



Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators
Proud Leadership for Pennsylvania Schools

Education Update January 17, 2023

Updates:

Save the Date:

Aspiring to Leadership: PASA is proud to host a virtual workshop on Friday, February 3, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. focused on individuals who are “Aspiring to Leadership” specifically focusing on the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent positions. This program continues to be very timely and is much needed as we continue to see a tremendous amount of change over in key leadership positions across our state. ***Register on the PASA Website now!***

PA Summit for Educational Leaders: PASA and the Pennsylvania Principals Association will host the PA Summit for Educational Leaders August 6-8, 2023 at The Alloy King of Prussia and Upper Merion Area High School. Act 45 PIL Hours Available. Look for more information in the new year!

In Health, Safety, Equity & Learning News...

U.S. Kindergarten Vaccination Rate Dropped Again, Data Shows— Vaccination rates for U.S. kindergarteners dropped again last year, and federal officials are starting a new campaign to try to bring them up. Usually, 94% to 95% of kindergarteners are vaccinated against measles, tetanus and certain other diseases. The vaccination rates dropped below 94% in the 2020-2021 school year, during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study released Thursday found rates dropped again in the 2021-2022 school year, to about 93%. *Read the rest of the story: [“U.S. Kindergarten Vaccination Rate Dropped Again, Data Shows”](#) (from Associated Press, 1/12/23)*

Panic Buttons, Classroom Locks: How Schools Have Boosted Security— When Adam Lane became principal at Haines City High School eight years ago, there was little to stop an attacker from entering the school, which sits alongside orange groves, a livestock farm and a cemetery in Central Florida. “You could drive right up, walk right in the front office,” Mr. Lane said. Today, the school is surrounded by a 10-foot fence, and access to the grounds is carefully controlled via specific gates. Visitors must press a buzzer to be let into the front office. More than 40 cameras monitor key areas. New federal data released on Thursday offers insight into the many, growing ways that schools have amped up security over the past five years, as the country has recorded three of the deadliest school shootings on record, and as other, more routine gun incidents on school grounds have [also become more frequent](#). *Read the rest of the story: [“Panic Buttons, Classroom Locks: How Schools Have Boosted Security”](#) (from The New York Times, 1/12/23)*

In State News...

PA House Bill Would Make It Easier for Parents to Attend School Events — They’re the stuff of every happy ending in movies or on tv: Proud parents in the stands or in the auditorium seats, cheering on their children as they succeed on stage, in the classroom, or on the athletic field. But for too many American families, the demands of work and the economy make it hard for parents to be there when their kids need them the most. But a bill sponsored by two Democratic lawmakers from Philadelphia [aims to help](#)

[parents be there when it matters](#). Read the rest of the story: [“PA House Bill Would Make It Easier for Parents to Attend School Events”](#) (from PA Capital-Star, 1/10/23)

PA High Schools Could Start Offering Students K-12 Education Training Next School Year — Starting next school year, Pennsylvania schools will have a new career and technical education (CTE) option to offer students: K-12 education. The program is just one of many ways the state is responding to a teacher shortage that’s created cascading staffing challenges across the Commonwealth. Tomás Hanna, the state Department of Education’s chief talent officer, said the goal of the program is to expose young people to careers in education. Read the rest of the story: [“PA High Schools Could Start Offering Students K-12 Education Training Next School Year”](#) (from WHYY, PBS, 1/13/23)

Ex-Reading Superintendent Tapped for PA Education Secretary— A former Reading School District superintendent is heading to Harrisburg. Pennsylvania’s incoming governor, Josh Shapiro, picked Khalid Mumin, the former leader of Reading schools, to join his cabinet as education secretary. After some shorter stints by former superintendents, Khalid Mumin led the Reading School District for seven years, becoming the longest-tenured superintendent in more than 20 years. Read the rest of the story: [“Ex-Reading Superintendent Tapped for PA Education Secretary”](#) (from KPVI NBC 6, 1/9/23)

In National and International News...

How This School Uses Architecture and Design to Improve Mental Health— When John Lewis Elementary School opened in August 2021, it became the first school in the District of Columbia school system to pursue a WELL Building certification. To get it, the school was designed and built with mental health in mind. The WELL Building Standard is a set of concepts laid out by the International WELL Building Institute, an organization focused on the relationship between design and health. Those concepts—keying in on air, water, nourishment, light, movement, thermal comfort, sound, materials, mind, community, and innovation—are built off decades of research demonstrating how design can facilitate active learning and childhood development. Read the rest of the story: [“How This School Uses Architecture and Design to Improve Mental Health”](#) (from EducationWeek, 1/10/23)

ChatGPT Advice Academics Can Use Now — Ever since the chat bot [ChatGPT](#) burst into public view in late 2022, students, professors and administrators have been woozy from a chaotic cocktail of excitement, uncertainty and fear. The bot writes poems, sonnets and essays. It also serves as a convincing debate partner on a seemingly unlimited number of subjects. Given that the natural language model [learned](#) passing scores on the evidence and torts portion of the bar exam, among other feats, some in academe fret that the technology may facilitate widespread cheating. Others see opportunity for accelerating discussions about [reimagining teaching](#) to help students write prose that differs from what machines can produce. Read the rest of the story: [“ChatGPT Advice Academics Can Use Now”](#) (from Inside Higher Ed, 1/12/23)

