



Generation180

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Solar for Schools Grant Enacted in Pennsylvania

Generation180 offers assistance to Pennsylvania schools to access state and federal funds to go solar

The Pennsylvania General Assembly recently took a significant step forward in advancing a clean energy economy and upgrading educational facilities by enacting the Solar for Schools Grant Program (HB 1032). This groundbreaking legislation introduced by Representative Elizabeth Fielder (D - 184th District) creates a state-funded grant program to help schools across the Commonwealth install on-site solar arrays that will reduce burdensome electricity bills and create cost savings for schools.

In support of the new statewide grant program, nonprofit Generation180 is announcing solar assistance and [free solar feasibility assessments](#) for any K-12 school or district in Pennsylvania that is interested in exploring options for installing onsite solar arrays. Generation180 will offer assistance in applying for state grants and considering different options for funding a solar project.

“With the opportunity to take advantage of new state and federal funding, now is the time for all Pennsylvania schools to explore the cost-saving and educational benefits of solar energy,” said Shannon Crooker, Pennsylvania Director at Generation180. “We are eager to help Pennsylvania schools find needed energy cost savings that can be invested into our students. We look forward to building a brighter, more sustainable future with our educational institutions and the generations of students they serve.”

The Solar For Schools Grant Program will help eligible schools fund up to 50% of the total cost of a solar project. Grant funds can be stacked with Inflation Reduction Act tax credits (which reimburse 30%-60% of the total project cost) or combined with other solar financing arrangements. The Solar for Schools Grant Program prioritizes schools located within 50 miles of a recent coal plant closure and in low-income communities. The program details will be developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) over the coming months.

“Solar for Schools is a groundbreaking, bipartisan victory for rural, suburban, and urban communities alike,” said Representative Elizabeth Fiedler. “Thanks to the program’s potential to create good-paying jobs and reduce our environmental impact, we’ve been able to create an unprecedented coalition of labor leaders, environmental advocates, and legislators on both sides of the aisle to make it happen. I can’t wait to see schools take control of their energy costs and start saving!”

The state budget allocated \$25,000,000 to the Solar for Schools Grant Program for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The state also allocated \$100,000,000 this year for the Public School Facility Improvement Grant, which provides funding for several types of building and equipment upgrades, to include energy savings projects.

Generation180 is receiving support from the Metropolitan Edison Company Sustainable Energy Fund of Berks County Community Foundation and Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund of the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies to provide solar assistance to schools located in the respective utility territories.

“Our grant, leveraging Generation180’s continuing success, offered an amazing opportunity for the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund to support an effort that brings together increased renewable capacity, community visibility and impact, and educational opportunities. Establishing the Solar for Schools grant program at the state level only makes the program much more impactful. Our congratulations to Generation180 for helping to make that possible,” said Emily Smedley, environment and energy program officer with Berks County Community Foundation. Smedley manages grantmaking in the Met-Ed utility territory from the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund.

ABOUT GENERATION180

Generation180 is a national nonprofit working to inspire and equip people to take action to advance clean energy in their homes, schools, and communities. Through its Electrify Our Schools campaign, Generation180 offers free support and resources to help nationwide K-12 schools learn about the benefits of solar and other clean energy technologies and how to take the next steps. Generation180 offers free solar technical assistance and an unbiased solar feasibility report to any K-12 school in Pennsylvania.

[Generation180.org/electrify-our-schools/pennsylvania](https://www.generation180.org/electrify-our-schools/pennsylvania)

About The Metropolitan Edison/Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund

The Sustainable Energy Funds were created as a result of electric utility deregulation and subsequent settlement agreements by Pennsylvania Electric Utilities. The funds are designed to

promote the development of sustainable and renewable energy programs and clean-air technologies on both a regional and statewide basis. Two of those funds, the Metropolitan Edison Company Sustainable Energy Fund (Met-Ed Sustainable Energy Fund) and the Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund of the [Community Foundation for the Alleghenies](#) (Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund), began distributing money in the form of grants, loans, and equity investments for a variety of projects within the territories originally served by the two electric companies. The two funds share an advisory committee and are commonly referred to in the singular as the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund. Since inception in 2000, the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund has approved 279 grants totaling \$7,209,518; 51 loans totaling \$25,161,087; and three equity investments totaling \$1,600,000. Total funding since inception is more than \$33.9 million.

<https://bccf.org/funds/sustainable-energy-fund/>