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Dear Residents of SD-44:

I understand that many families throughout the Commonwealth are anxious about school reopening and the health of the students, teachers, and support staff. Last week, I attended a hearing aimed at strategizing how the state can support and coordinate resources to aid schools boards, teachers, students, and parents as we all grapple with how to most effectively educate students amidst the pandemic.

In this newsletter, you will find information for families with students with IEPs, small business grants, rent and mortgage assistance and my record in Harrisburg to protect your constitutional right to clean air and water.

My staff and I are always available by phone at 610-792-2137 and by email at [senatormuth@pasenate.com](mailto:senatormuth@pasenate.com) to help answer your questions and provide you with the resources that you need. We will also continue to share new information through E-blasts, social media and on [website](#) as we receive it to ensure you, your family, schools, and small businesses have the most up-to-date information.

Sincerely,

Senator Katie Muth

## Policy Hearing Recap: Responsible School Reopening

Last week I took part in a Senate Democratic Policy Committee hearing on “Strategies to safely reopen schools”, which was held at the request of Senators Tim Kearney, Maria Collett, Andy Dinniman, and Larry Farnese.

American Federation of Teachers PA president, Arthur Steinberg noted, "Asking teachers, students, parents, and communities to resume school as if none of this is happening is irresponsible."

It's clear that a "one size fits all" strategy will not work, but school leaders, public health experts, educators, and parents all need to work together to decide on when/how to safely reopen schools. I will continue to work with the school boards in my district and solicit feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators to bring their collective voices to Harrisburg as we continue to navigate this evolving situation.

Watch the full hearing [HERE](#).



## Protecting Your Right to Clean Air and Water

Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania released their [legislative scorecard](#), which tallies most of the votes that impact air, water, and public health. Pennsylvania's constitution guarantees our right to a clean and healthy environment, yet our Commonwealth ranks as the third-highest emitter of climate pollution in the nation and has the third-highest rate of cancer. Our rates of lung diseases, like asthma, remain far above the national average. Many of our counties rank among the worst communities in America for air pollution and more than a third of our lakes and a fifth of our streams are considered greatly impaired.

On top of all of those threats to our health, in 2020 our Commonwealth faced the COVID19 pandemic, a disease exacerbated by asthma and lung disease. And as always, these threats fall disproportionately on the Black, Brown and low-income communities often forced to live next door to the worst sources of pollution. Rather than dealing with those myriad issues, the Pennsylvania General Assembly instead spent the last two years seeking to derail the agencies that protect our environment and health, to promote and incentivize more fracking and more plastic, and to roll back or eliminate vital environmental laws and regulations. Too often, the general public does not know about the environmental attacks that take place each session in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

On a positive note, the General Assembly scored the [amendments](#) that I offered on HB 732, which would have required environmental impact studies and a greenhouse gas emissions plan.

#thereisnoplanetb #cleanupPA #PeopleOverProfits



Democracy works best when the **public is informed about crucial votes** that affect them and our environment—and can **use the information to engage their elected leaders** and hold them accountable.”

## Second Round: Statewide Small Business



# Assistance Grants

SD-44 Small Business Owners:

The PA CDFI Network has [announced](#) that the second grant application window for the COVID-19 PA Statewide Small Business Assistance program will open at 9:00AM on August 10th and will remain open for 15 business days closing at 11:59PM on August 28th.

If you applied during the first application window you should receive notification of your application status by August 10th. You do NOT need to reapply in the second round. Qualified applications will be automatically rolled over into the next funding round for consideration.

To learn more about the program and apply, click [here](#).



## Webinar: Students with IEPs and the 2020-2021 School Year

My office has received a number of calls and emails from families with students with IEPs. Next Tuesday, August 11th, Carole Clancy, Director of the Bureau of Special Education, will provide an overview for families of key components of the guidance being provided to schools.

This event will be streamed LIVE on the [PEAL Center](#) Facebook page.

### Students with IEPs and the 2020-21 School Year: What Families Need to Know

Co-sponsored by:     

**Carole Clancy**, Director, Bureau of Special Education, PA Department of Education, will provide an overview for families of key components of the guidance being provided to schools.

**Tuesday, August 11, 2020  
12:00 - 1:30 PM**

Submit your questions in advance to identify topics that are important to you



Training will be delivered in English, with Spanish and ASL translations. Captioning in other languages is available if you download the Microsoft Translator app onto your device.

Streaming on Facebook  
Live from the PEAL  
Center page!



## Rent and Mortgage Assistance

Help is available if you're struggling to make monthly payments. If you lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can apply for rent and mortgage relief through the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA).

Apply today: [phfa.org/pacares](https://phfa.org/pacares).

En español: [phfa.org/es](https://phfa.org/es).

## Rent and Mortgage Assistance is Available

RENTERS RELIEF

Up to \$750 a month  
for six months

HOMEOWNERS RELIEF

Up to \$1000 a month  
for six months

Protection from foreclosures  
and evictions **ends on August 31**



APPLY TODAY



[phfa.org/Pacares](https://phfa.org/Pacares)

## How to Stay Informed

Below is an extensive list of information, statistics, and resources to ensure you stay up-to-date with any changes happening due to COVID-19.

Check out [my website](#) for a comprehensive list of resources or one of the helpful site below.

### Pennsylvania Department of Health

- The PA DoH [Daily COVID-19 report](#). Updated regularly throughout the day.
- Follow the PA Health Department on [Twitter](#).
- Follow them on [Facebook](#).

### U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Track confirmed cases in the US](#). (This site is updated weekdays at noon and shows numbers that were current as of 4 p.m. the previous day.)
- CDC provided information regarding ["What you should know about COVID-19"](#)
- Follow the CDC on [Twitter](#).
- Follow the CDC on [Facebook](#).
- Learn how best to [prevent "community transition"](#) with specific details on what to do before, during, and after outbreaks.

### World Health Organization

- Learn what's happening Worldwide with the [WHO's Daily report](#). The most recent report is located at the top of the page. It includes confirmed case and death tallies.
- Additional COVID-19 information is provided on their [website](#).
- Stay informed on [Twitter](#).

- Follow their [Facebook](#) page.

Be sure to check out the complete list of information, data, and resources available to those in:

[Berks County](#)

[Chester County](#)

[Montgomery County](#)



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from

**KATIE MUTH**  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE SENATOR

Submit your mobile number to stay up-to-date with the latest events and happenings from Senator Katie Muth sent right to your phone.

  


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