



**2023-2024**

# **Government Policy Agenda**

*For the Legislative Years*

*January 1, 2023 to November 30, 2024*

**PSEA Officers**

Rich Askey, *President*

Aaron Chapin, *Vice President*

Jeff Ney, *Treasurer*

James G. Vaughan, *Executive Director*

*For the Legislative Years  
January 1, 2023 to November 30, 2024*

Recommended by the PSEA Board of Directors  
December 1, 2022

Approved by the PSEA House of Delegates  
December 3, 2022

**Policy Subcommittee**

Michael Cherinka, Chair

Charlie Bigelow

Rachael West

Ann Monaghan

Kelli Thompson, *Staff Consultant*

Veronica Biegen, *Associate*

## PSEA GOVERNMENT POLICY AGENDA 2023-2024

The Pennsylvania State Education Association advocates for our more than 178,000 members through collective action. PSEA members know that policy decisions made at the federal, state, and local level have a direct impact on their ability to serve the public – either through delivering a quality education to over 2.63 million K-12 and higher education students in Pennsylvania or delivering quality health care services to Pennsylvania patients.

PSEA’s legislative priorities direct the energies of the organization to the targets listed below for the 2023-2024 legislative session.

*PSEA’s legislative priorities for 2023-2024 are:*

- 1 Protect PSEA members’ employment rights:
  - a. collective bargaining;
  - b. compensation and working conditions, particularly a safe working environment; and
  - c. employee benefits, including health care and pension.
  
- 2 Protect retirement security for retired, current, and future public school employees by maintaining the defined benefit pension system in Pennsylvania.
  
- 3 Advocate for quality public education:
  - a. Increase the state share of funding for public schools by raising broad-based state taxes and distribute those funds in a more equitable, predictable, and accountable manner;
  - b. Support research-based, proven programs that improve student achievement;
  - c. Strengthen and improve teaching and learning conditions in public schools;
  - d. Reduce reliance on standardized testing and provides for fair accountability with interventions tailored to the individual needs of struggling schools; and
  - e. Defeat “reforms” that are not research-based nor proven to improve learning in the classroom.
  
- 4 Advocate for statewide and regional strategies to address the educator shortage:
  - a. Rebuild the educator pipeline by advancing strategies to attract the next generation of certified educators and paraprofessionals to the field;

- b. Evaluate the ongoing substitute teacher shortage and determine if statutory provisions should be extended or additional relief is needed;
- c. Address the barriers that prevent people from entering the public education field;
- d. Advance strategies to ensure all students have access to school health and mental professionals in every school building; and
- e. Ensure public school entities are focused on retaining certified educators and paraprofessionals for the long-term.

*Specifically, our members support the legislative positions identified in the following sections:*

## SCHOOL FUNDING

### *State Funding*

- Advocate for the adoption, maintenance and full funding of an adequate and equitable system of basic and special education funding. Every public school must have the resources necessary to enable every child to meet state academic standards, be prepared for post-secondary success, and become productive, knowledgeable, and engaged adults. This funding should be based on a reasonable, consistent estimate of the actual local costs of providing equal educational opportunities to meet or exceed state goals and distributed in a manner so that all students may obtain a quality education regardless of their families' income or place of residence.
- Support efforts to resolve racial equity within Pennsylvania's school funding system that include funding stability for districts that are unable to make-up lost revenue at the local level.
- Provide state funds to fully subsidize districts, so as to keep their total residential taxes below a target percentage of total personal income in the district.
- Provide state funds to enable districts to meet state and federal performance benchmarks.
- Provide full state funding for the additional costs of special education services.
- Provide adequate equalized state funding for costs of new programs when mandated by the legislature or the State Board of Education.
- Provide for mandatory property reassessment on an established cycle through a state coordinated county-administered using properly trained assessors, with rates consistent across the state at 100 percent of market value.
- Provide relief for a school district when the market value is reduced by more than five percent as a result of assessment appeals, the market value decreases by more than five percent for other reasons, or unemployment increases by more than 15 percent.
- Provide for the state collection and transfer of income-based taxes to school districts.
- Provide that school districts adopt the most economical method of tax collection.
- Require the state to provide school district payments equal to tax revenue lost when state programs cause school districts to lose revenue because of tax exemptions.
- Provide that the Commonwealth appropriate funds to reimburse tax-levying authorities of the Commonwealth's political subdivisions for loss of taxes due

to the location of Commonwealth owned property within the jurisdiction of the political subdivision. Most payments would be made on the basis of market values as determined by the State Tax Equalization Board.

