
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF THE **AUDITOR GENERAL**



News for Immediate Release

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Auditor General DeFoor, Be Money \$mart Partners Kick off Financial Planning Month with Second-Annual Art Contest for PA Students

Camp Hill, PA – Auditor General Timothy L. DeFoor today kicked off a contest to design the cover of his department’s second annual Be Money \$mart financial literacy activity book designed to help students and their caregivers learn how to plan for their financial future. The activity book is being promoted with ‘Be Money \$mart’ partners, including the [State YMCA of Pennsylvania](#), the [Pennsylvania Library Association](#), [CrossState Credit Union Association](#), [Junior Achievement of South Central Pennsylvania](#), [PSECU](#) and the [Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry](#).

“Financial Literacy is something I’ve been passionate about for decades, because it is about preparing our next generation for the real world,” Auditor General DeFoor said. “This is the generation we will rely on to create businesses, jobs and fuel our economy for the rest of this century. They need to learn that money is real because they will be employees who will need to understand where their paycheck goes and how to save for their future.”

The winning artwork will be revealed at an award ceremony in November. To enter the contest, visit www.paauditor.gov/covercontest and download the official template. Pennsylvania students in grades K-12 are eligible to participate. Submissions are due by October 30, 2026.

Last year, Olivia Green from Luzerne County, PA was selected as the winner of the competition. Her artwork was chosen out of nearly 215 submissions and was featured on the cover of the activity book, which was unveiled at the 2026 PA Farm Show and handed out to visitors. This year, the department will be choosing 3 winning covers; one from elementary school; one from middle school; and one from high school.

National Financial Planning Month is celebrated each year in October and emphasizes the importance of being financially literate and encourages people to learn about the ways they can become fiscally smart.

“Helping young people build strong financial habits starts with making financial education relevant and engaging,” said Christina Mihalik, CrossState Credit Union Association’s SVP of Government Relations. “CrossState is proud to continue our partnership with the Pennsylvania Auditor General’s Office on this initiative and to help encourage students to begin thinking about money, saving, and financial decision-making in ways that are meaningful for them and their families.”

“At PSECU, we believe financial confidence starts at a young age, and every student deserves the chance to build healthy money habits that can shape their future,” said Adam Stewart, PSECU Vice President of Retail Delivery & Sales. We are proud to partner with the Pennsylvania Auditor General’s Office on initiatives like ‘Be Money \$mart’ that make financial education accessible, practical, and easy to share, helping create a lasting impact for families and communities across Pennsylvania.”

Auditor General DeFoor has spent five years promoting financial literacy through his [Be Money \\$mart](#) initiative, which raises awareness about the need for financial literacy education in Pennsylvania and highlights free resources that people can use on their journey to financial freedom.

Since ‘Be Money \$mart’ launched in 2021, Auditor General DeFoor has:

- Created a [Be Money \\$mart Community Partners](#) page for individuals to directly access resources and information about financial literacy;
- Launched a [statewide art contest](#) for students to design the cover of a financial literacy activity book;
- Partnered with Harrisburg University of Science and Technology and Members 1st Federal Credit Union to coordinate a [statewide financial literacy competition](#) for high school students;
- Met with teachers and students in high school classrooms across Pennsylvania in recognition of successful financial literacy learning opportunities;
- Visited all [state and state related universities in Pennsylvania, as well as community colleges](#), to talk about job and internship opportunities within the department and the importance of knowing how your money works;

- Moderated [financial literacy panels for community organizations, the agriculture industry and local chambers of commerce](#);
- Partnered with the [Pennsylvania Library Association](#) to highlight free financial literacy resources and the PA Forward program;
- [Visited YMCAs](#) across the Commonwealth to talk about financial literacy for all ages;
- Worked with [Junior Achievement](#) to emphasize financial literacy messages to elementary school students and participated in multiple BizTown simulations; and
- Partnered with CrossState Credit Union Association and other credit unions and financial institutions across the state to promote free financial literacy resources, including hosting '[Money \\$mart Mondays](#)' with PSECU.

To learn more about our department, our '[Be Money \\$mart](#)' initiative or to locate audits affecting your community, visit our [website](#).

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