

Education – Build a World-Class Public Education System

Contributing Agencies & Mission Statements

Department of Education

Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchak
www.education.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 760
Total Budget: \$14.143 B

To lead and serve the educational community to enable each individual to grow into an inspired, productive, fulfilled lifelong learner.

Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency

James L. Preston, President
www.pheaa.org
Complement Level: 2,148
Total Budget: \$474.436 M

The mission of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency is to provide affordable access to postsecondary education while helping to secure a strong economic future for the commonwealth through the development of a highly skilled workforce.

Commission for Women

Leslie Stiles, Executive Director
www.pcw.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 3
Total Budget: \$325 K

The mission of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women is to identify and advance the diverse needs and interests of Pennsylvania women and girls; to inform, educate and advocate for its constituents; and to provide opportunities to empower women and girls to reach their highest potential.

Education – Build A World-Class Public Education System

Pre-K through 12 Education

Key Objective: Make high-quality early learning programs available to Pennsylvania children, particularly those at risk of academic failure.

Why this objective is important: High-quality early childhood education helps prepare children for school, especially those at risk of academic failure due to poverty or other circumstances. Children who benefit from high-quality early education are more likely to be better students, graduate from high school and attend college.

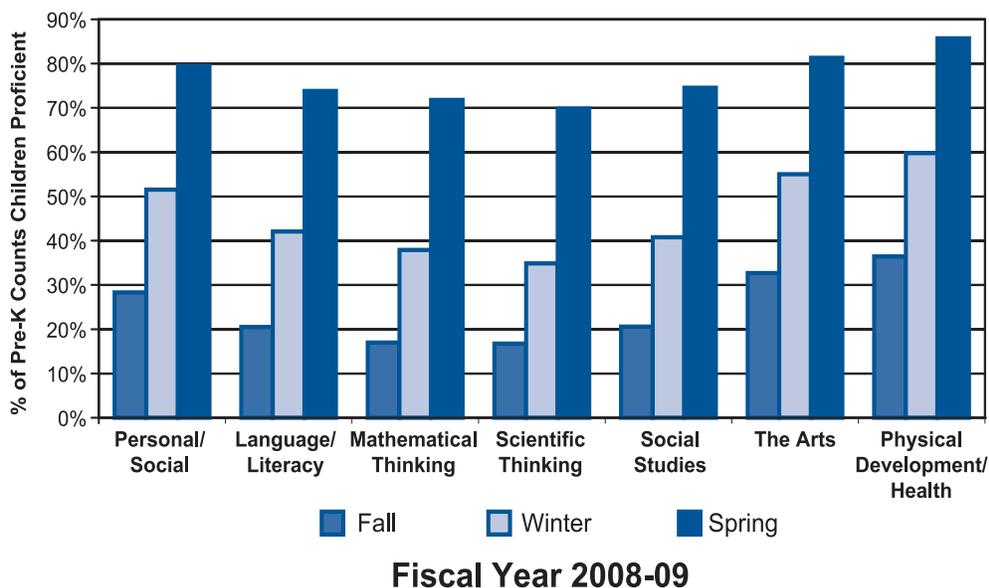
How we are doing: The Department of Education has played a key role in creating an effective early childhood education system that sets high standards, provides the supports to meet those standards and fosters accountability and community engagement.

In 2008-09:

- Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts provided high-quality pre-kindergarten services to 11,800 three- and four-year-olds.
- The department provided early intervention services to more than 40,000 preschoolers with developmental delays or risks of developmental delays.

Pennsylvania's investments are getting results, with President Barack Obama and others taking note of the commonwealth's leadership and success. Last year's Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts graduates are succeeding in kindergarten and this year's students have made remarkable progress during the 2008-09 school year. Because of our investments, more children are entering kindergarten ready to learn.