- Provide for incentive grants to school entities or innovative consortia to assist with human relations training in racially isolated and low socioeconomic impacted areas and to assist with special problems related to desegregation in elementary and secondary schools.
- Provide for state reimbursement of all costs of transporting public and non-public school pupils in all school entities based on the entity's aid ratio.
- Provide no state financial incentive for subcontracting of transportation services.
- Provide incentive grants for research and development projects in basic education.
- Amend state law to respect the decisions of duly elected school boards on the resource needs of schools by not requiring voter approval of those decisions.
- Support legislation for opportunities to improve the ability of local school boards to raise the necessary funds to conduct a referendum election and to prevent changes that could hinder their ability to do so.
- Provide for an amendment to the state Constitution providing for a graduated income tax if said tax prohibits loopholes.
- Support efforts to revisit the formula used for the distribution of gaming revenue to entities other than school districts and encourage the modernization of the formula to drive a higher proportion of gaming revenue to school districts.
- Provide state funding to: provide English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education according to students' educational needs; diagnose English Language Learner (ELL) students' learning needs, support their learning, and assess their progress; provide ELL students who are eligible for special education with appropriate services; and provide resources for improving accommodations for ELL students.
- Provide supplemental financial support to school districts in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of English Language Learner (ELL) student population as a percentage of their total student population to provide services for ELL services.

#### *Charter/Cyber Charter Funding*

- Ensure that school districts are not financially harmed by the costs of providing charter and cyber charter payments.
- Ensure that charter schools receive no more than the actual cost of providing special education.

#### *Local Funding*

- Amend state law to respect the decisions of duly elected school boards on the

resource needs of schools by not requiring voter approval of those decisions.

- Support legislation for opportunities to improve the ability of local school boards to raise the necessary funds to conduct a referendum election and to prevent changes that could hinder their ability to do so.
- Expand the exceptions to the Act 1 index, particularly for crisis situations and a significant reduction in local revenue.
- Oppose efforts that seek to prohibit or limit school districts from appealing a property's assessment.
- Enable school districts to enact taxes for which the limitations are separate for the school district and municipality and are not shared.
- Increase the income level for the state's local school tax rebate program for senior citizens and renters, and simplify the application for such rebates.
- Use state funds to rebate local school taxes above a specific percentage of a household's personal income (i.e., a "circuit breaker" on local school taxes).

### *Financially Distressed Schools*

- Ensure that a school district identified for financial recovery status is not unnecessarily kept under state control for academic or other non-financial reasons if the district has met or exceeded the financial goals outlined in its recovery plan.
- Ensure that PDE provides high-quality, targeted supports to a school district identified for financial recovery including but not limited to: highly qualified Recovery Officer or Receiver; technical assistance for development of evidence-based Recovery Plan based on updated diagnostic assessments of the district; supports for continuous improvement process; and accountability for the district administration to implement the Plan as adopted.

## **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

- Provide funding to ensure the availability of high-quality early childhood education – pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten - for all children who qualify.
- Provide pre-kindergarten education within public education programs taught by certified teachers.
- Require full-day kindergarten to be offered for children five years or older.
- Require completion of a kindergarten program prior to entry into first grade.
- Limit entrance to first grade to children who reach age six by September or children under age six if they meet standards prescribed by the State Board of Education.
- Encourage innovations and improvements in urban school districts that prioritize and promote diversity, equity and inclusion practices.
- Encourage use of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and technology in the classroom without

sacrificing quality of education or abridging employee rights.

