



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

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Jared Solomon, Editor

jsolomon@bosepublicaffairs.com

Della Cronin, Editor

dcronin@bosepublicaffairs.com

Bob Moran, Editor

rmoran@bosepublicaffairs.com

Sarah Lamson, Deputy Editor

slamson@bosepublicaffairs.com

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**
 - **Funding**
 - **Biden Releases FY24 Budget, ED Secretary Holds Budget Briefing:**
On Thursday, March 9, The Department of Education (ED) hosted an in-person briefing on President Joe Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request. The briefing featured remarks from several ED officials, including Sheila Nix, Office of the Secretary Chief of Staff; Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten; Undersecretary James Kvaal; and Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development Roberto Rodriguez.
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
 - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
 - **House Panel Clears Parents Bill of Rights Act:** On Thursday, March 9, House Education and the Workforce Committee Republicans advanced two GOP proposals. The first aims to codify a “Parents Bill of Rights” that would place new requirements on districts and schools to provide access and voice to parents. The panel additionally approved a bill that would prohibit transgender women from playing on sports teams consistent with their gender identity. (Attachment: Bose summary of Parents Bill of Rights Act)

- **IT Group Looks at Popular AI Chatbox Impact on Education:** On Tuesday, March 7, the Center for Data Innovation hosted a webinar discussion on **OpenAI's new ChatGPT AI feature** that is inciting both excitement and concern among educators.
- **New America Promotes High-Quality Math, Science Early Learning:** On Tuesday, March 7, New America and the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading hosted a webinar titled, "Promoting High Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten."

4. **New Publications**

- **Evidence for Social and Emotional Learning in Schools**
Learning Policy Institute (March, 2023)
In 2017, a 28-member Council of Distinguished Scientists examined the relevant evidence regarding SEL across a range of disciplines and concluded that social and emotional competencies are essential to learning; positive development; and success in school, careers, and life. This report provides further support for the evidence base for SEL and reviews the findings from 12 independent meta-analyses covering hundreds of studies of school-based SEL programs, presents the evidence on the effects of social and emotional learning programs in PreK–12 schools, and considers the next steps for research in SEL.
- **The New Wave of Public Funding of Private Schooling, Explained**
Future Ed (March, 2023)
To help inform the national conversation about these new moves to funding private school education, FutureEd reexamined the research on private school choice, **identified** every major private school choice program nationwide, analyzed the trends they reflect, and sought to answer key questions about the programs, including whom they serve and their impact on student achievement.

5. **In the News**

- **Biden Requests \$90B for Education Department in FY24 Budget**
K-12 Dive (March 9, 2023)
- **Sarah Huckabee Sanders Signs Sweeping Education Bill, to Praise and Protests**
ABC News (March 8, 2023)
- **4 Ways the National Cybersecurity Strategy Could Shape K-12**
K-12 Dive (March 8, 2023)
- **The Political Excitement for Pre-K is Missing One Key Ingredient**
Politico (March 8, 2023)
- **Republicans Issue Subpoenas to Former School Board Officials**
U.S. News (March 6, 2023)

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

- **Senate Budget Committee on President's FY2023 Budget Proposal: The Senate Budget Committee will hold a hearing on "The President's FY2024 Budget Proposal."**
Wednesday, March 15 at 10:15am ET

- **Latest Congressional Proposals to Address Children’s Online Safety:** The Cato Institute will hold a virtual discussion on "Do the Latest Policy Proposals Improve Children's Online Safety?"
Wednesday, March 15 at 11am ET
 - **OSTP Listening Sessions on Federal STEM Strategic Plan:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is hosting **virtual listening sessions** throughout March to inform development of the 2023-2028 Federal STEM Strategic Plan. The series will include a total of six listening sessions throughout the month of March. Each session and its details can be found in the **calendar section**, as well as **here**.
7. **Future Hearings & Events**
 - **House Labor-H Appropriations Subcommittee Public Witness Day:** The House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Public Witness Day."
Thursday, March 23 at 10am ET
 8. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**
 - **Senate: Consideration of nominations**
 - **House: In recess until Wednesday, March 22**
 9. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**
 10. **About BPAG**