PA Pre-K Counts Improved Proficiency in Key Areas



Pennsylvania is already a national model of success, but more must be done to provide access. As of June 2008, more than 7,800 children were on waiting lists for early education programs. Increased investment and public support are needed to expand these services. To learn more, visit http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pre_k-12/7209.

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Pre-K through 12 Education (continued)

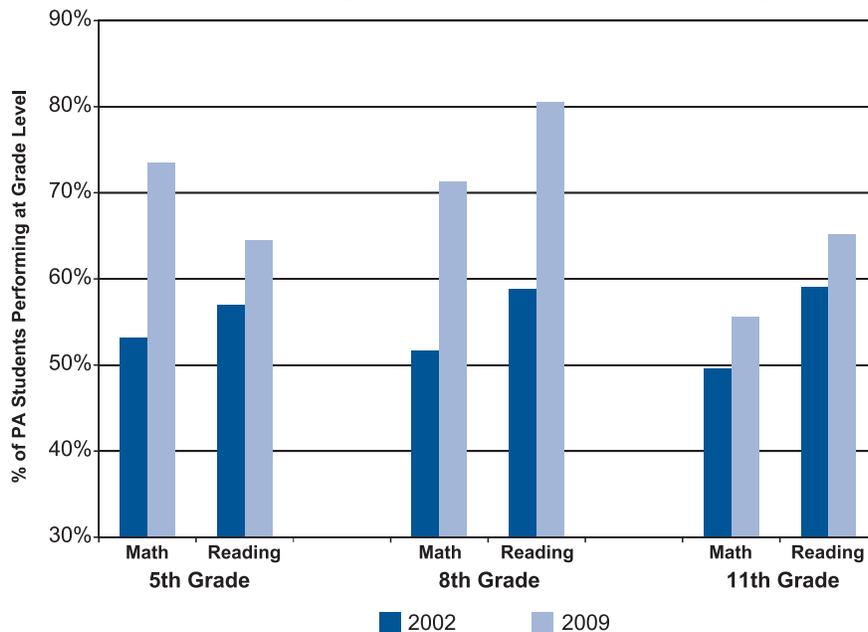
Key Objective: Ensure that every K-12 student acquires essential skills in math, English, science and social studies.

Why this objective is important: Success beyond high school, whether in college or in the workplace, requires a strong foundation in math, English, science and social studies. Highly skilled, engaged citizens are the foundation for Pennsylvania’s economic success in a global economy.

How we are doing: The Department of Education has made substantial investments in public education over the past seven years and is getting results. The percentage of students performing at grade level (proficient or advanced in math and reading on the state assessment) has increased significantly since 2002.

The Center for Education Policy, a leading national educational research organization, identified Pennsylvania as the only state to see increases in student achievement in each of elementary, middle and high school grades from 2002 to 2008.

The Percentage of Pennsylvania Students Performing at Grade Level is Increasing



Pennsylvania continued this progress in 2009, with nearly three-quarters of Pennsylvania students performing on grade level in reading and math, compared to 55 percent in 2002.

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires all students to be proficient in math and reading by 2014. States are required to set annual targets to ensure that schools are making progress toward this goal. The achievement of students in each school in math and reading compared to these targets is called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is one indicator for parents, educators and the public about the quality of each school. Nearly 500 more schools met AYP targets in 2009 than in 2008. Nearly 70 percent of the schools that were in “warning” status in 2008 met the 2009 AYP targets. More than 77 percent of all Pennsylvania schools met the 2009 AYP targets.

