



## 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. **With Congress on recess through the month of August and the Labor Day holiday, the Ed Report will next publish in September. COSSBA will keep you updated if important news is released. Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:**

1. **News, Publications, & Updates on COSSBA Policy Priorities**

- **Funding**

- **White House Prepares New Rescissions Package with Education Cuts:**

- On Tuesday, *The Daily Signal* reported that the White House plans to introduce another rescissions package, which will include cuts to education funding.

2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**

- **Impact on State School Board Associations**

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

- **Lawmakers Reintroduce Child Care for All Working Families Act:** Last week, Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI), joined by Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, Senators Patty Murray (D-WA), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Andy Kim (D-NJ), and Representatives Bobby Scott (D-VA), Katherine Clark (D-MA), Summer Lee (D-PA), along with more than 115 colleagues, reintroduced the “Child Care for Working Families Act.”
- **USED Unveils National AI Plan, Seeks Input on Education Priorities:** The Department of Education released its national Artificial Intelligence plan on Tuesday, highlighting AI’s transformative potential in education and setting priorities for responsible integration.

- **Punchbowl Highlights Push for COPPA 2.0, Stronger Online Protections:** On Tuesday, Punchbowl News hosted an event with Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and Kate Charlet, Global Director of Privacy, Safety, and Security Policy at Google, focused on online child safety and digital privacy.
- **Senate Hearing Examines School Choice, Literacy, Federal Funding Gaps:** On Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Education and the American Family held a hearing focusing on strategies to improve K–12 educational outcomes, literacy, and the role of school choice.
- **Senate HELP Committee Advances Six Trump Admin Nominees:** On Thursday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee voted to advance six of President Trump’s nominees for positions at the Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.
- **ED Launches Rulemaking for One Big Beautiful Bill Implementation:** The Department of Education’s Office of Postsecondary Education announced plans on Thursday to initiate negotiated rulemaking to implement the One Big Beautiful Bill (OB BB) Act.
- **States Take Varied Paths on Youth Apprenticeship Policy:** The Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship hosted a webinar on Thursday to examine how Colorado, Tennessee, and Illinois approach youth apprenticeship policy in the absence of a federal definition.

#### 4. **New Publications**

- **Department of Health and Human Services—Application of Impoundment Control Act to Availability of Head Start Program Funds**  
*US Government Accountability Office (July 2025)*  
The GAO found that publicly available evidence, including data recorded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on its Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System, indicates that between January 20, 2025, and April 15, 2025, HHS withheld from disbursement funds appropriated for Head Start. Based on this evidence, GAO concludes that HHS violated the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.
- **An Analysis of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act’s Effect on Student Loans**  
*American Enterprise Institute (July 2025)*  
This AEI report analyzes key education-related provisions of the budget reconciliation measure recently signed into law.

#### 5. **In the News**

- **20 States Sue Over Immigration Restrictions for Head Start, Other Programs**  
*K-12 Dive (July 21, 2025)*
- **Trump Administration Pauses Student Loan Forgiveness**  
*The Washington Post (July 22, 2025)*
- **School Districts Face Uncertainty Following Budget Cuts, but Some Welcome Reevaluation of Funds**

*ABC News (July 23, 2025)*

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

- **Senate Appropriations FY26 Labor-H, Defense Bill:** The Senate Appropriations Committee will hold a markup of the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2026"; and the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026."  
*Thursday at 9:30am ET*

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

- **Senate floor**
  - Possible consideration of FY26 3-4 bill minibuss
  - Consideration of nominations
- **House floor:** In recess

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

9. **About BPAG**

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## 1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

### **FUNDING**

#### **WHITE HOUSE PREPARES NEW RESCISSIONS PACKAGE WITH EDUCATION CUTS**

On Tuesday, *The Daily Signal* **reported** that the White House plans to introduce another rescissions package, which will include cuts to education funding. This initiative is a key component of the second Trump administration's broader effort to reform the education system. In March, President Trump signed an **executive order** authorizing Secretary of Education Linda McMahon to begin dismantling the Department of Education – a process that has already resulted in the layoff of 1,300 career employees. Details of the upcoming rescissions package remain unclear, as does its timing with the House in recess until September, though it will include reductions in other spending areas as well. White House Deputy Chief of Staff James Blair stated on Friday that the package is expected "soon," citing ongoing discussions with senators involved in the appropriations process. This move follows Congress's approval last week of President Trump's first rescissions package, which cut \$9.4 billion from National Public Radio, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, as well as foreign aid programs.

