



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, March 2, 2026

**Contact:** Trevor J. Monk, [dlipress@pa.gov](mailto:dlipress@pa.gov)

## **Shapiro Administration Invests \$4.1 Million to Expand Schools-to-Work and Pre-Apprenticeship Pathways Across Pennsylvania**

*Governor's [2026–27 budget plan](#) proposes doubling Schools-to-Work funding to \$7 million as part of his commitment to invest in young Pennsylvanians and empower the Commonwealth's workforce of tomorrow.*

*Since January 2023, the Shapiro Administration's Schools-to-Work funding has supported 52 programs statewide and 2,295 students with hands-on training, classroom instruction, mentorship, and direct connections to employment and apprenticeship opportunities.*





**HARRISBURG, PA** – The **Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I)** today announced an investment of more than **\$4.1 million** in **Schools-to-Work** grant awards, supporting 17 projects statewide that will not only prepare high school students for a career but also ensure they have a clear path to employment upon graduation.

The **Schools-to-Work** program bridges classroom learning with real-world opportunity, aligning training with in-demand industries and workforce needs across the Commonwealth. It also strengthens partnerships among school districts, career and technical centers, employers, workforce boards, and training providers to help students graduate with a clear pathway into their chosen field, registered apprenticeship, or postsecondary education.

“Schools-to-Work is about making sure students don’t just graduate with a diploma, but with direction,” said **L&I Secretary Nancy A. Walker**. “Under Governor Shapiro’s leadership, we have made workforce development for young Pennsylvanians a priority because we know early exposure to real careers changes lives. These investments connect students to hands-on experience, industry credentials, and employers, while strengthening the pipeline Pennsylvania businesses depend on to grow.”

Secretary Walker announced the investment today during an event at Susquehanna Township School District’s (STSD) Sara Lindemuth / Anna Carter Primary School. STSD was awarded \$236,226 in this latest round of Schools-to-Work and is now able to launch its **Preparing Aspiring Teachers for Higher Education (PATH-Ed)** registered

pre-apprenticeship program. PATH-Ed will build upon the district's successful Cadet Teaching Program and help address ongoing teacher workforce shortages in Pennsylvania.

"Our students are not only the leaders of tomorrow," said **Dr. Tamara Willis, Susquehanna Township School District Superintendent of Schools**. "They are the teachers of tomorrow. This grant advances the systems our team built to identify, inspire, and prepare future educators right here in Susquehanna Township."

Students like STSD Cadet Teacher **Cole Hunsberger** are already seeing how Schools-to-Work opens doors to meaningful careers in education.

"I have had an entirely positive experience in the Cadet Teaching Program, and the skills I have learned will continue to prepare me for a career in education," **Hunsberger said**. "Through the program, I have had the chance to teach a full class, work with small groups, and provide one-on-one support, while also observing effective classroom management and practicing those strategies myself. Just as importantly, I have been able to support the teacher I am placed with as an extra set of hands in the classroom. The Cadet program gives students who are interested in teaching first-hand experience, so they can truly understand the work and know whether this path is the right fit for them."

For 2025 STSD graduate and former Cadet Teacher **Zimere Martin**, the experience provided clarity and confidence about pursuing a career in education.

"Participating in the Cadet Teaching Program in high school was a life-changing experience that shaped my personal and professional growth," **Martin said**. "It gave me real classroom experience, strengthened my confidence and leadership skills, and confirmed that I want to pursue a career in education, specifically as a special education teacher. Because of the foundation the program provided, I was offered a summer school position after graduation and later a paraprofessional role with paid schooling through the Cadet Program, creating a clear pathway from high school into the profession. I am grateful for the doors it opened and for programs like this that help students turn early experiences into long-term, meaningful careers."