- Require class maximums of 15 for kindergarten through grade three; 18 for students in late elementary school; and 20 for secondary students. Require even smaller class sizes when there is a significant inclusion of students with special needs. If school entities aren't able to meet these classroom thresholds, require teacher assistants and/or paraprofessionals to support the classroom.
- Provides that the school entity should employ full-time certified school librarians based on the established ratios of the American Library Association with a minimum of one librarian in each elementary, middle, and secondary school building.
- Provide full state funding for separate kindergarten through 12 alternative programs with certificated professional staff to teach and work with disruptive students including special education students.
- Require school districts to develop or expand programs and policies that build individualized interventions for students at risk of school failure, and provide state funding to support interventions such as: comprehensive case management approach to planning and providing student support; community schools that bring services into the school setting; mentoring or other programs that develop meaningful relationships for the student with at least one adult; and Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTII) models that develop specific interventions targeted to a student's level and type of need.
- Require the establishment of developmental and remedial or corrective reading programs in all grades of the public schools; that teachers certified in reading are employed to teach these programs; and that materials and equipment be appropriate to the needs of the children.
- Require special subject areas such as art, music, physical education, world languages, technology education, family and consumer sciences, and library/media skills be taught in all grade levels by certified teachers in the respective areas.
- Provide that all students under 18 years of age be given the opportunity to enroll in driver education courses and that all driver education courses are taught by certified driver education teachers.
- Prohibit the use of any standardized test scores to punish schools and school employees.
- Prohibit waivers of state law or regulations without appropriate legislative action.
- Limit waivers of state law or regulations to those that provide flexibility to school districts in unique situations.
- Reject the use of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote intolerance.
- Ensure that all students in public schools – including charters and cyber charters are taught by certified teachers.



- Require alignment of Pennsylvania charter and cyber charter school curricula with Pennsylvania’s academic standards.
- Ensure appropriate state oversight and regulation for home school programs.
- Fund and encourage evidence-based programs to identify students at risk of dropping out and intervene to reduce the likelihood of dropout. Intervention programs should meet the curricular, logistic, and interpersonal needs of students at risk of dropping out, and include flexible scheduling to accommodate relevant work.
- Develop data systems to track dropout prevention program implementation and program outcomes.
- Encourage school districts to adopt models that preserve comprehensive student legal rights, particularly for students with disabilities, by serving them within the kindergarten-12 public system.
- Require districts to establish policies to assist and encourage parents, families, and communities to be actively involved and engaged in their public schools, including training and networking opportunities for targeted schools.
- Provide state-funded professional development programs that give educators the communications skills and knowledge needed to engage parents, families, and other caregivers in students’ learning.
- Ensure that school entities provide quality, age-appropriate career exposure, information, and counseling regarding post-secondary employment and education opportunities, at least once a year, to all students in grades 4-12.

## **EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS**

- Expand the authority of the Professional Standards and Practices Commission to include preparation of students entering the profession and development of standards for granting certification.
- Require certification in proper subject/practice area for all professional employees in traditional public, charter, and non-public schools.
- Require substitute teachers to have a current or expired educator certificate or an emergency permit granted by PDE that authorizes individuals who are currently enrolled in educator preparation programs and meet minimum qualifications. During the educator shortage crisis beginning in 2021, support the use of classroom monitor permits for individuals who meet minimum qualifications to provide staffing coverage.
- Provide full funding and ensure adequate training opportunities for all school employees to meet requirements and recommendations outlined in Act 48 of 1999, PA Safe Schools initiatives and mandates, and technology innovations.
- Support the rights of professionals and education support professionals by granting them highly qualified status.
- Require that all professional employees who devote one-half or more of their

time to supervision and administration shall be properly certified by the Department of Education in accordance with such regulations as the State Board of Education may establish.

