



Teachers' Desk Reference: Practical Information for Pennsylvania's Teachers

Support Systems for Educating Students in Pennsylvania

From time to time, you may need additional resources or assistance outside of your school district. The following list includes brief descriptions, along with websites, of available support systems within the commonwealth.

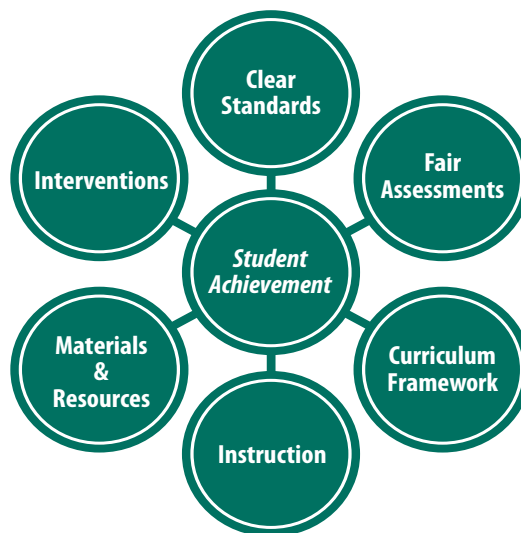
The **Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)** is the state agency that holds the ultimate responsibility for the state supervision of all schools and educational programs in the commonwealth. PDE offers many resources for teachers to help create the most beneficial learning opportunities for all Pennsylvania students. PDE's website, www.education.state.pa.us, has a special section for teachers, which includes information about certification, codes and regulations, data and statistics, forms, grants and subsidies, policies and procedures, and programs.

The **Bureau of Special Education (BSE)** is responsible for the education of students with disabilities from ages three through 21. The Bureau provides professional leadership and management in the provision of special education services and programs. BSE administers the special education contingency fund and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. Staff provides technical assistance

and consultation to local education agencies to support them in meeting the requirements of state and federal special education requirements, and, also works with the U.S. Department of Education regarding federal requirements. For the latest information about BSE's activities, visit their website at www.education.state.pa.us, click on Elementary and Secondary Education, Pre K-12 Bureaus, Bureau of Special Education, and then click on *BSE Communicator*.

The **Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)** is an initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education. Under the direction of the BSE, PaTTAN is responsible for professional development, offers technical assistance, and provides resources to build the skills of intermediate unit and school district personnel. With three regional offices located in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and King of Prussia, PaTTAN works in partnership with families and local education agencies to support programs and services to improve student learning and achievement. Visit PaTTAN's website at www.pattan.net to register for professional development, learn about evidence-based practices, and download training materials, special education forms, and publications.

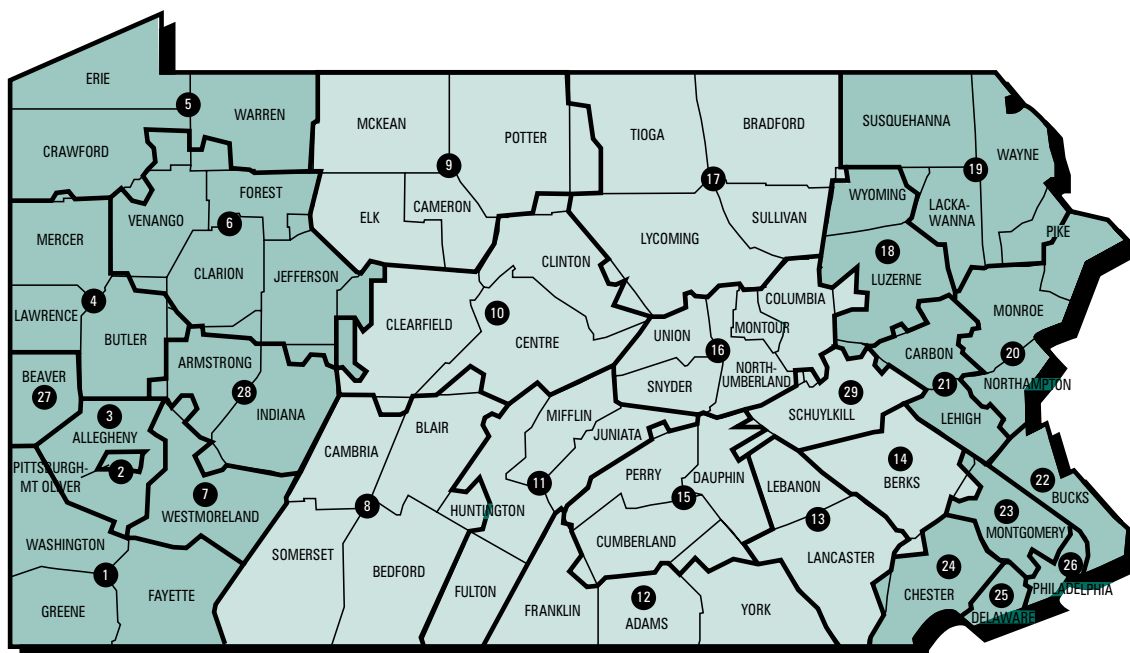
The **Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support** functions as a consultative and facilitative agency in selected curriculum, instruction strategies, and compensatory education. The Bureau provides curriculum and instructional materials and guidelines; coordinates technical assistance and professional development for school districts, intermediate units, local educational agencies, and institutions that guide teacher preparation programs. It also administers significant state and federal programs and projects such as Title 1 and No Child Left Behind. In addition, the Bureau coordinates the Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System (SAS) project. SAS is a comprehensive approach to support student achievement across the commonwealth. SAS identifies six distinct elements – clear standards, fair assessments, curriculum framework, instruction, materials and resources, and interventions – which, if utilized together, will provide schools and



districts with a common framework for continuous school and district enhancement and improvement. For more information about SAS, go to www.pdesas.org.

