



## September 2024: Civic Engagement & Information Literacy, New Resources Available for All School Districts, and More Wins for Education!

As the autumn season settles in, we celebrate a season of achievement and growth for schools across Pennsylvania. This month, we congratulated the [2024 National Blue Ribbon Schools](#), visited the [Educator Preparation Program at Penn State Harrisburg](#), and [attended the Global Impact Forum in Philadelphia](#).

In addition to these important celebrations, the Shapiro Administration awarded over [\\$33 Million to 12 community colleges](#) for capital projects and renovations, and recently awarded [13 PA libraries funding](#) to expand book collections for young learners and [15 PA libraries funding for PA Family Place & Play and Grow libraries](#), which help transform libraries into community centers for early childhood information, parent education, socialization, and family support.



The [Governor's Civic Engagement Award \(GCEA\) program](#) engages high school students in voter registration and the electoral process and awards the students and their schools for their efforts. The program encourages high school students to volunteer and assist with the administration of our electoral process.

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Schools must first sign up and designate a coordinator to participate in the GCEA. In participating schools, students hold registration drives so that their peers who are eligible to register to vote can do so.

Schools that register to vote at least 85% of their eligible students during the school year earn Gold Level Awards. Schools that register to vote between 65% and 84% of their eligible students achieve Silver Level Award status.

To register your school, visit the [GCEA Registration form](#).



## Flyers Regarding the Keystone State Challenge Academy

The Keystone State Challenge Academy (KSCA) is unlike any other youth program in Pennsylvania. It is a one-of-a-kind scholarship program for youth, ages 16-18, who might never receive a scholarship elsewhere. The KSCA was created to give at-risk adolescents the opportunity to benefit from the military training model. This program is more than just receiving a high school diploma or GED. It is a well-rounded, values-based program that seeks to help cadets become responsible, self-sustaining citizens. Funded by federal and state funds, it is tuition-free, with state and federal subsidies to school districts remaining with the home school.

Two one-page flyers are attached for distribution and can be downloaded by selecting the buttons. For more information, please visit the [Keystone State Challenge Academy webpage](#).

Flyer for Superintendents

Flyer for Executive Directors

**Shapiro Administration delivers funding for free period products to all Pennsylvania school districts.**

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# Funding for Free Period Products Now Available for All PA School Districts

Earlier this month, the Shapiro Administration announced all school districts, intermediate units, career and technical centers, and brick-and-mortar charter schools will receive funding to [provide free period products to students](#). This funding enables schools to provide access to period products at no cost to students and works to improve health equity.

Applications and reimbursement requests will not be required. Funding is proportional to the total number of students enrolled in a school, [funding allocations for the 2024-2025 Feminine Hygiene Product Grant Program](#) can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Health website.

# Governor's Breakfast Champions Celebrated at Governor's Residence

This month, Governor Shapiro and Secretary Mumin celebrated 10 schools named as the first-ever Governor's Breakfast Champions: schools that had the most success in participation in the inaugural Governor's School Breakfast Challenge. These schools also worked to implement sustainable changes that incorporate more nutritious and local foods in their meal offerings.

For more information on the Universal Free Breakfast program, including the School Breakfast Promotion Digital Toolkit, please visit the [Governor's School Breakfast Challenge webpage](#).

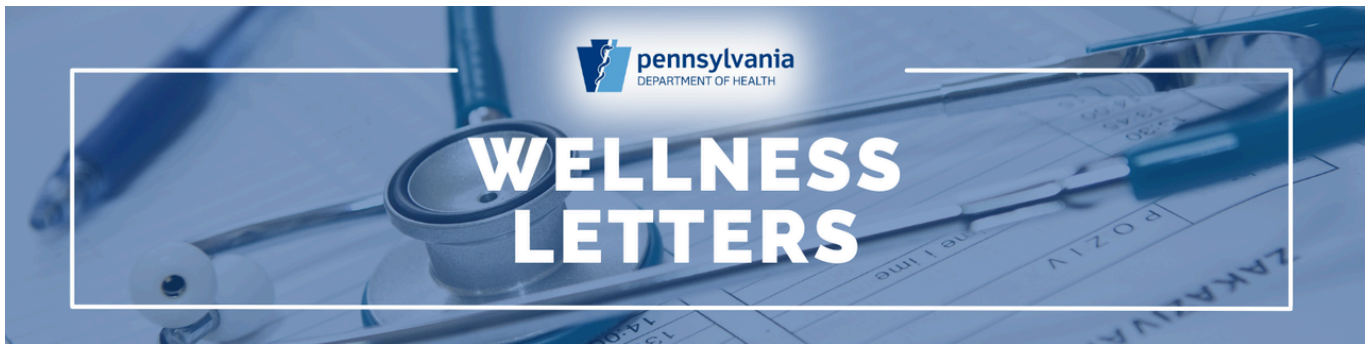


# New Information Literacy Toolkit Now Available

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The [information literacy toolkit](#), which is available to the public, offers a comprehensive resource about how to recognize biases, distinguish between credible information and misinformation, and create and share content responsibly.

This toolkit was created to help develop the information literacy skills of educators, students, and families to better discern fact from fiction. It also aims to encourage critical thinking, active participation in society, and contextual understanding of past and current events to help all learners better navigate the world around them.



We wanted to inform you that the PA Department of Health has formally updated its template letter for parent notification of student growth screenings that are conducted yearly at schools. There are two things we would like to emphasize with the release of this new template:

- 1. The use of this template is NOT mandatory, it is only a tool that is available for use if desired.**
- 2. The guidance for growth screenings has NOT changed, only the template has been updated.**

Note that this template, along with growth screening results, also contains vision, hearing, and scoliosis screening results to help streamline parent/guardian notification of school-based health screenings. As mentioned, the use of this letter is not mandatory. However, it is recommended as it places more emphasis on communication between a parent/guardian and the child's healthcare provider to address individual and unique needs of the child. The new template is [located on the DOH website](#). If you have any questions about this new template, feel free to reach out to the Department at [c-paschool@pa.gov](mailto:c-paschool@pa.gov) and include "Wellness Letter Template" in the subject line.



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