



# Weekly Legislative Update

01.21.22

Most of the legislature's standing committees with education jurisdiction kicked off this week, seeing the 2022 session of the 112th General Assembly's first bills calendared for discussion and official consideration. This week also saw the conclusion of the public comment period from the Tennessee Department of Education, as the state's monumental review of the BEP public school funding formula and recently-released [draft framework](#) continues. The Department and Governor Lee's administration will now review input from the public comment period as well as ongoing recommendations from the subcommittees and central legislative steering committee. You can see The Education Trust in Tennessee's submitted public comments on the draft framework [here](#).

As funding conversations continue, there has been heightened concern in education policy and advocacy circles around the potential inclusion of school vouchers in any upcoming reforms. Both Governor Lee and Commissioner Schwinn have recently gone [on the record](#) in stating that the current public school funding formula review and the issue of school choice are two different conversations. The issue of school vouchers in Tennessee continues to be a hotly-contested one, with the Tennessee Supreme Court slated to hear [arguments in the education savings accounts \(ESAs, or vouchers by another name\) case](#) in late February.

On the legislative front, a new voucher bill sponsored by Sen. Mike Bell of Riceville, [SB1674](#) (HB1671 in the House), is making its rounds through Cordell Hull, with the Senate Education Committee voting to advance the bill with the adoption of an [amendment](#) that would permit ESAs to be afforded to students zoned to attend schools in the state's turnaround Achievement School District or in school districts that did not offer 180 days of in-person instruction in a school year due to COVID-19. To see more on this bill and other legislation we are actively tracking, please refer to this newsletter's "On Our Radar" section and updated bill tracker below.



**Reggie Nash**  
External Relations Manager for Tennessee



## On Our Radar

**[HB1671 / SB1674](#)**  
Rep. Curcio / Sen. Bell  
Expands eligibility for an education savings account to students zoned to attend school in an LEA under specified conditions.

**[HB1862 / SB1815](#)**  
Rep. Darby / Sen. Kelsey  
Requires each four year public institution of higher education to obtain a student's score on nationally recognized college admissions test before admitted.

**[HB1174 / SB1131](#)**  
Rep. Baum / Sen. White  
Creates the TN Rapid Growth School District (TRGSD) Fund for LEAs experiencing rapid growth in student population.

**[HB1676 / SB1775](#)**  
Rep. Cepicky / Sen. Hensley  
Authorizes the State Board of Education to reject or revise, instead of only adopt, the academic standards offered by the standards recommendation committees.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



## What's Happening

**House Higher Education Subcommittee**  
Tuesday, 1/25/22, 12:00pm  
House Hearing Room III [Subcommittee Homepage](#)

**House Education Instruction Subcommittee**  
Tuesday, 1/25/22, 3:00pm  
House Hearing Room II [Subcommittee Homepage](#)

**House Education Instruction Committee**  
Wednesday, 1/26/22, 11:00am  
House Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

**Senate Education Committee**  
Wednesday, 1/26/22, 2:00pm  
Senate Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Education Administration Committee**  
Wednesday, 1/26/22, 3:30pm  
House Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

**The Public Charter School Commission Quarterly Meeting**  
Wednesday, 1/27 - 1/28/22, 2:30pm  
Conference Room 1A, Davy Crockett Tower [Commission Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



## Noteworthy

**ERIC Commission Year Two Report**  
The [Tennessee Commission on Education Recovery and Innovation \(ERIC\)](#) recently released a report, "A Revitalization: Transforming Education in Tennessee," which outlines a number of priorities and recommendations for closing educational gaps and modernizing K-12 to career systems.

[Learn more](#)

**TN25: Mapping Our Future Together Report Release**  
On Wednesday, January 19th, we released our new report, TN25: Mapping Our Future Together, that examines the impact of COVID-19 on students and schools in Tennessee and outlines recommendations for how we can close opportunity and achievement gaps exacerbated by the pandemic.

[View our report here](#)

**Exploring Race & Gender in TN Teacher Evaluation Scores**  
Join the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA), the Tennessee Education Association, and Ed Trust on Thursday, January 27th, at 4:00pm CT for a webinar on new research findings on race and gender gaps in evaluation scores by Dr. Jason Grissom of Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education and the Tennessee Education Research Alliance.

[Register here](#)

**Video: Ed Trust TN's Gini Pupo-Walker & Reggie Nash Talk BEP Reform on News Channel 5's Open Line**  
This past Wednesday, our State Director Gini Pupo-Walker and External Relations Manager Reggie Nash joined News Channel 5 Nashville's Ben Hall to chat about all things school funding formula review and education bills before the 2022 General Assembly.

[Watch here](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Check Out Our Policy Agenda](#)



The Education Trust