

**What did the Governor tell the General Assembly about his education priorities in the 2026-27 state budget?**

**Excerpts from the Governor's budget address delivered today.**

**On Adequacy Funding for PA Schools**—"We've invested a record amount of money in public education, and created a brand-new formula that drives that money out to the schools that need it most. And we pledged to keep doing it until we meet our obligation set forth in Article 3, Section 14 of our state Constitution, which guarantees every Pennsylvanian access to a "thorough and efficient system of public education."

"As a result of the investments we've made so far, and, thanks to Dr. Rowe and her team at the Department of Education, schools have served more than 224 million free breakfasts. 3,000 more students are enrolled in career and technical education courses. The number of new teacher certifications is increasing, after more than a decade of decline. Regular attendance and graduation rates are up. And Consumer Affairs now ranks us as one of the top states for quality public education in the entire country. This budget proposal builds on that progress."

**On Basic Education Funding**—"It [the proposed state budget] again increases our investment in basic education — and special education. At a time when there are people attacking those with special needs, we are investing in them, respecting them, and believing in their potential. I want to thank you for the bipartisan consensus we have here in Pennsylvania to do that. This budget again directs \$565 million more to the schools that need it most through the new adequacy formula we created together."

**On Cyber Charter Tuition**—"And it builds on the work we started last year to reform our cyber charter system — bringing savings for public schools up to \$250 million this year."

**On Mental Health Funding to Hire School Counselors**—"We've funded mental health services in nearly 800 schools — and helped hire more than 200 new mental health counselors for our students. This budget will allow even more schools to follow their lead — and my plan expands on that work even further by ensuring those dollars can also be used to hire substance use disorder counselors."

**On Advocating for a Cell Phone Ban in Schools**—“Supporting our kids means investing more dollars in our schools and also ensuring they have a healthy, productive learning environment. One way to do that is to get the distraction of cell phones out of their classrooms. I am calling on you to put a bill on my desk to ban cell phones while kids are in school.”

**On Guaranteed Recess Periods**—“Here’s another thing we can do to strengthen student wellbeing. Let’s give students the opportunity to take a break during the day, and get some exercise if they’re able. To clear their heads, and not feel the pressure of being in a classroom for 5 or 6 hours in a row. I’ve directed the State Board of Education to develop recommendations for schools to guarantee recess for our students.”

“Recess isn’t just an extra block on the schedule. I would argue it’s just as critical as learning math, science, and English. It’s fundamental to kids’ growth, and their ability to interact with one another, play together, and learn to settle disputes. I’ve heard about the need for recess from teachers, but more importantly from students who are asking for ways to develop these life skills. These are foundational skills no matter which path they choose after high school.”

**On Career and Technical Education**—“We’ve registered 231 new pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. And more than 39,000 Pennsylvanians have participated in an apprenticeship during my time as your Governor, in fields ranging from welding to nursing to dairy herd management. Those investments are making a meaningful difference, creating more pathways of opportunity.”

“Because there’s still more demand for these classes — more and more students see themselves working alongside electricians like Rob Bair and other members of the skilled trades. That’s why we need to increase CTE funding by another \$18 million this year, bringing our total investment to over \$200 million. And while we increase our investment, let’s also cut red tape for CTE students so they don’t have to repeat classes that they’ve already taken as part of their gen eds. Together, we can make it easier for kids taking CTE classes to graduate with all the credits they need.”

**On Increasing Teacher Stipends**—“Three years ago, we came together in a bipartisan manner to create student-teacher stipends. Because if you’re working full-time as part of your training to become a teacher, you should get paid for that. In our first year, we invested in 2,000 aspiring educators....2,000 student teachers show — if we put more money in people’s pockets, we can get them into the jobs they love.”