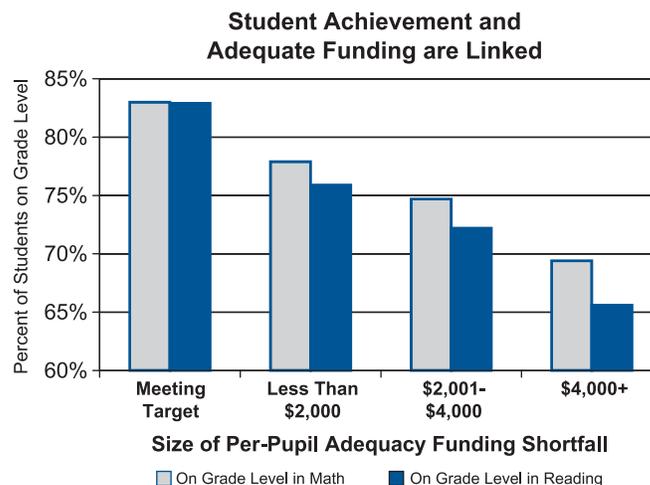
According to the U.S. Department of Education’s study of 2007 student national test data, only three states scored higher than Pennsylvania in fourth grade reading and only four states scored higher in eighth grade reading. Four states scored higher in fourth grade math and seven states scored higher in eighth grade math. Pennsylvania is well on its way to its goal of 100 percent student proficiency by 2014, as the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires. However, there is still much work to be done.

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Pre-K through 12 Education (continued)

Pennsylvania's struggling students – those at greatest risk of not reaching proficiency by 2014 – continue to be concentrated in under-funded school districts. The districts that have made the greatest gains in student achievement since 2002 also have received some of the most significant state investments toward student success but may still have large adequacy gaps. There is a correlation between adequate funding and student achievement.

In all, 81 percent of students are performing at grade level in schools with adequate funding, while only about 65 percent are performing at grade level in schools with funding adequacy gaps of greater than \$4,000 per pupil.



Department-led efforts to assist districts include:

- Implementing a standards-aligned system that includes clear standards, fair assessments, curriculum framework, instruction, materials and resources, and interventions for students who need help.
- Decreasing the funding adequacy gap – the difference between what school districts should spend and what they actually spend. The General Assembly's 2007 "Costing-Out Report" provided the first-ever Pennsylvania-specific school funding targets for every school district. In 2008-09, Pennsylvania took the first step toward building a new school funding formula and provided \$291.3 million as a down payment on a six-year plan toward adequacy.
- Increasing the high quality of instruction and rigor of curriculum in core subject areas through the development of voluntary model curricula, professional development and teacher preparation, and investments in career and technical education. In 2008-09:
 - 1,332 administrators participated in the Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership program in order to learn how to support effective instruction by their teachers.
 - The department issued new guidelines for teacher, principal and superintendent preparation programs with a greater emphasis on connecting coursework to real-world application; increased field experience requirements; and a focus on child development and 21st century standards.
 - \$52 million supported the efforts of local districts and career and technical centers to enhance career and technical education programs to meet industry standards through updated curriculum, professional development and state-of-the-art equipment purchases.
- Continuing state investments in school districts for programs proven to raise student achievement. In 2008-09:
 - \$271 million in Accountability Block Grants was provided to school districts to support early childhood education, full-day kindergarten, teacher training, tutoring, reduced class size and other practices proven to increase student performance.
 - \$66 million in Educational Assistance Program funding was provided to school districts and career and technical centers to provide tutoring to ensure that these students achieve reading and mathematics proficiency and graduate prepared for college and the high-skills workforce.

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- Science: It's Elementary, a hands-on program for science learning in the classroom, provided intensive teacher training, coaching and fully stocked science kits to more than 72,000 students and their teachers in kindergarten through eighth grade.
- More than 18,500 juniors and seniors enrolled in postsecondary courses at a reduced cost and received college credit for their work through the Dual Enrollment program, a 154 percent increase in student participation since the program's inception in 2005-06.
- Tracking the progress of public school students and teachers through the Pennsylvania Information Management System and the Teacher Information Management System.

