



K-12 EDUCATION

Ensure each child in Pennsylvania has the opportunity for an adequate and equitable high-quality public education. All children in Pennsylvania deserve to be provided an adequate and equitable high-quality public education, regardless of their zip code. This includes equipping students with supports to meet their special education needs and focusing on building skills to graduate successfully, transition to higher education, or enter the workforce career ready.

DATA POINTS

61.9% of 3rd grade students → score proficient or advanced in English Language Arts as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).
 and
57.9% of 8th grade students →

56.0% of 3rd grade students → score proficient or advanced in math as measured by the PSSA.
 and
32.2% of 8th grade students →

MORE THAN 1 IN 8 STUDENTS

who entered 9th grade four years ago did not graduate by the end of the four years.

Pennsylvania ranks **43RD** in the nation in the state's share of education funding.

The share of CTE funding is

90% LOCAL **8%** STATE **2%** FEDERAL

65,536 students are enrolled in career and technical education programs.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- 1. Support increased investments in basic education and special education funding as well as evaluate and recommend strategies to address and advance adequacy and equity.**
 - a. Support increased investments through the enacted basic education funding formula to ensure adequate and equitable support is provided to school districts.
 - b. Ease the burden on local school districts covering special education costs by increasing the state share of special education funding back to approximately one-third of costs.
 - c. Monitor the outcome of the public education lawsuit, including legislative considerations depending on the decision.
 - d. Develop and provide a formal advocacy position to the Basic Education and Special Education Funding Commission, if convened, on adequacy and equity in K-12 education.
- 2. Produce publicly available and easily digestible education data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.**
- 3. Ensure adequate state funding for career and technical education (CTE) so that every interested child can participate.**
 - a. Continue to drive increased investments into the state CTE subsidy and equipment grant lines.

- b. Advocate for increased disaggregated publicly available CTE data that is consumable and identifies future policy solutions.
- c. Modernize the career exploration process and CTE curriculum to ensure that programming is meeting economic needs.
- d. Develop a formal CTE coalition that includes a diverse stakeholder community that focuses on increasing student access and CTE support.
- e. Research options for CTE to create a pipeline to the human services field by potentially adding options for industry-based credentials.

4. Continue to develop a comprehensive and transparent accountability framework for schools and their personnel.

- a. Review and monitor the state’s study on student learning loss as a result of virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Identify national metrics on 3rd grade reading and 8th grade math to identify policy solutions to improve the state’s outcomes in these measures.
- b. Continue to monitor the Future Ready Index and school profiles to ensure that school districts are improving performance and making progress in key areas, including emphasizing student growth measures.
- c. Continue to oppose efforts to implement vouchers or education savings accounts, as these proposals are likely to weaken the performance of already struggling schools further.
- d. Advocate for universal free breakfast and lunch for all public school students.

5. Conduct a landscape analysis of how local education agencies offer and provide mental health services to students.

- a. Request data on how local education agencies utilized the 2023-2024 school safety and mental health grants, including the outcomes of the study on current services offered.
- b. Research school-based mental health models, including funding opportunities for expansion.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS IMPACTING POLICY PRIORITIES:

- A legislative response should the decision on the public education funding lawsuit (*William Penn School District et al vs. Pennsylvania Department of Education et al*) determine that the current funding structure is unconstitutional.
- PSSA and Keystone exam data to track post-pandemic trends, including the state’s plan to address learning loss.
- Federal budget appropriations, including Title I and IDEA. State budget appropriations in basic education funding, career and technical education funding, and special education funding.
- Reauthorization of federal Perkins V, which governs CTE administration from a congressional level.

