



# Weekly Legislative Update

04.05.24

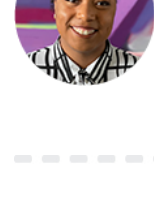
Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

One week after the first anniversary of the Covenant School shooting, Tennessee’s lawmakers advanced two bills to increase the presence of school resource officers and guns in school. [HB1664/SB1715](#), which allows local law enforcement agencies to place school resource officers at local education agencies without a memorandum of understanding with the local education agency passed the [House](#) and Senate chambers on Thursday. In a 7-1 vote, [SB1325](#) by Sen. Paul Bailey (R-Sparta), which allows a school faculty or staff member to possess and carry a concealed handgun on the grounds of their assigned school if they meet certain requirements, passed out of the [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) on Tuesday. After being scheduled for the House floor debate last April, the House companion to [SB1325](#), [HB1202](#) was held on the desk and no action was taken. [SB1325](#) is expected to be heard on Tuesday, April 9 at 1:30 PM CT during the Senate floor debate. To take action against [HB1202/SB1325](#), sign on to The Education Trust - Tennessee statement of opposition [here](#).

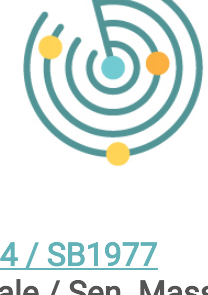
On Tuesday, the [Senate Finance Ways and Means Committee](#) postponed consideration on [SB503](#), the universal private school voucher proposal, to Tuesday April 9 at 8:30 AM CT. [HB1183](#), the House version of the universal school voucher proposal, is scheduled to be heard in the [House Finance, Ways and Means Subcommittee](#) on Wednesday, April 10 at 9:30 AM CT. To learn more about universal private school vouchers, please check out The Education Trust Tennessee’s [statement of opposition](#), the [voucher amendment tracker](#) and our voucher resource hub [here](#).

With debate on [HB1183/SB503](#) suspended this week, education advocates turned their attention to the [House Education Administration Committee](#). The committee considered a long calendar with a variety of issues ranging from accreditation of higher education institutions to code of conduct for student bodies. Two [Ten for Tennessee](#) legislative priorities, [HB1914](#) and [HB2184](#), advanced out of the [Education Administration committee](#) and will be heard in the [House Finance Ways and Means Subcommittee](#) on Tuesday, April 10. The House Education Administration committee also moved [HB2165](#), which requires teachers and administrations to notify the parent if a child seeks to be called a different name or use different pronouns than the sex written on their birth certificate, and [HB2784](#), which establishes deadlines to initiate and completion investigations related to “divisive concepts”. These pieces of legislation further the national movement championing laws that lead to [censorship](#) and [anti-LGBTQ discrimination](#). To take action on this legislation, check out the advocacy toolkits from the [Tennessee Coalition for Truth in Our Classrooms](#) and the [Tennessee Equality Project](#).

In partnership,



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



## On Our Radar

[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.

[HB2184 / SB1783](#)  
Rep. White / Sen. Lundberg

As introduced, reallocates 5 percent of the privilege tax collected from licensees that offer sports wagering in this state from the lottery for education account to a new Tennessee Promise completion grant special account created to assist the commission in awarding completion grants to certain Tennessee Promise scholarship students; makes the four-year pilot program established by the commission to award completion grants to certain Tennessee Promise scholarship students permanent.

[HB1183 / SB0503](#)  
Rep. Lamberth / Sen. Johnson

As introduced, extends from October to November, the time within which a public institution of higher education that receives funds from the distribution of credit cards to students or any percentage from the use of cards bearing the college or university name or logo must report the amount of such funds or percentage received as well as how the funds were expended during the previous fiscal year to the education committee of the senate and the education administration committee of the house of representatives.

[HB0785 / SB0750](#)  
Rep. White / Sen. Massey

As introduced, requires the department to create and implement a promising futures program to provide scholarships to children who are not school age to assist them in developing early language and literacy skills in a high-quality early care and learning program; redirects, from the lottery for education account to an account administered by the department to provide funding for the promising futures scholarship program, a certain percentage of the privilege tax collected from sports wagering licensees for certain fiscal years.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



## What’s Happening

**House Government Operations Committee**  
Monday, 4/8/24, 1:00pm  
House Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Floor Session**  
Monday, 4/8/24, 3:00pm  
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

**House Floor Session**  
Wednesday, 4/10/24, 9:00am  
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

**Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee**  
Wednesday, 4/10/24, 11:00am  
House Hearing Room III | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Education Administration Committee**  
Wednesday, 4/10/24, 2:30pm  
House Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Floor Session**  
Thursday, 4/11/24, , 9:00am  
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



## Noteworthy

**Article: Bill to let some teachers carry guns advances in Tennessee. Parents wouldn’t be notified**

Check out this article in Chalkbeat about legislation that would let some public school teachers carry handguns gained momentum as the GOP-controlled legislature quashed new attempts to tighten the state’s lax firearm laws following last year’s mass school shooting in Nashville.

[Read more](#)

**Event: "Can't Be Erased" An Event to Rally Against Book Bans and Curriculum Censorship**

Join [EdTrust](#) and renowned leaders in education and civil rights on Wednesday, April 17, 6 – 7:30 p.m. ET for an essential conversation on how to push back against efforts to suppress the teaching of honest history and diversity of identities and ideas.

[Register here](#)

**Resource: Navigating the Better FAFSA**

Every day that there is a delay or complication with the current FAFSA system increases the risk that students who want to attend and graduate from college won’t be able to do so. This is especially dire for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, who must weigh their college options based on financial cost. This [FAFSA hub](#) provides resources and materials that students, families, and advocates need to complete the Better FAFSA (2024-2025 cycle) and ensure equitable college-going opportunities for more students.

[Learn more](#)

**Resource: 5 Things Equity Advocates Should Know About ... The Better FAFSA Rollout in Tennessee**

The Better FAFSA was released on December 30, 2023, and students and families immediately encountered glitches. Today, only 39% of high school seniors in Tennessee have submitted a FAFSA form - down from 74% at this same time last year. As students and counselors race towards Decision Day, FAFSA complications threaten to exacerbate longstanding equity gaps in college-going. Check out our newest [#5Things](#) written by Higher Education Policy Fellow, [Jordan Mareno](#) that includes everything Tennessee students and families need to know about The Better FAFSA.

[Read more](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Legislative Advocacy Hub](#)