To learn more, visit:

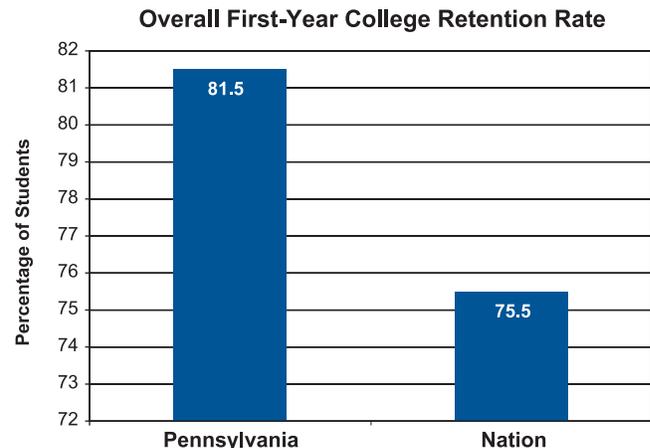
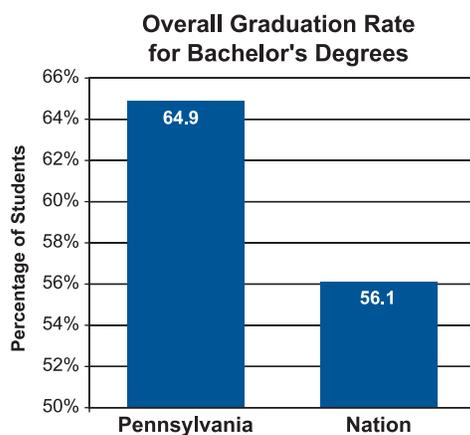
http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/child_development__early_learning/7200.

Higher Education

Key Objective: Increase enrollment and graduation rates at Pennsylvania's colleges and universities, especially among economically disadvantaged students and first-generation college students.

Why this objective is important: Pennsylvania must create a highly skilled workforce to be competitive in the global marketplace. Most living-wage jobs increasingly require postsecondary training or education. Workers who lack the skills or education to obtain these jobs are more likely to rely on government aid programs, increasing costs to taxpayers. Making higher education more accessible and affordable benefits the state's economy and all of its citizens.

How we are doing: The Department of Education is working to make higher education more accessible and affordable by offering multiple options for postsecondary learning, including 14 community colleges, 14 state-owned universities in the State System of Higher Education, four state-related universities, numerous private colleges and universities, and private vocational and technical schools. Pennsylvania's completion rate for bachelor's degrees is well above the national average, and Pennsylvania has an above-average first-year retention rate – an important indicator of whether a student will graduate.



2007 Source: www.higheredinfo.org

2007

Note: 2007 is the latest year for which state-by-state comparisons were done.

Despite these positive indicators, more can be done to increase college access and completion rates, especially for minority students. According to [higheredinfo.org](http://www.higheredinfo.org), while about 66 percent of white Pennsylvanians graduate from Pennsylvania's four-year institutions within six years, only 44 percent of African-Americans and 57 percent of Hispanics graduate from college within six years.

The high cost of higher education could account for these disparities between white and minority students, and it could also be a barrier to higher education for all students. Pennsylvania received an 'F' for affordability in [higheredinfo.org](http://www.higheredinfo.org)'s latest national higher education report card. The report found that

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Higher Education (continued)

families contribute an increasingly larger share of their income for their children to attend Pennsylvania's two-year and four-year institutions, and families often accumulate burdensome debt.

