

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 1, 2026

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In Northwestern PA, Lt. Gov. Davis Highlights Investments in Youth Safety Programs to Help Keep Kids and Communities Safe

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) School Safety and Security Committee, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis, approved 177 projects to strengthen community safety and expand opportunities for Pennsylvania youth.

Over the past three years, PCCD has provided more than \$1 billion in funding through 6,764 grants across Pennsylvania to address and prevent violence in our communities.

Governor Shapiro's [2026-27 budget proposal](#) continues to make investments in the community organizations doing critical violence prevention work by proposing a \$5.2 million increase for the Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) program and a \$1 million increase for the Building Opportunities through Out-of-School Time (BOOST) program, bring total proposed investment to \$68.3 million.

ERIE AND FARRELL, PA – Today, **Lt. Governor Austin Davis** highlighted the **Shapiro-Davis Administration's** continued investments in Pennsylvania's Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) and Building Opportunities through Out-of-School Time (BOOST) programs to keep kids and communities safe while visiting two new recipients of BOOST funding – **Farrell Area School District in Mercer County** and the **YMCA of Greater Erie's Teen Center**.

The **Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)**, which Lt. Gov. Davis leads as chairman, recently [announced the latest round of grant award winners for the Violence Intervention and Prevention \(VIP\) and Building Opportunities through Out-of-School Time \(BOOST\) programs](#). In total, 177 projects received more than \$65 million in funding.

"These investments are about providing a place where our youth feel safe and stay engaged after the school bell rings," said **Lt. Gov. Austin Davis**. "I am proud that,

through these grants, Erie and Farrell are building brighter futures and safer communities for kids.”

At the **YMCA of Greater Erie**, a \$493,286 BOOST grant was funded to expand and strengthen their afterschool Teen Center program, which serves approximately 250 middle and high school students in the Erie City School District.

In addition, a \$49,996 VIP grant was awarded to United Way of Erie County to launch “Intro to Sports,” a new afterschool recreation and skill-building program. Delivered in partnership with the YMCA of Greater Erie, the program is designed to serve approximately 280 elementary students in grades 1–5 across 10 Erie public schools.

“This grant truly exemplifies the power of United Way of Erie County’s Community School Model,” said **Mike Jaruszewicz, President of United Way of Erie County**. “Through thoughtful, data-driven collaboration, we can work proactively with schools and community partners to reduce child and adolescent risk factors while creating more opportunities for students to feel connected, supported and successful.”

Lt. Governor Davis also toured **Farrell Area School District** to see how the district is using their \$418,668 BOOST grant and previously awarded school safety and mental health funding, and discussed plans for a new afterschool program supported by the funding.

“The Farrell Area School District is pleased to host Lt. Governor Austin Davis,” said **Superintendent Dr. Lora Adams-King**. “The district has received school safety and mental health grant funding, along with the Building Opportunities through Out-of-School Time grant through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, which the Lt. Governor leads. We are proud to receive these much-needed investments from the Commonwealth, and we are anxious to meet with Lt. Governor Davis regarding how these funds are being utilized.”

To address and prevent gun violence in our communities, the Shapiro-Davis Administration has made historic investments to increase youth and community safety. Since taking office, the Administration has:

- Provided more than \$1 billion in funding through 6,764 grants across Pennsylvania to strengthen public safety and prevent violence in our communities through PCCD;
- Doubled annual state funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Fund Program—providing more than \$25 million in funding through almost 400 grants for places of worship and other nonprofits to enhance security measures;
- Re-established the Pennsylvania Office of Gun Violence Prevention within PCCD to create a comprehensive, coordinated statewide strategy to reduce gun deaths, injuries, and crime;
- Called for a **\$5.2 million** increase for the VIP program and a \$1 million increase for the BOOST grants program in the Governor’s proposed FY 2026-27 state budget, bringing the total proposed investment to **\$68.3 million**.

Since 2023, Pennsylvania has seen a 40 percent decrease in firearm-related crime; a 35 percent decrease in homicides; and a 26 percent decrease in assaults.

Demand for VIP and BOOST funding continued to exceed available resources. PCCD received applications from **464 organizations** seeking a total of more than **\$158 million** — well above the **\$62 million** appropriated for FY 2025-26. Applications represented **44 counties**, with more than three-quarters of applicants seeking youth-based prevention funding, reinforcing the statewide demand for resources to engage youth and promote long-term reductions in violence.

Recognizing this ongoing demand and need, the Shapiro-Davis Administration has called for a **\$5.2 million** increase for the VIP and BOOST grants program in the Governor's proposed FY 2026-27 state budget, bringing the total proposed investment to more than **\$68 million**.

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