



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations  
Weekly Education Report  
**LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON**

**OCTOBER 17, 2022**

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*The COSSBA Education Report*, a weekly publication, provides an executive summary of public policy issues affecting American K-12 education and employment. **Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:**

1. **News, Publications, & Updates on COSSBA Policy Priorities**

• **Child Nutrition**

- **USDA Invests \$80M to Improve Nutrition in School Meals:** The Biden-Harris Administration **announced** \$50 million in grants for schools to invest in new food service equipment that will allow them to continue serving nutritious meals, which adds to the \$30 million in **equipment grants** that the administration gave schools earlier this year.

• **IDEA**

- **2022 OSEP Discipline-Behavior Guidance Website:** The Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), in collaboration with their technical assistance partners, unveiled a **new webpage** on the OSEP Ideas that Work website to share implementation-related resources supporting OSEP's recently released Guidance to Help Schools Support Students with Disabilities and Avoid Disparities In the Use of Discipline.

2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**

• **Impact on State School Board Associations**

3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**

- **K-12 School Principals Discuss Teacher Shortages, Mental Health:** The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National

Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) hosted an event titled, “Personnel Shortages, Mental Health Challenges: Principals, Policymakers Discuss Impact on Students.”

- **US News Shares Data on How Child Mental Health Impacts Workforce:** U.S. News & World Report hosted a webinar titled, “How Child Mental Health Impacts the Workforce.” The panel focused on the role that health professionals and community care providers play in addressing the child mental health crisis and provided insight on how to build meaningful interventions at home through education and awareness in the workforce.
- **Latinos for Education Host Policy Briefing on Educator Diversity:** Latinos for Education hosted an in-person congressional briefing on educator diversity, where they discussed removing barriers that affect Latino children and advocated for improving Latino educator influence in the classroom.
- **ED Launches “YOU Belong in STEM” Initiative:** The Department of Education launched "YOU Belong in STEM," an initiative to galvanize the broad STEM education ecosystem to implement and scale equitable and high-quality STEM education for all young people from Pre-K to higher education.

#### 4. **New Publications**

- **Educators and ESSER: How Pandemic Spending is Reshaping the Teaching Profession**  
*FutureEd* (October, 2022)  
To understand state and local policymakers’ strategies for bolstering teaching resources in the wake of the pandemic, FutureEd analyzed the Covid-relief spending plans of 5,000 school districts and charter organizations representing 74 percent of the nation’s public-school students.

#### 5. **In the News**

- **Jordan Signals Judiciary Focus on School Board Memo Under GOP Rule**  
*The Hill* (October 11, 2022)
- **High School Class of 2022 Had Lowest ACT Scores in Over 30 Years, Data Shows**  
*ABC News* (October 14, 2022)
- **Federal Funding and Charter School Closures: What the Latest Government Data Show**  
*EducationWeek* (October 13, 2022)

#### 6. **Weekly Calendar - What’s coming up this week?**

- **Webinar: Innovative Approaches to Identifying and Supporting Dual Language Learners:** Early Edge California, an organization dedicated to advancing policy changes and investments that will expand high-quality Early Learning programs for children from birth to age 8, is pleased to invite you to a webinar titled, “Innovative Approaches to Identifying and Supporting Young Dual Language Learners (DLLs).”  
*Tuesday, October 18*
- **Webinar: Politics of Education: School Boards Roundtable:** The Reinventing America’s Schools Project (RAS) and The 74 will hold a webinar to examine the

power and influence of politics in the role of school boards as they support efforts to prioritize equity in their district.

*Wednesday, October 19*

- **Webinar: Maintaining Healthy Schools**: AASA, the School Superintendents Association, will host a webinar to discuss how district leaders in partnership with healthcare providers, parents and other key stakeholders can prioritize the development of systems, policies, practices, and facilities that promote health, safety, and equity to ensure student success in both health and learning.

*Thursday, October 20*

#### 7. **Future Hearings & Events**

- **Webinar: Release of the 2022 NAEP Scores**: The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) will host a webinar and live stream event to examine the results from the 2022 reading and math assessments at grade 4 and 8.

