



Weekly Legislative Update

02.23.24

Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

Reeling after Tennesseans witnessed [Neo-Nazis march through downtown Nashville](#), Tennessee's lawmakers reconvened at the state Capitol for this week's legislative business, with several, including Governor Lee, expressing concern over the march and its message.

In a major development this week, Governor Lee and [Senate Education Committee Chairman Jon Lundberg](#) each released an [amendment](#) to be added to [HB 2468/SB 2787](#), the vehicle for Governor Lee's universal private school voucher program. These amendments provide long awaited details for Governor Lee's universal private school vouchers program. It is expected that both amendments will be discussed during the [Senate Education Committee](#) meeting but the committee is not expected to take a vote on the bill this week. To watch the committee debate, I invite you to join The Education Trust-Tennessee on Wednesday, February 28 at 2:45 PM - 4 PM for for our virtual [Voucher Watch Party](#), an webinar where we will live stream the Senate Education Committee's discussion of [SB 2787](#). At the time of this writing, the House has yet to file an amendment for [HB 2468](#), however, it is anticipated that the House will use [HB1183/SB503](#) as the vehicle for their universal private school voucher proposal. To stay up to date on the movement of Governor Lee's universal private school voucher, please check out The Education Trust-Tennessee's suite of voucher resources [here](#).

On Tuesday, the [K-12 Subcommittee](#) passed [HB 2758](#) (Rep. Rebecca Alexander R), which prohibits the use of electronic devices in schools except for instructional use. The [House Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee](#) heard [HB 1632](#) (Rep. Gino Bulso R), which gives parents the right to sue public schools over the enforcement of the Age Appropriate Materials Act of 2022, and placed the bill behind the budget. [HB 1632](#) is still alive; however, the bill will not be considered by the subcommittee until the committee members have heard and passed Governor Lee's 2024-2025 budget.

[The Senate Education Committee](#) considered the budgets of three public universities and heard key legislation including [SB 1722](#) (Sen. Joey Hensley R), the Senate companion to [HB 1605](#) which bans certain flags in school. The committee passed the [amended](#) bill in a close (5-4) vote. The amendment narrows who has standing to file civil action against LEAs who violate this policy if the bill becomes law. The bill now waits to be calendared for the Senate floor debate.

As our public advocacy training series continues, I invite you to join The Education Trust-Tennessee and [The Sycamore Institute](#) for [Understanding Tennessee's Education Budget](#), a webinar to learn more about Governor Lee's 2024-2025 education budget, on Monday, February 26th at 2 PM - 3 PM CT / 3PM - 4PM ET.

In partnership,



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



On Our Radar

[HB2346 / SB2109](#)
Rep. Ragan / Sen. Lundberg

As introduced, creates a mechanism for the management and governance functions of a local governing board of trustees for a state university to be transferred and assumed by the commission in the event a state university board ceases to exist under the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law.

[HB2272 / SB2106](#)
Rep. Slater / Sen. Pody

As introduced, requires the state department of education to submit the U.S department of education's interpretations and directives on the implementation of department rules providing guidance to this state to the chairs of certain legislative committees; requires such information to be submitted to each member of the joint government operations rule review committee prior to each rule review meeting.

[HB1914 / SB1917](#)
Rep. Hale / Sen. Massey

As introduced, establishes the hunger-free campus grant program; provides grants to higher education institutions to address student hunger.

[HB1927 / SB1901](#)
Rep. Cepicky / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, authorizes LEAs and public charter schools to reimburse teachers for child care expenses paid by the teacher each month for the teacher's dependent child to receive child care services through certain child care programs certified by the department of education or child care agencies licensed by the department of human services; requires, subject to appropriation, this state to reimburse LEAs and public charter schools a portion of any such monthly reimbursement amount paid by the LEA or public charter school.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



What's Happening

House Higher Education Subcommittee

Monday, 2/26/24, 3:00pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Floor Session

Monday, 2/26/24, 4:00pm
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

House Education Instruction Committee

Tuesday, 2/27/24, 9:00am
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House K-12 Subcommittee

Tuesday, 2/26/24, 4:30pm
House Hearing Room II | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Education Administration Committee

Wednesday, 2/28/24, 1:30pm
House Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

Senate Education Committee

Wednesday, 2/28/24, 3:00pm
Senate Hearing Room I | [Committee Homepage](#)

House Floor Session

Thursday, Date, 9:00am
House Chamber | [House Homepage](#)

Senate Floor Session

Thursday, Date, 8:30am
Senate Chamber | [Senate Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



Noteworthy

Article: Tennessee State: Bill to vacate board stirs questions about underfunding, disparities

Check out [this article](#) in The Tennessean about the proposed bill ([SB1596/HB1739](#)) that would vacate the Tennessee State University board. The measure would still allow the historically Black university in Nashville to have an independent board for the next two years, but Gov. Bill Lee could opt to appoint all new members.

[Read more](#)

Article: Whether to test private school students is key difference in dueling voucher proposals in Tennessee

Check out this article in the Tennessee Lookout outlining the differences in the two voucher amendments that were filed this week.

[Read more](#)

Event: Making it Plain: The Key to Advancing Black Student Success in Tennessee

This Black History Month, we want to better understand how to advance Black student success in Tennessee with community-driven policy solutions. Join The Education Trust—Tennessee on Friday, March 1 from 1:00 pm - 2:00 PM CST for an important conversation to explore national and state trends related to Black student success, the important role for education advocates, and considerations for policymakers and leaders about how to ensure we are equipping Black students in Tennessee to succeed in school and beyond.

[Register here](#)

Event: TECA ConnectED: Williamson County

Register to join [TECA](#) and [One WillCo](#) on Thursday, February 29 from 5:30 - 9 PM CST for a casual evening of networking, educator support, and food & beverages. Educators who live and/or work in Williamson County are encouraged to attend. Educators outside of Williamson County are also welcome. There will be a presentation at 6:30 PM. Come as your schedule allows and stay for as long as you'd like.

[Register here](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Legislative Advocacy Hub](#)