- Provide for full-time employment of a properly certified elementary principal when there is a building or combination of buildings with either 12 or more elementary classroom teachers, or 300 or more elementary pupils, or both.
- Establish appropriate, minimum qualifications for school board members.
- Encourage public school educators to serve on school boards.
- Require training for school board members regarding school finance, diversity, equity, inclusion and the scope of responsibility for school boards. School board members should be held accountable for failing to comply with any training requirements.
- Support initiatives to comprehensively address Pennsylvania’s teacher shortage that include increasing salaries, providing student debt relief, promoting diversity within the workforce, incentivizing more teacher assistants and hiring more mental health professionals in schools.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS**

- Provide for student discipline on school property and at school-sponsored activities.
- Provide supports to school districts, parents, students, and school employees for identifying and addressing gang activity in schools.
- Require every school district to establish a safe school plan; state to provide technical assistance for improving safety in schools.
- Require all school entities to take the necessary steps to ensure the health, safety and well-being of students and employees based on the guidance of health experts during a local, regional or statewide crisis.
- Ensure school employees with “legitimate educational interest” in student receive information regarding disciplinary behavior including upcoming adjudication and records transferred from another facility.
- Promote better communication within school entities between administrators and school employees to address potential threats or school safety concerns.
- Provide that personal information that students give in confidence to any school entity employee should be legally privileged.
- Oppose reductions in any course offerings or protections related to Chapter 4.
- Ensure funding and professional staff to carry out activities of instructional support teams.
- Establish acceptable standards for classroom temperature, air quality, general climate and other conditions to protect the health and safety of students and school employees and provide an environment that fosters learning.
- Provide sufficient funding for the immediate abatement of asbestos and other

environmental hazards in public schools. Such funds should not be apportioned from education appropriations.

- Provide Pennsylvania public employees and students with protections similar to those provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and empower the Department of Labor and Industry to oversee all aspects of physical condition of public schools, including indoor air quality.
- Provide incentives, including funding, for renovations and repairs of school buildings to address deferred maintenance needs and ultimately make buildings safer in districts that qualify based on a demonstrable need for improvements combined with inability to generate sufficient funding through local tax efforts.
- Assess broadband capabilities and infrastructure within school districts and provide target support to regions to strengthen or expand broadband capabilities.
- Reject the use of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote intolerance.
- Support efforts to ensure that bigotry or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or national origin are not part of our classrooms, educational curricula, textbooks, school policies and discipline practices.
- Ensure students have access to diverse and uncensored literary works in schools.
- Ensure students and educators are able to engage in conversation and instruction that support students' personal and educational development so young people understand how to interact with different cultures, different genders and ultimately different societal viewpoints.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- Provide that preschool and school age children with special needs who have been identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act have access to educational programs that meet their individual needs in the least restrictive environment.
- Provide that the decisions related to districtwide and statewide assessments be based on the student's unique needs and determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team and in accordance with IDEA (including IDEIA) and ESSA (including ESSA) state regulations.
- Ensure that the commonwealth cannot penalize school entities when IEP teams deem that the alternative state assessment (PASA) is appropriate for any number of students.
- Require that local education agencies offer opportunities for training for paraprofessionals working with students with disabilities during working hours and/or in accordance with a collective bargaining agreement.
- Require speech and hearing therapists be certified when working with students

in schools.

