

# PASSHE & COMMUNITY COLLEGES BUDGET HEARING WRAP

## Thursday, February 20, 2025



### General Overview:

Interim Chancellor Dr. Christopher Fiorentino of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), and Dr. Nicholas Neupauer, Vice President of the Commission for Community Colleges, Dr. Donald Generals, President of the Community College of Philadelphia, and Dr. Quintin Bullock, President of the Community College of Allegheny County, testified before the House Appropriations Committee this morning. House Republicans focused their questions on how these higher education institutions are preparing students for high-need job areas, their enrollment numbers, and how state leaders can work to ensure future success for both of these important post-secondary education systems.

### Key Takeaways:

- Pennsylvania's population continues to remain stagnant, creating demographic challenges for all of Pennsylvania's institutions of higher education.
- The Governor's budget proposal does not provide the support requested by PA's Community Colleges.
- While the COVID-19 pandemic is long past, members of the committee heard of the ongoing ramifications of the learning loss experienced by elementary and secondary students during the pandemic. This continues to cause challenges for PASSHE and PA's Community Colleges.
- Committee members inquired and urged PASSHE and PA's Community Colleges to invest in job training programs for our high-need job areas.
  - Members were pleased to hear about efforts for "dual enrollment" programs which allow high school students to earn college credits.
  - Both PASSHE and Community College leaders shared they frequently communicate with industry to ensure education programs are meeting workforce needs.
- PASSHE has consolidated schools and buildings over the past several years. Members were pleased to hear PASSHE has a strong understanding of their space utilization and how to use their properties in a fiscally responsible way.

### Notable Q&A:



Rep. Jeff Olsommer questions both PASSHE and Community Colleges on how the demographic challenges of Pennsylvania are impacting their enrollment.

Rep. Eric Davanzo inquired about dual enrollment programs offered by Community Colleges and how they prepare high schoolers for high-need job areas.



Rep. Josh Kail discusses workforce training with PASSHE and the Community Colleges.