



## Celebrating Historic Investments, FAFSA Assistance, PA Green Ribbon Schools, and More this July!

This July has brought sunshine, summer fun, and exciting updates to PDE! The Shapiro Administration successfully passed a budget that invests in our classrooms and provides opportunities throughout the Commonwealth. The [2024-2025 budget](#) secures a \$1.11 billion total increase in K-12 public education funding, including additional increases in special education funding and student mental health services.

In alignment with these historic investments, PDE highlighted several grant recipients this month. Notably, [more than \\$1 million to expand adult literacy education programs](#) was awarded to five school entities and over [\\$1.4 million was dedicated to grow Pennsylvania's special education workforce](#).

As we move closer towards a new school year, we wish everyone a safe and enjoyable remainder of the summer season.

A banner for 'Birth Certificate Request Information' with a light green background. On the left is an icon of a document with a baby face and a gold ribbon. The text 'Birth Certificate Request Information' is in large, bold, black font. In the bottom right corner is the Pennsylvania Department of Health logo.

## Birth Certificate Requests for the New School Year

During the late summer and early spring, the Department of Health's vital records office often

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Birth certificates can be ordered through the mail with an [Application for a Birth Certificate](#) with a printable/fillable PDF or online through the [PA Vital Records' official storefront](#). In person requests are not required, certificates can be mailed to you, and most orders are processed within two weeks.

If your child was born in another state, you will need to request their birth certificate from that state. See the [National Center for Health Statistics' website](#) for contact information.

The Department of Health's Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries is the official custodian of the Commonwealth's vital records. Third-party vendors may offer vital records services for an extra fee and claim they can get you a copy of your vital record much quicker. However, they generally use the information you provide to submit an order on paper or online back to the Department of Health. To avoid those extra fees and processing steps, we recommend you apply directly through the Department of Health.

For additional information, including information on how to modify or amend a child's birth certificate, please visit the [Department of Health's Records webpage](#). If you would like to share this information with your educational communities, we have created a graphic to share on your social media profiles.

### Vital Records Information

If you would like to share this information with your educational communities, we have created a graphic to share on your social media profiles. This graphic can be saved to your computer by right clicking the image and Selecting *Save Image As...* on your device.

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## Completing a sports physical or new school registration for your child?

If you need a new copy of a birth certificate, the best time to order is **now**.

By ordering now, you can avoid the rush later.



Visit [mycertificates.health.pa.gov](https://mycertificates.health.pa.gov) to learn more.



## Get FAFSA Help From a Real Person (For Free!)

**Text 313- PA FAFSA (313) 723-2372**

### FAFSA Helpline is Now Available for PA Students

PDE partnered with the national nonprofit [uAspire](https://uaspire.org) to launch a free statewide helpdesk to assist students with the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](https://fafsa.gov) application.

This summer, Pennsylvania students, families, and aspiring postsecondary learners can text **313-PA-FAFSA (313-723-2372)** to receive personalized support through a scheduled phone call or virtual advising session. Assistance is available in both English and Spanish.

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## Sign Up for the New PDE Bulletin Board!

Recently, PENN\*LINK moved to a new free-to-subscribe messaging platform called the PDE Bulletin Board. With the change to this new platform, there is no longer the capability for users to add content to the messaging pool, instead communications are **one-way from PDE to the field**.

Members of your school, library, or other educational community are invited to sign up using our [PDE Bulletin Board Sign-Up Form](#). We encourage you to share this form with others so they can stay informed about important communications and updates from the education field.



## Celebrating the 2024 US Green Ribbon Schools Award Winners

Members from school communities across the Commonwealth recently traveled to DC to receive awards through the US Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools initiative. In PA, Rowan Elementary School (Cranberry Township, PA), Green Woods Charter School (Philadelphia, PA), and Reading Senior High School (Reading, PA) were recognized for their efforts to promoting sustainability practices.

To achieve the Green Ribbon Schools award, schools demonstrated progress in three sustainability pillars: reducing environmental impact and costs, improving health and wellness of schools, students, and staff, and promoting effective environmental and sustainability education. Want to learn more? Visit our [Pathways to Green Schools webpage](#) to see how your school district can support green initiatives!

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