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

FUNDING

BIDEN RELEASES FY24 BUDGET, ED SECRETARY HOLDS BUDGET BRIEFING

On Thursday, March 9, The Department of Education (ED) hosted an in-person briefing on President Joe Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request. The briefing featured remarks from several ED officials, including Sheila Nix, Office of the Secretary Chief of Staff; Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten; Undersecretary James Kvaal; and Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development Roberto Rodriguez. Nix provided opening remarks, echoing Education Secretary Miguel Cardona’s **Raising the Bar message**, stating that “the budget is fundamental for fulfilling the purpose, mission, and reflection of our commitment to putting students and families first.” She outlined Raising the Bar’s four core objectives, which are evident in the President’s budget request: Achievement of academic excellence; boldly improving learning conditions; creating pathways for global engagement; and making post-secondary education inclusive and affordable. Deputy Secretary Marten shed light on the “demand for students to have the resources needed to succeed” by highlighting specific investments found in the FY24 budget request, including increased investments in Title I programs; eliminating the educator shortage; supporting student mental health; and providing every student a pathway to multilingualism. Undersecretary Kvaal noted the budget request’s a 2024-2025 maximum Pell Grant award boost to \$8,215. The current maximum is \$7,395. The increase in funds would tackle the accessibility, inclusivity, and affordability of post-secondary education, Kvaal stated. Rodriguez provided a general overview of the budget request, stating

that it raises the bar in public education to support all learners, with a “\$90 billion investment in discretionary spending, which is almost a 13.6 percent increase among current levels.” Rodriguez highlighted requested increases for Title I (\$2.2 billion) and IDEA (\$2.7 billion for Part B funding). Following the budget presentation, the floor was opened to public comments and questions which included concerns over education resource and development, teacher shortages for specialized programs, and The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act’s (CTE) funding. A link to the Department’s statement can be found [here](#), and the budget materials can be found [here](#).

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Education headlines last week included the release of the White House’s FY 2024 budget request and the House Education and the Workforce Committee’s first mark up of two partisan bills. In between, there were dozens of meetings. Those who visited Capitol Hill last week can confirm that the frenzied pace of spring on the Hill has returned. Waiting for elevators, no seats in the cafeterias, lines out the doors and hallway meetings have returned.

On Wednesday, House Education and the Workforce Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) presided over the panel’s [first markup](#) of the 118th Congress. The [Parents Bill of Rights Act](#) (HR 5) and [The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act](#) (HR 734) were passed by the Committee after a 16-hour proceeding (including breaks) that recessed in the wee hours of Thursday morning. The bills were passed via partisan votes. During consideration of HR 5, about 25 proposed amendments were offered by Democratic members, many of which attempted to protect courses on the histories of minority groups. Democratic proposals were rejected on party-line votes. “The Biden administration is orchestrating a radical culture shift in America’s schools that is fundamentally changing what students are exposed to in the classroom and on the field,” said Chair Foxx, in supporting the bills. House leadership says HR 5, which would require schools to provide parents with a list of books and reading materials available in the school library, post curriculum publicly, and affirm parents’ rights to address school boards, among other provisions, will be on the floor in the next two weeks. It is not likely the Senate will consider either bill.

Less than 12 hours after the conclusion of the House mark up, President Joe Biden released his [FY 2024 budget request](#). The Department of Education would receive \$90 billion in discretionary funding in the plan—a 14 percent increase over last year. In [a statement](#), Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona said of the plan, President Biden's latest budget proposal calls on Congress to act with urgency and provide our schools with the resources needed to raise the bar in education by promoting academic excellence and rigorous instruction, improving learning conditions, and answering unmet challenges like the educator shortage and the mental health needs of our students. Our administration is also pushing for dramatic new investments in high-quality preschool that provide all our youngest learners with a sturdy bridge to elementary school success. The Biden-Harris budget also supports the Department of Education's efforts to boost global competitiveness by expanding opportunities for multilingual learning, redesigning high schools to include multiple pathways to college and career, and supercharging state and local efforts to make free community college a reality nationwide."

