



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

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 - **Youth Apprenticeship Youth Council Lunch Symposium:** New America's Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) will hold a lunch symposium at New America with the PAYA Youth Council.
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 - **The Urgency for Action: Advocating for Family and Community Engagement:** The National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) in will hold a virtual discussion, on "The Urgency for Action: Advocating for Family & Community Engagement."
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1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

IDEA

ADVOCATES VOICE CONCERN OVER SHIFTING SPECIAL ED OVERSIGHT

Special education and disability rights advocates are ramping up their defense of the federal role in the education of students with disabilities as their concerns grow over a potential shift in how the U.S. conducts special education oversight and support. There is still no official plan from the administration to move the duties of special education oversight out of the U.S. Department of Education to another federal agency — possibly the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services. But over the past week, advocates have sent a flurry of letters and hosted online forums to prevent such a transition. Read more from *K-12 Dive* [here](#).

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

The federal government remains shut down today, Monday, November 10, with the impasse now stretching into the longest on record. Last week, however, Senate leaders kept the chamber in an unusual Friday session amid signs of a potential breakthrough. (The House hasn't met since September 19th.) Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) floated a new framework aimed at reopening the government: pass a short-term, "clean" funding bill to end the shutdown now, and then take up Democrats' healthcare demands separately. "Enough is enough," Thune said on the floor recently, pressing Democrats to accept a nonpartisan CR so "we can get back to work for the American people."

SNAP—the country's largest anti-hunger program—has become the most immediate shutdown flash point, after the administration first said it would pay only part of November benefits using limited reserves, federal courts ordered full funding. The Justice Department is appealing while states scramble to implement payments. Governors have turned up the pressure: Michigan's Gretchen Whitmer (D) and a coalition of 21 governors urged the White House to "prevent disruption" to SNAP, while Iowa's Kim Reynolds (R) activated a state plan to bolster food banks, saying, "Together, we can make an even bigger difference for our neighbors who need help during this time." Senate attempts to mandate full federal SNAP funding hit partisan roadblocks last week, underscoring how food aid and shutdown politics are now tightly intertwined.

It also should be noted that last week's Election Day results added new political gravity – at least in the short-term. Democrats notched prominent wins in New Jersey, Virginia and New York City—results party strategists argued strengthened their hand to insist on a one-year extension of Affordable Care Act subsidies as part of any reopening deal. President Trump, by contrast, faulted the shutdown for hurting Republicans' image and urged the Senate GOP to break the stalemate—though most Republicans resisted changing Senate filibuster rules, despite the president's demands. "All Republicans have to do is say yes," Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said Friday as he offered the one-year subsidy extension in tandem with reopening the government; Thune and most Republicans pushed back, arguing policy talks should follow a reopening rather than precede it.

Fast forward to late Sunday night—the Senate voted 60–40 to advance a short-term funding measure that would reopen the federal government and extend current funding levels through January 30, 2026. Notably, eight Democrats joined all Republicans in supporting the motion to proceed, while most of the Democratic caucus opposed it due to the measure's omission of an immediate extension of the Affordable Care Act premium tax credits—a key Democratic priority. The stopgap legislation also includes provisions to reinstate federal employees wrongfully terminated during the shutdown, guarantee full back pay, and prohibit large-scale federal workforce reductions through late January. Sunday's vote was procedural, allowing debate on the measure to move forward. The bill must still pass the full Senate and then be taken up by the House before it can reach the President's desk.

What happens next? The Senate convenes at 11 a.m. today, with lawmakers hoping to complete votes on the CR–minibus package in time to head home for Veterans Day on Tuesday. Achieving

that timeline, however, would require unanimous consent from all 100 senators. Once the Senate acts, the House is expected to take up the package—likely on Wednesday or Thursday—which means House members are already scrambling to book flights amid service reductions ordered by the FAA after air traffic controllers have increasingly failed to report for work, after not being paid for weeks.