*Monday, October 24*

- **Webinar: The State of American Education**: The Hill will hold an event on “The State of American Education.”

*Wednesday, October 26*

#### 8. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**

- The House and Senate are in recess until Monday, November 14

#### 9. **Bills to Watch**

- **H.R. 7309**: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022

#### 10. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**

#### 11. **About BPAG**

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## 1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

### CHILD NUTRITION

#### USDA INVESTS \$80M TO IMPROVE NUTRITION IN SCHOOL MEALS

On Tuesday, October 11, the Biden-Harris Administration **announced** \$50 million in grants for schools to invest in new food service equipment that will allow them to continue serving nutritious meals, which adds to the \$30 million in **equipment grants** that the administration gave schools earlier this year. This announcement comes as USDA and other advocates in the child nutrition space celebrate **National School Lunch Week** (October 10-14). The added support for school meals and child nutrition builds on White House efforts, such as the **Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health**, recently reported in this publication, where the administration unveiled a **national strategy** to end hunger and reduce diet-related disease by 2030. “Ensuring access to nutritious school meals is one of the best investments we can make in our fight to end child hunger and improve health,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “As we celebrate the valiant efforts of school nutrition professionals across the country this National School Lunch Week, USDA is doubling down on our commitment to helping schools overcome

challenges including higher food prices and continued supply chain disruptions,” he continued. The request for applications is open through November 28, 2022, which can be found [here](#).

## IDEA

### 2022 OSEP DISCIPLINE-BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE WEBSITE

The Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), in collaboration with their technical assistance partners, unveiled a [new webpage](#) on the OSEP Ideas that Work website to share implementation-related resources supporting OSEP’s recently released Guidance to Help Schools Support Students with Disabilities and Avoid Disparities In the Use of Discipline.

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## 2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Congress remains in recess this week, although that doesn’t mean Members and staff aren’t working. In particular, the Senate is working on one of the few “must-pass” bills that will be considered post-Election Day. The [National Defense Authorization Act](#) (NDAA) and resolution of FY 2023 appropriations are the two major issues lawmakers will face in November.

Senators filed more than 900 proposed amendments to the NDAA, and Senate Armed Services Committee leaders, Chairman Jack Reed (D-RI) and Ranking Member Jim Inhofe (R-OK), sorted through those and decided to include 75 of them in a manager’s package that was filed last week. Staff will now spend the rest of the month pre-conferencing the House and Senate packages, with the goal of resolving most issues before their bosses return in November.

The other must-pass bill is the omnibus spending package that Congress will need to complete in order to keep the federal government operating past the expiration of the current continuing resolution that is funding the government until December 16th. Last week, Committee for Education Funding Executive Director Sarah Abernathy penned [a piece](#) for *The Hill* detailing the challenges facing education caused by the pandemic, including falling test scores, the teacher shortage, declining college enrollments and other effects, and calling for action on spending bills and enactment of a proposal that invests more in education. She said, in part:

*This fall, Congress should avoid repeating the mistake of having a funding cliff for education. Instead, it should invest in ways that address the effects of the pandemic — learning disruptions and lost academic time and the physical and mental health hits, among others. It should also increase investments to address needs that existed long before the pandemic — for early childhood education, special education, access to higher education and career technical education, and many other in-school and wraparound services that help provide the education and training that is the bedrock of our society. As Congress makes decisions about government funding for fiscal year 2023, education funding should be a big priority.*

Education advocates hope the piece is read by staff and members, who will make final decisions about spending before the end of the year. Probably.

## **How does this impact State School Board Associations?**

The outcome of the November elections will ultimately determine the policy and fiscal agenda for Congress beginning in 2023 and could determine whether an FY 22 omnibus funding bill is passed in the lame duck session later this year. Whether or not that bill passes could have significant impact on FY 23 funding decisions as well. If the House switches to Republican leadership, and an omnibus spending package is pushed into the New Year, it is possible Republicans could cut domestic spending, including federal funding for schools and education programs.

