeesport
 - March 23 - Penn College of Technology, Williamsport
 - May 14 - Penn State, Berks, Wyomissing
 - May 29 - Penn State, York, York
 - June 1 - Penn State, Wilkes-Barre, Dallas
 - June 5 - Virtual

Join Penn State AI researchers and K-12 experts for dynamic listening and learning sessions on the future of AI in education, exclusively for K-12 educators and administrators. There will be a combination of 8 in-person and virtual day-long venues for this tour. This event will provide individuals with deeper insights of AI, from AI usage to AI policy, and more.

Participants will engage with knowledge sharing from experts, workforce development, policy implications, professional development, and ethics and sustainability. For more information and to register for these events, please visit the [Shaping AI in Education webpage](#).



Structured Literacy Updates & Webinar Recording

In January, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) hosted four webinars for school leaders focused on [Act 135 of 2024](#) resources and guidance, as well as early information about how Act 47 of 2025 will shape the future implementation of structured literacy in Pennsylvania. More than 1,000 participants attended these sessions, demonstrating the field’s deep commitment to structured literacy. [A PDF of the slide deck is available](#), and a link to the recording is available at [Structured Literacy Update, January 2026, Webinar Recording](#).

PDE’s [Structured Literacy landing page](#) has also become a central hub for the field. Since its launch, it has received more than 36,000 views and over 10,000 unique visitors. PDE will continue to expand its scope so that it not only houses Act 135 materials, but also incorporates resources connected to [Act 47 of 2025](#) as that work progresses.

And finally, the LEA survey mandated by Act 47 of 2025 is designed to meet legislative requirements while giving PDE a clear, statewide picture of where LEAs currently stand in structured literacy implementation and where the greatest needs exist. It will be distributed directly to superintendents and chief administrative officers to ensure that each LEA submits one coordinated response. Responses will support planning and technical assistance by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.
View this email [online](#).

607 South Drive | Harrisburg, PA 17120 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.