



# Weekly Legislative Update

3.17.23

Dear {{FirstName or 'Supporter'}},

Third and fourth grade retention was top of mind for education advocates at Cordell Hall this week. Last Tuesday, [Chairman Kirk Haston](#) (R - Lobelville) facilitated [discussions](#) with members of the House K-12 Education Subcommittee on [16 retention-related bills](#). Across multiple calendars, 12 bills were taken off notice, four bills were delayed to K-12 Subcommittee's meeting on 3/21/23, one bill failed for a lack of second, and one bill was delayed to summer study.

However, [Chairman Mark White](#) (R - Memphis) successfully passed [HB0437](#) as [amended](#). This proposed legislation would put fewer third graders at risk of being held back this year by revising retention decisions from solely the annual TN Comprehensive Assessment Program test to also considering results from a second state-approved benchmark test if students score in at least the 50th percentile. Additionally, the bill directs the TN State Board of Education to create rules for appealing retention for students who score "approaching proficiency" and requires any public school student held back in kindergarten through second grade to engage in tutoring, which can be online or in person, their following school year. The House K-12 Subcommittee advanced HB0437 on a voice vote, and it is scheduled to be heard next Wednesday by the House Education Administration Committee. The companion bill, [SB0300](#) as [amended](#), co-sponsored by [Chairman Jon Lundberg](#) (R - Bristol) advanced through the Senate Education Committee with 8-0-1 vote, with [Senate Minority Leader Raumesh Akbari](#) (D - Memphis) abstaining with a PNV vote (present, not voting).

Looking ahead, [a retention bill impacting Tennessee's first graders](#) was deferred in the House K-12 Subcommittee, and will also be heard next week in the Senate Education Committee. We encourage you to continue reviewing Ed Trust TN's [updated retention legislation tracker](#) and [Cost of Retention memo](#) as retention bills continue to move through the legislature.

Other notable bills advanced this past week in the Senate Education Committee including [SB0750](#) as [amended](#), brought forward by Senator Becky Massey (R - Knoxville). This legislation would provide funding for a "Promising Futures" Scholarship Fund to support children through age five to attend a high-quality early care and learning program while simultaneously addressing our state's urgent [child care crisis](#). SB0750 advanced with a 7-2 vote, with [Chairman Jon Lundberg](#) (R - Bristol) and [Senator Mark Pody](#) (R - Lebanon) voting no. Further, a higher education-related bill from Senator Massey, [SB0364](#), advanced with a 9-0 vote, which as [amended](#) allows high school graduates who are employed full-time to be eligible for [Tennessee Promise](#) if they apply within 16 months of graduation.

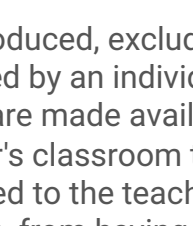
In other concerning news impacting children, House Speaker Cameron Sexton [proposed a task force](#) to look into rejecting federal education funds, and it was announced that an amendment was added to the administration bill [HB0330/SB0282](#) that would [completely delete](#) the [Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth](#) from state statute. If passed, this would shut down the 35-year-old independent agency that is our only state entity purposely designed to work across all child-serving departments. HB0330 will be heard this Tuesday by the House Children & Family Affairs Subcommittee and SB0282 will be presented to the Senate Health and Welfare Committee this Wednesday. [Learn how to take action here!](#)

Next week, many committees have final calendars posted, including the [House Higher Education Subcommittee](#) and the [K-12 Education Subcommittee](#). To see all of the education-related bills Ed Trust is actively tracking and other important information on movement at the Tennessee General Assembly, please be sure to check out the "On Our Radar" section, our updated bill tracker, and the committee calendars each linked below.

In partnership,



**Reggie Nash**  
External Relations Manager for Tennessee



## On Our Radar

### [HB1040 / SB1078](#)

Rep. Jernigan / Sen. Yarbro

As introduced, excludes materials obtained by an individual teacher, which are made available in the teacher's classroom to students assigned to the teacher's class or classes, from having to be identified in a list posted on the school's website, and from being subject to the development, review, and feedback process established by the school's local board of education or public charter school governing body for materials in the school's library collection.

