



# The Consortium of State School Boards Associations Weekly Education Report

**May 13, 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](#)**
  - **[Funding](#)**
    - **[ED Announces Increased Funding for Mental Health Services in School](#)**: May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and on Thursday, the Biden-Harris Administration announced new actions to increase access to school-based mental health services.
2. **[Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up](#)**
  - **[Impact on State School Board Associations](#)**
3. **[In Brief – Last Week in Washington](#)**
  - **[Cardona Testifies Before House Education Panel on ED Priorities](#)**: On Tuesday, the House Education and the Workforce Committee had Secretary Cardona testify on the Department of Education’s policies and priorities, as well as the agency’s Fiscal Year 2023 financial audit.
  - **[House Education Panel Confronts Antisemitism in K-12 Schools](#)**: On Wednesday, the House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing titled, “Confronting Pervasive Antisemitism in K-12 Schools.”
  - **[Senate Appropriators Hear from Acting Labor Secretary on Apprenticeships](#)**: On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education heard from Department of Labor (DOL) Acting Secretary Julie Su on President Joe Biden’s FY 2025 budget

request for the DOL. Acting Secretary Su’s testimony noted the DOL’s \$8 billion request for the Career Training Fund and \$335 million for apprenticeship programs, an increase of \$50 million.

4. **New Publications**

- **How ‘Computer Science for All’ Initiatives Affect Students’ College and Career Outcomes**

*Brookings Institute (May 2024)*

Using rich longitudinal data from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center, the study is among the first that offers causal evidence on how access to “high-quality” computer science courses in high school affects college major choice and early-career earnings.

5. **In the News**

- **Education Department Boosts FAFSA Outreach Efforts to Close Completion Gap**

*Higher Ed Dive (May 6, 2024)*

- **Afterschool Programs Expect to Scale Down with Pandemic Aid Ending**

*K-12 Dive (May 6, 2023)*

- **US Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Reminds Schools of Their Legal Obligation to Address Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry and Ethnic Characteristics**

*US Department of Education (May 7, 2024)*

- **Safety or Censorship: Congress Rushes to Pass Broad Child Online Protection Laws**

*The 74 (May 8, 2024)*

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

- **Biden Administration’s Title IX Regulations**: The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research will hold a virtual discussion on “Combating the Biden Administration’s Title IX Regulations.”

*Monday at 11am Eastern*

- **House Education and Workforce Committee on HHS Priorities**: The House Education and the Workforce Committee will hold a hearing on “Examining the Policies and Priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services.”

*Tuesday at 10:15am Eastern*

- **Addressing America’s Youth Mental Health Crisis**: Axios will hold a discussion on “Addressing America’s Youth Mental Health Crisis.”

*Thursday at 8am Eastern*

- **Addressing State Teacher Shortages Through Apprenticeship Programs**: The Learning Policy Institute will hold a webinar to examine building and sustaining high-quality registered teacher apprenticeship programs as a tool to address teacher shortages.

*Thursday at 2pm Eastern*

- **Federal Pandemic Spending on Learning Loss**: The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research will hold a virtual discussion on “190 Billion Was Not Enough: The Feds Should Spend Billions More on Learning Loss.”

*Thursday at 6pm Eastern*

7. **Future Hearings & Events**

- **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.  
*May 22 at 12pm Eastern*

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

- **Senate floor**: Consideration of nominations
- **House floor**:
  - **H.R. 354** – Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act (LESOSA) Reform Act (Sponsored by Rep. Bacon / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H.R. 7343** – Detain and Deport Illegal Aliens Who Assault Cops Act (Sponsored by Rep. Van Drew / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H.R. 8146** – Police Our Border Act (Sponsored by Rep. D’Esposito / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H. Res. 1213** – A resolution regarding violence against law enforcement officers (Sponsored by Rep. Stauber / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H. Res. 1210** – Condemning the Biden border crisis and the tremendous burdens law enforcement officers face as a result (Sponsored by Rep. Higgins / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H.R. 7581** – Improving Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Through Data Act (Sponsored by Rep. Bishop (NC) / Judiciary Committee)
  - **H.R. 7530** – DC CRIMES Act of 2024 (Sponsored by Rep. Donalds / Oversight and Accountability Committee)
  - **H.R. \_\_\_\_\_** – Israel Security Assistance Support Act (Sponsored by Rep. Calvert / Appropriations Committee)

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

10. **About BPAG**

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1. **COSSBA Policy Priorities**

