



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations Weekly Education Report

May 20, 2024

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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**
 - **Appropriations Hearing on Nutritious Foods in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies will hold a hearing on nutritious foods in SNAP on May 22, 2024.
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
 - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
 - **White House Holds Summit on Chronic Absenteeism:** Last Wednesday, the White House held an event titled, “Every Day Counts Summit.” Speakers shared insights from their school districts and the importance of engaging students and parents as primary stakeholders.
 - **House Panel Review HHS Priorities with Secretary Becerra:** Last Wednesday, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing titled, “Examining the Policies and Priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services.” Secretary Becerra highlighted the budget’s proposed funding for Head Start and universal preschool. He also emphasized the Department’s focus on youth mental health, highlighting the establishment of the nationwide 988 suicide and crisis lifeline and the implementation of behavioral services in schools.

- **LPI Examines the Role of Apprenticeships in Teacher Shortages:** On Thursday, the Learning Policy Institute hosted a webinar titled, “Addressing State Teacher Shortages: The Promise of Apprenticeship Programs.” The event featured a panel of policy leaders and faculty from teacher preparation programs who shared insights into building and sustaining high-quality registered teacher apprenticeship programs.
- **Axios Hosts One-On-One Conversations with Mental Health Leaders:** On Thursday, Axios hosted an event titled, “Addressing America’s Youth Mental Health Crisis.” Axios reporters held one-on-one conversations with US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), and Hannah Wesolowski, chief advocacy officer for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

4. **New Publications**

- **Unsettled Science on Longer-Run Effects of Early Education**
Science.org | American Association for the Advancement of Science (May 2024)
This review of recent studies supports more cautious conclusions regarding the longer-term effectiveness of today’s preschool programs. While there is evidence of the potential for today’s early education programs to accomplish their goals of improving long-run outcomes for many children, this study shows that preschool impacts are not unequivocally positive, and much more rigorous research is needed to understand how to design early education programs that are most effective at promoting the skills that children need to succeed in school and beyond.
- **School Was in Session This Summer, But Less Than Half of Eligible Students Enrolled**
RAND Corporation (May 2024)
The authors of this report use a survey administered to a nationally representative sample of kindergarten through grade 12 public school districts to investigate the prevalence and structure of districts’ programming in summer 2023. The report describes the prevalence of district-offered summer programming that year; examines details about elementary and secondary programs, in terms of their eligibility criteria, length, and academic and nonacademic offerings; discusses how districts approached their summer academic instruction; and looks at districts’ expectations about funding for summer 2024.
- **Schools and the Law: First Amendment US Supreme Court Decisions That School Board Members Should Know**
American Enterprise Institute (May 2024)
This report is the first in a series produced by the American Enterprise Institute and the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty to help public school board members anticipate and think through legal issues they might have to consider in their supervisory and policymaking role.

5. **In the News**

- **Summer Programming Cuts Expected Despite Need for Expansion**
K-12 Dive (May 15, 2024)
- **Healthier Foods, Healthier Minds**

Homeroom | US Department of Education (May 14, 2024)

- **How a CISA Proposal Could Impact K-12 Cyber Incident Reporting**
K-12 Dive (May 13, 2024)

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

- **Senate Finance Committee on Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefitting Children:** The Senate Finance Committee will hold a hearing on "Child Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefiting American Children."
Tuesday at 10am Eastern
- **House Appropriations Subcommittee on Nutritious Foods in SNAP:** The House Appropriations Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Nutritious Foods in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program."
Wednesday at 10am Eastern
- **Crossing the Partisan Divide in Education Policy:** The Aspen Institute will hold a webinar with policy experts and leaders in the field who will unpack effective strategies for advancing cross-partisan education policy initiatives.
Wednesday at 12pm Eastern
- **House Agriculture Committee Farm Bill:** The House Agriculture Committee is expected to mark-up a Farm Bill.
Thursday at 12pm Eastern
- **Heritage Foundation on Education Freedom:** The Heritage Foundation will hold a discussion on "Leading on Education Freedom."
Thursday at 3pm Eastern
- **Superintendents of Color Leading with Excellence:** The Education Trust and School Superintendents Association will hold a webinar on "Superintendents of Color Leading with Excellence."
Thursday at 6pm Eastern

7. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**

- **Senate floor:** Consideration of Nominations
- **House floor:**
 - **H.R. 4763** – Financial Innovation and Technology for the 21st Century Act (Sponsored by Rep. Thompson (PA) / Financial Services Committee)
 - **H.R. 192** – To prohibit individuals who are not citizens of the United States from voting in elections in the District of Columbia (Sponsored by Rep. Pfluger / Oversight and Accountability Committee)
 - **H.R. 5403** – CBDC Anti-Surveillance State Act (Sponsored by Rep. Emmer / Financial Services Committee)

8. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**

9. **About BPAG**

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

CHILD NUTRITION

APPROPRIATIONS HEARING ON NUTRITIOUS FOODS IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies will hold a [hearing](#) on nutritious foods in SNAP on May 22, 2024, at 10:00 AM Eastern. Witnesses include Robert Seligson, chief executive officer of The Physicians Foundation; Dr. Angela Rachidi, senior fellow and Rowe Scholar for The American Enterprise Institute; Michael Gay, an independent grocer; and Dr. Robert Lustig, and emeritus professor in the Department of Pediatrics for the University of California San Francisco.