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### **3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington**

#### **K-12 SCHOOL PRINCIPALS DISCUSS TEACHER SHORTAGES, MENTAL HEALTH**

On Wednesday, October 12, The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) hosted an event titled, “Personnel Shortages, Mental Health Challenges: Principals, Policymakers Discuss Impact on Students.” The event featured Silvia Martinez, office of Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM); Roberto Rodríguez, assistant secretary for planning, evaluation, and policy development at the Department of Education; Representative Jamie Raskin (D-MD-8); Samuel Buckley, assistant principal of Pikesville High School; Edward Cosentino, principal of Clemens Crossing Elementary School; Sue Danielson, principal of Rosa Parks Elementary School; and Robert Motley, principal of Atholton High School. Martinez called for revising and expanding the [Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program](#) and highlighted the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Improvement Act ([S. 3827](#)), which would make necessary amendments to the program and include retention incentives for educators and principals. Meanwhile, Raskin discussed the mental health crisis students are facing and proposed placing mental healthcare providers in schools beginning as early as Pre-K. Like Martinez, the Congressman declared that his colleagues can help alleviate the stress and burden educators face by revising the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program by extending it to all educators. Cosentino described the grave mental health issues his students are facing, reporting the need for an updated suicide intervention plan, as the number of at risk students have quadrupled at Clemens Crossing. Cosentino also advocated for teacher pipelines, recruitment and preparation starting as early as secondary school. Danielson criticized a lack of support systems for principals and signaled for a more holistic approach, in addition to raising salaries to ensure a more attractive and competitive job market. Buckley advocated for improved teacher diversity, while Motley considered the challenges in retaining principals and how to counter this rising issue. A recording of the event can be found [here](#).

#### **US NEWS SHARES DATA ON HOW CHILD MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS WORKFORCE**

On Wednesday, October 12, U.S. News & World Report hosted a webinar titled, “How Child Mental Health Impacts the Workforce.” The panel featured Marti Bledsoe Post, executive director of On Our Sleeves; Yusra Benhalim, M.D., senior national medical director of Optum Behavioral Health Solutions; Vinita Clements, executive vice president and chief human resources officer for Nationwide; Ariana Hoet, Ph.D., clinical director of On Our Sleeves; and Morgan Felchner, executive editor of News and Events for U.S. News & World Report. The panel focused on the role that health professionals and community care providers play in

addressing the child mental health crisis and provided insight on how to build meaningful interventions at home through education and awareness in the workforce. Post presented data from a recent On Our Sleeves [study](#) that illustrated the connection between the mental wellness of children and the success of the U.S. workforce, which is largely made up of parents and caregivers. After surveying nearly 5,500 working adults in the United States, responses implied that children's mental health has a direct impact on corporate success. In explaining how more employers can be encouraged to take action, Post said that more conversations around mental wellness need to be had. "By talking about it, we are breaking down the stigma around this topic," she said. Following Post's opening comments, panel participants each discussed their role and experience at their respective institutions and businesses in relation to how they are supporting parents and caregivers and child mental health. Benhalim noted that "only looking at the healthcare system means we're waiting for families to seek care." She continued, "We need to think outside of the healthcare system as opportunities to make connections" prior to seeking care. Leveraging time during the workday to provide education and increase awareness around mental health is increasingly crucial, as the On Our Sleeves study suggested, Clements noted. This might include, Clements further explained, "mindful Mondays" or "wellness Wednesdays," or increased workplace counseling services, as a few examples. Hoet pointed out that six out of ten parents worry about their child's mental health and that half of those have missed work due to this. As a final thought, Hoet stated, "We have to continue advocating for children at schools, at homes, and especially in the workplace." A recording of the event can be viewed [here](#).