K-12 Schools Share Their Strategies for Addressing the Coming Federal Funding Cliff— The COVID-19 pandemic essentially ended the conversation about whether school districts should embrace one-to-one programs that put a computing device into the hands of every student. “During COVID, a large number of individual devices were deployed,” says Amy McLaughlin, Cybersecurity Initiative director at the [Consortium for School Networking \(CoSN\)](#). “We exited the conversation of, ‘Should we do one-to-one?’ and entered the conversation of, ‘How do we maintain one-to-one?’” Historically, many school districts have struggled to [build device refresh cycles](#) into their operating budgets. Often, new interactive displays or laptops are bought with one-time, nonrecurring funds, such as bond money for a school building project. More recently, schools received multiple rounds of [federal government funding from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#), the [Emergency Connectivity Fund](#) and other grants to make necessary ed tech purchases. Read the rest of the story: [“K-12 Schools Share Their Strategies for Addressing the Coming Federal Funding Cliff”](#) (from EdTechMagazine, 1/11/23)

House GOP Introduces Bill Requiring K-12 Schools to Post Curricula Online — House Republicans have proposed legislation to require K–12 schools that receive federal funding to post their curricula online for the sake of [transparency](#) for parents. The [bill](#) would amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that local education agencies “post the curriculum . . . on a publicly accessible website of the agency.” The legislation is dubbed the “Curriculum Review of Teachings Transparency Act.” *Read the rest of the story: [“House GOP Introduces Bill Requiring K-12 Schools to Post Curricula Online”](#) (from National Review, 1/12/23)*

Legislative Updates:

SB 84 (Sponsors: Phillips-Hill & Schwank) – *This bill passed unanimously on second consideration in the Senate last week. [Protecting the First Amendment Right to Freedom of Religious Expression](#) -* Amends the Public School Code of 1949 to repeal the provision prohibiting public school teachers from wearing religious garb or insignia while in the performance of their duties. Currently, Section 1112 prohibits a teacher from wearing any garb, mark, emblem or insignia that would indicate he or she is a member of or adherent to any religious order or sect while in the performance of their duties as a teacher. A teacher who violates this ban must be suspended from teaching for a term of one year, or permanently disqualified from teaching after multiple offenses. Furthermore, a public school director can be held criminally liable for failing to enforce this prohibition.

In the case *Nichol v. Arin Intermediate Unit 28* in the United States District Court, W.D. Pennsylvania held that Arin Intermediate Unit 28’s religious affiliations policy violates the Free Exercise of Religion and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The teacher was suspended pursuant to the Garb Statute and Arin’s religious Affiliations policy from her job as an instructional assistant for refusing to comply with her supervisor’s request that she remove or conceal a small cross she regularly wore on a necklace. As a result of the ruling, the plaintiff was rehired with back pay. Based on this decision, Section 1112 is no longer warranted.

SB 114 (Brooks) – *This bill passed unanimously on second consideration in the Senate and re-referred to the Appropriations Committee last week. [Firefighter Training Pilot Program for High School Students](#) -* Amends the Public School Code of 1949 to establish a pilot program to provide fire training to secondary school students through institutions of higher education. This bill would create a pilot program for community colleges and universities in the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) to give interested high school students training in firefighting. This legislation passed the Senate unanimously in April 2021, but was not considered by the full House before the close of session.

As documented in the SR 6 report, Pennsylvania is facing a severe shortage of volunteer firefighters, with the current number of volunteers down to less than 15% of the number of volunteers in the 1970s. By encouraging school districts to partner with institutions of higher education, we can help recruit and retain firefighters at a time when first responders are desperately needed. This legislation would award three grants of \$150,000 each, which would be distributed to three community colleges or PASSHE schools in the Commonwealth, one in the eastern, central, and western parts of the state. The grants will be used to establish fire training programs for students in high school during the school year, with the hope they will remain firefighters for years to come.

Upcoming Legislative Schedule –

House of Representatives:

Next session: Jan. 9 at noon.

No committee meetings scheduled at this time.

Senate:

Next session: None scheduled

No committee meetings scheduled at this time.

On the PASA Calendar...

- January 24,25,31: Developing and Maintaining a Balanced Budget (One day, held regionally at Central PATTAN, 6340 Flank Drive, Harrisburg, PA, EAST PATTAN, 333 Technology Drive, Malvern PA; WEST PATTAN, 3190 William Pitt Way, Pittsburgh, PA)
- February 3: Aspiring to Leadership (Virtual workshop)
- March 30-31: PASA Leadership Forum - "A New Beginning: Advocating and Leading for a Positive Education System in Pennsylvania"
- May 21-23: PASA Women's Conference – featuring Ruby Payne, Keynote Speaker on Emotional Poverty
- October 16-18: PASA/PSBA Fall Conference
- August 6-8: PA Summit for Educational Leaders (Held at The Allow King of Prussia and Upper Merion Area High School.) PIL Hours Available

[Click here](#) to view the full calendar of events.