**FUNDING**

**ED ANNOUNCES INCREASED FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOL**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and on Thursday, the Biden-Harris Administration **announced** new actions to increase access to school-based mental health services, including: (1) increased investments in the Department of Education’s (ED) School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) and Mental Health Service Professionals (MHSP) grant programs in the current Fiscal Year; (2) making additional investments through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA); and (3) offering new mental health and wellbeing trainings and resources for schools and educators. In addition to increasing available funding, ED extended the application windows for both grant programs until May 31, 2024, now remaining open through the entirety of Mental Health Awareness Month. “Today’s announcements affirm the Biden-

Harris Administration’s continued commitment to tackling our youth mental health crisis,” said Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “We know students are more likely to access mental health support if it’s offered in schools. By nearly doubling funds this year for school-based mental health professionals, releasing additional funds to help advance a variety of mental health strategies, and providing additional training and resources, we are raising the bar for student wellbeing across the country.” More information about upcoming events on mental health can be found on ED’s [Best Practices Clearinghouse calendar](#); and additional resources, including toolkits and reports from ED’s technical assistance centers, can be found in the [resource library](#).

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## 2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Last week, House Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) continued to convey to the spending cardinals, the chairs of the individual appropriation’s subcommittees, his plans for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 spending cycle. Chair Cole’s goal is to have all 12 spending bills ready for action by the beginning of next month, and to have subcommittee markups of those bills completed before the August recess. In the meantime, Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) has signaled that she is open to increasing defense spending in FY 2025 but said she would insist on commensurate increases in non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending, which would include education investments. That insistence has drawn the ire of Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and other Republicans, who applaud the notion of defense increases but consider NDD growth to be wasteful government spending. It would also seem that Chair Cole and Chair Murray are not talking to each other about their respective plans—plans that would eventually clash and make House-Senate negotiations on FY 2025 spending bills difficult.

Of course, the FY 2025 spending bills are unlikely to be complete until after the November elections and appropriators on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol will need to develop a plan for keeping the federal government open past September 30, 2024 – the end of FY 2024. House Republicans frustrated with how the FY 2024 spending process was resolved could make trouble for efforts to pass one or more continuing resolutions that do not make spending cuts. Time will tell. In the meantime, education advocates are busily organizing sign on letters conveying support for various programs. A broad coalition of organizations supporting hundreds of programs at domestic federal agencies told Congress to increase the overall allocation for the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education spending bill last week. Almost 700 signers [asked House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders](#) to provide the highest possible allocation to the spending bill in FY 2025, despite the spending caps prescribed by the Fiscal Responsibility Act.

As May marches on, cabinet leaders continue to be called before Congress to defend Administration budgets and policies. It seems every Member of the House and Senate, their staff, and the advocates that are responding to the compressed appropriations cycle are counting the days to the Memorial Day recess.

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

Education funding stakeholders should continue to monitor the appropriations process that is unfolding. President Biden’s FY 2025 ED request reflects a \$3.1 billion (4 percent) increase from the FY 2024 annualized Continued Resolution level, but Congress of course will have final

say, and it's likely that the FY 2025 funding process will look like FY 2024. Congress will be in session for another two weeks, before breaking for the Memorial Day holiday. Last week, Chair Cole announced that he is hoping to give appropriations subcommittees their allocations—the amount of money they have to spend on the agencies and programs under their purview—this week. He's also hinted that he would like to see earmarks return to the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill, saying the House's decision to not allow such spending in the bill last year "hurt us." Education advocates will be watching closely to see what develops further this week.

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

#### **CARDONA TESTIFIES BEFORE HOUSE EDUCATION PANEL ON ED PRIORITIES**

On Tuesday, the House Education and the Workforce Committee had Secretary Cardona [testify](#) on the Department of Education's (ED) policies and priorities, as well as the agency's Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 financial audit. Members of the Committee asked a variety of questions over the five-hour hearing. Questions focused on several core areas: Title IX; student loan forgiveness and debt repayment; discrimination, campus free-speech and safety; the new Free Application For Student Aid (FAFSA) rollout; mental health in schools; and the Department's FY 2023 financial audit. The hearing occurred during Teacher Appreciation Week, which was noted by several Members. Secretary Cardona's written [testimony](#) was similar to those that he delivered during an [April 30<sup>th</sup> Senate Appropriations hearing](#) and an [April 10<sup>th</sup> House Appropriations hearing](#), although he asserted during Tuesday's hearing that his intention was "not to create a spectacle for the benefit of the media or to provoke divisions that inflame culture wars and political sideshows, but do nothing to help our young people succeed." Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) shared [opening remarks](#) critical of Secretary Cardona's record as head ED and accused him of presiding over the "greatest decline of educational attainment and institutional legitimacy in the history of our nation." She continued by underscoring issues with the new FAFSA, her disdain for student loan forgiveness, and her concerns related to an eruption of protests on college campuses and increased rates of antisemitism. In contrast, Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) welcomed Secretary Cardona's opportunity to testify on how ED is bolstering support for students and teachers and "tackling the systemic inequities present in our public school system." While he shared Chair Foxx's concerns about FAFSA, he applauded ED's efforts to relieve student debt and boost income driven repayment plans. This was the Secretary's third appearance on Capitol Hill over the last month, and the questions and criticisms he faced at this hearing were similar to those he faced at his two previous appearances. Similarly, he received support from familiar and established allies at the hearings. He and his agency will continue to navigate the difficulties the agency has faced in implementing the new FAFSA, the political fallout from efforts to forgive student loan debt for some borrowers, and questioning about the appropriate size, cost, and role of ED through the year. The hearing can be viewed [here](#), and a summary prepared by BPAG is [here](#).

