



## ***Legislative Update September 23, 2022***

The House and Senate concluded a relatively short September session on Wednesday and are adjourned until October 17 (Senate) and October 24 (House). Both chambers dealt with a panoply of legislative proposals, but relatively low-key in subject matter.

The House, in Harrisburg for six days this month, moved legislation that among other things dealt with a limitation on parole for crimes of a violent nature, standards for audits conducted by the Auditor General's Office (no specific language directed at school audits), transparency requirements for both state pension systems to include a mandate for livestreaming PSERS board meetings, and a repeal of an archaic limitation in state statute on professional football games on Sunday afternoons.

In the Senate's one week back, the upper chamber moved legislation as diverse as creating special license plates for recipients of a military Air Medal, limitations of dealings with either Russia or Belarus, and a requirement for carbon monoxide alarms in child-care facilities.

While there was no floor action on education bills, the Senate Education Committee did meet on Tuesday and sent two School Code bills to the floor. [House Bill 1813](#) will allow a child of a parent or guardian on active military duty to pre-enroll in a district prior to residency. The parent or guardian must indicate intent to establish residency in the district by providing a real estate contract, lease, or a letter of intent. The parent or guardian must also provide the military orders directing relocation to the new district. The bill was approved without amendments unanimously. The legislation has also had fiscal review by the Senate Appropriations Committee and is ready for a floor vote when the Senate returns in October. You can read more details about the legislation by [clicking here](#).

The Senate Education Committee also approved [Senate Bill 139](#) unanimously. The legislation originally requiring a moment of silence in schools in remembrance of the September 11 attacks, was amended in committee to direct the PA Department of Education to create a model curriculum on terrorism, focusing on September 11. PDE is required to make the curriculum available, but schools are not mandated to use it. Prime sponsor of the bill is Senator Doug Mastriano (R-Franklin) who is the GOP nominee for Governor.

Meanwhile, the Democratic nominee, current Attorney General Josh Shapiro, was moving forward on his education agenda. Shapiro announced over the weekend that he would support the so-called lifeline scholarships as proposed in House Bill 1834 according to the PennLive news outlet. According to the news report, [available here](#), he told reporters that, “I’m for fully funding public education. I’m for making sure we give parents the ability put their kids in the best situation for them to be able to succeed. And I’m for making sure we add scholarships like lifeline scholarships to make sure that that’s additive to their educations.”

[House Bill 2169](#) is currently in the Senate Appropriations Committee. It passed the House in late April by a 104-98 vote largely on party lines. The Senate Education Committee gave its approval late June on a party line vote. Students in the lowest 15% of schools in state math and reading assessments would be eligible to receive the scholarship which could be used for various purposes including tutoring or payment of tuition to another school district in which case the district of residence would have to provide transportation. According to PDE, there 382 low-achieving schools in 76 school districts, enrolling approximately 191,000 students. You can read more about this bill by [clicking here](#).