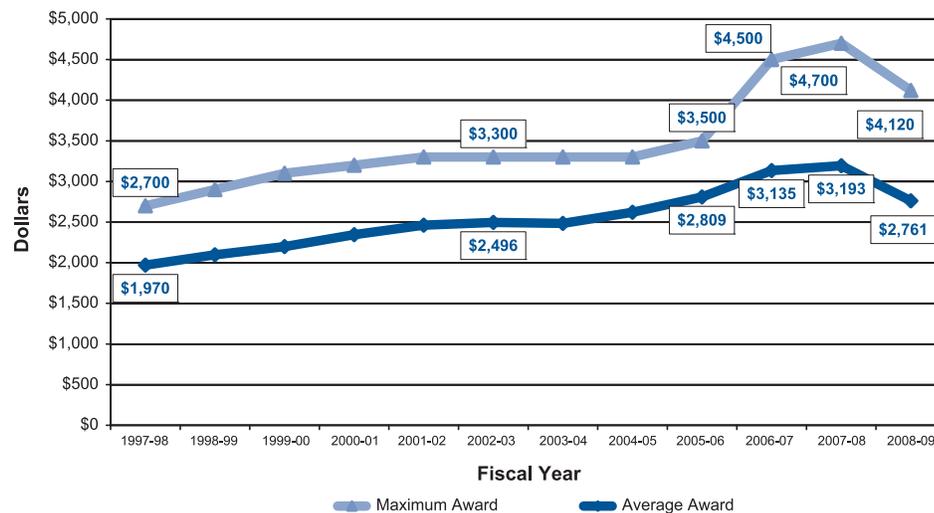
The Department of Education is working to make higher education accessible and affordable to all by:

- Assisting students and families with the cost of higher education through the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA).
- Investing in the commonwealth's community colleges and state universities.
- Administering the College Access Challenge Grant Program.
- Making it easier for students to transfer credits.
- Conducting prior-learning assessments.
- Accurately tracking Pennsylvania's postsecondary students through the expansion of the Pennsylvania Information Management System.
- Adopting workforce development strategies to train students for occupations in high demand, including adult education initiatives.
- Offering Dual Enrollment Grants to provide a pathway to affordable college for high school students.

To learn more, visit <http://www.pdehighered.state.pa.us/>.

The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency provided meaningful State Grants to nearly 165,000 students in 2008-09 and helped ensure that eligible students seeking low-cost federal Stafford loans obtained them. Maintaining this level is particularly impressive in light of the extensive budget reductions Pennsylvania was forced to make.

**Average and Maximum State Grant Awards
Academic Years 1997-98 through 2008-09**



The state-funded **Pennsylvania State Grant Program** continues to provide financial aid to thousands of students. The number and value of grant awards is tied directly to funding appropriated to the programs administered by the agency.

The state-funded **Institutional Assistance Grant Program** provides formula grants to 85 independent, nonprofit Pennsylvania colleges and universities, ensuring strong public and private postsecondary options for students.

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Higher Education (continued)

Pennsylvania State Grant Program		
	Annual Expenditure	Number of Awards
2001-02	\$337,000,000	163,300
2002-03	\$346,700,000	166,200
2003-04	\$357,900,000	175,100
2004-05	\$361,000,000	167,900
2005-06	\$400,000,000	175,100
2006-07	\$452,900,000	178,500
2007-08	\$454,400,000	175,000
2008-09	\$374,900,000	165,000

Institutional Assistance Grant Program		
	Annual Expenditure	Number of Schools
2001-02	\$42,700,000	84
2002-03	\$40,600,000	84
2003-04	\$38,600,000	84
2004-05	\$39,500,000	84
2005-06	\$40,500,000	83
2006-07	\$41,600,000	85
2007-08	\$42,300,000	85
2008-09	\$42,100,000	85

Key Objective: Increase and maintain a strong workforce in Pennsylvania.

Why this objective is important: The future of the commonwealth depends on having an educated workforce that can compete nationally and internationally.

How we are doing: To increase and maintain a strong workforce in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency administers several aid programs in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board. Additionally, the Department of Education aligns career and technical education with those occupations most in demand in Pennsylvania, such as health care professionals, technology experts and engineers. In 2008-09, more than 1,200 career and technical education programs educated more than 44,900 students in high-priority occupations and provided living wages across the commonwealth.

The **New Economy Technology Scholarship Program** provides SciTech and Technology scholarships to students who agree to work in Pennsylvania following graduation for at least one year for each scholarship year.

