



From Graduations, to CTE Investments, and the Governor's STEM Competition, We Have a Lot to Celebrate this May!

This May has brought exciting new updates to PDE! Throughout the month, we have highlighted schools across the Commonwealth who are promoting new and innovative ways to learn. We visited [Keystone Central School District](#) and [Forbes Road School District](#) to highlight how investments in career and technical education are serving students of all ages to propel them into their future careers.

We also celebrated [Migrant Education Program graduates](#) at Harrisburg Area Community College as 224 graduates earned a high school diploma or a Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma, overcoming barriers to achieve this important milestone.

This month, we also welcomed the [10th Annual Governor's STEM Competition](#) where twenty regional winning teams from across the Commonwealth displayed and demonstrated their projects under the theme, *Creating a Commonwealth with Universal Design in Mind*.

As we look forward to June and the beginning of the school break, we encourage learners of all ages to stay curious, keep exploring, and take advantage of new learning opportunities available this summer. Whether it's through reading, engaging in STEM activities, or pursuing new hobbies, let's continue to foster a love of learning that lasts well beyond the summer break.



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From the Secretary's Desk

As many students across the Commonwealth approach summer break, I want to take a moment to congratulate everyone on yet another successful school year! Congratulations to all who are graduating – whether it be from kindergarten, high school, college, or anywhere in between – we are so proud of you! The future is yours to design, and I can't wait to see all the great things you accomplish as you step into your next phase of life.

As you pack up your desks for the summer, make sure to continue learning and growing, reading, visiting your local library, seeking out summer meals in your community, relaxing and having fun! We can't wait to welcome you back to school in the fall, ready to learn and change the world!



PA School District Recognized by USDA

Donegal School District in Mount Joy was recognized by the USDA Food and Nutrition Services as one of their featured success stories in a recent newsletter! This year, Donegal School District created a cooking club for seventh and eighth grade students to help students explore different cooking techniques, how food is sourced, food safety, and more. Throughout the year, Food Services Director Kelly Price worked to create lessons that were designed to build student confidence in the kitchen while helping to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

During the semester, students were partnered with a teammate as the group spent time learning about various recipes and cuisines, visited a local beef farm, and used USDA resources like the "[Grow It. Try It. Like It](#)" toolkit and the [MyPlate](#) tools.

Inaugural Organ Donation Awareness Innovations Challenge Selects Winner

This year, the Organ Donation Advisory Committee (ODAC) held it's first innovations challenge, inviting students across the Commonwealth to submit a 30-90 second PSA to support organ donor education.

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Students from Altoona High School were selected as the winner of this inaugural award and were honored in Boalsburg, on May 9th. This award also included a \$3000 prize which will be shared by the team. To watch, visit the [Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness program YouTube video](#).



There's Still Time to Fill out Your FAFSA

Recently, [PHEAA](#) extended the submission deadline for the 2024-2025 PA State Grant FAFSA to **June 1**—make sure to submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) on time!

If you, or someone you know, is attending an institute of higher education this upcoming year, we strongly recommend completing and submitting your FAFSA forms as soon as possible. For more information, visit studentaid.gov.

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Calling All Future PA Teachers!

Are you, or someone you know, thinking about becoming an educator? We recently launched our Teach in PA mailing list, designed to keep potential educators informed and connected. Whether you're a high school student exploring teaching as a career or already pursuing your degree, this mailing list is your go-to source for the latest updates and information about teaching in Pennsylvania. Visit the [Teach In PA website](#) to sign up today!

May Marks the Return of Remake Learning Days

This month, we celebrated Remake Learning Days and the Career Ready PA Backpack Challenge. Throughout the Commonwealth, participating organization like schools, libraries, museums and more all answered the call and provided hands-on learning opportunities for learners of all ages.

Throughout the month, many organizations focused on STEAM-based learning and employability skills for groups to explore. Programs included activities like flying drones, marketing a product, learning to code, or exploring the great outdoors, all while encouraging participants to think outside the box and learn more about the world around them. Below, take a look at some of the events that we've highlighted throughout May that participated in the PA Backpack Challenge!



Fourth graders from Mifflin County School District participated in a Reedstown event to learn about industry professionals across a wide variety of industries, including banking, healthcare and agriculture. Free Wheeling Day has been offered to Mifflin County students for many years, bringing representatives from a variety of career fields to interact and provide hands-on learning for students.

As part of the Career Ready PA Backpack Challenge, multiple schools throughout the Commonwealth designed and engineered their own catapults as part of a STEM-based hands-on learning experience.



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Learners of all ages participated in Rutherford Elementary School's STEAM Family Celebration where they learned about Rube Goldberg machines, levers and pulleys, as well as ways to implement these concepts using household items like cereal boxes, strings, dominoes and more.



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