



# Weekly Legislative Update

4.7.23

Dear {{FirstName or 'Supporter'}},

Pertinent education policy movement and legislative business was unfortunately clouded this week as all eyes were watching Tennessee on the international stage yesterday. Three Democratic lawmakers, including two with previous education committee assignments before they were stripped – Rep. Gloria Johnson of Knoxville (House Education Instruction), Rep. Justin Jones of Nashville (House Education Administration), and Rep. Justin Pearson of Memphis – each faced expulsion resolutions from the Republican-controlled chamber due to gun reform protests from the well of the House floor on March 30. Rep. Jones and Rep. Pearson, the two youngest members of the TN Black Caucus of State Legislators, were each expelled on 72 - 25 and 69 - 26 votes respectively. Rep. Johnson's expulsion resolution failed 65 - 30, falling one vote short of the necessary two-thirds required for passage. With at least several weeks remaining in the 2023 legislative session with outstanding bill debates and state budget deliberations, advocates and other capitol watchers will be closely following the political dynamics and implications of the past several weeks' events on the flow of legislation.

Earlier in the week, education committees moved closer to their final closure. In the upper chamber, the Senate Education Committee wrapped up its business for the year, with passage of the Governor's school safety and threat assessment bill, [SB274](#). As amended, the bill requires exterior locked doors, bullet-resistance on any exterior glass panels, safety drills and safety plans, each district to establish threat assessment teams, training for school-based security guards and officers, and other elements, with some of these requirements only applying to new builds and new remodels on school campuses. To watch the Governor's office testimony on the bill and full committee discussion on its final bill, [click here](#). Additionally, [SB1427](#), a bill as amended that would vacate and significantly restructure the Board of Trustees for Tennessee State University and place it under a corrective action plan moved forward in the Senate Government Operations Committee on a 7-2 party line vote, with Democratic lawmakers Oliver of Nashville and Kyle of Memphis opposing. It will now move forward to the Calendar Committee for scheduling for full floor consideration.

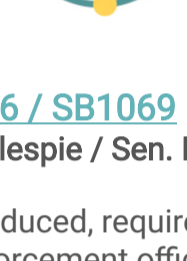
In the House, the Education Administration Committee worked within two meetings on Wednesday to try to close out its final calendar for the year, discussing the majority of 35 bills on its docket. There was a lengthy discussion on [HB433](#), which represents an expansion of Tennessee's education savings account program to include both Hamilton and Knox Co. districts. The bill, which is opposed by Ed Trust TN, featured testimony in favor of its passage from the American Federation for Children. However, due to standing bipartisan questions about aspects of the bill's potential implementation and program elements if expanded, the bill was rolled to next week to allow testimony from staff at the Department of Education (TDOE). Additionally, [HB1202](#), which would permit educators and school staff to carry concealed handguns on school grounds, passed on a 12-6-1 roll call vote, with Republican Chairman Mark White of Memphis, Rep. Charlie Baum of Murfreesboro, and Rep. John Gillespie of Memphis joining Democratic Reps. Love (Nashville), McKenzie (Knoxville), and Parkinson (Memphis) in opposition. Republican Rep. Kirk Haston of Lobelville, the House K-12 Subcommittee Chairman, was marked as present, not voting. Ed Trust TN and over 1,000 concerned Tennesseans sent a [sign-on letter](#) to the full committee and bill sponsor expressing opposition to the school hardening measure following The Covenant School tragedy. [HB158](#), another bill Ed Trust TN opposes which would prohibit any LEA from requiring implicit bias training, passed out of the committee to advance to House Finance. However, several bills heavily supported by Ed Trust, including legislation to expand the Minority Teaching Fellowship ([HB276](#)), directing TDOE to study early high school interventions and 9th grade success indicators ([HB1295](#)), and that would ban colleges and universities from inquiring about applicants' criminal history ([HB369](#)) all successfully advanced out of full committee.

