

Summer ideas and tasks

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Summer ideas and tasks

In the last issue of e-comm we shared an idea for a summer project. PenSPRA member Barbara Kingsley returned the favor with this suggestion:

“When staff and students out of the buildings and halls are empty, try visiting the personnel of the multiple offices around the District. I did a piece on the secretarial staff last year that was very successful. This year I plan on doing the same photo story but with the grounds and custodial staff.”

What do you have planned for the summer? If you have an idea you would like to share, send it to Karen. Here are some more ideas from NSPRA.

<https://schoolpr.wordpress.com/2015/06/08/unconventional-things-to-do-this-summer/>

Gold medal for PenSPRA member

PenSPRA member Cara Zanella was featured in her local paper for her dedication to ice dancing in light of the fact that she suffers from rheumatoid arthritis. We would also like to congratulate Cara on her ice dancing gold medal, acquired after 8 years of practice! Quite the example of dedication and perseverance. Here's the featured story:

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/health/2015/05/29/Skating-brings-North-Huntingdon-woman-freedom-from-pain-of-arthritis/stories/201505220010>

The budget

The July 1 deadline is now less than a month away and the politicians are going at it in Harrisburg. Rather than just a typical budget discussion, this year's budget involves a number of proposed changes to taxes, and a successful resolution of the budget seems to depend on all of the changes being approved by the legislature.

In a nutshell, Governor Wolf has proposed reducing property taxes by an average of 50%, reducing the corporate income tax from 9.99% to 5.99%, raising personal income tax to 3.7%, raising sales tax .6% and instituting a 5% severance tax on Marcellus shale. The budget also proposes privatizing liquor sales and reforming the pension system.

To keep you up to date, here is the latest article on budget discussions:

[http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/06/wolf\\_gop\\_leaders\\_meet\\_on\\_budge.html](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/06/wolf_gop_leaders_meet_on_budge.html)

Why this year's negotiation is different:

<http://www.fandm.edu/politics/politically-uncorrected-column/budgets-the-good-the-bad-the-ugly>

This is a breakdown of the two proposed property tax reform plans

<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-state/2015/06/07/Property-tax-reform-Comparing-Gov-Wolf-s-plan-with-the-House-Republicans/stories/201505310096>

The keystone moratorium

Currently there is legislative movement to pass a moratorium on using the Keystone exams as a graduation requirement. Should this pass, districts would still give the Keystone exams but a passing grade would not be necessary in order to graduate. Activists and legislators are working to pass this moratorium before the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

Here is some information on the legislation:

[http://capwiz.com/psba/issues/alert/?alertid=66301641&queueid=\[capwiz:queue\\_id\]](http://capwiz.com/psba/issues/alert/?alertid=66301641&queueid=[capwiz:queue_id])

The West Chester School District has taken an active role in the movement to end the keystones grad requirement:

[http://articles.philly.com/2015-06-02/news/62926178\\_1\\_keystone-exams-graduation-requirement-dinniman#QK6lSse85T8hYEOZ.99](http://articles.philly.com/2015-06-02/news/62926178_1_keystone-exams-graduation-requirement-dinniman#QK6lSse85T8hYEOZ.99)

News from around the state and nation

Nevada has passed a law allowing parents a choice of schools, between public, private, parochial and home schooling

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/charterschoice/2015/06/school\\_vouchers\\_nevada\\_law\\_breaks\\_new\\_ground.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/charterschoice/2015/06/school_vouchers_nevada_law_breaks_new_ground.html)

A mistake on the June SAT's is raising questions from parents and students

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/06/09/college-board-wont-score-two-sections-sat>

Pension reform seems to be on the fast track

<http://www.plsreporter.com/Home/TabId/56/artmid/472/articleid/738/Pension-reform-likely-before-end-of-June.aspx#.VW4OgxLZxpB.twitter>