### [HB1411 / SB1117](#)

Rep. Fritts / Sen. Bowling

As introduced, requires an LEA to obtain a student's parent's or legal guardian's consent to allow the student to participate in instruction, an activity, evaluation, assessment, survey, or analysis offered by the student's LEA.

### [HB0127 / SB0141](#)

Rep. Martin / Sen. Watson

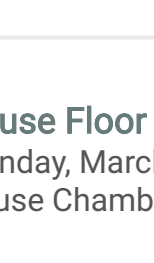
As introduced, allows a school resource officer, school security officer, or other law enforcement officer who is trained and certified for completing a behavior intervention training program to use a mechanical restraint on a student receiving special education services in an emergency situation.

### [HB1377 / SB1141](#)

Rep. Ragan / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, creates a process by which certain individuals may file a complaint with an LEA or public charter school for the LEA's or public charter school's including or promoting certain prohibited concepts as part of a course of instruction, in a curriculum or instructional program, or by allowing teachers or other employees to use supplemental materials that include or promote certain prohibited concepts.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



## What's Happening

### House Higher Education Subcommittee - Final Calendar

Monday, March 20th, 3:00pm CT  
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Floor Session

Monday, March 20th, 4:00pm CT  
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

### House Floor Session

Monday, March 20th, 5:00pm CT  
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

### House Transportation Committee

Tuesday, March 21st, 8:00am CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Education Instruction Committee

Tuesday, March 21st, 9:00am CT  
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Criminal Justice Subcommittee - Final Calendar

Tuesday, March 21st, 12:00pm CT  
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, March 21st, 1:00pm CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Commerce and Labor Committee

Tuesday, March 21st, 3:00pm CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Civil Justice Subcommittee

Tuesday, March 21st, 1:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room III](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Health Subcommittee

Tuesday, March 21st, 1:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room IV](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Finance Ways & Means Committee

Tuesday, March 21st, 3:00pm CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House K - 12 Subcommittee - Final Calendar

Tuesday, March 21st, 4:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room II](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Government Operations Committee

Wednesday, March 22nd, 8:30am CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Finance Ways & Means Subcommittee

Wednesday, March 22nd, 10:30am CT  
[House Hearing Room III](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House State Government Committee

Wednesday, March 22nd, 10:30am CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### House Education Administration Committee

Wednesday, March 22nd, 1:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Health and Welfare Committee

Wednesday, March 22nd, 3:00pm CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

### Senate Floor Session

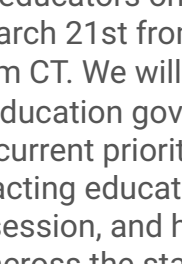
Thursday, March 23rd, 8:30am CT  
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

### House Floor Session

Thursday, March 23rd, 9:00am CT  
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



## Noteworthy

### Event: Tennessee Policy & Advocacy Training for Educators

Join Ed Trust TN for an [advocacy training](#) for educators on Tuesday, March 21st from 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm CT. We will review important education governance structures, current priority policy issues impacting educators this legislative session, and hear from educators across the state about how they have engaged in advocacy from the classroom.

[Register here](#)

### Article: Chalkbeat TN: Tennessee House speaker proposes task force to look into rejecting federal education funds

Check out [this article](#) from Chalkbeat TN to learn more about House Speaker Cameron Sexton's proposal to create a task force to study the feasibility of Tennessee rejecting \$1.8 billion in federal funds. The full proposal is outlined in this amended [fiscal note](#) to [HB1249/SB1507](#).

[Read more](#)

### Resource: 5 Things for Advocates to Know About Chronic Absenteeism

8 million students were chronically absent before the pandemic closed, and the pandemic has led to alarming increases in chronic absence. In [this brief](#), Ed Trust shares 5 things that advocates should know about how leaders can address chronic absence.

[Read more](#)

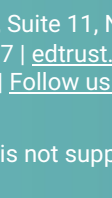
### Article: Governor's Office pushes to dissolve Commission on Children and Youth amid foster care woes

Check out [this article](#) from Tennessee Lookout to learn more about Governor Lee's office new proposal to dissolve the independent Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth. The full proposal is outlined in [SB0282/HB0330](#).

[Read more](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Check Out Our Policy Agenda](#)



The Education Trust

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