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## 2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Late Friday afternoon, after weeks of advocacy from various education organizations, states, educators, communities, schools, families, parents and students, the White House announced plans to release the more than \$5 billion in funding that is being withheld after releasing over \$1 billion in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) funds earlier in the week. Representative Don Bacon (R-NE), **celebrated the decision**, noting he pushed for the release. "Exciting news to announce! All frozen education funding for the upcoming school year have been released," he wrote on X.

Administration officials told the press that the release comes with “guardrails,” “to ensure these funds will not be used in violation of executive orders or administration policy.” When states received notice of the release of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds, the notice reminded them of their obligation to adhere to various laws. States are likely to receive similar reminders when they receive the until-now-withheld funds.

While this announcement is being celebrated by education advocates, concerns remain that the Office of Management and Budget could pursue a rescissions package that targets education funds. The release of funds would make rescinding them administratively difficult, if not impossible. However, there are a number of competitive grant programs that have not been competed this fiscal year. Those programs, such as the Education Innovation and Research program, the Supporting Effective Educator Development or “SEED” program and the Teacher Quality Partnership program, are obvious candidates for a rescission effort. While House action on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill has been delayed until September, Senate appropriators want to get ahead of the White House and any rescission effort by unveiling their education spending priorities and arguably asserting Congress’ power of the purse. They **have announced** that they will mark up their bill this Thursday, July 31.

The House is in recess until September 2. The Senate remains in session this week and Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) is under pressure from the President to make significant progress on presidential nominations and perhaps stay in session for at least some portion of August. As it currently stands, the Senate is slated to depart for their August recess at the end of this week.

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

The White House’s decision to release previously frozen education funds marks a significant victory for school boards and the communities they serve. However, the funds will likely come with administrative “guardrails” and legal reminders, which may increase compliance and reporting obligations. While this release provides short-term relief and stability for the upcoming school year, concerns remain over the possible rescissions package. School districts relying on certain funding streams highlighted above may face uncertainty if those grants are rescinded. Given this, Senate appropriators are preparing to assert congressional authority over education funding. However, with the House in recess and Senate negotiations ongoing, COSSBA members should remain vigilant and engaged in advocacy.

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

#### **LAWMAKERS REINTRODUCE CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT**

Last week, Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI), joined by Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, Senators Patty Murray (D-WA), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Andy Kim (D-NJ), and Representatives Bobby Scott (D-VA), Katherine Clark (D-MA), Summer Lee (D-PA), along with more than 115 colleagues, **reintroduced** the “**Child Care for Working Families Act.**” The legislation aims to address the nation’s growing childcare crisis by making high-quality care more affordable and accessible for American families. The Act proposes capping childcare costs at no more than 7% of a family’s income, with many low-income families paying nothing. It also seeks to raise wages for childcare workers to achieve parity with elementary school teachers and expand access to pre-kindergarten and full-day, full-year Head Start programs. This reintroduction comes as childcare

costs continue to rise, with the national average reaching \$13,128 annually – a 29% increase since 2020. In many areas, these costs surpass median rent and in-state university tuition. Supporters frame the bill as a critical investment in children and the economy, contrasting it with Republican priorities. A FAQ sheet can be found [here](#), a section-by-section summary [here](#), and the bill text [here](#).