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK) continued to push the FY 2025 appropriations process forward last week. The Committee [released interim FY 2025 allocations](#). This funding reflects the total amount available to appropriators for FY 2025. Under this proposal, non-defense discretionary spending is cut by \$62 billion (8%) below FY 2024. Chairman Cole's Senate counterpart, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), hasn't weighed in on allocations, but, as was the case last fiscal year, it seems unlikely she will set spending for the large domestic investments bill at the same level.

Chairman Cole has also announced a [markup schedule](#); the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Subcommittee markup is scheduled for June 27th, with full Committee action following on July 10th.

While both chambers are addressing FY 2025 spending in coming weeks and month, there is no doubt that there will need to be some agreement on temporary spending bills to bridge the end of FY 2024—which is September 30th—and the November elections. FY 2025 spending bills are unlikely to be complete until the post-election lame duck session at the earliest. Action could be further delayed to the 119th Congress, which convenes in January, depending on the results of Election Day. Regardless, advocates are writing letters, submitting testimony, sponsoring fly-ins and meeting with staff and Members. It's appropriations season. Always.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

The funding total that Chairman Cole allotted for the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill is just over \$184.5 billion. That amounts to a cut of roughly \$40 billion compared to the bill's final total of \$225.4 billion in FY 2024.

The markup schedule is an aggressive one and the education funding bill is always among the most controversial. Even though the Chairman would like to see the Committee complete action on all 12 spending bills before the August recess, it would not be surprising if either or both education spending package markups were delayed—or canceled altogether.

In the Senate, education stakeholders can submit outside witness testimony in support of various investments. [Guidance is here](#).

3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

WHITE HOUSE HOLDS SUMMIT ON CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

On Wednesday, the White House held an event titled, “Every Day Counts Summit.” The event featured education leaders and experts from across the country – Neera Tanden, director of the Domestic Policy Council; Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Education; Rhode Island Governor Daniel McKee; Eric Mackey, Alabama State Superintendent of Education; Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education; and others. In her opening remarks, Tanden underscored the importance of reducing absenteeism rates and fostering enhanced student engagement, noting how, since the pandemic, absenteeism can be attributed to as much as a 27 percent decline in math and a 45 percent decline in reading scores. To address this issue, she outlined a four-pronged approach including, increasing communication with families, visiting families at their homes to find solutions, making school more relevant for students, and investing in full-service community schools that can meet the basic needs of students and their families. Secretary Cardona echoed Tanden’s sentiments, stressing the urgent need for comprehensive support services. He announced significant federal funding initiatives, including \$250 million in grants aimed at combatting chronic absenteeism, as well as the President’s proposed budget allocations of more than \$8 billion to further expand chronic absence interventions in the next fiscal year. In addition, Governor McKee highlighted Rhode Island's [Learn365RI](#) program, an initiative aimed at extending learning beyond the traditional school through partnerships with municipalities and community organizations. Drawing from their respective states, Mackey and Jenner also shared their state-specific approaches, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and data-driven strategies, including a real-time attendance dashboard. The summit concluded with the remaining speakers sharing insights from their school districts, discussing the necessity of partnering with medical practitioners and engaging students and parents as primary stakeholders. A recording of the event can be found [here](#).

HOUSE PANEL REVIEWS HHS PRIORITIES WITH SECRETARY BECERRA

On Wednesday, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing titled, “Examining the Policies and Priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services,” featuring Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra. In her opening statement, Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) criticized the proposed budget for FY 2025, which includes \$130.7 billion in discretionary and \$1.7 trillion in mandatory spending, arguing it imposes a heavy burden on younger generations and overlooks critical issues like fentanyl, the border crisis, and child trafficking. She also advocated for the expansion of telehealth services in rural areas and the reduction of healthcare costs, spotlighting the [Lower Costs, More Transparency Act](#). In addition, her Republican colleagues expressed opposition to the negative impact of HHS’ regulatory overreach and raised concerns over the handling of unaccompanied minors at the border and the infringement of doctors’ religious liberties. In contrast, Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) praised the achievements of HHS, highlighting the success of the *American Rescue Plan* and the *Inflation Reduction Act* in making healthcare more affordable and accessible. Throughout the hearing, his Democratic colleagues echoed this sentiment and focused their attention on the youth mental health crisis, the opioid epidemic, lowering drug costs, and protecting the reproductive rights of women. In response, Secretary Xavier Becerra defended HHS’ budget and priorities, noting recent reductions in drug prices and expansion of healthcare coverage. He highlighted the budget’s proposed funding for over 750,000 Head Start slots, increased wages for Head Start