Figure 1. Map of Pennsylvania's Intermediate Units

This map depicts the location of Pennsylvania's 29 intermediate units. Each intermediate unit is supported by one of the three regional PaTTAN offices located in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and King of Prussia.



Pittsburgh		Harrisburg		King of Prussia	
1. Intermediate Unit 1	7. Westmoreland	13. Lancaster-Lebanon	19. Northeastern Educational	25. Delaware County	
2. Pittsburgh-Mount Oliver	8. Appalachia	14. Berks County	20. Colonial	26. Philadelphia	
3. Allegheny	9. Seneca Highlands	15. Capital Area	21. Carbon-Lehigh	27. Beaver Valley	
4. Midwestern	10. Central	16. Central Susquehanna	22. Bucks County	28. ARIN	
5. Northwest Tri-County	11. Tuscarora	17. BLaST	23. Montgomery County	29. Schuylkill	
6. Riverview	12. Lincoln	18. Luzerne	24. Chester County		

An **Intermediate Unit (IU)** is a regional educational agency that provides services to local educational agencies including curriculum, special education, technology and information services, human resources, instruction, and professional development. In addition, intermediate units serve as liaison agents between the school districts and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For more information about Pennsylvania's IUs, contact your area's IU (see Figure 1.) or visit the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units' website at www.paiu.org and click on Find Your IU.

Other Pennsylvania Department of Education Pre K-12 Bureaus

Visit the individual Bureau websites at www.education.state.pa.us, click on *Elementary and Secondary Education, Pre K-12 Bureaus*.

The **School Services Unit** serves as a central point of inquiry for advice and assistance to school administrators, teachers, parents, school board members, and students regarding the School Law of Pennsylvania, the State Board of Education regulations, and related programs, services and policies.

The **Bureau of Assessment and Accountability** develops and implements the state's assessment system (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment - PSSA) and the state's accountability system under No Child Left Behind. The Bureau provides support for schools and districts in school/district improvement status and/or corrective action status. Staff provides direction to schools and districts on assessment and accountability programs; evaluates school/student progress, deficiencies, and school performance for compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act. Other functions include developing of assessment anchors to better align curricula, instruction, and assessment practices throughout the state; coordinating test development, administration, and reporting; and, providing technical assistance for statewide and local assessment systems.

The **Bureau of Career and Technical Education** is responsible for the administration and supervision of the career and technical education

programs in accordance with the policies and directives of the State Board of Education and the Department of Education, consistent with various state and federal laws. The Bureau provides leadership in developing high-quality career and technical education programs that prepare students for postsecondary and employment opportunities, through integration of rigorous academic and industry-relevant instruction. Bureau staff supports schools as they develop the academic, vocational, and technical skills of secondary and postsecondary students who choose to enroll in career and technical education programs.

The **Bureau of Community and Student Services** oversees an array of programs and services to schools, families, and communities to enable students to develop resiliency, stay in school, reach their full potential, and succeed in life after high school graduation. The Bureau provides critically needed funding, technical assistance, and other support to more than 20 different initiatives, including: nonpublic, private, and charter schools; homeless children's education; safe and drug free programs; alternative and corrections education; teen parent projects; after school programs; migrant and refugee education; dropout prevention; and education mentoring programs.

Resources for Families

When it comes to school-related matters, you are the primary contact for your students' families. They may request your assistance with navigating the educational system. The organizations listed on the next page provide a variety of services specifically for families, which can help them more easily participate in educational decision-making for their child.

ConsultLine (1-800-879-2301) is the toll-free help line provided by the BSE to assist parents of children with disabilities who have questions concerning their children's special education services. ConsultLine advisors answer questions about special education programs and the laws governing those programs for parents of and advocates for children with disabilities, or those who are thought to be disabled.

<http://odr.pattan.net/consultline/default.aspx>

Resources continued . . .

Hispanics United for Exceptional Children (HUNE) is one of two Community Parent Resource Centers in Pennsylvania. HUNE empowers parents of children with exceptionalities to obtain a free and appropriate quality education for their children and other children with disabilities. HUNE provides training programs on all aspects of special education and support, including transition services. HUNE serves, but is not limited to, Hispanic parents in Philadelphia.
<http://huneinc.org/>

The **Mentor Parent Program** is one of two Community Parent Resource Centers in Pennsylvania. The program was created by parents of children with special needs to support parents of children with disabilities in the rural Appalachian region of Pennsylvania.
www.mentorparent.org

The **Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR)** coordinates and manages Pennsylvania's special education mediation and due process systems. ODR provides help concerning procedural safeguards to parents, advocates, school districts, charter schools, intermediate units, and approved private schools. ODR provides the resources for parents and educational agencies to resolve disputes concerning the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities, students who are gifted, and children with disabilities served by the early intervention system.
<http://odr.pattan.net/>

The **Parent Education and Advocacy Leadership (PEAL) Center** is one of two Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) in Pennsylvania funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The PEAL Center is an organization of parents of children with disabilities reaching out to assist other parents and professionals. PEAL provides workshops, training, and information about early intervention, special education, and inclusive education. Parent advisors are available to provide families with information about the special education process and problem-solving strategies.
www.pealcenter.org

The **Parent Education Network (PEN)** is one of two Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) in Pennsylvania funded by the U.S. Department of Education. PEN is a coalition of parents of students representing a range of disabilities and ages. Its parent training projects promote mutual respect between parents and professionals for the knowledge, skills, and abilities each contributes to delivering education and other services to students and adults with disabilities.
www.parentednet.org

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Tom Corbett
Governor



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Bureau of Special Education
Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

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