The coming holidays, announcements regarding limits on flights to keep the skies safe and the aggregate effects of limited public services and absent paychecks give some hope of a resolution before Thanksgiving.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

For school boards, the prolonged federal shutdown carries growing operational and financial risks. While education funding is largely forward-funded, prolonged disruptions to key federal services could begin to strain district budgets if agency staffing shortages persist. The uncertainty around SNAP benefits also directly affects students and families who rely on federal food assistance, potentially increasing demand on school meal programs and local resources.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

SENATE HELP COMMITTEE EXAMINES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS

On Wednesday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing on registered apprenticeship programs. Senators examined how slow federal and state registration, excessive compliance paperwork, limited reciprocity, and unstable project funding hinder workforce development in healthcare, manufacturing, and infrastructure. Lawmakers emphasized the value of apprenticeships, noting that starting salaries for registered apprentices average \$80,000 and that the U.S. could face two million unfilled manufacturing jobs by 2030. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) highlighted Alabama’s employer-driven nursing apprenticeship model, praising partnerships between hospitals, state licensing boards, and colleges that provide “last-dollar” scholarships and connect education to workforce needs. Members—including Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)—warned that uncertainty surrounding federal initiatives like the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law undermines employer confidence, cancels projects, and disrupts apprenticeship pipelines. Witnesses and senators alike called for modernizing occupational codes, streamlining compliance, and incentivizing state-college partnerships over rigid federal mandates. They cited burdensome accreditation rules and outdated paperwork as particular obstacles in construction and manufacturing. Wraparound supports such as childcare, scholarships, and competency-based learning received bipartisan attention, as did concerns about Medicaid cuts reducing nursing home staffing and limiting apprenticeship opportunities. Through questioning from Chairman Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), the committee debated the roles of government and the private sector in job creation but agreed on the need for long-term investment, stable funding, and stronger coordination between industry and education. Members concluded that high-quality apprenticeships require clear standards, efficient registration, and durable partnerships to create adaptable, high-wage pathways in a changing economy. A comprehensive summary prepared by BPAG is [here](#).

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4. New Publications

Voices from the Field: 2025 Program Survey

National Girls Collaborative Project (October 31, 2025)

The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) conducted a survey in mid-2025 to understand how recent shifts in funding and policy are affecting organizations focused on equity in STEM education. While about half of the organizations feel secure in continuing their STEM equity work, a significant portion (41%) expressed concerns about their future STEM equity work due to unstable funding and changing diversity-related policies.

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5. In the News

Child Care Providers Run for Office to Fix a Broken System

The 74 Million (November 3, 2025)

The Shutdown Is Hurting Schools Whose Budgets Are Mostly Federal Money

U.S. News (November 5, 2025)

Indiana Attorney General's Lawsuit Alleges Indianapolis Public Schools Hindered ICE

Chalkbeat (November 6, 2025)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Thursday, November 13, 2025

Webinar: Beyond the DEI Label in Support for Learning Environments for All Students

Subject: The Progressive Policy Institute will hold a virtual discussion on "Getting Beyond the DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) Wars: How can school leaders and teachers support an environment in which all students can learn to their highest potential?"

Participants: Paula Stanton, supervisor, Harford County Public School's Office of Culture and Climate; Richard Kahlenberg, director, PPI American Identity Project and author of "A Way Out of the DEI Wars;" and Brian Osborne, professor of practice, Lehigh University.

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here.](#)

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Event: Youth Apprenticeship Youth Council Lunch Symposium

Subject: New America's Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA) will hold a lunch symposium at New America with the PAYA Youth Council.

Time and Location: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Event: The Urgency for Action: Advocating for Family & Community Engagement

Subject: The National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) in will hold a virtual discussion, on "The Urgency for Action: Advocating for Family & Community Engagement."

Participants: George Otero, NAFSCE; and Anne Henderson, NAFSCE.

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor:

Consideration of short-term "Cromnibus"

House Floor:

Consideration of short-term "Cromnibus"

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9. 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](#)

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[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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