### **USED UNVEILS NATIONAL AI PLAN, SEEKS INPUT ON EDUCATION PRIORITIES**

The Department of Education (ED) [released](#) its national Artificial Intelligence plan on Tuesday, highlighting AI's transformative potential in education and setting priorities for responsible integration. This initiative supports President Trump's April 23 [Executive Order](#), "Advancing Artificial Intelligence Education for American Youth." In a [Dear Colleague Letter](#), ED clarified how federal grant funds can be used to support AI in education. Eligible uses include AI-based instructional materials, AI-enhanced tutoring, and AI tools for college and career pathway exploration. The guidance emphasizes responsible adoption, including safeguarding user privacy, teaching appropriate AI use, particularly regarding social media, and engaging parents and teachers in decisions about new technologies. Simultaneously, Secretary of Education Linda McMahon announced [supplemental grantmaking priorities](#), which includes "Advancing Artificial Intelligence in Education." [Published in the Federal Register](#) for a 30-day public comment period, the proposal focuses on integrating AI literacy into teaching, expanding AI and computer science education in K-12 and higher education, and providing professional development for educators. Additional goals include using AI to personalize learning, support differentiated instruction, enhance classroom efficiency, reduce administrative burdens, and improve teacher training and evaluation. ED is [seeking public comment](#) on these proposed priorities and definitions by **August 20, 2025**. This initiative reflects the federal government's commitment to preparing students and educators for an AI-driven future, supporting workforce readiness and long-term economic competitiveness.

### **PUNCHBOWL HIGHLIGHTS PUSH FOR COPPA 2.0, STRONGER ONLINE PROTECTIONS**

On Tuesday, Punchbowl News [hosted an event](#) with Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and Kate Charlet, Global Director of Privacy, Safety, and Security Policy at Google, focused on online child safety and digital privacy. Senator Markey opened by highlighting his longstanding work on the "[Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#)" (COPPA), first enacted in 1998, and emphasized the need to modernize the law through his [COPPA 2.0](#) legislation. The updated bill seeks to raise the covered age threshold, restrict targeted advertising to minors, and strengthen parental rights over children's data. Markey warned that emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, while promising, pose serious risks to children and teens. He identified unregulated social media use as a major driver of the youth mental health crisis, citing data showing that in 2023, one in four teenage girls contemplated suicide, one in eight attempted suicides, and one in five LGBTQ youth attempted suicide. He linked these troubling trends to gaps in age verification, data privacy enforcement, and content regulation across platforms. Kate Charlet echoed the urgency of updating policy frameworks to keep pace with technological change. She stressed the importance of proactive industry measures, such as age assurance mechanisms and limits on advertising, to protect minors in a rapidly evolving digital marketplace. Charlet also called for sustained

collaboration among government, industry, and civil society to establish clear and comprehensive protections for children and teens.

### **SENATE HEARING EXAMINES SCHOOL CHOICE, LITERACY, FEDERAL FUNDING GAPS**

On Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee on Education and the American Family held a hearing focusing on strategies to improve K–12 educational outcomes, literacy, and the role of school choice. Chairman Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) emphasized the need for alternatives to traditional public schools, citing Alabama’s CHOOSE Act and literacy initiatives. Witnesses, including charter school and education policy leaders, highlighted the success of charter schools, state-level literacy reforms, and parental choice programs in improving reading proficiency. Ranking Member Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE) stressed investing in public schools rather than diverting funds to private vouchers, warning that such programs often exclude students with disabilities and LGBTQ youth. She criticized the administration for “illegally withholding” over \$5 billion in funds intended for teacher development and student success. She also opposed proposals to eliminate federal literacy grants, dismantle the Department of Education, and block grant funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), noting these moves would undermine special education. Richard Barrera of San Diego Unified School District urged Congress to release withheld funds and fully fund IDEA, arguing the proposed \$58 billion for private school tax credits could instead strengthen literacy and special education. He warned block granting IDEA would risk states diverting funds away from students with disabilities. Afterschool funding was also addressed: Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) noted bipartisan pressure led to the release of funds for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, supporting before- and afterschool programs and summer learning to prevent learning loss. The hearing concluded with bipartisan support for evidence-based literacy instruction and teacher training, alongside sharp divides on school choice and federal versus state roles in education policy.

