

# PA EdVentures



## March EdVentures: Student Art Contests, FID Program Information, and Digital Connectivity Technology Program!

In March, the Shapiro Administration announced several major grant funding programs, including over [\\$4 million in Keystone Grants to 11 public libraries](#), [funding for 12 schools to purchase food service equipment for cafeterias](#), and over [\\$1.5 million in Parent Pathways grants](#) to help more Pennsylvanians afford higher education.

This month, we also announced the [selection of our 2025 PA One Book](#), *Arlo Draws an Octopus*, which encourages readers to embrace their creativity and to see the beauty in their efforts -- no matter the outcome. The Pennsylvania State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) also announced a [statewide stakeholder engagement tour](#) to gather input on the creation of a new strategic plan for higher education in PA.

## Month of the Military Child

### April is the Month of the Military Child

April is the Month of the Military Child (MOMC) which celebrates and recognizes military-connected students.

This year, the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) has designated April 23, 2025, as "Purple Up!" Day in recognition of military families and students. However, states and communities may select their own date. On this day, participants wear purple as a sign of support for our military-connected families. Your school entity may use this date or choose another to recognize our military families during the MOMC.

A Purple Up toolkit is available via the [MIC3 Month of the Military Child webpage](#).

To learn more about the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3), please visit the [MIC3 website](#).

## 2025-2026 Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Program Information

[Section 1506 of the Public School Code](#) allows public school entities to develop a Flexible Instructional Day (FID) program to meet the 180 instructional day requirement. Eligible school entities include school districts, intermediate units, career and technical schools, charter schools and regional charter schools, as defined under section 1703-A. While schools are expected to build make-up days into their local school calendars, FID programs can support schools in cases when circumstances (e.g., a disease epidemic, a hazardous weather condition, a law enforcement emergency, the inoperability of school buses or other equipment necessary to the public school entity's operation, damage to a school building, or another temporary circumstance rendering any portion of a school building unfit or unsafe for use) prevent the delivery of instruction in its customary manner or location.

The 2025-2026 FID application will be available on the PDE website using the [Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal \(FRCPP\)](#) no later than April 1, 2025. In accordance with 24 P.S. § 15-1506, the deadline for submitting 2025-2026 school year applications is June 1, 2025. There is nothing in statute that permits PDE to grant extensions. Please note: If all of the required contents are not included in the application by June 1, 2025, then the application would be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.



## School Bus Safety Week Poster Contest

It's time for the 2025 National School Bus Safety Week Poster Contest and PennDOT needs your help! School districts throughout the Commonwealth will be observing National School Bus Safety Week October 20-24 and students are invited to participate in the National School Bus Safety Week Poster Contest.

Posters should be mailed to PennDOT and must be postmarked by **April 18, 2025**. For additional information, including poster specifications, rules, and regulations, and the mailing procedures, please review the [Poster Contest Guidelines](#). If you have additional questions regarding the poster contest, please contact PennDOT School Bus Unit at (717) 705-7604.

**Free Lead Testing &  
Reduction Grants for  
Schools & Childcare Facilities**

# Free Lead Testing and Reduction Grants for Schools and Childcare Facilities

The Shapiro Administration is launching a free water sampling program for eligible schools and childcare facilities across Pennsylvania to test for lead in drinking water. This initiative through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is funded by the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act's Voluntary School and Child Care Lead Testing and Reduction Grant Program and is part of the Shapiro Administration's efforts to protect children from lead exposure.

Partnering with Terraphase Engineering, the program offers no-cost water testing and, for those with elevated lead levels, grant funding to support lead reduction activities such as installing hydration stations. Eligible applicants could receive up to \$3,000 per hydration station installed. It's an easy, no-cost way to protect children's health and make sure they're drinking safe water.

Schools and childcare centers that meet the criteria are encouraged to apply. Applications must be submitted online through the Commonwealth's Electronic Application: [Grant Details | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#). Enrollment is currently open and will remain so until funds are exhausted.

For more information, visit DEP's webpage [Lead Information for Schools and Child Care Facilities](#).