SciTech Scholarship		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	1,152	\$3,222,250
2006-07	1,085	\$3,044,327
2007-08	1,019	\$2,875,250
2008-09	1,125	\$3,178,384

Technology Scholarship		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	1,510	\$1,412,665
2006-07	1,648	\$1,555,282
2007-08	1,833	\$1,716,146
2008-09	2,011	\$1,902,927

The **Technology Work Experience Internship Program** provides matching funds to approved postsecondary schools, supporting students completing internships or work experiences with emerging technology companies throughout Pennsylvania. This program received a one-time appropriation in 2004-05.

Technology Work Experience Internship Program		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	7	\$18,171
2006-07	23	\$55,078
2007-08	17	\$18,054
2008-09	10	\$20,577

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Higher Education (continued)

The **Federal Work-Study On-Campus**, and **Community Service** and **State Work-Study Programs** provide matching funds to institutions to support both on-campus and off-campus student employment programs. As the minimum wage increased and available funding decreased, less students could be served.

Community Service Program		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	2,594	\$1,270,192
2006-07	1,711	\$914,089
2007-08	1,374	\$768,827
2008-09	1,258	\$721,029

Federal Work-Study On-Campus Program		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	39,500	\$7,461,262
2006-07	40,945	\$8,319,426
2007-08	36,940	\$8,593,833
2008-09	33,096	\$7,198,707

State Work-Study Program		
	Number of Recipients	Value of Awards
2005-06	5,554	\$3,782,728
2006-07	5,523	\$3,771,026
2007-08	6,327	\$4,473,816
2008-09	5,768	\$4,344,563

Key Objective: Increase beneficial partnerships to increase available student aid funding.

Why this objective is important: Establishing partnerships with other agencies maximizes available student aid funding and makes it easier for Pennsylvanians to pursue postsecondary education.

How we are doing: The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency administers various partnership aid programs:

The **Educational Assistance Program**, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, provides aid to National Guard members in Pennsylvania. Recipients and value declined significantly in 2008-09 because more PA National Guard members were placed on active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Educational Assistance Program		
	Recipients	Dollars
2005-06	2,669	\$8,234,585
2006-07	2,983	\$10,928,155
2007-08	2,543	\$9,290,594
2008-09	1,865	\$6,319,529

The **Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program**, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, offers grant assistance to Pennsylvania undergraduates who are aging out of foster care.

Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant Program		
	Recipients	Dollars
2005-06	435	\$1,518,518
2006-07	457	\$1,727,487
2007-08	470	\$1,805,654
2008-09	573	\$2,163,575

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Higher Education (continued)

The **Partnerships for Access to Higher Education Program**, in partnership with 35 nonprofit organizations and foundations in Pennsylvania, provides need-based scholarship aid to eligible students, matching up to \$3,500 of partner-provided aid.

Partnerships for Access to Higher Education Program		
	Recipients	Dollars
2005-06	1,447	\$1,559,114
2006-07	1,613	\$1,848,316
2007-08	1,454	\$1,792,646
2008-09	1,512	\$1,699,031

The **Federal Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program**, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, provides federal funds to high school seniors who have demonstrated academic excellence.

Federal Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program		
	Recipients	Dollars
2005-06	1,095	\$1,594,077
2006-07	1,082	\$1,567,379
2007-08	1,073	\$1,536,376
2008-09	1,061	\$1,512,940

The **Pennsylvania State Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs**, in partnership with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, provide federal scholarships to inner-city youth going on to postsecondary education. More than 190 recipients received a total of \$717,002 in 2008-09 – the first year of scholarship disbursements.

Key Objective: Increase the awareness of elementary, middle and high school students about the importance of higher education.

Why this objective is important: Introducing elementary and middle school students to the importance of higher education increases the number of high school students who pursue higher education. Early awareness prevents disengagement, offers career path exploration and encourages parental involvement.