### **SENATE HELP COMMITTEE ADVANCES SIX TRUMP ADMIN NOMINEES**

On Thursday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee voted to advance six of President Trump’s nominees for positions at the Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education (ED), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. Each nominee was approved along party lines in 12-11 votes. Their nominations will now move to the Senate floor for final consideration. ED nominees include David Barker for Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education and Mary Christina Riley for Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Congressional Affairs. Thursday’s vote brings the total number of Trump administration nominees advanced by the HELP Committee this year to 28, as the Senate works to fill key agency roles that have remained vacant or been held by acting officials. “These nominees are vital to advancing President Trump’s pro-worker, pro-family, pro-patient agenda,” said HELP Committee Chairman Bill Cassidy (R-LA). “As Chairman of the HELP Committee, I am committed to getting President Trump’s team in place as quickly as possible.”

### **ED LAUNCHES RULEMAKING FOR ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL IMPLEMENTATION**

The Department of Education’s (ED) Office of Postsecondary Education announced plans on Thursday to initiate negotiated rulemaking to implement the *One Big Beautiful Bill (OB BB) Act*. This effort focuses on higher education provisions and other administration priorities. A public



virtual hearing will be held prior to the sessions to gather recommendations on changes to federal student loan and Pell Grant programs. Acting Under Secretary James Bergeron stated that the new law will require colleges to emphasize post-graduation outcomes, expand workforce pathways, simplify student loans, and prevent taxpayers from bearing the cost of broad student loan forgiveness. ED will establish two committees: the Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee and the Accountability in Higher Education and Access through Demand-driven Workforce Pell (AHEAD) Committee. RISE will address federal student loan reforms during sessions in September and November, while AHEAD will focus on Workforce Pell, institutional and programmatic accountability, and related issues in December and January. This process complies with Section 492 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which requires public participation in developing Title IV program regulations. The Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) has already issued preliminary guidance to institutions and partners outlining immediate OBBB changes, including adjustments to income-based repayment plans, parent repayment options, loan limits for part-time students, and updates to borrower defense to repayment and closed school discharge regulations. Additional guidance will be released throughout the year.

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#### **4. New Publications**

##### **Department of Health and Human Services—Application of Impoundment Control Act to Availability of Head Start Program Funds**

*US Government Accountability Office (July 2025)*

The GAO found that publicly available evidence, including data recorded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on its Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System, indicates that between January 20, 2025, and April 15, 2025, HHS withheld from disbursement funds appropriated for Head Start. Based on this evidence, GAO concludes that HHS violated the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

##### **An Analysis of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act’s Effect on Student Loans**

*American Enterprise Institute (July 2025)*

This AEI report analyzes key education-related provisions of the budget reconciliation measure recently signed into law.

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#### **5. In the News**

##### **20 States Sue Over Immigration Restrictions for Head Start, Other Programs**

*K-12 Dive (July 21, 2025)*

##### **Trump Administration Pauses Student Loan Forgiveness**

*The Washington Post (July 22, 2025)*

##### **School Districts Face Uncertainty Following Budget Cuts, but Some Welcome Reevaluation of Funds**

*ABC News (July 23, 2025)*

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## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

### 6. Weekly Calendar

#### Thursday, July 31, 2025

##### **Markup: Senate Appropriations FY26 Labor-H, Defense Bill**

**Subject:** The Senate Appropriations Committee will hold a markup of the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2026"; and the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026."

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

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

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

#### **Senate Floor:**

Possible consideration of FY26 3-4 Bill Minibus

Consideration of nominations

#### **House Floor:**

In recess

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

[U.S. House and Senate 2025 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:

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

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