



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations
Weekly Education Report
LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON

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The COSSBA Education Report, a weekly publication, provides an executive summary of public policy issues affecting American K-12 education and employment. **Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:**

1. **News, Publications, & Updates on COSSBA Policy Priorities**
 - **Child Nutrition:** On February 17, Education and the Workforce Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee Ranking Member Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) **wrote** to the Department of Agriculture in support of the agency's **proposal** to improve food assistance for participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
 - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
 - **Speaker McCarthy Introduces Parents Bill of Rights Act:** On Wednesday, March 1, House Republicans fulfilled a campaign promise introducing the **Parents Bill of Rights Act**.
 - **Brookings Institute Examines Reducing Child Poverty:** On Wednesday, March 1, The Brookings Institute and the Hamilton Project hosted a forum to discuss and evaluate child poverty, which coincided with the release of **three essays** focused on delivering in-kind nutrition benefits to children; addressing place-based poverty; and establishing a partially refundable Child Tax Credit.
 - **Healthy Schools Campaign Guidance on Funding School Health Services:** On Thursday, March 2, the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families

and the Healthy Schools Campaign hosted a webinar titled, “Using Medicaid to Fund School Health Services.”

4. **New Publications**

- **How States are Using Federal Relief Funding to Scale High-Impact Tutoring:** *Council of Chief State School Officers (March, 2023)*
This report explores how states are using their ESSER state set-aside to scale high impact tutoring.

5. **In the News**

- **House GOP Mulls Putting ‘Woke’ Earmarks on Chopping Block** *Roll Call (February 27, 2023)*
- **The GOP’s Tortured Spin on DOJ and School Boards** *The Washington Post (March 2, 2023)*

6. **Weekly Calendar - What’s coming up this week?**

- **Will ChatGPT Forever Change Education?** The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation will hold a virtual discussion on "Will ChatGPT Forever Change Education?"
Tuesday, March 7 at 11am ET
- **Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten:** New America will hold a virtual discussion on "Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten."
Tuesday, March 7 at 3pm ET
- **House Appropriations Labor-H Subcommittee Member Day:** The House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Member Day."
Wednesday, March 8 at 10am ET
- **Equity in Online Career and Technical Education Programs:** The Urban Institute will hold a virtual discussion on "Advancing Racial Equity in Online Career and Technical Education Programs: Knowledge for Action."
Thursday, March 9 at 11:30am

7. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**

- **Consideration of Nominations** on the Senate Floor
- **H. Con. Res. 21** - Directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria
- **H.R. 140** - Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act
- **H.J. Res. 27** - Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'"
- **S. 619** - A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information relating to the origin of COVID-19, and for other purposes

8. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**

9. About BPAG

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

CHILD NUTRITION

On February 17, Education and the Workforce Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee Ranking Member Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) wrote to the Department of Agriculture in support of the agency's proposal to improve food assistance for participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The proposed updates would use a science-based review of WIC food packages to provide families with greater access to healthy food and to address both the continued inequities in access to nutritious food and disproportionate impact of diet-related needs in low-income areas.

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

This week is the week! President Joe Biden is expected to release his budget plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 on Thursday, with more details to follow. Advocates for every cause are eager to see what might be in the plan. Given, Republican control of the House, the budget proposal will likely get limited attention in that chamber. House leadership is preparing to invite agency heads to Capitol Hill to defend the plan but in the meantime, the House Appropriations Committee is hosting an exhausting 13 hearings next week.

As appropriators get organized, House Republicans have released guidance for Members who want to weigh in on program funding or congressionally-directed spending this cycle. Earlier this year, House Budget Committee Republicans took aim at some projects, characterizing their budget-cutting efforts to "Stop Woke-Waste." Republicans would like to cut more than \$130 billion from current funding levels.

Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)—who is also the Ranking Member for the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Subcommittee, released a statement regarding the decision, saying, in part, "I am saddened by the majority's guidance on Community Project Funding (CPF). It is unfortunate that they have chosen to prevent Members of the House from requesting CPFs in the Financial Services and General Government, Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education, and Defense. This is not about Democrats or Republicans. It is about communities that need federal support. By excluding these subcommittees, they are decreasing opportunities for Members to help people in their districts and to meet urgent needs directly." The Senate is still allowing earmark requests in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education funding bill, with requests for that bill due April 13. Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Susan Collins (R-ME) has detailed guidance for her constituents about "community directed spending."

This week will be a busy one, as will the entire month of March as Congress settles into the 118th Congress and its work.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

Concerning the President's expected FY24 budget release on Thursday, the education community is expecting the White House to propose more increases to federal education programs.