### **LATINOS FOR EDUCATION HOST POLICY BRIEFING ON EDUCATOR DIVERSITY**

On Wednesday, October 12, Latinos for Education hosted an in-person congressional briefing on educator diversity. Participants included Amanda Fernandez, founder and CEO of Latinos for Education; Roberto Rodriguez, assistant secretary for planning, evaluation, and policy development at the U.S. Department of Education; Feliza Ortiz-Licon, chief policy and advocacy officer for Latinos for Education; Eric Duncan, assistant director of policy at The Education Trust; Manny Cruz, advocacy director of Latinos for Education; and Jacqueline Rodriguez, vice president for research policy and advocacy at American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). Fernandez provided opening remarks expressing the enormity of removing barriers that affect Latino children and advocated for placing Latino educators in front of Latino students. Roberto Rodriguez articulated a similar sentiment, stating there should be more Latino educator influence in early childhood education. He underscored the American Rescue Plan and its impact on Latino Americans, which included \$80 million for teacher educational programs and increases in the Pell Grant—doubling the grant by 2029. Duncan outlined current challenges in ensuring a diverse teacher workforce, stating that while students of color represent 50 percent of the student body in many cases, only 20 percent of faculty are teachers of color. He described how teachers of color have an impact on student achievement, leading to better rates of mental health, positive outcomes on graduation rates, and lower suspension rates for students of color. "In 2020, educator diversity stood at only 8%," and because of this, coalitions like Latinos for Education fought hard to create the [Educator Diversity Act](#), Cruz later noted. Cruz examined the measure's provisions, which include alternative certification processes for teachers, a state educator diversity dashboard, a mandated diversity plan among districts, and the establishment of educator diversity counselors. Dr. Jacqueline Rodriguez discussed challenges around teacher retention due to academic censorship, low wages, and the high costs of tuition leaving educators

with disproportionate loans. “Teaching is the profession that makes all of the other professions possible,” Dr. Rodriguez stated. A recording of the event is not available.

#### **ED LAUNCHES “YOU BELONG IN STEM” INITIATIVE**

On Wednesday, October 12, The Department of Education (ED) **launched** "YOU Belong in STEM," an initiative to galvanize the broad STEM education ecosystem to implement and scale equitable and high-quality STEM education for all young people from Pre-K to higher education. YOU Belong in STEM will focus on improving student outcomes by promoting positive conditions for STEM learning and development, as research shows a direct correlation between a sense of belonging in the classroom and a student's focus and academic content retention. "With the YOU Belong in STEM initiative, we are helping districts and schools redesign systems and learning spaces to ensure students get the well-rounded education they need," said Deputy Secretary of Education Cindy Marten. “We are also challenging narratives about who belongs in STEM learning and careers that, over generations, left out millions of girls and young women, students of color, students living in poverty, Native American and Alaska Native students, students with disabilities, and other marginalized students,” she added. ED will soon provide guidance and other technical assistance to elevate the new initiative’s priorities.

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#### **4. New Publications**

**Educators and ESSER: How Pandemic Spending is Reshaping the Teaching Profession**  
*FutureEd* (October, 2022)

To understand state and local policymakers’ strategies for bolstering teaching resources in the wake of the pandemic, FutureEd analyzed the Covid-relief spending plans of 5,000 school districts and charter organizations representing 74 percent of the nation’s public-school students. They also examined additional documents and conducted a range of interviews to gauge how the nation’s 100 largest school districts plan to reinforce their teaching ranks with the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) aid.

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#### **5. In the News**

**Jordan Signals Judiciary Focus on School Board Memo Under GOP Rule**  
*The Hill* (October 11, 2022)

**High School Class of 2022 Had Lowest ACT Scores in Over 30 Years, Data Shows**  
*ABC News* (October 14, 2022)

**Federal Funding and Charter School Closures: What the Latest Government Data Show**  
*EducationWeek* (October 13, 2022)

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### **THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON**

## 6. Weekly Calendar

**Key:** E&S – Elementary & Secondary; H – Higher Education; D – Disability Policy

### Tuesday, October 18, 2022

#### **Webinar: Innovative Approaches to Identifying and Supporting Dual Language Learners (DLLs) (E&S)**

**Subject:** Early Edge California, an organization dedicated to advancing policy changes and investments that will expand high-quality Early Learning programs for children from birth to age 8, is pleased to invite you to a webinar titled, “Innovative Approaches to Identifying and Supporting Young Dual Language Learners (DLLs).”

