



## March's EdVentures: United 93 Memorial Symposium, FID Program Instructions, Month of the Military Child & More!

In March, we announced a [\\$1.7 million investment in Pennsylvania colleges and universities for "It's On Us" initiatives](#) to combat sexual violence and support survivors. Additionally, we announced investments of \$1 Million to combat hunger on 30 college campuses across Pennsylvania. Since 2023, the Shapiro Administration has funded 92 postsecondary institutions to fight hunger on their campuses.

Last month, [Secretary Rowe visited Lehigh Career & Technical Institute](#) to showcase the investments the Shapiro Administration has made in career and technical education programs that are better preparing students for in-demand careers. Additionally, we announced nearly [\\$1 million in grants to 11 institutions of higher education to provide accelerated pathways to certification for Special Education teachers in training](#), ensuring that all of the Commonwealth's students have the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed.



## Pennsylvania Teachers Encouraged to Apply for New Symposium at Flight 93 National Memorial

Teachers from across Pennsylvania are invited to apply for "Teaching With Courage: 9/11 and the Legacy of Flight 93," a new two-and-a-half-day professional education symposium hosted this summer at Flight 93 National Memorial. This continuing education program is a collaboration between the University of Pittsburgh School of Education, Friends of Flight 93, and the National Park Service.

Applications opened March 2, 2026, and Pennsylvania civic, history, and social studies teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools have until April 1 to apply. Symposium leadership anticipates selecting approximately 40 educators for this inaugural program.

Additional details and the application form are available on the [Flight 93 Educator Symposium webpage](#). For questions, contact Donna Gibson, Executive Director, Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial at 724-472-7933.

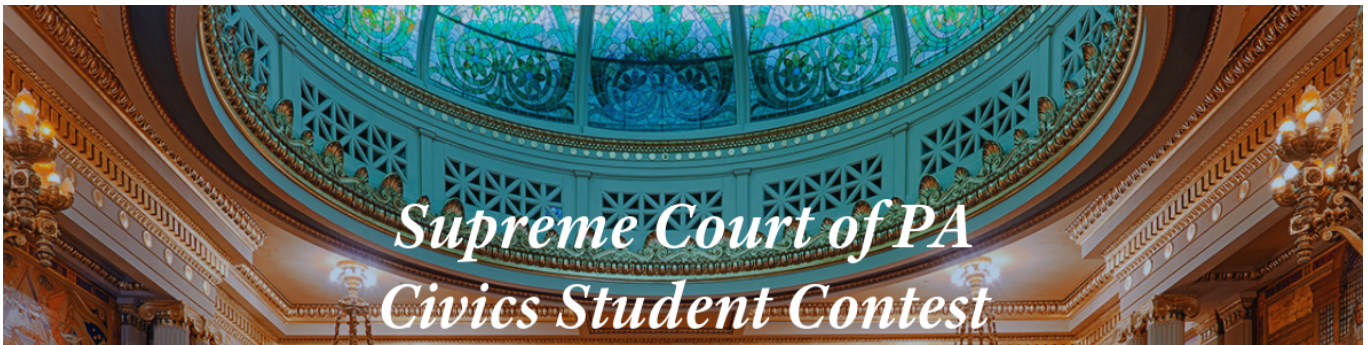
## Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Program Application

The Flexible Instructional Day (FID) program is available to public school entities to be used as an alternative approach to delivering instruction if a circumstance arises that prevents instruction in the customary manner. Entities must have an accepted application to use FIDs.

The 2026-27 SY FID application can be found on the Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal (FRCPP). The window opens on or prior to April 1 and closes on June 1. A complete application includes either Board minutes or a Board President Affirmation Statement that attests to the fact that the Board reviewed and approved the application for submission so applicants are advised to add the approval of the application to an upcoming Spring School Board meeting agenda.

For a list of accepted FID programs along with the effective and termination dates, please visit our website. If you have an accepted FID application and it terminates on 6/30/26, then your entity would need to reapply during the window or you will lose the program for the 2026-27 SY. You would be able to reapply in the future.

For questions about the FID program, please email [RA-FID@pa.gov](mailto:RA-FID@pa.gov).