House Republicans will largely ignore the proposal—unless they are criticizing it, although they have not devised a plan for the year yet. House Budget Committee Chairman Jodey Arrington

(R-TX) has told reporters his panel’s plan won’t be ready for “at least” another 30 days. In the meantime, some Members are working on their own plan. The bipartisan House Problem Solvers Caucus met last week to discuss the issue of the debt limit, and its 64 members started sharing ideas to resolve the looming stalemate around spending cuts and the debt limit.

Spring is in the air. It’s busy again on Capitol Hill. The cherry blossoms are coming. March Madness, for sure.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

On the *Parents Bill of Rights Act*, this issue has become a primary component of conservative education agendas in recent years, particularly following school shutdowns during the pandemic and the increased tension between parents and school boards. In addition to the U.S. Congress capitalizing on this movement, parents’ rights policies have also passed at district and state levels around the country. On the other side of the isle, Democrats, educators and some advocates are concerned about what the *Parents Bill of Rights Act* means for equity in schools.

On the FY24 budget request, almost 75 percent of the increase would go to 12 programs, including a total increase of \$4.2 billion for the two largest formula grant programs (Title I and IDEA), mental health support for students, and administration of ED’s programs. Title I provides financial assistance to local educational agencies for children from low-income families and IDEA is intended to support early intervention and special education services for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. Meanwhile, a number of big programs see no proposed growth in the plan, such as many of the School Improvement programs, Innovation and Improvement programs, and investments in afterschool.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

HOUSE PANEL CLEARS PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS ACT

On Thursday, March 9, House Education and the Workforce Committee Republicans advanced two GOP proposals. The first that aims to codify a “Parents Bill of Rights that would place new requirements on districts and schools to provide access and voice to parents.” The panel additionally approved a bill that would prohibit transgender women from playing on sports teams consistent with their gender identity. [The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023](#) and the [Parents Bill of Rights Act](#) (PBORA) cleared the Committee along party lines following a 16-hour markup. Both are now primed for the House floor. Passage of both bills sends “a strong message,” Education and Workforce Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) said. Both measures align with the Republicans’ policy agenda, outlined in their [Commitment to America](#), and have House Republican leadership support. On Wednesday, House Majority Leader [Steve Scalise](#) (R-LA) said that the PBORA will receive a House vote in two weeks, although there is no timeline yet for when the transgender sports bill will be taken up. Moreover, while it is possible that the legislation clears the House, the bills will not likely be considered at all by the Democratic-led Senate. Republicans voted down the majority of [the more than two dozen](#) Democratic amendments for the PBORA. These amendments included boosting diversity in schools, grants for teacher training, access to school meals, prohibiting book bans and censorship in schools, and prohibiting banning Ethnic and Gender studies courses, including those on LGBTQ+, Latino, Native American and Black history, among other issues. Even so, a handful of

amendments did pass, including one on broadband access for students and another on prohibiting federal involvement in curriculum. “The majority has chosen to use our first markup to advance their own political agenda by politicizing students’ education and scapegoating some of our most vulnerable students as the cause of inequity in athletics,” said House Education and the Workforce Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA). Further details on the Committee’s markup can be found [here](#). In addition, BPAG Principal Bob Moran drafted a memo providing an explanation of the bill, which is attached to this email.