As for FY24 congressionally directed spending, it had been rumored that the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill would not be eligible for "community project funding requests" this year. It was asserted in the press that Republicans had concerns over earmarks funded in the FY23 bill to include several LGBTQ and transgender services-related projects. So while this is disappointing, it's ultimately unsurprising.

Community project funding requests refer to what has historically been termed "earmarks." Earmarks are provisions included primarily at the request of a Congress member providing, authorizing or recommending a specific amount of discretionary funding in the budget for an expenditure with or to an entity, or targeted to a specific State, locality or Congressional district, other than through statutory formula funding or a competitive award process. Last year, earmarks in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill made up \$2.7 billion of the total \$15.3 billion in earmarks.

With the Senate continuing to allow these requests despite the House ban, it's unclear how that will influence the final FY24 budget agreement. Will Senate CPFs ultimately remain or will they to be discarded in final negotiations? In practical terms, this is another avenue closed for local school systems to obtain federal funding. If you're still interested in pursuing federal support for a community project, you should contact one of your U.S. Senators who may be willing to submit the project as part of the Senate appropriations bill.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

SPEAKER MCCARTHY INTRODUCES PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS ACT

On Wednesday, March 1, House Republicans fulfilled a campaign promise introducing the [Parents Bill of Rights Act](#). The legislation would require school districts nationwide to publicly post their curricula, as well as provide parents with a list of library books, according to a [fact sheet](#) on the legislation. The bill would also require teachers to offer two in-person meetings with parents each school year and prevent schools from sharing student data with tech companies without parental consent. The bill's introduction coincided with an event on Capitol Hill hosted by House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and House Education and the Workforce Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC). "[Today is] about every parent, mom and dad, but most importantly about the students in America," the Speaker [said](#) at Wednesday's event. The proposal comes on the heels of a House Judiciary Committee investigation into Justice Department and Department of Education statements regarding parents violently protesting certain policies at school board meetings around the country. Meanwhile, Democrats and some education groups argue that GOP efforts to establish a "parents' bill of rights" is a harmful overreach on schools and teachers. "McCarthy would rather seek to stoke racial and social division and distract us from what will really help our students thrive: an inspiring, inclusive, and age-appropriate curriculum that prepares each and every one of them for their future," National

Education Association President Becky Pringle said in response to the bill's introduction. Additionally, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona authored an opinion piece in Newsweek on Wednesday in what seems to be a response to Republican efforts. "[This] approach does nothing to help students across the country. None of the nearly 10,000 parents with whom my team and I have met since the president took office said they wanted more culture wars or partisan politics in schools. While each of these parents brought their own distinct needs and perspectives, they were united by a focus on their child's ability to learn now—and thrive in the future," Cardona says in the op-ed. The legislation currently has 73 original cosponsors and is being led by Congresswoman Julia Letlow (R-LA). Similar legislation was introduced in the Senate last Congress by Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO). Neither bill was ever presented for a vote. In this Congress, the bill will likely get approved by the education committee on party lines and be approved by the House, but will not be considered by the Senate.

BROOKINGS INSTITUTE EXAMINES REDUCING CHILD POVERTY

On Wednesday, March 1, The Brookings Institute and the Hamilton Project hosted a forum to discuss and evaluate child poverty, which coincided with the release of three essays focused on delivering in-kind nutrition benefits to children; addressing place-based poverty; and establishing a partially refundable Child Tax Credit. The forum was divided into three sessions. The first session featured a fireside chat between Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Amna Nawaz of PBS NewsHour. The following two panels featured discussions between Lauren Bauer, Wendy Edelberg, and Robert Greenstein of Brookings; Vince Hall, Feeding America; Bradley Hardy, Georgetown University; Grace B. Hou, Illinois Department of Human Services; Christine James-Brown, Child Welfare League of America; Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Northwestern University; and Eric Schwartz, 76 West Holdings. The fireside chat between Nawaz and Senator Bennet primarily examined the Senator's efforts to expand the Child Tax Credit (CTC). In 2019, he and Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) introduced the American Family Act, which would overhaul the existing CTC and make it a more effective tool for supporting middle-class families with children and reducing child poverty. He further discussed his work to include CTC expansion in the 2022 Omnibus and criticized Republican leaders who failed to negotiate a deal. Senator Bennet called for more leadership from President Joe Biden and asserted that Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) has been a driving force in preventing CTC expansion. The second panel further discussed reducing child poverty at the federal level and the CTC's economic impact. Edelberg stated that the CTC is predicted to moderately reduce workforce participation, but asserted that the benefits of diminishing child poverty make it well worth it. The final panel provided solutions to reducing child poverty at the state level and emphasized the importance of local, state, and federal agencies working together with private sector entities. An archived recording of the event can be found here.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN GUIDANCE ON FUNDING SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