## Explore Civics with the Supreme Court of PA Historical Commission

As the nation marks America's 250th birthday, Pennsylvania students are invited to join the celebration while learning about the work and role of the courts with the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Historical Commission.

Through its focus on the importance of civics education, the Supreme Court Historical Commission has launched a series of contest opportunities for students, aimed at helping students expand their knowledge about the work and the role of the state court system.

Beginning March 5, students will have the opportunity to participate in essay and coloring contests with winners honored during the Supreme Court's May oral argument session at the Capitol.

Both contests are free and open to Pennsylvania students in public, private, charter, cyber-charter and home school settings. The deadline for entries is **April 24, 2026**. The coloring contest is open to all students ages 5-11 and will give young students the opportunity to create their own judge. After printing the cartoon judge cutouts, students can choose which judge they want to color and design using their creativity as their guide.

Students and parents are encouraged to submit photo entries on Instagram by tagging [@pennsylvaniacourts](#) or by mail, following the instructions outlined below.

The essay contest is open to all students in grades 3 through 12, with essays being judged on creativity, overall quality and adherence to the questions:

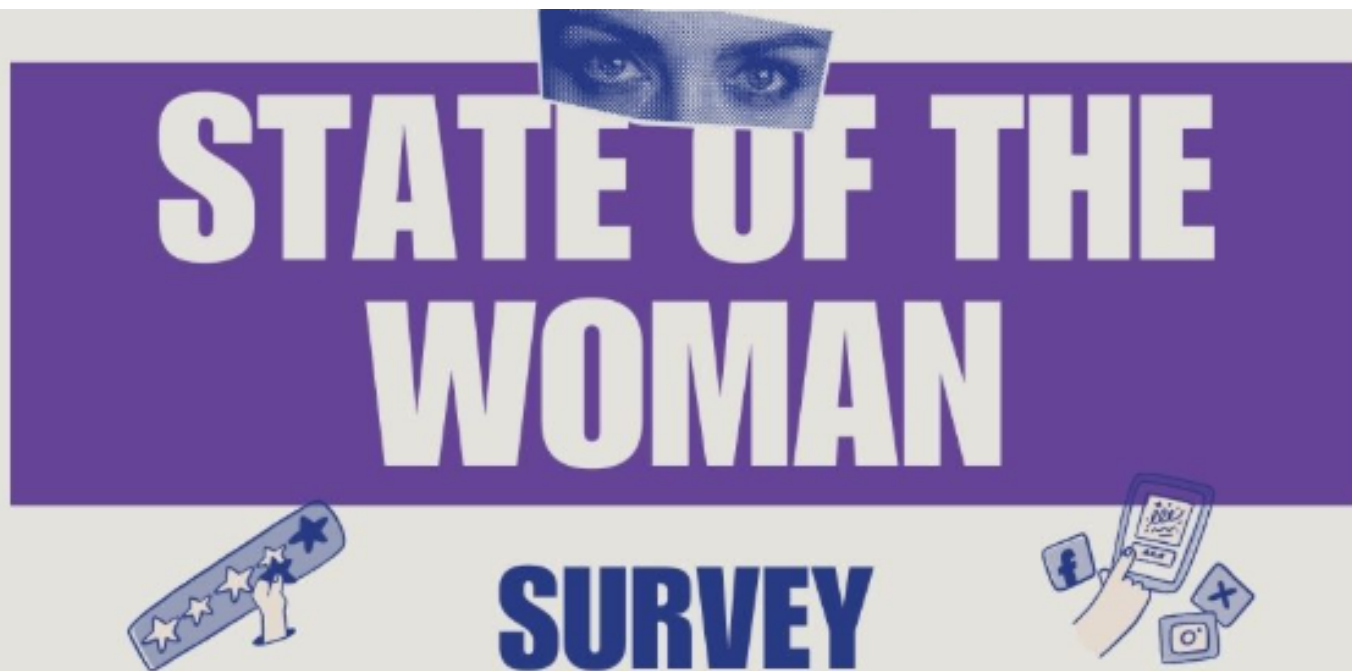
- Question (Grades 3-5) – Why is the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania important?
- Question (Grades 6-12) – Which Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice inspires you and why?