**Participants:** Patricia Lozano, moderator, executive director, Early Edge California; Montserrat Garibay, senior advisor for labor relations & acting assistant deputy secretary, U.S. Department of Education; Michael Rodríguez, executive director, Dual Language Education of New Mexico; and Jessica, a practitioner based in Fresno, California.

**Time/Location:** 4:00 p.m.

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

### Wednesday, October 19, 2022

#### **Webinar: Politics of Education: School Boards Roundtable (E&S)**

**Subject:** The Reinventing America’s Schools Project (RAS) and The 74 will hold a webinar to examine the power and influence of politics in the role of school boards as they support efforts to prioritize equity in their district.

**Participants:** Curtis Valentine, co-director, Reinventing America’s Schools Project (Moderator); Ray A. Freeman, school board member, Warrensville Heights, OH; Beatriz Lebron, school board member, Rochester, NY; Ty G. Jones, school board member, Lancaster, TX; Erika Mitchell, school board member, Atlanta, GA; and Kevin Mahnken, senior writer, The 74

**Time/Location:** 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

### Thursday, October 20, 2022

#### **Webinar: Maintaining Healthy Schools (E&S)**

**Subject:** AASA, the School Superintendents Association, will host a webinar to discuss how district leaders in partnership with healthcare providers, parents and other key stakeholders can prioritize the development of systems, policies, practices, and facilities that promote health, safety, and equity to ensure student success in both health and learning.

**Participants:** Sasha Pudelski, director of advocacy, AASA; Elizabeth Cook, senior director, Alliance for a Healthier Generation; and Stephanie Domain, director of child safety, health and wellness, American Academy of Pediatrics.

**Time/Location:** 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

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## 7. Future Hearings and Events

### Monday, October 24, 2022

#### **Webinar: Release of the 2022 NAEP Scores (E&S)**

**Subject:** The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) will host a webinar and live



stream event to examine the results from the 2022 reading and math assessments at grade 4 and 8.

**Time/Location:** 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

### **Wednesday, October 26, 2022**

**Webinar: The State of American Education (E&S, H)**

**Subject:** The Hill will hold an event on “The State of American Education.”

**Participants:** Penny Schwinn, commissioner of education, Tennessee; Bob Cusack, editor-in-chief, The Hill; Kirsten Baesler, superintendent, North Dakota; Governor Spencer Cox (R-UT); Shalinee Sharma, CEO, Zearn; Caitlin Sullivan, executive director, Leading Now; Roberto Rodriguez, assistant secretary of education, U.S. Department of Education; and more.

**Time/Location:** 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; The Showroom, 1099 14th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

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## **8. On The Floor of Congress This Week**

**Senate Floor:** In recess until Monday, November 14

**House Floor:** In recess until Monday, November 14

## **9. Bills to Watch**

### **Authorization Bills**

**H.R. 7309**     *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022*

Sponsor: Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA)

(5/17/22 Passed by House; 4/5/22 Passed by House Ed and Labor Committee;

3/31/22 Introduced in House)

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## **10. Links for Up-to-Date Information on Hearings, Legislation, and Events**

[U.S. House and Senate 2022 Schedule](#)

[U.S. Department of Education](#)

[U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions](#)

[U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor](#)

[U.S. Senate Budget Committee](#)

[U.S. House Budget Committee](#)

[Congressional Budget Office](#)

[Federal legislative information](#)

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## 11. About BPAG

**Bose Public Affairs Group** is a full-service government affairs and public relations consulting firm that has built a reputation for producing results. We partner with clients committed to excellence in education and other social services to achieve policy and advocacy success by:

- leveraging our expertise and passion;
- strategizing intelligent solutions; and,
- Creating meaningful impact.

Our team includes long-term insiders in education policy from Pre-K through higher education, innovative thinkers and savvy strategists that provide a comprehensive array of customized client services. We have the knowledge, skills, and relationships that are necessary for successful advocacy at all levels. From grassroots to grass tops and everything in between, our broad-based legislative practice approaches every project with the same degree of determination and professionalism. BPAG provides expertise in a variety of services:

- Government Relations
- Research and Analysis
- Advocacy Training
- Association Management
- Strategic Communications
- Policy Events

For more information, please visit our [website](#).

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