



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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**In Philadelphia, Governor Shapiro, Mayor Parker, Secretary Rowe,
Legislators, Educators, and Students Celebrate Historic Investments
in Education Secured in 2026-27 Budget**

The 2026–27 budget signed by Governor Shapiro invests \$678 million in additional funding for Pennsylvania's students — bringing total increases for Pennsylvania's public schools to more than \$3 billion, or 35 percent, since the Governor took office.

Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, graduation rates across the Commonwealth have risen for 3 years in a row, more new teachers are being certified, and Consumer Affairs ranks Pennsylvania as one of the top states for quality public education in the country.



Philadelphia, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro, Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker, Pennsylvania Department of Education Secretary Dr. Carrie Rowe**, teachers, students, and local elected leaders visited Vare-Washington Elementary School in Philadelphia to highlight how the 2026-27 budget signed by the Governor is delivering **\$678 million** in additional funding for Pennsylvania students – building on three years of historic progress to give every student the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed.

This year's budget continues the Shapiro Administration's work to ensure every student, in every community, has access to a high-quality public education. Under **Governor Shapiro's** leadership, Pennsylvania has increased funding for our schools by more than **\$3 billion** – or 35 percent – since the Governor took office, for a total of **\$11.85 billion** invested into Pennsylvania's students this year.

“Even with a divided legislature, we've proven time and again that Democrats and Republicans can come together to get stuff done for the good people of Pennsylvania,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “I believe creating opportunity starts in our classrooms and from day one, my Administration has been focused on delivering real resources for students, parents, and teachers. Together, we've increased funding for Pennsylvania schools by 35 percent since I took office, leading to higher test scores, rising graduation rates, improved attendance, expanded access to vo-tech and CTE, more teachers in our classrooms. These investments are making a real difference and we're going to keep building on it to ensure every Pennsylvania student has the opportunity to succeed.”

This 2026-27 budget builds on the progress we've made over the past three years, providing an overall increase in education funding **totaling more than \$678 million**, including a **\$565 million** increase through the bipartisan adequacy and tax equity formula, a **\$58 million** increase for Basic Education Funding, and a **\$55 million** increase for Special Education Funding. It also continues funding for school infrastructure improvements, universal free breakfast, and mental health in schools.

The School District of Philadelphia will receive **\$2.2 billion in state funding this year, a more than 45 percent increase** compared to the amount the school received when Governor Shapiro took office. In that time, graduation rates are up nearly 3 percent across the Philadelphia School District. At Vare-Washington Elementary School, the percentage of students who scored advanced or proficient on their Math PSSAs is up nearly 8 percent.

“For schools like Vare-Washington Elementary School in Philadelphia and all across Pennsylvania, the impact of Governor Shapiro's commitment to funding public education is not theoretical. It is tangible,” said **Secretary of Education Dr. Carrie Rowe**. “With another balanced, bipartisan budget, we're doing more than funding schools. We're investing in millions of individual stories -- the child who starts the day with a healthy breakfast, the student who discovers the joy of reading, the young person who finds hope after a difficult day because someone was there to help. And that's how we invest in Pennsylvania's future.”

“If we want to incentivize the next generation of educators in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania — or in the city of Philadelphia — we have to be innovative in our approach,” said **Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker**. “And I want you to know that this Student Teacher Stipend program is providing assistance to train the future teachers of Philadelphia because the Governor and our legislative leaders fought for us.”

The Governor was joined for a ceremonial bill signing by **School District of Philadelphia Superintendent Dr. Tony B. Watlington Sr., 6th Grade Teacher Kathleen Kramer**, as well as local and state legislators. As part of today’s visit, Governor Shapiro ceremonially signed the General Appropriations Bill.

“We are thankful for Governor Shapiro and the General Assembly for their commitment to and continued focus on public education, especially the \$157.3 million in increased funding for the School District of Philadelphia to improve student outcomes,” said **Superintendent Tony B. Watlington, Sr., Ed.D.** “Stable and predictable state funding is essential as the District works to balance long-term financial sustainability with our responsibility to serve students in every neighborhood, regardless of their zip code. It will also support our goal to achieve the Board of Education’s Goals and Guardrails, as well as become the fastest improving, large urban district in the nation.”

