



Weekly Legislative Update

03.01.24

Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

This week, Tennessee's lawmakers heard three different proposals on universal private school vouchers. The [House K-12 Subcommittee](#) heard its own omnibus proposal, [HB1183/SB503](#), on Tuesday, February 27, 2024. It includes a host of items including increased TISA funding to certain districts, changes to teacher insurance, licensure, and evaluations, TCAP assessments and accountability, and terminating the Achievement School District. In addition to raising serious concerns about how the language was drafted and how quickly the process is moving, legislators questioned the inclusion of homeschool students in the proposal, the cost of this proposal, and accountability measures for students who use the universal private school vouchers. The House proposal passed out of the House K-12 subcommittee in a 5-2-2 vote and will be heard in [The House Education Administration Committee](#) on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

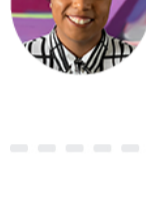
The [Senate Education Committee](#) heard [Governor Lee's universal private school voucher proposal](#) and a [universal private school voucher proposal filed by Sen. Jon Lundberg](#), the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee both of which are [distinctly different from the House proposal](#). Similar to the discussion in the House K-12 Subcommittee, legislators questioned the inclusion of homeschool students and undocumented students, protections against discrimination, and how the proposal will be funded. The Senate Education Committee did not vote on either proposal this week, however both proposals were adopted and attached to [HB1183/SB503](#). The committee is expected to vote on [HB1183/SB503](#) on Wednesday, March 6. To stay updated on the movement of Governor Lee's universal private school voucher, please check out The Education Trust Tennessee's suite of voucher resources [here](#), including a [side-by-side tracker](#) that compares the various amendments.

Other key legislative developments this week include the passage of [HB 1914](#) through the House Higher Education Subcommittee, which establishes grants to colleges and universities to address hunger on their campuses and the passage of [HB1927](#) through House Education Administration Committee, which allows LEAs and public charter schools to reimburse teachers for childcare expenses.

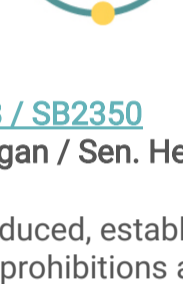
Additionally, the [Tennessee Coalition for Truth in Classrooms](#) is tracking a series of [censorship and anti diversity, equity, and inclusion legislation](#), two which, [HB1948](#) and [SB1858](#) will be heard next week in the [House Higher Education Committee](#) and [Senate Education Committee](#) respectively. [HB1948](#), by Rep. John Ragan, prohibits public college campuses from maintaining DEI offices, personnel, trainings, activities, and programs. [SB1858](#), the Senate companion to [HB1632](#), which gives parents the right to sue public schools over the enforcement of the Age Appropriate Materials Act of 2022. To take action against these bills, please sign onto our advocacy letters for [HB1948](#) and [SB1858](#).

On Monday, March 4, The Education Trust-Tennessee will host [Telling Your Story: Effective Communication & Media Strategies in Legislative Advocacy](#) from 4PM-5PM CT/5PM-6PM ET. I invite you to join us to conclude our public training series with a workshop from RALLY, a national communications and advocacy organization, who will provide an overview of the importance of storytelling in communication and key media narrative strategies to leverage in your campaigns.

In partnership,



MaKenzie L. Mosby, MPP
Senior Manager of Government Relations for Tennessee



On Our Radar

[HB1948 / SB2350](#)
Rep. Ragan / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, establishes various prohibitions and requirements for public institutions of higher education regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[HB1664 / SB1715](#)
Rep. Warner / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, authorizes a law enforcement agency to assign a law enforcement officer to serve as a school resource officer at a school within a local board of education's control that has not entered into a memorandum of understanding with a law enforcement agency to assign a school resource officer to the school.

[HB1632 / SB1858](#)
Rep. Bulso / Sen. Haile

As introduced, gives a parent of a child who attends, or who is eligible to attend, a school operated by a local education agency or a public charter school standing to file a civil action against the LEA or public charter school in a chancery court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the Age-Appropriate Materials Act of 2022.

[HB1914 / SB1977](#)
Rep. Hale / Sen. Massey

As introduced, establishes the hunger-free campus grant program; provides grants to higher education institutions to address student hunger.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



What's Happening

House Higher Education Subcommittee
Monday, March 4th, 3:00pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Monday, March 4th, 4:00pm
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Committee
Tuesday, March 5th, 9:00am
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House K-12 Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 5th, 4:30pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 6th, 12:00pm
House Hearing Room III | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Administration Committee
Wednesday, March 6th, 1:30pm
House Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, March 6th, 3:00pm
Senate Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session
Thursday, March 7th, 8:30am
Senate Chamber | [Senate Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Thursday, March 7th, 9:00am
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



Noteworthy

Webinar: Telling Your Story: Effective Communication & Media Strategies in Legislative Advocacy

Join The Education Trust – Tennessee for a [Gearing Up Advocacy Training](#) on Monday, March 4th from 4:00-5:00 PM CT on how to meaningfully tell your story when engaging with elected officials and integrating your stories into advocacy campaigns that mobilizes your community to act. We will be joined by [RALLY](#), a national advocacy organization, who will provide an overview of the importance of storytelling in communication and key media narrative strategies to leverage in your campaigns.

[Register here](#)

Webinar: Leading with Evidence: A New Way to Measure Healing from Community Violence

The Annie E. Casey Foundation will host a webinar, [A New Way to Measure Healing from Community Violence](#), from 1-2 PM ET on March 6th. The session will highlight a new scale to measure healing in people who have been harmed by community violence, expanding ways to better understand and respond to young adult survivors of trauma.

[Register here](#)

Report: 'Segregation Forever'? Private Universities Haven't Increased Diversity in the Past 20 Years. What Now?

The [EdTrust](#) with endorsement from our partner, [UnidosUS](#) released [this report](#). The report examines the ongoing challenges faced by Latino students in accessing higher education opportunities. Through a rigorous analysis of enrollment data and access scores spanning over two decades, the report illuminates the slow pace of progress in addressing the underrepresentation of Latino students. Despite efforts to foster inclusivity and diversity, systemic obstacles persist, hindering equitable access to these institutions for Latino students.

[Read more](#)

Report: The Budget in Brief: Summary of Gov. Lee's FY 2025 Recommended Budget

Checkout this report from [The Sycamore Institute](#) about the governor's recommended budget. The budget includes a range of priorities, including K-12 education, rural and behavioral health, and franchise tax changes. Their "Budget in Brief" has the details.

[Read more](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Legislative Advocacy Hub](#)