educators, and universal preschool for all four-year-olds. He also emphasized the Department's focus on youth mental health, highlighting the establishment of the nationwide 988 suicide and crisis lifeline and the implementation of behavioral services in schools - many of which are increasingly offered through Medicaid. In addition, Secretary Becerra highlighted the Department's investments in affordable childcare and maternal health, reaffirming HHS' commitment to sustaining health and promoting wellness for all Americans. The recording of the hearing can be found [here](#).

LPI EXAMINES THE ROLE OF APPRENTICESHIPS IN TEACHER SHORTAGES

On Thursday, the Learning Policy Institute hosted a webinar titled, "Addressing State Teacher Shortages: The Promise of Apprenticeship Programs." The event featured a panel of policy leaders and faculty from teacher preparation programs who shared insights into building and sustaining high-quality registered teacher apprenticeship programs. Speakers included Lisa Barron, Associate Dean and Director of Teacher Education and Partnerships, Austin Peay State University; Erin Crisp, Executive Director, Tennessee Grow Your Own; Cindy Gutierrez, Clinical Teacher Education & Office of Partnerships Director, University of Colorado Denver; Hanna Melnick, Senior Policy Advisor, Learning Policy Institute; Maureen Tracey-Mooney, Senior Advisor, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education; and, Randi Wolfe, Ph.D., Executive Director, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success. Panelists touted the promise of apprenticeship programs in growing the teacher workforce, asserting that such programs allow candidates to earn a salary and receive mentored on-the-job experience while working toward a teaching license. They noted the surge of interest in these programs in recent years as administrators and policymakers recognize their potential for helping to address the nation's critical teacher shortages. With encouragement from the US Departments of Labor and Education, by the end of 2023, Registered Apprenticeships in teaching had been launched in 31 states and territories and apprenticeship programs were in development in several others. The discussion featured findings from the recent LPI-Pathways Alliance brief, *[Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship Program: Role of State Agencies](#)*. Panelists highlighted current progress from their own programs and states, while reflecting on the ongoing opportunities to further refine the work, particularly as states navigate the end of COVID relief funding. The presentation used by panelists is available [here](#).

AXIOS HOSTS ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH LEADERS

On Thursday, Axios hosted an event titled, "Addressing America's Youth Mental Health Crisis." Axios senior health care reporter Tina Reed and senior reporter Caitlin Owens held one-on-one conversations with US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), and Hannah Wesolowski, chief advocacy officer for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). A separate panel discussion was also featured, allowing the audience to hear from Schultz Family Foundation co-founder Sheri Kersch Schultz, AmeriCorps CEO Michael Smith, and Pinterest Chief Legal and Business Affairs Officer Wanji Walcott. The event highlighted how America's youth mental health crisis is worsening as rates of depression and anxiety among children and teens rise to unprecedented levels, exacerbated by factors like post-pandemic isolation, social media use, and treatment shortages. Participants explored topics such as school-based mental health care options, targeted government action, multi-sector partnerships, as well as the expanded roles of pediatricians. Surgeon General Murthy framed the current state of mental health in the United States. "I believe that the youth mental health crisis that we're living through at this time truly is the defining public health issue of our time," said Murthy. He pointed to

different contributors to the crisis, including a rise in technology use combined with isolation among young people throughout the day, but also called attention to the increased usage of telemedicine and virtual care as helpful solutions. Wesolowski also suggested that constant connection to technology is a contributing factor and asserted that the crisis is impacting LGBTQ+ and other minority youth groups at increased rates. Wesolowski additionally underscored NAMI's efforts, as well as congressional efforts, to get more mental health counselors in schools. "If we meet kids where they are, we can have much more successful outcomes for them," she said. Congresswoman Coleman called attention to the **Congressional Black Caucus Emergency Taskforce on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health** that she chairs. The taskforce held hearings, forums, events and listening sessions to identify both the causes and potential solutions to the crisis, which resulted in the release of a **report** and **legislation** aimed at closing the mental health care gap for black youth. Notably, Schultz, Smith and Walcott announced during their panel a new **Youth Mental Health Corps**, funded by private and public dollars, with hopes to create a new talent pipeline to address shortages of mental health workers. The Corps is set up so that young people ages 18 and up will spend nearly a year working at a school or nonprofit to help connect other young people to mental health supports. Programs will begin this fall in Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Texas. Programs in California, Iowa, Maryland, New York, Utah and Virginia are slated to start next year. The Schultz Family Foundation and Pinterest expect to invest \$10 million in the program over three years, with additional funding provided by public sources, including state and national AmeriCorps grants. The event was live streamed and can be viewed **here**.