- Maintain restraint and seclusion language in regulation rather than legislation.
- The IEP should be the key determining factor for the way in which student performance is evaluated and for developing educational programs for individual students.
- Provide appropriate accommodations for special education students on state assessments.
- Maintain that paraprofessional staff shall provide appropriate supports and services to students with IEP's first and incidental benefit to students without IEP's secondarily.
- Guarantee appropriate and equitable funding for special education services, programs and facilities that ensures comparable, healthy, and suitable environments for students and personnel.
- Provide that a full continuum of services be maintained, regardless of operating entity.
- Ensure that inclusion be appropriate and occur with full support and services needed by the students with IEPs, as well as the education staff, to allow for effective education and the attainment of positive post-secondary outcomes for both regular and exceptional students.
- Ensure that all paraprofessionals providing education services should be employees of school entities.
- Provide safeguards and adequate staffing for classrooms with students who have health and personal care needs in a school setting.
- Provide for appropriate safety measures, written plans, and specific training for staff when working with students with behavioral disorders.
- Maintain integrity of bargaining unit positions for special education support, services, and programs.
- Provide funding for districts to adjust the schedules of professional employees to permit adequate collaboration between special education and regular education instructional, related services, and support staff and to maximize staff contact with students.
- Provide sufficient transition supports to students, beginning at age 14, and ensure greater awareness of options for education, employment and independent leaving as students prepare to leave secondary school.

## **PUPIL SERVICES**

- Ensure that comprehensive pupil personnel services are provided by all school entities using properly certified pupil personnel services, such as: school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school dental hygienists, school social workers, and home and school visitors.
- Require school districts, intermediate units, and career and technical schools to provide the services of at least one certified school nurse in every school\_

building.

- Increase state funding for school health services – which has not been changed since 1991 – to increase the reimbursement for school nurse services from \$7 per student to \$12 per student.
- Dedicate recurring state funding to ensure school entities have adequate resources to support accommodate students’ general ~~health~~ and mental health needs.
- Provide representation for certified school nurses on the State Board of Nursing.
- Require school counseling services for all public school elementary and secondary students with a counselor/pupil ratio of one to 250 in mixed general and special education populations and staffed by certified school counselors.
- Provide financial assistance from the state for school entities to expand their school counseling services and make certain that school counselors are able to devote the majority of their time to direct student services.
- Provide incentive funding by the Commonwealth for career counseling in the schools.
- Require each school entity to employ one certified school psychologist for every 500 to 700 students.
- Require the employment of licensed and certified school dental hygienists in all school entities.
- Provide an increase in school dental hygienist funding to reimburse school entities based on the average daily enrollment at a minimum of \$20 per student.
- Require the employment of at least one certified home and school visitor/ school social worker in each school entity, with a ratio of one for every 250 students.
- Provide financial assistance for school entities to expand home and school visitor services and school social worker services.
- Provide state funding to expand the pipeline of school-based mental health professionals through initiatives that remove barriers to entry and make school careers more attractive.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

- Provide for equipment and materials funding for the creation of new or the reopening of Career and Technical Education programs that serve the needs and demands of the community and/or are on the High Priority List.
- Expand the commonwealth’s construction/renovation reimbursement program to include the renovations and upgrading of Career and Technical Education Centers.
- Ensure properly certified Cooperative Education Coordinators oversee and provide support for all workforce training programs (cooperative education,

school-to-career, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships or other career training programs).

- Provide funding for the reestablishment of Agriculture Education, Business Education, Family & Consumer Science, and Technology Education programs that have been previously curtailed.
- Require PDE to educate school districts on their mandated role in supporting special education students in CTE programs.
- Require that the career and technical education teacher or their representative be present at the IEP/Service Agreement meeting when a student placement decision is to be made. Such placements should be evaluated for their appropriateness to the IEP/Service Agreement of the student and the students' physical safety.
- Require input from career and technical education certified teachers in the coordination of the Comprehensive Plan between Career and Technical schools and sending school entities.
- Require new teachers to demonstrate or have received instruction and training on the safe use of equipment and technologies in all career and technical education programs to ensure the safety of all students.
- Provide at least 50% state funding for the acquisition or updating of industry standard equipment for schools offering approved career and technical education programs.
- Fully fund Pennsylvania's Secondary Career and Technical Education Subsidy for approved career and technical education programs according to the existing funding formula without exception.
- Support the expansion of workforce partnerships and provide incentives for partnering in workforce programs (cooperative education, school-to-career, apprenticeships, job shadowing, internships or other career training programs).
- Codify in statute the current PA Department of Education (PDE) five-year plan for Career and Technical Education.
- Provide incentives for post-secondary institutions to expand articulation agreements with Career and Technical Education programs.
- Provide funding and incentives for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) initiatives.
- Require Business Education, Family & Consumer Science, and Technology Education courses be mandated course offerings at all K-12 levels.
- Require school districts to fund programs such as Agriculture Education, Business Education, Family & Consumer Science, and Technology Education.
- Develop an incentive program to promote enrollment in post-secondary teacher certification programs for career and technical education.
- Promote career and technical education as a viable pathway for all students and ensure school entities provide students in grades 4-12 with exposure to career

