



Weekly Legislative Update

03.08.24

Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

This week, legislators continued their discussion of [HB1183/SB503](#), the universal private school vouchers proposals in the House Education Administration Committee and the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday. [For more than four hours](#), House members debated parliamentary procedure and key elements of the House amendment including the costs associated with the non-voucher components and the eligibility of schools, private school students, and undocumented students. In a 12-7 vote, [HB1183/SB503](#) passed out of the House Education Administration Committee and is referred to be heard in the House Government Operations.

The Senate Education Committee [discussion](#) of [HB1183/SB503](#) focused on the committee amendment specifically how the public funds from a private school voucher travels with a student, use of a private school voucher for out of district tuition, and the financial impact of private school vouchers on school districts. [HB1183/SB503](#) has not been calendared in committee and is not expected to be heard in the House or the Senate next week. 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.

In other legislative developments, [HB2826](#) by Leader Karen Camper (D-Memphis) which instructs the Tennessee Department of Education to create a conflict resolution program for K-12 students and [HB2207](#) by Rep. Elaine Davis (R-Knoxville), which requires LEAs to provide feminine hygiene products in all women’s and girls’ bathrooms, locker rooms, and with the school nurse both passed out of the [House K-12 Subcommittee](#). Shout out to [AWAKE TN](#), a member of the [Tennessee Alliance for Equity in Education](#), for leading the [advocacy strategy](#) on [HB2207](#).

In a striking 0-9 vote, [HB1948](#) by Rep. John Ragan (R-Oak Ridge), which prohibits public college campuses from maintaining DEI offices, personnel, training, activities, and programs, was unanimously voted down in the [House Higher Education Subcommittee](#) on Monday. Additionally, [SB2173](#) by Sen. Joey Hensley (R-Hohenwald), which allows district residents to petition the removal of materials that do not meet contemporary community standards, and [SB2107](#) by Sen. Mark Pody (R-Lebanon), which creates a process to remove sexually explicit materials from libraries, were both deferred to summer study during the [Senate Education Committee](#) on Wednesday. To stay up to date on censorship legislation, please check out the [advocacy toolkit](#) from the [Tennessee Coalition for Truth in Our Classrooms](#).

In partnership,
MaKenzie



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



On Our Radar

[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

[HB2024 / SB1892](#)
Rep. Clemmons / Sen. Oliver

As introduced, requires the department of education to contract with the TCAP test provider to offer students who receive language assistance services in the classroom the same language assistance services during the administration of a TCAP test

[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.

[HB2784 / SB2501](#)
Rep. Cepicky / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, establishes deadlines for public institutions of higher education to initiate and complete an investigation into a report filed by a student or employee alleging they have been penalized, discriminated against, or received adverse treatment due to their refusal to support or otherwise assent to a divisive concept, specific ideology, or political viewpoint; establishes financial penalties for institutions that fail to timely investigate such reports or fail to timely report the results of such investigations to the comptroller of the treasury; requires the comptroller to report institutions that frequently submit reports of such investigations to the education committees of the senate and house of representatives

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



What’s Happening

House Higher Education Subcommittee
Monday, 3/11/24, 3:00pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Monday, 3/11/24, 4:00pm
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session
Monday, 3/11/24, 4:00pm
Senate Chamber | [Senate Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Committee
Tuesday, 3/12/24, 9:00am
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House K-12 Subcommittee
Tuesday, 3/12/24, 4:30pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Subcommittee
Wednesday, 3/13/24, 12:00pm
House Hearing Room III | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Administration Committee
Wednesday, 3/13/24, 1:30pm
House Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, 3/13/24, 3:00pm
Senate Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session
Thursday, 3/14/24, 8:30am
Senate Chamber | [Senate Homepage](#)

House Floor Session
Thursday, 3/14/24, 9:00am
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



Noteworthy

Article: Tennessee universal school voucher bill clears two more legislative hurdles after contentious debate

Vouchers are a “bitter pill” that will destabilize K-12 education, a former Superintendent of the Year testified as Gov. Bill Lee’s universal school voucher proposal cleared two more legislative hurdles. Check out [this article](#) in Chalkbeat about the most recent update on school voucher legislation in Tennessee.

[Read more](#)

Article: University of Tennessee looks to the future with four proposed degrees in AI, data science

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville plans to add four future-looking bachelor’s degrees that prepare students to work in artificial intelligence, data science and other emerging fields. Artificial intelligence students could get certificates in music, medicine, game craft and more.

[Read more](#)

Event: Diverse Books Matter 3.25.24 at 5PM CT

Join [One WillCo](#) for a deeper understanding of representational balance in books as we examine books to provide realistic understanding of others. There will be an overview of findings and recommendations based off of the Tool for Representational Balance in Books from Ed Trust. We will walk through examples and discussions together. This session aims to offer a deeper understanding of what high-quality and culturally relevant curriculum should look like. Refreshments will be served.

[Register here](#)

Article: State Board of Education asks Tennessee lawmakers to rethink holding back third graders in unanimous vote

The State Board of Education unanimously passed a resolution Monday asking Tennessee lawmakers to consider shifting the state’s reading and retention law to focus on students in kindergarten through third grade. Check out [this article](#) in the Tennessee to read about the resolution.

[Read more](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Legislative Advocacy Hub](#)

