



Weekly Legislative Update

2.11.22

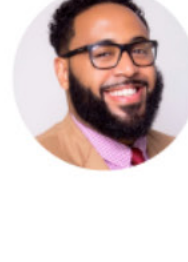
Tennessee education advocates and stakeholders continued to wait with bated breath this week for additional details and legislative language around the Lee Administration's Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement, or TISA, the proposed framework for revamping the state's 30-year-old public education funding formula. In a [press conference](#) Thursday afternoon flanked by Commissioner of Education Dr. Penny Schwinn and various chairs of [funding formula review subcommittees](#), Governor Lee shared that his staff hopes to unveil bill language to the General Assembly by the end of next week, though he did not commit to a specific date. Many uncertainties remain around the mechanics of the forthcoming funding framework, chiefly of which are lingering questions regarding the local capacity and responsibility of school districts to financially contribute and the specific details of student weight components.

There were significant developments on education bills in both chambers of the General Assembly this week. In the House K-12 Education Subcommittee, the harmful [HB1648](#), which would eliminate state education funding for undocumented immigrant students in Tennessee public schools, was delayed for consideration for two weeks. The Education Trust in Tennessee [opposes](#) advancement of this legislation alongside several of our state immigrant and civil rights advocacy partners. An [amended HB1753](#), which would require state TCAP assessments to be administered on paper for grades three through five through the 2022-23 school year and grades six through eight for 2021-22, while end-of-course tests for grades nine through twelve would be taken online for the 2021-22 school year, passed out of the full House Education Instruction Committee. [HB1676](#), which grants the State Board of Education the authority to reject or make non-substantive revisions to academic standards recommended by the standards review committees passed out of the same committee as well.

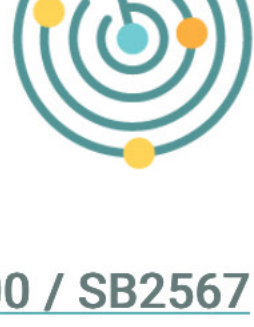
In the House Education Administration Committee, much of the legislative panel's conversation centered around [HB1838](#), introduced by Rep. Scott Cepicky of Culleoka, which seeks to grant partial State Board of Education appointment authority - which is currently held solely by the Governor, with appointed members confirmed by the legislature - to the Speaker of the House and Lt. Governor/Speaker of the Senate. As proposed, the bill allows for three members to be appointed by the Speaker, three by the Lt. Governor, and three to remain under the authority of the Governor. Brent Easley, representing the Governor's office, [testified in opposition](#) to the bill in committee. A spirited bipartisan debate on the state separation of powers and influence on education agenda setting concluded with the bill advancing on a 9-6 vote, with Committee Chairman Mark White (R-Memphis) and Rep. Charlie Baum (R-Murfreesboro) joining with all four Democrats on the committee in dissent.

In the Senate, the upper chamber's Education Committee kicked off their annual budget hearings with [presentations](#) from the Tennessee State Board of Education and Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, respectively. On the Senate floor this week, Sen. Brian Kelsey (R-Germantown)'s [SB1815](#), a bill which would mandate Tennessee's public colleges and universities to require college admissions test scores from the SAT or ACT to be submitted, led to [significant debate](#) amongst senators on both sides of the aisle on the merits and content of the legislation. Following bipartisan opposition to the bill, consideration and a final vote was ultimately delayed until next Thursday, February 17.

Next week, a sizeable number of education bills related to diversity, equity, and truthful renditions of history in student learning will appear before legislative committees, with implications for both K-12 and higher education. To see all of the legislation up for consideration next week as well as the key bills Ed Trust is actively tracking, please be sure check out the "On Our Radar" section, our updated bill tracker, and the committee calendars each linked below.



Reggie Nash
External Relations Manager for Tennessee



On Our Radar

[HB1900 / SB2567](#)

Rep. Weaver / Sen. Crowe
Requires the Department of Education to establish a fund to reimburse educators in an amount equal to the cost of an assessment required for licensure if the educator receives a qualifying score on the required assessment.

[HB2670 / SB2290](#)

Rep. Sexton / Sen. Bell
Prohibits a public institution of higher education from taking certain actions with regard to divisive concepts and the ideologies or political viewpoints of students and employees; revises the duties of an institution's employees whose primary duties include diversity; requires each institution to conduct campus climate survey.

[HB2154 / SB2407](#)

Rep. Lamberth / Sen. Johnson
Enacts the "Age Appropriate Materials Act of 2022": requires each public school to maintain, and post on the school's website, a list of materials in the school's library collection; requires each local board of education and public charter school governing body to establish procedures for the development and review of school library connections.

[HB1944 / SB1944](#)

Rep. Cepicky / Sen. Hensley
Prohibits an LEA or public school from making obscene materials or materials harmful to minors available to students in school libraries controlled by an LEA or public school.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



What's Happening

House Higher Education Subcommittee
Tuesday, 2/15/22, 12:00pm
House Hearing Room III [Subcommittee Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Subcommittee
Tuesday, 2/15/22, 3:00pm
House Hearing Room II [Subcommittee Homepage](#)

House K-12 Education Subcommittee
Tuesday, 2/15/22, 4:30pm
House Hearing Room II [Subcommittee Homepage](#)

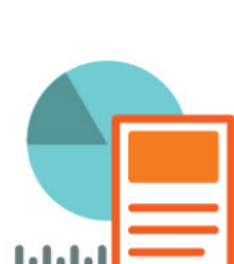
House Education Instruction Committee
Wednesday, 2/16/22, 11:00am
House Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Education Committee
Wednesday, 2/16/22, 3:00pm
Senate Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Administration Committee
Wednesday, 2/16/22, 3:30pm
House Hearing Room I [Committee Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



Noteworthy

Thrive Fellows and Community of Practice

The Education Trust in Tennessee is proud to announce the [recipients of the Thrive Fellowship](#), a cohort of 10 college students who will participate in a year-long program that will equip them to advocate for change, and [recipients of the Thrive Community of Practice](#), a group of 5 organizations who will spend the next year developing or expanding programs to increase access and opportunity for high school students.

[Learn more](#)

Event: The Debate Over Critical Race Theory and What Students Can Do

[The EmpowerEd Network](#) invites students from across Tennessee to the second session of a two-part series to learn about the raging national debate over Critical Race Theory in schools. Part 2 will focus on how students can take action! Join us for an interactive advocacy workshop with [RALLY](#), who will lead a storytelling workshop that will equip students to connect their identity, stories, and experiences to advocate on an issue.

[Register here](#)

Webinar: Keeping Resource Equity at the Forefront of COVID-19 Recovery

Join The Alliance for Resource Equity for three webinars that discuss how to use additional federal funding given to schools and districts during the COVID-19 pandemic to advance student access to equitable experiences. Session 1 will focus on social, emotional, and academic well-being. Session 2 will focus on staffing shortages. Session 3 will focus on wraparound supports.

[Register here](#)

The Sycamore Institute: Tennessee's FY23 Budget in Brief

The Sycamore Institute, an independent, non-partisan public policy research center in Tennessee, has released a summative brief highlighting key takeaways of Gov. Lee's \$52.5 billion FY2023 recommended budget.

[Read here](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Check Out Our Policy Agenda](#)



The Education Trust