Next week, the House Education Administration Committee will continue its review and debate on its [final calendar of eight bills](#), while education advocates continue to track legislation through the finance committees in both chambers and/or on to full floor consideration. 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**  
Assistant Director, External Relations for Tennessee



## On Our Radar

[HB0826 / SB1069](#)  
Rep. Gillespie / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, requires the chief law enforcement officer of each law enforcement agency with law enforcement jurisdiction for a school that has utilized armed school security officers, following the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year, to submit a report to the governor, the chair of the education administration committee of the house of representatives, the chair of the senate, and the commissioner of education on or before September 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, that details any school security deficiencies and that provides recommendations for security improvements for each such school.

[HB0306 / SB1237](#)  
Rep. Bulso / Sen. Hensley

As introduced, authorizes a private school to create a policy to regulate a student's participation in the school's athletic activities or events based upon a student's biological sex.

[HB0727 / SB1443](#)  
Rep. Fritts / Sen. Roberts

As introduced, requires a student's parent or legal guardian, or the student if the student has reached the age of majority, to voluntarily signed consent to the student's LEA before the student may receive instruction through the LEA's family life curriculum, participate in a survey, analysis, or evaluation, or receive health services provided through a coordinated school health program.

[HB1295 / SB0884](#)  
Rep. Camper / Sen. Akbari

As introduced, requires the commissioner of education to report on the academic performance of historically underserved student groups to the education committee of the senate and the education administration and education instruction committees of the house of representatives by January 31 of each year.

[Review Our Bill Tracker](#)



## What's Happening

**House Government Operations Committee**  
Monday, April 10th, 1:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**Senate Floor Session**  
Monday, April 10th, 4:00pm CT  
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

**House Floor Session**  
Monday, April 10th, 5:00pm CT  
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

**Senate Finance Ways & Means Committee**  
Tuesday, April 11th, 8:30am & 1:30pm CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Local Government Committee**  
Tuesday, April 11th, 1:30am CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee**  
Tuesday, April 11th, 3:00pm CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**Senate Floor Session**  
Wednesday, April 12th, 8:30am CT  
[Senate Chamber](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

**House Finance, Ways, and Means Subcommittee**  
Wednesday, April 12th, 10:30am CT  
[House Hearing Room III](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**House Education Administration Committee**  
Wednesday, April 12th, 1:30pm CT  
[House Hearing Room I](#) | [Committee Homepage](#)

**Senate Floor Session**  
Thursday, April 13th, 8:30am CT  
[Senate Hearing Room I](#) | [Senate Homepage](#)

**House Floor Session**  
Thursday, April 13th, 9:00am CT  
[House Chamber](#) | [House Homepage](#)

[House Committee Calendars](#)

[Senate Committee Calendars](#)



## Noteworthy

**Article: Newsweek: Tennessee Republicans Accused of Racism After Expelling Two Black Lawmakers**

Check out [this article](#) from Newsweek about the expulsion of two Black Democrats from the Tennessee House of Representatives for participating in a gun control protest in the wake of the tragic Nashville school shooting. Many point out the racism that led to their expulsion after the Representative Gloria Johnson survived her expulsion resolution. [Read more.](#)

**Article: The Tennessean: Tennessee House passes bill to offer new school safety measures**

Check out [this article](#) from the Tennessean about the new school safety bill, [HB322](#), which passed in the House with bipartisan support. The only 4 opposing representatives were Reps. Justin Jones, Gloria Johnson, Justin Pearson, and Torrey Harris. [Read more.](#)

**Article: Chalkbeat TN: Tennessee lawmakers advance bill to let teachers carry firearms without notifying parents**

Check out [this article](#) from Chalkbeat TN about [HB1202/SB1325](#) which would allow teachers to carry firearms. This bill passed in the House Education Administration Committee in a 12-6 vote. The Senate voted to defer this bill, along with other gun-related legislation, until the second year of the legislative session in 2024. The article features a [letter of opposition](#) from The Education Trust -- Tennessee and over 1300 other Tennesseans who oppose the bill. [Read more.](#)

**Article: The Tennessean: How Tennessee lawmakers voted in Thursday's House expulsion debate**

Check out [this article](#) from the Tennessean breaking down the votes for each expulsion decision. [Read more.](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Check Out Our Policy Agenda](#)



The Education Trust

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