Essay entries can be submitted by email to [CommunicationsOffice@pacourts.us](mailto:CommunicationsOffice@pacourts.us) or by mail to:

**AOPC Communications**  
c/o Stacey Witalec  
601 Commonwealth Ave.  
Harrisburg, Pa 17106

If submitting by mail, entrants should include the following information on a separate piece of paper: full name, school name, city, state, phone number, email (if applicable), teacher name and teacher email (if applicable).

For additional information, please visit the [PA Courts Student Contests webpage](#).



## State of the Woman Digital Survey

It's been more than 20 years since Pennsylvania has produced a comprehensive report on the status of women in the Commonwealth. The Governor's Advisory Commission on Women hopes that this new benchmark will be the most inclusive report on women in Pennsylvania's history. The Commission hopes to reach women in all 67 counties through our digital survey, which will be open until May 30.

Share your experiences on community safety, women's health, and civic engagement through the 2026 State of the Woman Report survey. Your voice helps build a stronger, healthier Pennsylvania for everyone.

All responses are anonymous. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. Get started at [the State of the Woman survey](#).



**April is Month of the Military Child**

April is proudly recognized as the Month of the Military Child -- a time to honor the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of children in military families. Our school community celebrates these incredible students who support loved ones serving our country.

Since 1986, the U.S. Department of Defense has recognized April 15 as Purple Up Day! We invite everyone to participate in Pennsylvania's Virtual Military Family Spirit Week from April 13–17 and share their spirit on social media using **#PurpleUpPA**. The week includes, **April 13 – Red, White, and Blue Day; April 14 – Support Your Favorite Military Branch Day; April 15 – State-wide Purple Up! Day; April 16 – Camouflage (“Digi”) Day; and April 17 – R.E.D. (Remember Everyone Deployed) Friday—wear red.**

For more information about the [Military Interstate Compact Commission](#) in Pennsylvania or the [Purple Star Schools program](#), contact [RA-EDMILITARYFAMK12@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EDMILITARYFAMK12@pa.gov).

## Pick Up Pennsylvania: PA's Largest Community Improvement Program

Pick Up Pennsylvania is a year-long community improvement initiative includes cleanups, beautification and greening (like painting murals or planting flowers), recycling collections and litter prevention education.

Bags, gloves and safety vests are provided to registered participants through a partnership with the PA Department of Environmental Protection, PennDOT and Ocean Conservancy, while supplies last.

For more information, view the [Pick Up Pennsylvania flyer](#), visit the [Keep PA Beautiful Pick Up PA webpage](#) or contact Michelle Dunn at 724-836-4121 ext.113 or at [mdunn@keepabeautiful.org](mailto:mdunn@keepabeautiful.org).



## Information & Submissions for RISE Awards 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 opened on February 1. Nominations can be submitted until **August 30, 2026**.

# Highlighting

## Structured Literacy

## What is Structured Literacy?

**Structured literacy** is a research-based approach to teaching reading that aligns with the science of reading. It emphasizes clear, intentional instruction in the essential components of literacy. Structured literacy instruction is:

1. **Explicit** – Skills are directly taught with clear explanations, modeling, guided practice, and immediate feedback.
2. **Systematic** – Concepts are introduced in a logical sequence, moving from simple to more complex.
3. **Cumulative** – New learning builds on previously taught skills, with regular review to ensure mastery and retention.
4. **Diagnostic and responsive** – Instruction is informed by ongoing assessment. When needed, additional diagnostic tools are used to identify specific skill gaps, and instruction is adjusted accordingly.

Structured literacy ensures that **every student** has access to the foundational skills and tools needed to make meaning from print and confidently engage in all learning opportunities that literacy unlocks.

PDE's [Structured Literacy landing page](#) provides a comprehensive collection of resources related to Pennsylvania's literacy legislation, including **Act 55 of 2022**, **Act 135 of 2024**, and **Act 47 of 2025**, such as:

- Evidence-Based Reading Professional Development List
- Evidence-Based Reading Curriculum Materials List
- Evidence-Based Reading Intervention and Supplementary Materials List
- Implementation Guidance
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Reading Leadership Council resources
- Structured Literacy eBook
- Structured Literacy Program Framework Guidelines
- Pennsylvania State Literacy Plan Toolkit

These resources—and many others—support LEAs, educators, and families in understanding and implementing structured literacy across Pennsylvania.



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