



# GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor Josh Shapiro and Bipartisan Legislative Leaders Announce Opening of PA Student Teacher Support Program Application**

*The PA Student Teacher Support Program will help address critical teacher shortages across Pennsylvania and ensure students have the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed.*

*The program will provide eligible student teachers with up to \$15,000 in stipends and applications will open tomorrow at 9 AM EDT at [pheaa.org/StudentTeacher](https://pheaa.org/StudentTeacher).*





**Harrisburg, PA** – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** joined a bipartisan group of legislative leaders including Senator Vincent Hughes (D) and Senator Ryan Aument (R) and the **Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA)** to announce the online application period for the new student teacher stipend application, the PA Student Teacher Support Program, opens tomorrow at 9 AM EDT for the 2024-25 academic year.

In 2023, Governor Josh Shapiro signed into law [Act 33](#), establishing the **\$10 million** Educator Pipeline Support Grant Program, which provides up to **\$15,000** to eligible student teachers in Pennsylvania. Administered through the **Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)**, this program will help address the teacher shortage in Pennsylvania and fill staffing gaps for critical education positions to ensure every student has the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed.

“Today, we are here as Democrats and Republicans, investing in commonsense solutions to address the real problems Pennsylvanians face. We want more Pennsylvanians to become teachers – and that’s why we fought to include \$10 million for student teacher stipends in last year’s budget and why my budget this year boosts funding for the Student Teacher Support Program to \$15 million,” said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. “This investment is commonsense and it has strong bipartisan support– let’s come together to increase our support for our new teachers and show Pennsylvanians that their state government is working for them.”

Across the country, schools are facing growing teacher shortages in classrooms. Compared to ten years ago when Pennsylvania certified approximately 20,000 new teachers every year, in 2023 Pennsylvania certified just over 5,000 new teachers. The Commonwealth also has 5,500 teacher vacancies in schools across the state right now.

The groundbreaking student teacher stipend program will help address the shortage of teachers in Pennsylvania by addressing the financial strain caused by student teaching requirements. The program provides financial support to students enrolled in a PA Department of Education approved teacher preparation program and who are completing their student teaching requirements.

“I’m proud to have led this bipartisan initiative with Senator Aument to address Pennsylvania’s teacher shortage. And I want to thank Governor Shapiro for advocating for a 50% increase in funding for this program in our next budget,” said **Senator Vince Hughes**. “It’s far past time Pennsylvania makes serious investments in teachers, and this is a great start. If we’re going to attract more teachers to the profession, we must recognize the tremendous value they have for our children and communities.”

“On behalf of PHEAA’s Board of Directors, I can tell you that we are truly honored to play a pivotal role in administering and servicing this groundbreaking student teachers support program,” said **Senator Wayne Fontana, PHEAA Board Chairman**. “PHEAA is pleased to be a partner with the Shapiro Administration and of the General Assembly on the rollout of the new PA Student Teacher Support Program which will provide a lifeline for right rising teachers. By providing financial support to support teachers we are not only investing in the future of education, but also addressing the critical teacher shortage in this Commonwealth. As the Governor says – this is the kind of stuff that we all need to come together to get done.”

“This truly was a bipartisan effort – and I want to thank my colleagues in both the House and the Senate. If we are going to deliver a high-quality education to each and every child who enters the system in Pennsylvania, we must have a process that ensures that the best and brightest go into education,” said **Senator Ryan Aument**. “To Governor Shapiro – thank you for your visionary leadership and your commitment to delivering a high-quality education here in Pennsylvania.”

In Pennsylvania, aspiring teachers are required to get student teaching experience in the classroom before graduating from their program and becoming a full-time educator. As a result, student teachers often face financial limitations and do not get paid for those months working in the classroom. The stipend program will support aspiring educators and make it more affordable for young Pennsylvanians to choose this important path of public service.

“I’m here to talk today about the fact that the Governor has paid attention to a very need that we have to get our student teachers to have an opportunity to have a paid internship,” said **Representative Gina Curry**. “We know that most internships out here have pay that come with it – and we look at the student teacher opportunity for 12 weeks as a paid internship. We love our teachers, we need our teachers, and we need to keep our teachers. I see the hard work that these teachers put in – and they need to be valued in our Commonwealth. So let’s start them off early. Let’s help them know that they are valued.”

“The roles that these young people are stepping into will shape lives,” said **Representative Jesse Topper**. “They won’t just help with grades and test scores. They will shape lives – and we need to do whatever we can to ensure that this is a career field that our young people, like my two boys who are 17 and 15, if they want to go into it, we need to make sure they can go into it.”

To further strengthen Pennsylvania’s educator pipeline and put more teachers in our classrooms, the Governor’s [2024-2025 budget proposal](#) increases funding for the program by \$5 million to a **total of \$15 million** to support Pennsylvanians training to become certified and committed educators in the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania student teachers who are enrolled at a higher education institution in Pennsylvania for the fall and spring semesters of the 2024-25 academic year can apply beginning tomorrow at [pheaa.org/StudentTeacher](https://pheaa.org/StudentTeacher). The program will be awarded on a first come, first served basis.

The [program](#) will provide \$10,000 to student teachers who meet the program requirements, with an additional \$5,000 available to student teachers working in high-need areas. To qualify for the stipend, students must commit to working as teachers in Pennsylvania for a minimum of three years after completing their education and must be enrolled in an approved PDE Educator Preparation Program at a higher education institution in the Commonwealth.

“It is a privilege to be here today with Governor Shapiro – thank you again for your leadership – Senator Hughes, Senator Aument, Representative Curry, Representative Topper, and Senator Fontana,” said **Aaron Chapin, President of the PSEA**. “Thank you for all the hard work that you put into the student teacher stipend program. I am proud to represent about 177,000 members, which include more than 7,000 student PSEA members – some of which are here behind me today, and they will be the next generation of teachers. We’re lucky to have one of the largest and most active aspiring educator programs in the nation right here in Pennsylvania.”

“I want to thank Governor Shapiro, Senator Hughes, Senator Aument, Representative Curry, Representative Topper, and Senator Fontana for being such amazing supporters of the aspiring educators that I am privileged to represent today. The student teacher support program is needed now more than ever,” said **Amber Bloom, Vice-President of Student PSEA, University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg**. “There are a lot of challenges to student teaching, but that unique classroom experience is so important and so necessary for aspiring educators. Paying student teachers a modest stipend is a win-win. It is a win for the young people who want to pursue careers in the classroom, and it is a win for Pennsylvania because it removes a significant financial burden to becoming a teacher at a time when so many school districts are struggling with teacher shortages.”

For more information regarding the PA Student Teacher Support Program and eligibility, please visit [pheaa.org/StudentTeacher](https://pheaa.org/StudentTeacher).

For more information on how Governor Shapiro’s proposed 2024-25 budget recruits and retains the workforce and talent our schools need, visit [shapirobudget.pa.gov](https://shapirobudget.pa.gov).

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