On Thursday, March 2, the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families and the Healthy Schools Campaign hosted a webinar titled, "Using Medicaid to Fund School Health Services." The event featured Orla Kennedy, policy analyst at Community Catalyst; Margaux Johnson-Green, state health policy analyst at Georgetown Center for Children and Families; Anne Dwyer, associate research professor at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy; Jessie Mandle, National Program Director at Healthy Schools Campaign; Lena O'Rourke, a consultant for the Healthy Schools Campaign; Kevin Bauer, Michigan Department

of Health and Human Services; and Christie Guinn, school health manager at the New Mexico Services Department. The event examined how states are leveraging federal resources to improve health services and provider eligibility for Medicaid reimbursement. Johnson-Green and Dwyer presented an overview of Medicaid’s Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), explaining how the program benefits children and how funds can be used to address the youth mental health crisis in schools. Dwyer commented on a [Medicaid study](#), noting that “Medicaid is the single largest payer of behavioral health care, as it provides health coverage to over half of all children in the U.S.” Additionally, Dwyer stated that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated many of the challenges faced by program users for mental health resources. Mandel and O’Rourke touched on CMS’s [free care policy reversal](#) that gave states the option to provide physical and behavioral health care services to any student who is enrolled in Medicaid and get federal Medicaid reimbursement for those services. This means, she explained, that schools now have the opportunity to increase access and resources for school health services, and “Medicaid is no longer limited to students with an Individualized Education Plan, but rather up to the states if they wish to expand.” Passage of the Bipartisan [Safer Communities Act](#) also furthered the momentum in establishing and maintaining mental health services in the education system. Both Bauer and Guinn mentioned the personal experience of state expansion within Michigan and New Mexico, respectively. Kennedy closed the event, highlighting that “the best starting point, no matter where your state is at in this discussion, is to understand school Medicaid in your state.” She amplified an [interactive map](#) published by the Healthy Schools Campaign to monitor current usage. An archived recoding of the webinar can be found [here](#).

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4. New Publications

[How States are Using Federal Relief Funding to Scale High-Impact Tutoring](#)

Council of Chief State School Officers (March, 2023)

This report explores how states are using their ESSER state set-aside to scale high impact tutoring.

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5. In the News

[House GOP Mulls Putting ‘Woke’ Earmarks on Chopping Block](#)

Roll Call (February 27, 2023)

[The GOP’s Tortured Spin on DOJ and School Boards](#)

The Washington Post (March 2, 2023)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Webinar: Will ChatGPT Forever Change Education?

Subject: The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation will hold a virtual discussion on "Will ChatGPT Forever Change Education?"

Participants: Jeff Young, managing editor, EdSurge; Tony Wan, head of platform, Reach Capital; Deepak Sekar, co-founder and CEO, Prof Jim; and Torrey Trust, associate professor of learning technology, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Webinar: Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten

Subject: New America will hold a virtual discussion on "Promoting High-Quality Math and Science Learning in Kindergarten."

Participants: Cindy Hoisington, project director, Education Development Center; Doug Clements, professor, University of Denver; Chih-Ing Lim, senior technical assistance specialist, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Lauren Solarski, part-time faculty member, Loyola University.

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

Hearing: House Appropriations Labor-H Subcommittee Witness Day

Subject: The House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "Member Day."

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Contact: Register [here](#).

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7. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor: Consideration of nominations

House Floor:

H. Con. Res. 21 - Directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Syria

H.R. 140 - Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act

H.J. Res. 27 - Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'"

S. 619 - A bill to require the Director of National Intelligence to declassify information relating to the origin of COVID-19, and for other purposes

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8. Links for Up-to-Date Information on Hearings, Legislation, and Events

[U.S. House and Senate 2022 Schedule](#)

[U.S. Department of Education](#)

[U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions](#)

[U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor](#)

[U.S. Senate Budget Committee](#)

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9. About BPAG

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- leveraging our expertise and passion;
- strategizing intelligent solutions; and,
- Creating meaningful impact.

Our team includes long-term insiders in education policy from Pre-K through higher education, innovative thinkers and savvy strategists that provide a comprehensive array of customized client services. We have the knowledge, skills, and relationships that are necessary for successful advocacy at all levels. From grassroots to grass tops and everything in between, our broad-based legislative practice approaches every project with the same degree of determination and professionalism. BPAG provides expertise in a variety of services:

- Government Relations
- Research and Analysis
- Advocacy Training
- Association Management
- Strategic Communications
- Policy Events

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