



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

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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**
 - **Funding**
 - **Senate Holds Hearing on President Biden’s FY24 Budget Request:** On Wednesday, March 15, the Senate Budget Committee held a hearing on President Joe Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Proposal. The hearing **featured** Member statements from Chairman Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-IA), and witness testimony from Office of Management and Budget (OBM) Director Shalanda Young.
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
 - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
 - **Bonamici, Democrats Introduce Bill of Rights for Students, Parents:** On Friday, March 10, Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR.) **introduced her Bill of Rights for Students and Parents**, a Democratic response to the Republicans’ Parents Bill of Rights.
 - **Cato Examines Policy Proposals for Children’s Online Safety:** On Wednesday, March 15, the Cato Institute held a webinar titled, “Do the Latest Policy Proposals Improve Children’s Online Safety.” Panelists aimed to cross-examine the online safety policy developments and their potential consequences on the world stage.

4. New Publications

- **Federal and State Resources for Students Experiencing Homelessness**

Learning Policy Institute (March 2023)

This report examines federal and state funding sources directed to schools to support students experiencing homelessness and concludes with policy recommendations concerning funding amounts, distribution, and data collection that may improve educational opportunities for these students.

5. In the News

- **Schools Sue Social Media Companies over Youth Mental Health Crisis**

The Washington Post (March 19, 2023)

- **With Gun Control far from Sight, Schools Redesign for Student Safety**

NPR (March 17, 2023)

- **Trump Vows to Cut Federal Funding for Schools Teaching CRT, Accommodating Transgender Students**

USA Today (March 13, 2023)

- **'It's Hard to Focus': Schools Say American Kids are Hungry**

Associated Press (March 11, 2023)

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

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

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.”

Monday at 3pm ET

- **Event: Impact of ESSER Investments in the States:** The Council of Chief State School Officers' COVID Relief Data Project will hold an event, Investment to Impact: ESSER in the States, highlighting how states are using federal COVID-19 relief to support all students and share early evidence of the impact of those investments.

Tuesday at 9:30am ET

- **Webinar: Supporting STEM Organizational Decision Making:**

STEMConnector will hold a webinar to examine the STEM ecosystem and develop an understanding of how to leverage the framework to drive impact in their respective organizations.

Wednesday at 1pm ET

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

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.”

Wednesday at 1pm ET

- **Hearing: 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 at 10am ET*
 - **Hearing: House Budget Committee on FY24 Budget Request:** The House Budget Committee will hold a hearing on "The President's FY2024 Budget Request." *Thursday at 10am ET*
 - **Hearing: House Judiciary on Free Speech and Parental Engagement:** The House Judiciary Committee holds a hearing on "Free Speech: The Biden Administration's Chilling of Parents' Fundamental Rights." *Thursday at 2pm ET*
 - **Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 5: Build and drive capacity and cutting-edge STEM (and STEM education) research and development:** 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 fifth session will be on how to “Build and drive capacity and cutting-edge STEM (and STEM education) research and development.” *Friday at 2pm ET*
7. **Future Hearings & Events**
- **Agency Event: OSTP STEM Plan Listening Session 6: The National STEM Ecosystem:** 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.” *Monday, March 27 at 6pm ET*
8. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**
- **S. 316** - to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq.
H.R. 5 - Parents Bill of Rights Act
9. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**
10. **About BPAG**

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

FUNDING

SENATE HOLDS HEARING ON PRESIDENT BIDEN’S FY24 BUDGET REQUEST

On Wednesday, March 15, the Senate Budget Committee held a hearing on President Joe Biden’s Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Proposal. The hearing **featured** Member statements from Chairman Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-IA), and witness testimony from Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Shalanda Young. In his opening statement, Chairman Whitehouse commented on how the budget symbolizes the Administration’s values and touted its investment in kids, families and communities. “The

