



Pennsylvania School Boards Association

legislative report

January 4, 2019

PSBA remains on the frontline for public education during new legislative session; join us April 29 for Advocacy Day



As we embark on another new year and another new legislative session, PSBA is working harder than ever to advocate for our legislative priorities and platform goals. As we are pressing for increased support public education and our members' needs, it is critical for you to join in these efforts by keeping apprised on pending issues and building relationships with your legislators. Stay updated with PSBA's legislative reports, action alerts and issue resources.

Mark your calendars now for Advocacy Day on Monday, April 29, 2019 at the state Capitol in Harrisburg. This year PSBA will be partnering with the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU) and Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) to strengthen our advocacy impact. The focus for the day will be meetings with legislators to discuss critical issues affecting public education. There is no cost to attend, and PSBA will assist in scheduling appointments with legislators once your registration is received. Details and registration will be available soon.

Auditor General's Office, PEMA safety experts to present at PSBA Sectional Meetings



Learn more about school safety and security at one of PSBA's Sectional Meetings to be held in 10 locations across the state in February and March.

Representatives from the Auditor General's Office and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) will offer updates and valuable information. PSBA Sectional Meetings are held from 6-8 p.m. at all locations and are complimentary for members. [Click here](#) to learn more and to obtain a list of dates and locations. Register by logging

in to [myPSBA](#).

2019-20 General Assembly convenes



The 2019-20 session of the General Assembly convened on Jan. 1 as required by the state's constitution that calls for legislators to meet on the first Tuesday of January each year. The new two-year session opened with the swearing in of 50 freshman legislators and all returning members from both the Senate and House of Representatives.

In the Senate, where half of the 50 seats were up for election, there were 25 senators sworn into office. Of that number, there are 18 returning members and seven new members. The breakdown of the new members is five Democrats and two Republicans. Overall, the Republicans hold a 29-21 seat majority in the Senate. Sen. Joseph Scarnati (R- Jefferson) was re-elected as president pro tempore.

In the House, all 203 members were up for election. There are 43 freshman members of the House of Representatives, which includes 24 Democrats and 19 Republicans. Republicans in the House have a 110-91 seat majority. Rep. Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny) was re-elected as the Speaker of the House.

Following the swearing-in ceremonies, each chamber adopted its rules for conduct and procedures. The House adopted changes to some of its rules that include: more thoroughly addressing sexual harassment claims, expediting the process for expelling members convicted of a crime, banning "ghost amendments" (amendments tacked on to other amendments of a bill often done to slow or stop movement of the legislation), and creating a new oversight committee empowered to investigate actions made by executive agencies and administrations.

Also this week, Rep. Turzai announced that special elections will held on Tuesday, March 12, to fill two vacancies in the House that were created by the October death of Rep. Sid Kavulich (114th legislative district, Lackawanna County) and the resignation of Rep. Vanessa Lowery Brown (190th legislative district, Philadelphia County) in December after her conviction on various charges.

The Senate and House will reconvene on Tuesday, Jan. 15 when Gov. Tom Wolf will be sworn in to his second term of office and John Fetterman will become Pennsylvania's new lieutenant governor.

House committee news

- [House speaker announces Republican committee chairs](#)

State budget news

- [Gov. Wolf to present budget address Feb. 5, Appropriations hearings announced](#)

House committee news

House speaker announces Republican committee chairs

This week House Speaker Rep. Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny) announced the majority committee chairmen for the new session. The House Education Committee will be chaired by Rep. Curt Sonney (R-Erie). Rep. David Hickernell, R-Lancaster County, who chaired the House Education Committee during the 2017-18 session, is now chairing the House Professional Licensure Committee. Democrats have not yet announced their committee leaders, and full committee memberships have not been released. The Senate has not made any announcements on committees.

[Click here](#) to see the complete list of Republican House committee chairs.

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State budget news

Gov. Wolf to present budget address Feb. 5, Appropriations hearings announced

On Tuesday, Feb. 5, Gov. Tom Wolf will be presenting his 2019-20 state budget proposal before a joint meeting of the Senate and House of Representatives. PSBA will be providing members with complete coverage of the governor's budget proposal, budget details and resources for school boards.

Following the governor's budget address, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees will convene hearings in February and early March on specific components of the proposal. Hearings of special interest to school officials scheduled to date include:

House Appropriations Committee budget hearings:

- Feb. 11 (Independent Fiscal Office, Department of Revenue)
- Feb. 12 (PSERS/SERS, State System of Higher Education, PA Higher Education Assistance Agency)
- Feb. 13 (Treasury Department, Auditor General, Attorney General)

- Feb. 14 (Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Labor & Industry)
- Feb. 27 (Department of Community & Economic Development)
- Feb. 28 ((Department of Human Services)
- March 4 (Department of Education),
- March 6 (Governor's Budget Secretary)

Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearings:

- Feb. 19 (Independent Fiscal Office, Department of Revenue)
- Feb. 20 (Department of State)
- Feb. 21 (State System of Higher Education)
- Feb. 25 (Department of Labor & Industry)Feb. 27 (Department of Health, Department of Human Services)
- March 5 (Department of Education)
- March 7 (Department of Community & Economic Development, Governor's Budget Secretary)

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