#### **HOUSE EDUCATION PANEL CONFRONTS ANTISEMITISM IN K-12 SCHOOLS**

On Wednesday, the House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing titled, "Confronting Pervasive Antisemitism in K-12 Schools." Witnesses included David Banks, chancellor of New York City

Public Schools; Karla Silvestre, president of Montgomery County Board of Education; Emerson Sykes, senior staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union; and Enikia Ford Morthel, superintendent of Berkeley Unified School District. In his opening statement, Chair Aaron Bean (R-FL) underscored the prevalence of antisemitism in K-12 schools, citing several instances of anti-Jewish hate speech. He and his Republican colleagues argued that educators have turned a blind eye to these events and called for stricter disciplinary measures to hold both students and faculty accountable. Several concerns were also raised regarding educational material deemed antisemitic and the former Hillcrest High School principal still employed by New York's Department of Education following student riots, adding weight to the call for more decisive action. While both Democrats and Republicans agreed that more must be done to combat antisemitism and ensure student safety, Democrats also stressed the importance of addressing all forms of discrimination and hate, including Islamophobia. Ranking Member Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) advocated for a balanced approach that safeguards students' civil rights while upholding the First Amendment right to free speech and expression. In addition, she called attention to what she deemed as the hypocrisy of her Republican counterparts for not condemning other antisemitic incidents like the white supremacist march in Charlottesville and antisemitic statements made by former President Trump. In response, witnesses reiterated their commitment to student and faculty safety throughout the hearing, highlighting their engagement with local partners to develop educational curricula and provide resources to address the rising levels of antisemitism in schools. A recording of the hearing can be found [here](#).

### **SENATE APPROPRIATORS HEAR FROM ACTING LABOR SECRETARY**

On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education heard from Department of Labor (DOL) Acting Secretary Julie Su on President Biden's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget request for DOL. Acting Secretary Su's testimony noted DOL's \$8 billion request for the Career Training Fund and \$335 million for apprenticeship programs, an increase of \$50 million. She commended these programs for their ability to increase job pathways for underrepresented groups, including women, people of color, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. She also called attention to teacher and childcare apprenticeships, saying that evidence-based training programs are successful in non-traditional apprenticeship industries. Apprenticeship programs were referenced regularly throughout the hearing. In her opening remarks, Subcommittee Chair Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) referenced the National Apprenticeship Act reauthorization. "I have been proud to lead the effort to reauthorize the National Apprenticeship Act with my colleague Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), and I'm pleased that the Department is proposing to expand apprenticeships and increase opportunities for individuals who have historically not had access to apprenticeship program including women, people of color, and underrepresented groups," Baldwin said. "Apprenticeship programs provide technical instruction and on the job, learning experiences to ensure that workers are well prepared for jobs." On the other hand, Subcommittee Ranking Member Shelly Moore Capito (R-WV) took issue with DOL's proposed changes to the Registered Apprenticeship program. "These proposed changes will make an already complex system even more difficult for employers to navigate, and I think it could reduce registered apprenticeship opportunities for workers across the country. There are all a lot of worthy apprenticeship opportunities that don't fit the current registered apprenticeship model. I'd like to see the innovation to expand those apprenticeship opportunities to new programs and fields." Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) asked Su about the Women's Bureau and their role supporting women in the workforce. Su pointed to the important research the bureau does on certain policies to support women participation in the



workforce and noted the grant program called, “Women Apprentices in Non-traditional Occupations” (WANTO). “It is meant to make sure that women see themselves in some of these good jobs that are being created that they have been underrepresented in for a very long time,” Su stated. A recording of the hearing and Acting Secretary Su’s testimony can be found [here](#).

