



Weekly Legislative Update

3.10.23

Dear {{FirstName or 'Supporter'}},

Long-awaited [House K-12 Education Subcommittee](#) conversations on the issue of third- and fourth-grade retention were again rolled this week, with House Education Administration [Chairman Mark White \(R - Memphis\)](#) bringing forward [additional language](#) on the topic earlier this week. The subcommittee is now rescheduled to hold discussions on the [retention calendar and its 16 related bills](#) next Tuesday afternoon, March 14, at 4:30 PM CT. We encourage you to continue checking out Ed Trust TN's [retention legislation tracker](#) and [Cost of Retention memo](#), which will be updated as retention bills continue to make their way through the General Assembly.

As committees continue to press on -- some toward final calendars, such as [House Higher Education Subcommittee](#) -- other education bills beyond retention with significant equity considerations continue to move through the legislature as well. [Amended legislation](#) supported by Ed Trust TN, [HB276/SB231](#) by [Rep. Sam McKenzie \(D - Knoxville\)](#) and [Sen. Jeff Yarbro \(D - Nashville\)](#), advanced in both the House Higher Education Subcommittee and the Senate Education Committee this week. The bill as amended would expand and improve Tennessee's Minority Teaching Fellows Program for college juniors, seniors, and graduate students of color who aspire to be teachers in public K-12 schools by adjusting the award amount from \$5,000 up to the cost of tuition and fees on a last-dollar basis. It would also remove a burdensome 9% interest rate loan repayment penalty for student recipients who change career courses, become ineligible for the scholarship, or otherwise fail to complete the program's requirements, converting all award funds to a grant to align with other TSAC/THEC-administered scholarship programs. Another Yarbro bill supported by Ed Trust, [SB1078](#), which would exclude classroom texts obtained by teachers from having to be scrutinized and posted online alongside a school's library collection, cleared Senate Ed on a 9-0 bipartisan vote.

In other committee news, [HB1214](#), a caption bill from the [Speaker of the House Cameron Sexton \(R - Crossville\)](#) which raised flags due its creation of hybrid charter schools and opens the door to boarding and residential school programs for a broad "at-risk" student category, was rolled back another week in House Ed. Administration Committee. Chairman Mark White, who is [shepherding the bill](#) through the committee for leadership, desired more time to get additional clarity and answer member questions. The at-risk definition in the legislation encompasses the economically disadvantaged, homeless, foster, runaway, or migrant students, students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and students with disabilities, among others. The Education Trust--Tennessee and many of our advocacy partners will continue closely monitoring developments on the bill and seeking clarity around many of the legislation's provisions affecting vulnerable student groups. Another caption bill emerging from Speaker Sexton's office that captured [national headlines](#), [HB1249](#) which is expected to be connected to his proposal to reject federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education, is calendared for House K-12 Subcommittee next Tuesday as well.

Next week, calendars are packed rather full, with hosts of critical legislation up for discussion by lawmakers serving on education committees in both chambers. To see all of the education-related legislation Ed Trust is actively tracking and other pertinent information on movement at the Tennessee General Assembly, please be sure to check out the "On Our Radar" section, our updated bill tracker, and the committee calendars each linked below.

In partnership,



Reggie Nash
Assistant Director, External Relations - Tennessee

On Our Radar

[HB0727/SB1443](#)

Rep. Hulsey / Sen. Roberts

Requires a student's parent or legal guardian, or the student if the student has reached the age of majority, to provide a written, informed, and voluntarily signed consent to the student's LEA before the student may receive instruction through the LEA's family life curriculum, participate in a survey, analysis, or evaluation, or receive health services provided through a coordinated school health program.

[HB1376/SB0817](#)

Rep. Ragan / Sen. Hensley

Enacts the "Tennessee Higher Education Freedom of Expression and Transparency Act."

[HB0322/SB0274](#)

Rep. Lamberth / Sen. Johnson

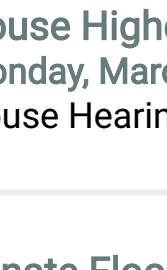
Requires the threat assessment team of each LEA to coordinate with state agencies providing services and technical assistance to local teams.

[HB0127/SB0141](#)

Rep. Martin G / Sen. Watson

Allows a school resource officer, school security officer, or other law enforcement officer who is trained and certified for completing a behavior intervention training program to use a mechanical restraint on a student receiving special education services in an emergency situation.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



What's Happening

Senate Judiciary Committee
Monday, March 13th, 1:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Higher Education Subcommittee
Monday, March 13th, 3:00pm CT
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session
Monday, March 13th, 4:00pm CT
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Monday, March 13th, 5:00pm CT
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

House Transportation Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 8:00am CT
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 9:00am CT
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Criminal Justice Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 14th, 12:00pm CT
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Commerce and Labor Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 1:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Civil Justice Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 14th, 1:30pm CT
[House Hearing Room III](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Health Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 14th, 1:30pm CT
[House Hearing Room IV](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Judiciary Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 3:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 3:00pm CT
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House K-12 Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 14th, 4:30pm CT
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 15th, 10:30am CT
[House Hearing Room III](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House State Government Committee
Wednesday, March 15th, 10:30am CT
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, March 15th, 12:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Administration Committee
Wednesday, March 15th, 1:30pm CT
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Health and Welfare Committee
Wednesday, March 15th, 3:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

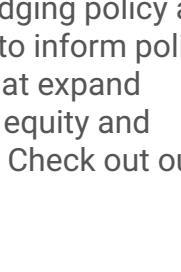
Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, March 15th, 3:00pm CT
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session
Thursday, March 16th, 8:30am CT
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Thursday, March 16th, 9:00am CT
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



Noteworthy

[Resource: Tennessee Education Advocacy Hub](#)

The Education Trust -- Tennessee launched an [advocacy hub](#) to help stakeholders effectively advocate for education justice in the state. We are excited to continue bridging policy and community to inform policy decisions that expand educational equity and opportunity. Check out our tools [here!](#)

[Article: The Tennessean, Gov. Bill Lee: How Tennessee's reading strategy will move students forward | Opinion](#)

Check out [this op-ed](#) in The Tennessean written by [Tennessee Governor Bill Lee](#) about literacy challenges and retention. He discusses Tennessee's literacy strategy and plans to move the needle for students including funding for K-3 literacy programs and expanded summer learning opportunities.

[Event: Tennessee Policy & Advocacy Training for Educators](#)

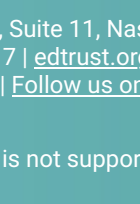
Join The Education Trust -- Tennessee for an [advocacy training for educators](#) on Tuesday, March 21st from 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm CT. We will review important education governance structures and review current priority policy issues impacting educators this legislative session. Register [here!](#)

[Article: Chalkbeat TN: Tennessee governor's safety bill threatens penalties for schools if they don't lock entrances](#)

Check out [this article](#) from Chalkbeat TN to learn more about developments on school safety. If passed, K-12 public schools face withheld state funds for each instance of non-compliance, and would be required to have a full-time school resource officer if they violate the policy two or more times in an academic year. The full proposal is outlined in [this amendment](#) to [HB322/SB274](#).

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Check Out Our Policy Agenda](#)



The Education Trust