



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations Weekly Education Report

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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. **The COSSBA Education Report will be on hiatus Monday, June 3 given the holiday and this week's congressional recess.** The next edition will be delivered on June 10.

Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:

1. **[News, Publications, & Updates on COSSBA Policy Priorities](#)**
 - **[Child Nutrition](#)**
 - **[House Appropriations Panel Examines School, Child Nutrition](#)**: On Wednesday, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing titled, “Nutritious Foods in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).”
2. **[Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up](#)**
 - **[Impact on State School Board Associations](#)**
3. **[In Brief – Last Week in Washington](#)**
 - **[Senate Finance Committee Holds Hearing on Child Savings Accounts](#)**: On Tuesday, the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing titled, “Child Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefiting American Children.”
4. **[New Publications](#)**
 - **[Investing in School Libraries and Librarians to Improve Literacy Outcomes](#)**
Center for American Progress (April 2024)
This issue brief offers an overview of the role and impact of school libraries, followed by recommendations to increase school library funding at the local,

state, and federal levels as well as to require the presence of a full-time librarian in every school. The brief also looks at mechanisms to collect and report data on school library resources as holistic measures of accountability.

5. **In the News**

- **Schools That Never Needed AC Are Now Overheating. Fixes Will Cost Billions**
Washington Post (May 24, 2024)
- **AI Education Skills Bolstered in Bipartisan Senate Legislation**
Bloomberg Government (May 23, 2024)
- **Roughly 25% of Teachers See More Harm Than Good in Using AI in K-12**
K-12 Dive (May 23, 2023)
- **West Virginia Public Education Collaborative Launches New National Teacher Recruitment Program**
West Virginia Metro News (May 22, 2024)
- **School Districts Join Challenges Against Title IX Rule**
K-12 Dive (May 22, 2024)
- **The STEM Pipeline Begins in High School**
Higher Ed Dive (May 20, 2024)

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

- **NSF STEM Education Advisory Committee**: The National Science Foundation (NSF) will hold a meeting of the Advisory Committee for STEM Education for a discussion on understanding rural STEM education and workforce development, voices from the field: the impact of NSF/EDU investments, principal investigators' panel: Rural STEM education and workforce development and unleashing opportunities in rural and remote communities, May 29-30.
Wednesday at 9:30am Eastern
- **The Value of Sports in American Schools**: The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI) will hold a virtual discussion on "The Value of Sports in American Schools."
Thursday at 4pm Eastern

7. **Future Hearings & Events**

- **Education Research and Development: Innovating Solutions**: The Alliance for Learning Innovation will hold an event to discuss education innovation through federal education research programs and implementation of best practices.
June 13 at 8:45am Eastern

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

- The House and Senate are in recess.

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

10. **About BPAG**

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

CHILD NUTRITION

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS PANEL EXAMINES SCHOOL, CHILD NUTRITION

On Wednesday, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing titled, “Nutritious Foods in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).” Witnesses included Dr. Angela Rachidi, senior fellow and Rowe Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute; Michael Gay, an independent grocer; Robert Seligson, CEO of The Physicians Foundation; and Robert Lustig, emeritus professor at the University of California, San Francisco. The hearing highlighted a stark divide between Republicans and Democrats regarding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Representative Andy Harris (R-MD) argued that SNAP fails to provide a nutritious diet, contributing to high rates of obesity and diet-related diseases among participants, especially children. He advocated for pilot programs to restrict the purchase of unhealthy foods with SNAP benefits, aiming to improve diet quality and public health. In contrast, Representative Sanford Bishop (D-GA) contended that such restrictions would be misguided, burdensome for families and retailers, and insufficient without increased funding to make healthy foods affordable. Bishop emphasized the importance of enhancing SNAP benefits and leveraging existing programs like the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to promote healthier choices without limiting options. In addition, Representatives like Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) highlighted the critical role of schools in ensuring that children receive nutritious meals, particularly in areas with high poverty rates. Kaptur proposed innovative ideas, such as incentivizing schools to produce healthier meals, involving students in the cultivation of produce, and integrating urban agriculture programs into school curricula. Responses from experts and grocers echoed these partisan divisions, with some supporting restrictions to address the health crisis and others warning of logistical challenges and negative impacts on community food access. A recording of the hearing can be found [here](#).

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Last week, House Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) made progress on his goal of passing all twelve spending bills before the August recess. The Appropriations Committee approved **“interim” subcommittee allocations**, which adhere to the spending caps of the *Fiscal Responsibility Act* passed last spring, but does not allow for additional “side deal” budgetary mechanisms that kept spending for non-defense discretionary programs frozen.

Chairman Cole said of the action, “Today marks an important step forward in the appropriations process. These allocations uphold the funding level prescribed in law and demonstrate that we can both fund our nation’s needs and exercise fiscal discipline. Our Fiscal Year 2025 (FY 25) approach is quite simple: it’s our duty to stay within the spending limits, work together to advance these bills, and serve the American people. Our FY25 process will reflect investments that make the United States safer, stronger, and more prosperous—now and into the future.”

Spending subcommittees also started marking up spending bills. The Military Construction, Veterans Affairs (MilCon) bill was marked up and approved by both the subcommittee and the full committee. In addition, the Legislative Branch bill was approved by its subcommittee. Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) warned his colleagues that they are in for lots of

appropriations activity in June and July. The House and Senate are in recess this week, but the first week of June, the MilCon bill is expected on the House floor. The NDAA bill will be on the floor the following week, and then the Homeland Security, State-Foreign Operations and Defense spending bills measures will be debated by the House the week of June 24th.