and technical education programs and their representatives, at least once a year.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Provide fair and equitable state funding for community colleges, state-owned universities, other colleges and universities in the Commonwealth, and other state-owned post-secondary institutions.
- Provide that no less than 65 percent of the total instructional staff of any institution be composed of full-time professional employees or that 65 percent of course offerings are taught as full loads by full-time professional staff. College administrators shall not be included as full-time instructional staff.
- Require a ratio of one full-time mental health professional to every 500 students enrolled.
- Protect academic freedom in all areas of instruction and research.
- Expand accessibility to college for students through grants and loan forgiveness programs.
- Preserve and support job stability in institutions of higher education.

## **EMPLOYEE RIGHTS**

- Ensure that all employees, including paraprofessionals and teachers' aides, have transfer between entities rights in the event of a school closure and the transfer of students to other public school entities.
- Reinstigate the state's reimbursable hourly rate for homebound instruction.
- Provide that any employee who is injured during the performance of his or her duties, and who is receiving workers' compensation, shall be entitled to receive payment from the employer reflecting the difference between the workers' compensation benefits and the employees' regular salary.
- Provide for the use of sick leave if accidental injury is incurred while the employee is engaged in remunerative work unrelated to school duties.
- Provide employees with paid leave, without loss of sick leave, if directed to quarantine by a school administrator, medical professional or as the result of an emergency order by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
- Provide that professional employees are entitled to accrue sick leave while on sabbatical.
- Provide that school employees shall be permitted leave for legislative service with the right to reemployment and benefits upon completion of such leave.
- Require full pay during sabbatical leave.
- Require school entities to reimburse school employees and temporary school employees for the cost of defending against any civil/criminal charges arising within the scope of employment.
- Require school entities to cover the costs of clearance requirements under Act

168 of 2014.

- Require school entities to continue payment of salary to any school employee who is suspended for disciplinary reasons, pending final disposition of dismissal charges.
- Require that any reduction in staff be proportionate to the substantial reduction in pupils and administrators and that reduction of staff be made only in those program areas that show substantial decline.
- Protect the job and benefits - including pension, health care, and others of school employees against subcontracting of services that can be performed by school employees.
- Ensure school entities provide payroll deduction of political contributions to a political action committee designated by the exclusive representative.
- Provide non-working paid leave for religious holidays.
- Protect current Pennsylvania statute providing for fair share on the chance that the elimination of fair share at the federal level could be overturned.
- Increase the minimum salary presently provided by law and requires a minimum career salary after no more than ten years of service.
- Provide funding to assist members in meeting the requirements of ESEA.
- Require school entities to recognize the seniority rights of school employees.
- Oppose mandatory drug testing for current and prospective school employees.
- Regulate testing for drug and other substance abuse and provide protection for employees, including due process and mandatory rehabilitation efforts.
- Reorganize and consolidate the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board and Bureau of Mediation into an independent agency.
- Provide the common pleas courts full equity power to resolve a bargaining impasse.
- Provide for the appointment of an arbitrator to rule in cases involving the dismissal, demotion, and suspension of school employees.
- Require any party appealing an arbitration award to pay all court costs where the arbitration award is affirmed on appeal.
- Prohibit the use of replacement workers.
- Provide a closure mechanism, either binding arbitration with acceptable procedural protections or court supervised bargaining upon agreement of the parties to Act 88 of 1992.
- Regulate insurance company practices such as unfair rate hikes and dropping coverage of people with good records.

