



Warm Wishes from PDE!

As many of us approach the winter holidays, we at PDE wanted to extend warm wishes to all educators, administrators, staff, and learners across our broad community. This time of year provides an excellent opportunity for reflection, gratitude and celebration. We applaud and thank the unwavering dedication of our educators, administrators, and support staff who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to create enriching and nurturing environments for our learners.

At PDE, we have several things to celebrate this season as we look back on our accomplishments from 2023. This year, the Shapiro Administration was able to

- continue to provide [universal free breakfast](#) for every child in public schools, which allows learners to continue their education without having to experience hunger.
- reduce the new teacher certification wait time by 10 weeks since 2022. Additionally, we introduced a certification "clock" on our [Certification page](#), offering real-time updates on processing time required for certifications.
- introduce a new website dedicated to providing information and resources to individuals interested in becoming educators in the Commonwealth, entitled [Teach in PA](#).
- and unveil the [PA MASLOW: A Hierarchy of Collegiate Basic Needs](#) initiative to support postsecondary learners and provide them with the tools, resources, and support to ensure success.

As we reflect on the triumphs of this year, we look forward to continuing to support our education community in 2024 and beyond. All of us at PDE extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who plays a part in shaping the future through education and look forward to serving you in the new year to come.

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You've Got a Friend in PA!

Recently, we unveiled *You've Got a Friend in Pennsylvania* - our automated phone number that individuals of all ages can call to hear pep talks, jokes, and words of encouragement.

Callers can access the line at **717-772-4737** and can select from menu options to listen to students ranging from early elementary through high school. Know someone who would like to participate? Fill out our form and submit their recordings at the link: surveymonkey.com/r/PAPepTalk.



Get Ready for the Governor's School Breakfast Challenge

Introducing the *Governor's School Breakfast Challenge*, a three-month program to encourage more participation in the Universal Free Breakfast Program. We want to recognize schools for increasing breakfast participation while implementing sustainable changes that incorporate more nutritious and local foods in their meal offerings. To learn more about this challenge and to view the challenge criteria, visit the [Breakfast Challenge webpage](#).



Celebrate Agriculture at the 2024 PA Farm Show

The 2024 Pennsylvania Farm Show will provide multiple opportunities for students and teachers to learn more about getting involved in agriculture around the Commonwealth. From January 6th through 13th, learners of all ages can meet and engage with farmers, producers, and fellow educators to learn more about Pennsylvania's number one industry, and all the ways they can bring those lessons into their classrooms.

Several highlights for this year's PA Farm Show will include

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- the *So You Want To Be A Farmer?* booth as an interactive stop on the show floor that allows students and teacher to get hands on experience with many different child-friendly farming tools and get one-on-one time with real farmers to ask questions and learn more about how agriculture connects us all.
- the PA Preferred® Culinary Connection stage provides learners the opportunity to engage with local chefs, media personalities and special guests to learn about Pennsylvania's many foods and crops and how they can be incorporated in familiar favorite meals.
- and the AgExplorer program where learners can discover the many facets of agriculture! Grab your AgExplorer Passport and wander the complex, seeking out the AgExplorer stations, and learn from guides about Pennsylvania agriculture through fun, interactive and hands-on learning.



Get Ready for Farm City Day 2024

Save the date! On May 8-9, 2024, learners from across the Commonwealth are invited to discover Pennsylvania agriculture at Farm City Day, hosted by the PA Department of Agriculture.

Learners will have the chance to learn about agriculture's connections to science, math, nutrition, geography and more through hands-on activities and engaging stations at the Farm Show Complex. To register your school, please visit <https://forms.office.com/g/viUZbivn9R>.

If you have questions, please reach out to Sara Gligora at sgligora@pa.gov.

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