Leader Scalise went on to say, "The Agriculture, Interior-Environment, Commerce-Justice-Science and Financial Services bills are lined up for the week of July 22, with the Energy-Water, Transportation-HUD and Labor-HHS-Education measures rounding out the slate the last week of July."

It would not be surprising to see these ambitious plans altered or even derailed. Even though there was a runoff special election in California this week that selected a Republican successor to Kevin McCarthy, and there will be two more special elections in June to replace other Republicans who resigned earlier this year, Republicans can only spare a handful of votes on spending bills. If past is prologue, moderate Republicans could take issue with proposals that significantly cut domestic programs. Those sentiments, the aggressive schedule, and the Republican budget numbers could throw more than one wrench into Leader Scalise's plans.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

The House proposed level for the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill's agencies and programs is \$185 billion—a figure that is concerning to countless education stakeholders. (A comparison table of the House 302b's is attached with this document.) Of course, Senate appropriators will likely have different ideas about how much money should be spent on education and other domestic priorities.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON CHILD SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

On Tuesday, the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing titled, "Child Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Advantaged Accounts Benefiting American Children." Witnesses included Dr. William Elliott, professor of social work at the University of Michigan; Colleen Quint, president and CEO of the Alford Scholarship Foundation; Dr. Veronique de Rugy, George Gibbs Chair in political economy at George Mason University; and Dr. Adam Michel, director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute. In his opening statement, Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR) emphasized the economic challenges facing today's youth, noting that only 50 percent of Americans now out-earn their parents compared to 90 percent in the mid-20th century. He advocated for child savings accounts, citing existing success in states like Maine. Democrats also expressed support for enhanced child tax credits, underscoring their effectiveness in reducing child poverty and supporting low-and middle-income families. In contrast, Republicans expressed concerns about the cost and long-term sustainability of certain child savings initiatives, suggesting Universal Savings Accounts (USAs) as a more flexible and less restrictive alternative. In addition, Committee Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-ID) and his Republican colleagues warned against increasing government spending and borrowing, proposing the simplification of existing tax policies and advocating for the permanent implementation of the 2017 tax cuts. Witnesses Dr. Michel and Dr. De Rugy echoed these sentiments, cautioning

against new subsidies. They called for a broader approach to tax reform that would incentivize savings without significantly increasing federal expenditures, citing the existing array of tax-advantaged accounts like 529 plans and Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) concluded the hearing by spotlighting his [401Kids Savings Act](#), emphasizing the importance of ensuring economic security for every child. A recording of the hearing can be found [here](#).

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4. New Publications

Investing in School Libraries and Librarians to Improve Literacy Outcomes

Center for American Progress (April 2024)

This issue brief offers an overview of the role and impact of school libraries, followed by recommendations to increase school library funding at the local, state, and federal levels as well as to require the presence of a full-time librarian in every school. The brief also looks at mechanisms to collect and report data on school library resources as holistic measures of accountability.

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5. In the News

Schools That Never Needed AC are Now Overheating. Fixes Will Cost Billions

The Washington Post (May 24, 2024)

AI Education Skills Bolstered in Bipartisan Senate Legislation

Bloomberg Government (May 23, 2024)

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K-12 Dive (May 23, 2024)

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West Virginia Metro News (May 22, 2024)

School Districts Join Challenges Against Title IX Rule

K-12 Dive (May 22, 2024)

The STEM Pipeline Begins In High School

Higher Ed Dive (May 20, 2024)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Agency Event: NSF STEM Education Advisory Committee

Subject: The National Science Foundation (NSF) will hold a meeting of the Advisory Committee for STEM Education for a discussion on understanding rural STEM education and workforce development, voices from the field: the impact of NSF/EDU investments, principal investigators' panel: Rural STEM education and workforce development and unleashing opportunities in rural and remote communities, May 29-30.

Time and Location: 9:30 a.m.; NSF, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Rooms E2020/E2030, Alexandria, VA.

Registration: Register [here](#).

Thursday, May 30, 2024

Webinar: The Value of Sports in American Schools

Subject: The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI) will hold a virtual discussion on "The Value of Sports in American Schools."

Participants: Tom Farrey, executive director, Aspen Institute's Sports and Society Program; Eric Kalenze, curriculum lead, FIT Academy; Robert Pondiscio, senior fellow, AEI; Jal Mehta, professor of education, Harvard's Graduate School of Education; and Torrey Palmer, assistant principal, Mater Academy of Northern Nevada.

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Thursday, June 13, 2024

Event: Education Research and Development: Innovating Solutions

Subject: The Alliance for Learning Innovation will hold an event to discuss education innovation through federal education research programs and implementation of best practices.

Participants: Dan Correra, CEO, Federation of American Scientists; Augustus Mays, vice president for partnerships and engagement, The Education Trust; Carey Wright, state superintendent of schools, State of Maryland; Erwin Gianchandani, assistant director, Directorate of Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships, National Science Foundation; and Matt Soldner, acting director, Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

Time and Location: 8:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.; B48 Dirksen SOB.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

The House and Senate are in recess.

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9. 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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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:

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

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