## **A Foundation of Workforce Development Progress**

Over the past three years, **Governor Josh Shapiro** has made investing in workforce development a cornerstone of his Administration. The Commonwealth increased funding for vo-tech, career and technical education, and apprenticeship programs by nearly 50 percent, from \$118 million to \$183 million, registered 231 new pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships, and enrolled nearly 18,000 new apprentices as of January 2026. More than 39,000 Pennsylvanians have participated in apprenticeships during that time, opening doors to stable, family-sustaining careers.

Those workforce gains are part of broader economic momentum across Pennsylvania, where more than 22,400 good-paying jobs have been created and \$40.4 billion in private-sector investment has been attracted statewide.

Governor Shapiro's [2026-27 budget plan](#) builds directly on that foundation by proposing to:

- Invest an additional \$18 million in vo-tech, CTE, and apprenticeship programs
- Double Schools-to-Work funding to \$7 million
- Increase Industry Partnership grants by \$3.5 million
- Increase funding for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation by \$1 million
- Provide a dedicated \$12.5 million appropriation for WEDnetPA to train workers and strengthen employers

Together, these investments continue strengthening Pennsylvania's workforce pipeline and ensure students graduate with the skills, credentials, and experience employers need.

Across the Commonwealth, this round of Schools-to-Work projects align training with high-demand industries including the skilled trades, health care, manufacturing, information technology, and education; the \$4.1 million investment is 100% state funded.

**Susquehanna Township School District** (Dauphin County, \$236,226)

Establishes PATH-Ed, expanding the district's Cadet Teaching Program and building a pipeline of future educators through dual enrollment and work-study experiences.

**Farrell Area School District** (Mercer County, \$216,500)

Launches a construction pre-apprenticeship connecting students to electrical, plumbing, and carpentry pathways.

**University of Pittsburgh–Titusville** (Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango, Warren Counties, \$250,000)

Expands machining and CNC pre-apprenticeship certifications aligned with regional manufacturing demand.

**JEVS Human Services** (Philadelphia County, \$249,918)

Expands Certified Medical Assistant pre-apprenticeship cohorts.

**Launchpad** (Philadelphia County, \$250,000)

Delivers a software developer pre-apprenticeship for high school juniors and seniors.

**Lehigh Valley Hospital, Inc.** (Lehigh County, \$250,000)

Enhances allied health career pathways through Health Care Futures programming.

**Fayette County Career and Technical Institute** (Fayette and Westmoreland Counties, \$250,000)

Implements HVAC, plumbing, pipefitting, and sheet metal pathways with industry-recognized credentials.

**Auberle** (Allegheny County, \$249,944)

Provides construction pre-apprenticeship training paired with supportive services.

**Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29** (Schuylkill County, \$250,000)

Establishes workforce readiness initiatives including the county's first registered carpentry pre-apprenticeship.

**Harrisburg Area School District** (Dauphin County, \$250,000)

Creates integrated Schools-to-Work pathways in health/EMT, IT, and construction.

**Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science & Technology** (Centre, Clinton, and Mifflin Counties, \$250,000.00)

Launches automation and instrumentation pre-apprenticeship linked to mechatronics.

**Manufacturers' Association of South Central PA** (Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York, and Chester Counties, \$250,000)

Expands manufacturing-focused Schools-to-Work exposure and training.

**Chester County Intermediate Unit #24** (Chester County, \$249,614)

Delivers health career pre-apprenticeship training with industry credentials.

**Per Scholas** (Philadelphia County, \$200,000)

Prepares seniors for IT support careers through school-to-apprenticeship programming.

**Philadelphia Youth Network** (Philadelphia County, \$250,000)

Develops a new healthcare-focused registered pre-apprenticeship.

**Industrial Arts Workshop, Inc.** (Allegheny County, \$250,000)

Introduces welding pathways aligned with industry standards.

**Eastern Center for Arts and Technology** (Montgomery County, \$216,090)

Supports co-op and work-based learning connected to skilled trades pathways.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, please visit the [website](#) or follow L&I on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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