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#### 4. New Publications

##### How ‘Computer Science for All’ Initiatives Affect Students’ College and Career Outcomes

*Brookings Institute* (May 2024)

Using rich longitudinal data from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center, the study is among the first that offers causal evidence on how access to “high-quality” computer science courses in high school affects college major choice and early-career earnings.

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#### 5. In the News

##### Education Department Boosts FAFSA Outreach Efforts to Close Completion Gap

*Higher Ed Dive* (May 6, 2024)

##### After-School Programs Expect to Scale Down With Pandemic Aid Ending

*K-12 Dive* (May 6, 2024)

##### U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Reminds Schools of Their Legal Obligation to Address Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry and Ethnic Characteristics

*US Department of Education* (May 7, 2024)

##### Safety or Censorship: Congress Rushes to Pass Broad Child Online Protection Laws

*The 74* (May 8, 2024)

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### THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

#### 6. Weekly Calendar

##### **Monday, May 13, 2024**

##### **Webinar: Biden Administration’s Title IX Regulations**

**Subject:** The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research will hold a virtual discussion on “Combating the Biden Administration's Title IX Regulations.”

**Participants:** Kimberly Richey, former principal deputy assistant education secretary for civil rights; Christian Corrigan, solicitor general, Montana Attorney General's Office; Tom Wheeler, partner, Bose McKinney & Evans; and Robert Eitel, president, Defense of Freedom Institute.

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

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

##### **Wednesday, May 15, 2024**

**Hearing: House Education and Workforce Committee on HHS Priorities**

**Subject:** The House Education and the Workforce Committee will hold a hearing on “Examining the Policies and Priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services.”

**Witness:** Xavier Becerra, secretary, Department of Health and Human Services.

**Time and Location:** 10:15 a.m.; 2175 Rayburn HOB.

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

**Thursday, May 16, 2024**

**Event: Addressing America’s Youth Mental Health Crisis**

**Subject:** Axios will hold a discussion on “Addressing America's Youth Mental Health Crisis.”

**Participants:** Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ); Sheri Kersch Schultz, co-founder and chair, Schultz Family Foundation; Wanji Walcott, chief legal and business affairs officer, Pinterest; Michael Smith, CEO, AmeriCorps; and Vivek Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General.

**Time and Location:** 8:00 a.m.; The Showroom, 1099 14 Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

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

**Webinar: Addressing State Teacher Shortages Through Apprenticeship Programs**

**Subject:** The Learning Policy Institute will hold a webinar to examine building and sustaining high-quality registered teacher apprenticeship programs as a tool to address teacher shortages.

**Participants:** 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 Wolf, executive director, Early Care & Education Pathways to Success.

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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

**Webinar: Federal Pandemic Spending on Learning Loss**

**Subject:** The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research will hold a virtual discussion on “190 Billion Was Not Enough: The Feds Should Spend Billions More on Learning Loss.”

**Participants:** Christopher Ruskowski, former New Mexico secretary of education; Jens Ludwig, professor, University of Chicago; Eric Hanushek, senior fellow, Hoover Institution; and Nakia Towns, chief operation officer, Accelerate – The National Collaborative for Accelerated Learning.

**Time and Location:** 6:00 p.m.; AEI, 1789 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Auditorium, Washington, D.C.

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

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## 7. Future Hearings and Events

**Wednesday, May 22, 2024**

**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](#).

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## 8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

**Senate Floor:** Consideration of nominations

### **House Floor:**

[H.R. 354](#) – Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) Reform Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Bacon / Judiciary Committee*)

[H.R. 7343](#) – Detain and Deport Illegal Aliens Who Assault Cops Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Van Drew / Judiciary Committee*)

[H.R. 8146](#) – Police Our Border Act (*Sponsored by Rep. D’Esposito / Judiciary Committee*)

[H. Res. 1213](#) – A resolution regarding violence against law enforcement officers (*Sponsored by Rep. Stauber / Judiciary Committee*)

[H. Res. 1210](#) – Condemning the Biden border crisis and the tremendous burdens law enforcement officers face as a result (*Sponsored by Rep. Higgins / Judiciary Committee*)

[H.R. 7581](#) – Improving Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Through Data Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Bishop (NC) / Judiciary Committee*)

[H.R. 7530](#) – DC CRIMES Act of 2024 (*Sponsored by Rep. Donalds / Oversight and Accountability Committee*)

[H.R. \\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#) – Israel Security Assistance Support Act (*Sponsored by Rep. Calvert / Appropriations Committee*)

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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**

**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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