IT GROUP LOOKS AT POPULAR AI CHATBOX IMPACT ON EDUCATION

On Tuesday, March 7, the Center for Data Innovation hosted a webinar discussion on [OpenAI’s new ChatGPT AI feature](#) that is inciting both excitement and concern among educators. The event featured Gillian Diebold, policy analyst for the Center for Data Innovation; Deepak Sekar, co-founder and CEO of Prof Jim; Torrey Trust, associate professor of learning technology for the Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; Tony Wan, Head of Platform for Reach Capital; and Jeff Young, managing editor at EdSurge. ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence (AI) bot that interacts with its users in a conversational way with the ability to answer follow-up questions, admit mistakes and challenge ideas, is raising some fears of increased and advanced cheating in schools. Diebold opened by asking the panel if they feel generally optimistic or worried about ChatGPT. Most felt generally, albeit cautiously, optimistic about the potential of ChatGPT. “It will come with amazing innovations, we won’t be able to remember when there wasn’t this, and it will come with things we are pulling our hair out over,” Young stated. The panel then analyzed how ChatGPT is currently being used as an educational tool. Several participants explained that, though in its infancy, it is primarily used to brainstorm, generate ideas, suggest and edit writing, and create and complete homework assignments. Dr. Sekar highlighted its innovative impact and speculated it could render some skills obsolete. “The world is going to look way different in 10 years... I don’t know if we are preparing our kids to be successful in 10 years’ time. The skills that are important now won’t be in 10 years’ time.” Furthermore, the speakers acknowledged the fact that this new innovation calls for a greater need for AI literacy. Both teachers and students need to be properly trained in AI literacy because we are already dependent on it, and that dependency will only increase. Additionally, Diebold inquired about the potential for cheating, and Dr. Sekar revealed that there are plans to add “a watermark” to all ChatGPT-generated writing, so plagiarism will be less of an issue as is assumed. Dr. Trust elaborated that bigger issues surround AI, such as misinformation, data collection of minors, and information literacy. Wan responded to these issues by emphasizing the requirement for proper guardrails and precautions to be put in place, which would include a human presence in AI systems. An archived recording of the event can be found [here](#).

NEW AMERICA PROMOTES HIGH-QUALITY MATH, SCIENCE EARLY LEARNING

On Tuesday, March 7, New America and the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading hosted a webinar titled, “Promoting High Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten.” The event featured Laura Bornfreund, senior fellow and advisor on Early and Elementary Education at New America; Douglas Clements, distinguished university professor and Kennedy Endowed Chair in Early Childhood Learning at the University of Denver; Cindy Hoisington, project director at the Education Development Center; Chih-Ing Lim, co-director of the STEM Innovation for Inclusion in Early Education and senior technical assistance specialist at the Frank Porter Graham Child

Development Institute; Lauren Solarski, part-time faculty in the School of Education at Loyola University – Chicago; and Jessica Tilli, math curriculum specialist in the School District Of Philadelphia. Math and science are two fundamental early-education curriculum subjects, and a strong foundation in nurturing a child’s transition from school to adulthood, the panel explained, yet these subjects typically receive less attention when compared to its counterparts, such as literature. The panel examined research that studied student success by prioritizing math and science classes early on. Hoisington pointed to the **Foundations of Science Literacy** – a comprehensive approach to science teaching and learning for educators and families – that promotes hands-on student engagement. For teachers, this approach generates high-level adult-facilitated discussions and a greater understanding of children’s scientific thinking, while significantly improving a student’s language and literacy. Additionally, Tilli noted that “early math is vitally important, predictive of future success, and more complex than most educators give it credit for,” shifting how teachers enable students and deliver instruction in ways that develop curiosity as a top priority. Large-scale research has shown that math is the best predictor of future educational success, as it develops critical thinking, social-emotional competencies, and language abilities, the panel commented. Clements continued, referencing **a study** finding that students who particularly lack math education showed reduced brain levels involved in reasoning and cognitive learning. He added, “We need [an] asset-based math, grounded in knowledge of children’s thinking and learning, where children are engaged, active and inventive.” Solarski also touched on the increasing gender disparity among educators, which in turn creates difficulties producing the space necessary for children to learn. She additionally outlined **guidelines** to promote children’s learning and provided classroom examples. An achieved recording of the webinar can be found **here**.

