



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Davis Secure 30 Minutes of Daily Recess for Every Pennsylvania K-5 Student in 2026-27 Budget, Helping Kids Learn and Develop Critical Social Skills

The Shapiro-Davis Administration secured 30 minutes of daily recess for every Pennsylvania K-5 student in the 2026-27 budget — giving kids more time to move, play, connect with classmates, and return to the classroom ready to learn.

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 nearly 35 percent more, 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.

North Wales, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis** visited **North Wales Elementary School in Montgomery County** to highlight the Shapiro-Davis Administration's historic investments in Pennsylvania's public schools and its work to give every student more time to learn, grow, and succeed — including **securing 30 minutes of daily recess** for every Pennsylvania student in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Governor Shapiro's 2026-27 budget established a requirement that all Pennsylvania K-5 students receive at least 30 minutes of recess each full school day beginning in the 2027-28 school year. The Governor ceremonially signed HB 1505 today to mark the achievement.

“Quality education is about more than dollars and cents — it’s also about common sense,” said **Governor Shapiro**. “It’s hard to focus when you haven’t had a chance to move around. Recess gives kids time to exercise, get some fresh air, interact with their classmates, work through conflicts, and come back to the classroom ready to learn. We’ve got to get back to basics, and that’s exactly what we’re doing with 30 minutes of recess every day for every K-5 student in Pennsylvania.”

“Our kids need time to exercise, time to play and time to socialize with their friends. They need time to simply be kids,” said **Lt. Gov. Davis**. “As parents, we’re all concerned about how screen time and social media are impacting our children, and recess gives them an opportunity to step away from their screens and connect with the world around them. And learning doesn’t stop when our kids are on the playground. They’re learning how to collaborate, take turns, resolve disagreements and play fair — skills that will serve them throughout their lives.”

The Governor spoke about the daily recess initiative in his budget address in February, calling for schools to provide **30 minutes of recess every day for students in kindergarten through fifth grade**. The requirement will take effect at the beginning of the **2027-28 school year**, giving school entities time to incorporate recess into elementary school schedules.

At North Wales Elementary, students currently receive 20 minutes of recess. Beginning next school year, the school plans to add 10 minutes to meet the new requirement.

Recess provides students with dedicated time for movement, fresh air, social interaction and play. It also gives students an opportunity to practice skills that are critical inside and outside the classroom, including collaboration, conflict resolution and self-regulation.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [recommends](#) that children and adolescents get **at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day** and notes that schools are uniquely positioned to help students meet that goal. Regular physical activity can help students improve their focus in class, grades, and test scores, while supporting lifelong health and well-being.

The Shapiro-Davis Administration has increased funding for Pennsylvania’s public schools by more than \$3 billion since the Administration took office — a nearly 35 percent increase, bringing total state education funding to nearly \$12 billion in 2026-27.

The 2026-27 budget brings North Penn School District’s annual state funding to **\$28.2 million — \$6.04 million more, or 27.3 percent more, than when Governor Shapiro took office**.

That investment is helping support students across the district, where the graduation rate reached over **95 percent in 2024-25 — nearly two percentage points higher than in 2022-23**.

At North Wales Elementary, more than **65 percent of students were advanced or proficient in Math on the 2025 PSSA — an increase of nearly 11 percentage points since 2022.**

The Shapiro-Davis Administration has also provided North Penn with nearly **\$1 million in School Safety and Mental Health Grant funding** since taking office, supporting mental health and counseling services, trauma-informed practices and school security improvements. In 2024, the district received an additional **\$575,000 Public School Facility Improvement Grant** for HVAC improvements at Penndale Middle School.

“As educators, we know that recess is about much more than taking a break from the classroom,” said **Dana Green, Principal of North Wales Elementary School**. “Thirty minutes may not sound like a major education policy, but when you look at it through the eyes of an elementary school student, those 30 minutes matter. They matter academically, they matter socially, and they matter emotionally. And perhaps most importantly, they give children time during a very busy school day to simply be children.”

“We believe that you should have every dream answered, and that you should absolutely have every opportunity. So we are here for you, and we’re making laws to make your lives better,” said **Representative Liz Hanbidge, who represents Pennsylvania’s 61st House District**. “Because we know that when we invest in education, we invest in you, in your success, in your opportunities, and eventually in our economy and our Commonwealth.”

Shapiro-Davis Administration’s Historic Investments in Pennsylvania Students

Governor Shapiro’s historic investments give every Pennsylvania student 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-Davis Administration’s strong

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

- **Continued Funding for 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. Because the Governor knows recess is not just 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 three years in a row, more new teachers are being certified, and Consumer Affairs has ranked Pennsylvania as one of the top states for a quality public education in the country.

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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