## **RETIREMENT SECURITY**

- Provide equalization of retirement benefits for current annuitants who retired before July 2001, and the passage of Act 9.



- Protect the defined benefit retirement system for all retired, current, and future public school employees. Oppose any pension proposal that cuts retirement benefits for current employees, eliminates the defined benefit retirement system, or weakens the retirement security of current, retired, or future employees.
- Support a level of employer pension payments that will eventually restore PSERS to full funding. Oppose any efforts that would add to the debt of the pension plan by further deferring employer pension obligations as required in Act 120 of 2010.
- Prohibit the Governor and the Legislature from using the PSERS fund to balance the state budget or to finance other state programs, projects, or bond issues, etc.
- Maintain a “floor” contribution rate for employers so that the employer pension contribution rate for PSERS never again falls below the annual “normal cost” (the rate necessary to pay for the retirement benefits earned by school employees during the year).
- Provide an annual cost of living adjustment for annuitants.
- Provide fully paid post-retirement health insurance coverage through the retirement system.
- Provide fully paid prescription drug plan for annuitants through the retirement system.
- Provide fully paid vision benefits plan for annuitants through the retirement system.
- Provide fully paid dental benefits plan for annuitants through the retirement system.
- Provide an increase in retirement benefits for beneficiaries of deceased annuitants.
- Provide an opportunity for school retirees who elected spousal Options 2 or 3 at retirement to elect to have their annuities recalculated and restored as a maximum single life annuity upon the death or divorce of their spouse beneficiary.
- Provide the opportunity to purchase service credit in PSERS for three categories of creditable non-public school service: 1) career and technical schools; 2) private/parochial school service; 3) service in approved schools of special education.
- Provide full retirement benefits to any school employee who retires with a combination of age and years of service that equal or exceed 85 (the Rule of 85).
- Provide that furloughed school employees be given the right to purchase up to three years of retirement credit when they return to service for the time they were on furlough.
- Allow remediation of a fractional year of retirement credit to allow any days

worked beyond 180 to be used to offset any existing fractional deficiencies.

- Permit employees the opportunity to purchase retirement credit for days on which they were on extended unpaid leave or sick leave, at the member's discretion.
- Permit furloughed employees to buy furlough time at the same contribution rate that was in effect at the time of furlough. The legislation should guarantee that furloughed employees would retain their previous contribution rate after the furlough period, unless the member opted to change class.
- Provide that full-time employees assigned to the Department of Corrections or the Department of Human Services who selected PSERS retirement system are included in the definition of "Correction Officer" contained in the SERS definitions, 71 P.S. § 5102 and provided a parity in benefits.
- Continue to protect the option that members of PSERS have upon retirement to take a lump sum withdrawal of contributions and interests made to the fund during active employment.
- Provide that the members of the retirement system are given the right to receive credited service for up to 180 days of any unused accrued sick leave.
- Provide members of the retirement system who missed the opportunity to elect a 2.5 percent multiplier within their first 45 days after becoming a school employee the opportunity to switch from a 2.0 percent to a 2.5 percent multiplier for future years of service if they agree to pay the appropriate contributions.
- Provide new employees joining the retirement system after June 2019, the additional option of a defined benefit plan with a 2.5 percent multiplier.
- Make certification for retirees permanently active and exempts annuitants from any requirements of continuing education under Act 48.

### **HEALTHCARE PSEA, AFT/AFL-CIO**

- Promote high quality health care delivered by licensed professionals.
- Provide consumers with clear and complete information regarding the provision of health care.
- Be a consumer advocate when dealing with healthcare issues.
- Promote the enforcement of the nurse practice act and advocate for professional nurse care for children and all consumers in Pennsylvania.
- Advocate for minimally trained health care providers only as an adjunct for licensed nurses.
- Protect the right of licensed health care providers from mandatory overtime.
- Advocate for adequate health care professional staffing in hospitals and clinics.