investments proposed in this budget are more than worthwhile. They are overdue,” the Chairman said. He continued, “I challenge anyone to say it's not worthwhile to make investments in our kids. The Biden budget would increase childcare options for 16 million more kids, lower costs for parents, fund pre-K access for all four-year-olds, and restore the full Child Tax Credit.” Tackling childcare and getting people back into the workforce was a prominent topic of discussion between Senators and Director Young. “It matters what to invest in. And we believe we have to grow the economy and one of the important pieces of the President's investments is childcare,” Ms. Young responded in an exchange with Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) that the lack of high-quality, affordable childcare is preventing people from entering or reentering the workforce. Additional discussion during the hearing focused on lowering costs for Americans, reducing the deficit, and amending the tax code to make it more fair, as well as strengthening Medicare and protecting Social Security. An archived recording of Wednesday's hearing can be found [here](#).

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Last week, the House was in recess while the Senate stayed in town. Since the House goes first in the annual appropriations process, that means there wasn't much progress on that front. There will be a slew of House Appropriations Committee [hearings this week](#), though, including the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Subcommittee's [public witness day](#), which will feature 17 witnesses addressing the breadth of issues and programs the panel will be considering. The schedule of the Committee is representative of the pace of activity on the Hill this week: busy. Thousands of advocates for various issues will be visiting Congress.

The Senate won't act on appropriations for a while, and Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) released a tentative schedule for hearings that will host agency leaders. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona is (tentatively) expected to appear before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee to defend the White House's budget request for his agency on May 11, 2023.

In the meantime, Dear Colleague letters making the case for more—or “robust”—funding for programs are circulating. Local interests are busily filling out paperwork to meet deadlines for community projects. There is a lot of work going into an appropriations process that still has the country's debt limit and House Republicans' desire to keep government spending at Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 levels slowing action. Seasoned advocates think there's very little chance that the spending bills will be completed by the end of FY 2023—September 30, 2023, and are predicting several continuing resolutions while the issues are sorted.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

In education news, it is clear that the Administration has been watching both the Education and the Workforce Committee deliberation and passage of the *Parents Bill of Rights Act* as well as the introduction, debate and passage of various state-level education policies. Last week, Secretary Cardona penned [an op-ed](#) titled, “As Education Secretary, I want us to enrich public schools, not ban books and topics.” The piece, published by the Tampa Bay Times, takes aim at a number of topical education debates, and asserts that the Biden Administration has been successfully working to improve education nationwide.

3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

BONAMICI, DEMOCRATS INTRODUCE BILL OF RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS

On Friday, March 10, Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR.) [introduced her Bill of Rights for Students and Parents](#), a Democratic response to the Republicans' [Parents Bill of Rights](#), now on its way to the House floor for a vote. "Parental involvement is critical to developing and sustaining high-quality public schools, and we must do all we can to involve parents and break down barriers that prevent or discourage participation," Bonamici said. The bill is supported by numerous education groups, including the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA). A [summary](#) of the legislation outlines that a student "should be able to receive a well-rounded education," and parents and families "should be able to collaborate effectively" with their children's teachers. Additionally, it dictates that public schools should be "responsive and inclusive," students should be able to learn in environments "free from all forms of discrimination," and all students should "receive an education that is historically accurate, reflects the diversity of our nation, and prepares students to think critically and participate actively in a representative democracy." The Republican counterpart, led by Congresswoman Julia Letlow (R-LA) mandates school districts to offer teacher-parent meetings, publicly disclose budget materials and allow parents to address the school board. "The previously introduced 'Parent Bill of Rights', HR 5, completely misses the mark and has discriminatory undertones that distract us from the seriousness of this moment," the National Parents Union said in a [statement](#). "Pitting parents against parents, parents against teachers, and adults against students does nothing to move us forward," they continued. A full list of endorsers of Bonamici's bill, the legislative text and a summary, can be found [here](#).