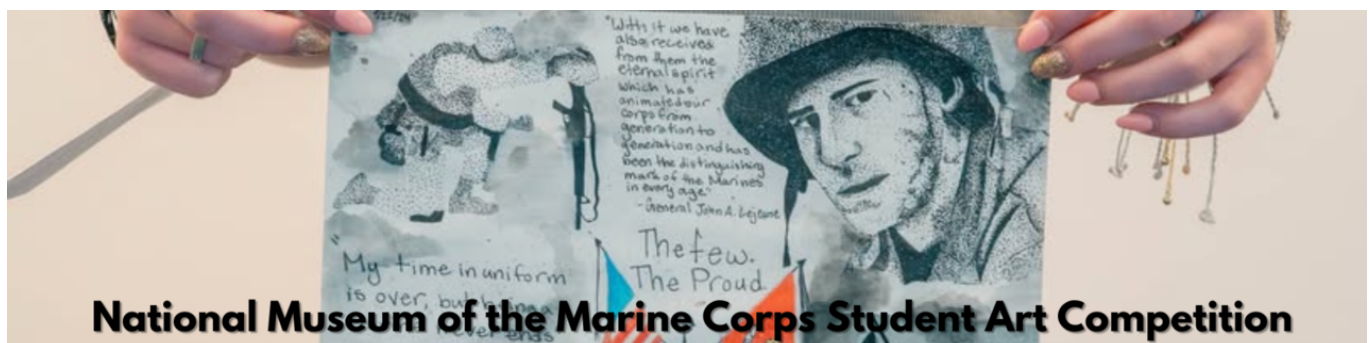
## Digital Connectivity Technology Program Capital Projects Fund Program

The U.S. Department of Treasury awarded \$279 million to Pennsylvania for critical capital projects. In June 2022, the Pennsylvania General Assembly appropriated this funding to the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA), which is using the funds to establish grant programs that identify eligible projects that meet program guidelines and federal requirements.

The CPF-Digital Connectivity Technology Program (Technology) is one of the three funding programs created by PBDA to help deploy these funds in communities across Pennsylvania. PBDA anticipates the program opening in early March/April 2025, and will accept applications for 60 days. Submissions must be made through the Electronic Single Application (ESA). Program guidelines and additional details and FAQs are available on the [CPF-Digital Connectivity Technology Program \(Technology\)](#) page.

PBDA will send an email notification once the program opens. To be added to the distribution list please email [pabroadbandauthority@pa.gov](mailto:pabroadbandauthority@pa.gov). For additional information, please see the Digital Connectivity Technology Program Fact Sheet.

[Digital Connectivity Technology Program Fact Sheet](#)



**National Museum of the Marine Corps Student Art Competition**

# "Every Clime and Place": Seventh Annual Marine Corps Student Art Competition

The National Museum of the Marine Corps' (NMMC) Seventh Annual Marine Corps Student Art Competition opens February 15, 2025, to all U.S. students in grades K-12.

The theme for the NMMC's art competition is "Every Clime and Place." Student artists are asked to create a piece of 2D art inspired by the theme. Suggestions include, but are not limited to; actions of a Marine from history (past or present), a Marine the student knows personally, Wounded Warrior Marines, Combat Veteran/Veteran Marines, or any United States Marine that the student artist believes to be the embodiment of having served in, "Every Clime and Place."

Artwork entries must be submitted via digital copy no later than **April 15, 2025**. For additional information and for the entry form, please review [the Student Art Competition 2025 Flyer](#).

## Input Needed: 5-Minute Survey on Cell Phone Policies That Work

**We need your help with a pressing challenge:** How, specifically, should schools manage student cell phones to maximize learning and well-being?

To date decisions about where and when students are permitted to use their phones have been made with limited evidence on what actually works. The philanthropically-funded Phones In Focus survey aims to change that by:

- Creating a statewide and national map of phone policies
- Connecting policies to academic and well-being outcomes to identify what works best and for whom

**What's required:** Just 5 minutes of your time as a school leader—and as many teachers and staff at your school as possible—to complete a survey about your school's current and past phone policies.

**Why this matters to you:**

- At the end of the survey, you'll receive a real-time snapshot of how educators across the U.S. are answering the same questions
- At the conclusion of the study, you'll receive evidence-based recommendations for effective phone policies
- Every educator who completes this survey is automatically entered into a weekly raffle (\$100 for the educator and a \$100 donation to the school). One lucky educator will be chosen as the winner of the grand prize raffle: a gift basket that includes a \$500 VISA gift card, a \$500 donation to their school, personalized and signed copies of *Mindset* by Carol Dweck and *Grit* by Angela Duckworth, and a personalized professional development workshop or in-person school assembly with Angela Duckworth.
- All school leaders who successfully get at least 5 teachers or staff to complete the survey will be invited to an online, invitation-only professional development webinar on the science of self-regulation with Angela Duckworth in fall 2025
- Your participation ensures our state's unique contexts are represented

This non-partisan research is led by the psychologist Angela Duckworth (University of Pennsylvania) and the economists Hunt Allcott and Matt Gentzkow (Stanford University).

**Next step:**

- Complete the online Phones in Focus survey by April 15, 2025 using the [Phones in Focus Survey link](#).

- Forward this email to your teachers and staff and encourage them to take the same survey (at the same link).  
The more responses from your school, the greater your chances of winning the raffle.

Your perspective as a frontline educator is invaluable. Thank you for contributing to research that will benefit schools across the Commonwealth.



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