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4. New Publications

Unsettled Science on Longer-Run Effects of Early Education

Science.org / *American Association for the Advancement of Science* (May 2024)

This review of recent studies supports more cautious conclusions regarding the longer-term effectiveness of today's preschool programs. While there is evidence of the potential for today's early education programs to accomplish their goals of improving long-run outcomes for many children, this study shows that preschool impacts are not unequivocally positive, and much more rigorous research is needed to understand how to design early education programs that are most effective at promoting the skills that children need to succeed in school and beyond.

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districts approached their summer academic instruction; and looks at districts' expectations about funding for summer 2024.

Schools and the Law: First Amendment US Supreme Court Decisions That School Board Members Should Know

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5. In the News

Summer Programming Cuts Expected Despite Need for Expansion

K-12 Dive (May 15, 2024)

Healthier Foods, Healthier Minds

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How a CISA Proposal Could Impact K-12 Cyber Incident Reporting

K-12 Dive (May 13, 2024)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

Hearing: Senate Finance Committee on Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefitting Children

Subject: The Senate Finance Committee will hold a hearing on "Child Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefiting American Children."

Witnesses: Adam Michel, director of tax policy studies, Cato Institute; Colleen Quint, president and CEO, Alfond Scholarship Foundation; William Elliot, professor of social work and director, University of Michigan's Doctoral Program in Social Work and Social Science; and Veronique de Rugy, chair, political economy and senior research fellow, George Mason University's Mercatus Center.

Time and Location: 10:00 a.m.; 215 Dirksen SOB.

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

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Hearing: House Appropriations Subcommittee on Nutritious Foods in the SNAP Program

Subject: The House Appropriations Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Nutritious Foods in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program."

Witnesses: Robert Seligson, CEO, The Physicians Foundation; Robert Lustig, emeritus professor, University of California San Francisco's Department of Pediatrics; Angela Rachidi,

senior fellow and scholar, American Enterprise Institute; and Michael Gay, independent grocer, National Grocers Association.

Time and Location: 10:00 a.m.; 2362-A Rayburn HOB.

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

Webinar: Crossing the Partisan Divide in Education Policy

Subject: The Aspen Institute will hold a webinar with policy experts and leaders in the field who will unpack effective strategies for advancing cross-partisan education policy initiatives.

Participants: Loren Cox, policy director, Education and Society Program, Aspen Institute; Karen Nussle, former president, Conservative Leaders for Education; Shaka Mitchell, senior fellow, American Federation for Children; and Andy Rotherham, co-founder, Bellwether Education.

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Registration: Register [here](#).

Thursday, May 23, 2024

Mark-Up: House Agriculture Committee

Subject: The House Agriculture Committee is expected to mark-up a Farm Bill.

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Registration: More information [here](#).

Event: Heritage Foundation on Education Freedom

Subject: The Heritage Foundation will hold a discussion on "Leading on Education Freedom."

Participants: Rep. Lindsey Burke, director, Heritage Center for Education Policy; Gov. Kimberly Reynolds (R-IA); and Rep. Ashley Hinson (R-IA).

Time and Location: 3:00 p.m.; Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C.

Registration: Register [here](#).

Webinar: Superintendents of Color Leading with Excellence

Subject: The Education Trust and School Superintendents Association will hold a webinar on "Superintendents of Color Leading with Excellence."

Participants: Adrienne Batle, superintendent, Metro Nashville Public Schools; LaTanya McDade, superintendent, Prince William County Public Schools; Tiffany Anderson, superintendent, Topeka Public Schools; and Tahira Dupree-Chase, superintendent, Westbury Union Free School District.

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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7. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor: Consideration of nominations

House Floor:

H.R. 4763 – Financial Innovation and Technology for the 21st Century Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Thompson (PA) / Financial Services Committee*)

H.R. 192 – To prohibit individuals who are not citizens of the United States from voting in elections in the District of Columbia (*Sponsored by Rep. Pfluger / Oversight and Accountability Committee*)

H.R. 5403 – CBDC Anti-Surveillance State Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Emmer / Financial Services Committee*)

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8. Links for Up-to-Date Information on Hearings, Legislation, and Events

[U.S. House and Senate 2024 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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9. 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

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