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4. New Publications

Evidence for Social and Emotional Learning in Schools

Learning Policy Institute (March, 2023)

In 2017, a 28-member Council of Distinguished Scientists examined the relevant evidence regarding SEL across a range of disciplines and concluded that social and emotional competencies are essential to learning; positive development; and success in school, careers, and life. This report provides further support for the evidence base for SEL and reviews the findings from 12 independent meta-analyses covering hundreds of studies of school-based SEL programs, presents the evidence on the effects of social and emotional learning programs in PreK–12 schools, and considers the next steps for research in SEL.

The New Wave of Public Funding of Private Schooling, Explained

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To help inform the national conversation about these new moves to funding private school education, FutureEd reexamined the research on private school choice, identified every major private school choice program nationwide, analyzed the trends they reflect, and sought to answer key questions about the programs, including whom they serve and their impact on student achievement.

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5. In the News

Biden Requests \$90B for Education Department in FY24 Budget
K-12 Dive (March 9, 2023)

Sarah Huckabee Sanders Signs Sweeping Education Bill, to Praise and Protests
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4 Ways the National Cybersecurity Strategy Could Shape K-12
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The Political Excitement for Pre-K is Missing One Key Ingredient
Politico (March 8, 2023)

Republicans Issue Subpoenas to Former School Board Officials
U.S. News (March 6, 2023)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Hearing: Senate Budget Committee on President's FY2024 Budget Proposal

Subject: The Senate Budget Committee will hold a hearing on "The President's FY2024 Budget Proposal."

Witness: Shalanda Young, director, Office of Management and Budget.

Time: 10:15 a.m.

Contact: Live stream available [here](#).

Webinar: Latest Congressional Proposals to Address Children's Online Safety

Subject: The Cato Institute will hold a virtual discussion on "Do the Latest Policy Proposals Improve Children's Online Safety?"

Participants: Matthew Feeney, head of technology and innovation, Center for Policy Studies; James Czerniawski, senior policy analyst, Americans for Prosperity; and Jennifer Huddleston, technology policy research fellow, Cato.

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 1: Supporting Learners across all STEM Disciplines

Subject: The White House Office of Science and Technology will be holding listening sessions to inform the development of the 2023- 2028 Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strategic Plan. The first session will be on how to "Support learners and educators in and across all science and technology disciplines."

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Friday, March 17, 2023

Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 2: Prepare and Recruit the Nation's Future STEM Workforce

Subject: The White House Office of Science and Technology will be holding listening sessions to inform the development of the 2023- 2028 Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strategic Plan. The second session will be on how to “Prepare and recruit our Nation’s future STEM workforce.”

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Monday, March 20, 2023

Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 3: Foster inclusive STEM learning and working spaces

Subject: The White House Office of Science and Technology will be holding listening sessions to inform the development of the 2023- 2028 Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strategic Plan. The third session will be on how to “Foster inclusive STEM learning and working spaces to retain STEM learners and workers.”

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 4: Foster meaningful community and public engagement in science and technology

Subject: The White House Office of Science and Technology will be holding listening sessions to inform the development of the 2023- 2028 Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strategic Plan. The fourth session will be on how to “Foster meaningful community and public engagement in science and technology.”

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Thursday, March 23, 2023

Hearing: House Labor-H Appropriations Subcommittee Public Witness Day

Subject: The House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Public Witness Day."

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Contact: Live stream available [here](#).

Friday, March 24, 2023

Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 6: The National STEM Ecosystem

Subject: The White House Office of Science and Technology will be holding listening sessions to inform the development of the 2023- 2028 Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strategic Plan. The sixth and final session will be on “The National STEM Ecosystem.”

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor: Consideration of nominations

House Floor: In recess until Wednesday, March 22

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9. 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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10. 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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