How we are doing: The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency provides free resources to elementary and middle school students, educating them on the importance of higher education.

- EducationPlanner.org, the agency’s higher education planning Web site, registered more than 900,000 visits during the 2008-09 year – 200,000 more than in 2007-08.
- The agency conducts more than 600 financial aid nights and Free Application for Federal Student Aid completion sessions at Pennsylvania high schools and community centers, providing parents and students with in-depth information on the college planning process and available student aid.

The ever-increasing cost of higher education, unfavorable market conditions and limited appropriations from the General Assembly, however, have limited the agency’s ability to provide aid to all deserving students and have limited award amounts.

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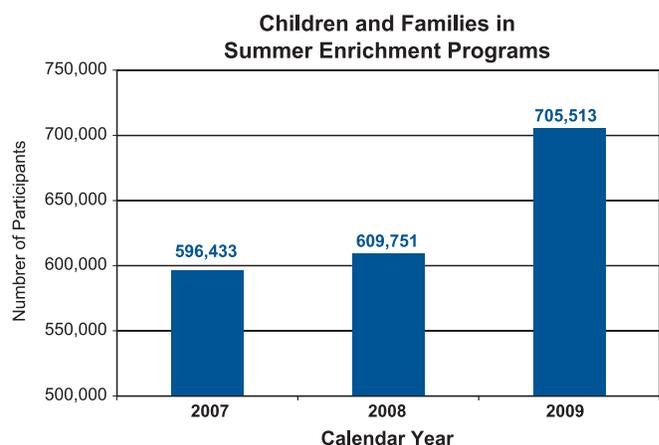
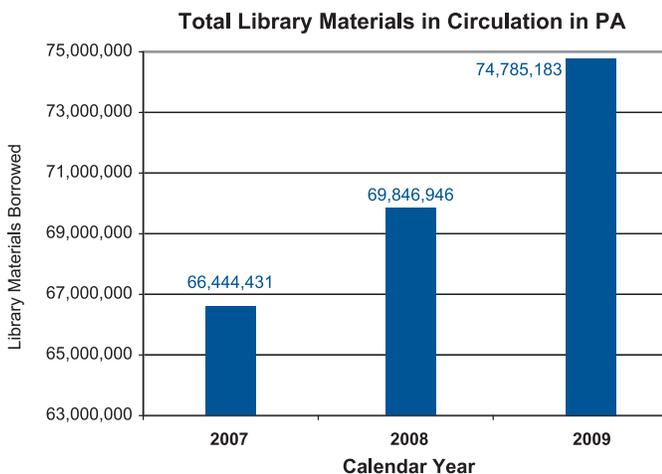
Library Resources (continued)

Library Resources

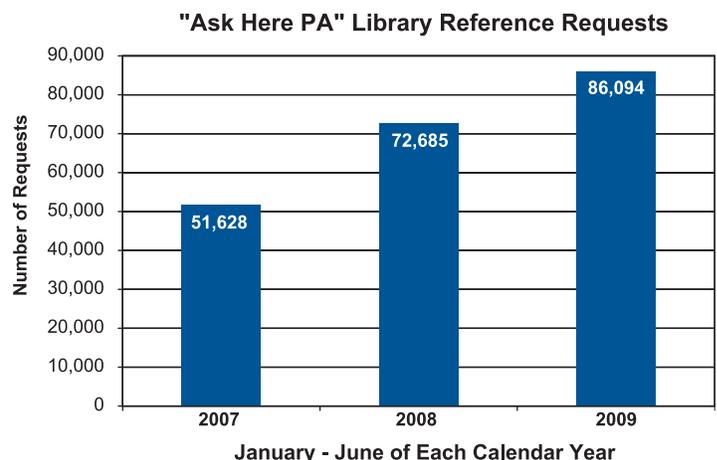
Key Objective: Provide library resources to inform and educate children and adults at home, in school and in the workplace.