CATO EXAMINES POLICY PROPOSALS FOR CHILDREN'S ONLINE SAFETY

On Wednesday, March 15, the Cato Institute held a webinar titled, "Do the Latest Policy Proposals Improve Children's Online Safety." The event featured Jennifer Huddleston, technology policy research fellow for the Cato Institute; Matthew Feeney, head of technology and innovation at the Centre for Policy Studies; and James Czerniawski, senior policy analyst for Americans for Prosperity. Ongoing parental conversations concerning online content exposure have pushed policymakers to introduce regulatory proposals aimed at improving child online safety. Since the start of the New Year, debate on this issue has expanded across many levels in the United States and the United Kingdom, and panelists aimed to cross-examine the resulting policy developments and their potential consequences on the world stage. Feeney initiated the discussion and explained the United Kingdom's [Online Safety Bill](#) – a bill that regulates certain internet services and focuses on "child safety measures through monitoring user-to-user interaction." Czerniawski then provided a U.S. perspective, noting that "the federal government is going to be slow in implementing a strategy similar to the U.K.," leaving ultimate responsibility on individual states. Czerniawski elaborated on two pathways states are taking on this issue: [age assurance](#) and [age verification](#), proposed by California and Utah, respectively. The panel also discussed potential international implications if the United Kingdom's online safety bill became law and drew attention to smaller U.S. companies that have European contributors. These entities lack the industry and institutional support that larger corporations have established – such as Meta or Google – and therefore creating a disadvantaged system with different sets of rules. To this, Czerniawski added that as smaller companies face difficulties in

trying to attract growth, it will inevitably lead to “deterioration of investment and innovation.” Both Feeney and Czerniawski agree that child online safety needs to be at the forefront of policy, however policymakers should consider the difficulties that could arise in maintaining personal autonomy through constitutional rights and privacy protection. Specifically, Feeney states that “eighty to ninety percent [of the Online Safety Bill] would be unconstitutional in the U.S.” Participants also examined TikTok cybersecurity concerns, the perspective of young people, and alternative age verification techniques. An archived recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).

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4. New Publications

Federal and State Resources for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Learning Policy Institute (March, 2023)

This report examines federal and state funding sources directed to schools to support students experiencing homelessness. The Learning Policy Institute reviews provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the major federal effort to support students experiencing homelessness. The report also describes currently available federal and state financial supports for students experiencing homelessness and concludes with policy recommendations concerning funding amounts, distribution, and data collection that may improve educational opportunities for these students.

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5. In the News

Schools Sue Social Media Companies over Youth Mental Health Crisis

The Washington Post (March 19, 2023)

With Gun Control far from Sight, Schools Redesign for Student Safety

NPR (March 17, 2023)

Trump Vows to Cut Federal Funding for Schools Teaching CRT, Accommodating Transgender Student

USA Today (March 13, 2023)

‘It’s Hard to Focus’: Schools Say Americans Kids are Hungry

Associated Press (March 11, 2023)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

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.

Registration: Register [here](#).

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Event: Impact of ESSER Investments in the States

Subject: The Council of Chief State School Officers’ COVID Relief Data Project will hold an event, Investment to Impact: ESSER in the States, highlighting how states are using federal COVID-19 relief to support all students and share early evidence of the impact of those investments.

Time and Location: 9:30 a.m.; Capital Hilton, 1001 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Registration: Register [here](#).

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Webinar: Supporting STEM Organizational Decision Making

Subject: STEMConnector will hold a webinar to examine the STEM ecosystem and develop an understanding of how to leverage the framework to drive impact in their respective organizations.

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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.

Registration: 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.

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

Hearing: House Budget Committee on FY24 Budget Request

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

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

Time: 10:00 a.m.

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

Hearing: House Judiciary on Free Speech and Parental Engagement

Subject: The House Judiciary Committee holds a hearing on "Free Speech: The Biden Administration's Chilling of Parents' Fundamental Rights."

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Registration: 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.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Monday, March 27, 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.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor:

S. 316 - to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq.

House Floor:

H.R. 5 - Parents Bill of Rights Act

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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

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- 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

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