The stipend that is now afforded to student teachers as well as their cooperating teacher is incredibly helpful to both partners. I remember being a student teacher, completing college classes and working a part time job — it was beyond overwhelming. A stipend would have been so helpful,” said **Kathleen Kramer, a 6th grade teacher at Vare Washington Elementary School**. “It has often been said that teaching is not just a profession, it’s a calling. Governor Shapiro’s budget is having a positive impact on those just receiving that calling.”

Governor Shapiro’s historic investments give every Pennsylvania learner the freedom to chart their own course — ensuring schools have the resources they need to help students succeed and families have access to affordable early learning opportunities.

The investments in this year’s budget build on this foundation, including:

- **\$565 million increase through the bipartisan adequacy and tax equity formula for a total of \$1.9 billion driven out** to the schools that need them most.
- **\$58 million increase to Basic Education Funding, for a total of \$8.32 billion.**
- **\$55 million increase to Special Education Funding, for a total of \$1.58 billion to support students with disabilities and special needs.**
- **Maintains \$125 million for school infrastructure improvements** to create safe, healthy learning environments — including **\$25 million** for the **Solar for Schools** program to lower energy costs and promote sustainability.
- **Provides more than \$100 million in mental health and school safety funding for K–12 schools**, ensuring every student has access to the resources and support they need to thrive, continuing the Shapiro Administration’s strong

commitment to expanding access to mental health care and support across the Commonwealth.

- **Continued Funding Universal Free Breakfast and Free Menstrual Hygiene Products for Students:** This budget continues funding for a key priority of Governor Shapiro – universal free breakfast for all 1.7 million students. It also **includes \$3 million** to ensure students have access to menstrual hygiene products at no cost.
- **Supporting Student Well-Being Through Daily Recess:** This budget establishes **30 minutes of daily recess for students in kindergarten through fifth grade**, ensuring students have dedicated time each school day for movement, social interaction, and stress management so they return to the classroom refreshed and ready to learn. Recess is not an extra — it is a fundamental part of children’s growth, teaching skills like collaboration, conflict resolution, and self-regulation that are just as essential as math, science, and reading.

Under Governor Shapiro’s leadership, graduation rates across the Commonwealth have risen for 3 years in a row, more new teachers are being certified, and Consumer Affairs ranks Pennsylvania as one of the top states for quality public education in the country.

When you walk into well-invested schools like Vare-Washington, you are reminded that we can and will succeed,” said **Speaker Joanna McClinton, PA’s 191st House District**. “We are so grateful to Governor Shapiro and every one of my colleagues for their hard work throughout this budget process, because I know that when we’re in the Capitol, we remember our community, we remember the children, and we create opportunities for more success stories where our children can achieve their dreams.”

“When everybody is doing their part — from the Mayor and teachers doing their part, to the legislators and the Governor — we’re able to deliver more resources, more teachers, more staff, and more books to help our students learn,” said **Senator Vincent Hughes, PA’s 7th Senatorial District**. “And it’s success in schools like Vare-Washington that show us what these investments can do.”

“When I go to Harrisburg every day, and we work on a budget, it’s not just the numbers that we do this work for — we do this work because we believe in our young people,” said **Chairman Jordan Harris, PA’s 186th House District**. “The most valuable resource and asset that we have in Pennsylvania is our young people, and we’re going to do all that we can to ensure they receive every single resource necessary to make each and every one of their dreams come true.”

“The passage of this budget is the fruition of the House and Senate’s collaborative commitment to giving every student the opportunity to succeed. By making investments in our schools, supporting our educators, allocating funding for after school and violence intervention programs, and expanding access to critical resources, we’re strengthening our communities and preparing the next generation for academic and personal success,” said **Representative Ben Waxman, PA’s 182nd District**. “This budget is an

investment in our children, our future workforce, and the overall future of our state. I'm proud to support these historic and necessary education funding increases.”

Governor Shapiro’s visit today reinforced a clear message — we must keep going to ensure every student has the freedom to [chart their own course](#) and the opportunity to succeed.

Read more about Governor Shapiro’s [2026-27 budget](#), view the Governor’s remarks as prepared [here](#), or watch the Governor’s delivered remarks [here](#).

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