Why this objective is important: Public libraries provide lifelong learning opportunities for Pennsylvanians and measurably affect the development of a literate, prepared workforce. Public libraries provide students with computers and resources to complete homework assignments and enrich learning. They help adults make informed health, financial and recreational decisions. Public libraries provide access to the Internet and online government resources, job retraining information, job postings, and free books and materials. For every dollar in public funds invested in libraries, communities receive a \$5.50 return in support of education, enhanced communities and strengthened economies.

How we are doing: The Department of Education is committed to providing access to libraries for all Pennsylvanians, with a focus on student-oriented afterschool and summer enrichment programs and homework help. These efforts have resulted in an increase in the number of library materials borrowed and increased participation in the Summer Reading Program, which encourages students to improve their reading skills between school years.



Pennsylvanians have around-the-clock, online access to resources through the POWER Library and access to a reference librarian through **Ask Here PA**. POWER Library searches increased 58.4 percent since last year. Ask Here PA requests have increased 67 percent since its inception in 2007, with the total number of requests exceeding 226,000. Pennsylvania has the most heavily used virtual reference services of the 15 states with similar services. In early 2009, the department began a pilot program in Philadelphia to offer access to a reference librarian via text messaging.



Education – Build A World-Class Public Education System

Awareness and Advocacy for Women *(continued)*

Awareness and Advocacy for Women

Key Objective: Increase awareness of critical issues that affect women and families and educate Pennsylvanians about these issues.

Why this objective is important: Of the 12.4 million people in the commonwealth, nearly 5 million are women over the age of 18. National surveys have shown that, compared to many other states, Pennsylvania lags behind in key areas that directly affect women and children. Areas where Pennsylvania needs improvement include: the number of women holding elected office, ready access to health care services for women and children, the availability of paid family leave and sick leave, and reducing the persistent pattern of violence against women. By educating the public on these issues, the Pennsylvania Commission for Women hopes to make the state a more welcoming place for women and families.

How we are doing: The commission initiated many activities to empower women and families through education. Specifically, the commission:

- Launched a statewide marketing campaign to educate women on the power that they could wield by voting in the 2008 presidential election. Women constituted a majority of Pennsylvania voters (53 percent) in the 2008 presidential election.
- Portrayed the devastating effects of osteoporosis in a statewide campaign targeting women in rural areas through advertising in local movie theaters. The osteoporosis message reached an estimated 875,000 to 900,000 people during an eight-week period.
- Honored Pennsylvania women in the military and featured educational and inspirational content during Women’s History Month in March, culminating with seven Women’s History Month Awards. At the time, 400 women in the Pennsylvania National Guard were stationed around the world.
- Organized the sixth annual Pennsylvania Governor’s Conference for Women, which more than 5,000 attended and which served as an extraordinary day of personal and professional development for Pennsylvania women.
- Placed 13 Women’s Wellness Guides for free in grocery stores; prison waiting rooms; women, infant and children centers; county assistance offices and health clinics across Pennsylvania.

Bilingual, touch-activated women’s health kiosks, the Women’s Wellness Guides target under-served women who lack Web access and consistent health care providers. Data from one kiosk placed in the Allegheny County Prison waiting room indicated 7,811 total hits after one year of use, with 56 percent of kiosk users expressing that they were likely to consequently adopt lifestyles changes.

- Produced “Voices: African American and Latina Women Share Their Stories of Success,” an award-winning museum exhibit modeled after the commission’s book of the same name. The commission displayed “Voices” for six months at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, where an estimated 20,000 children viewed the exhibit. The exhibit will reside until March 2010 at the State Museum of Pennsylvania, where an estimated 60,000 children will see it.
- Published the Status of Pennsylvania Women Report in 2004 and 2009, providing a unique snapshot of what it is like to be a woman in Pennsylvania. Organizations and individuals can use the report as an educational tool.