



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](#)**
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 - **[CISA Creates Voluntary Ed Tech Pledge to Boost K-12 Cybersecurity](#)**
K-12 Dive (September 6, 2023)
2. **[Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up](#)**
 - **[Impact on State School Board Associations](#)**
3. **[In Brief – Last Week in Washington](#)**
 - **[ED Launches New Community to Advance Kindergarten Learning](#)**: On Thursday, September 7, the Department of Education (ED) launched the Kindergarten Sturdy Bridge Learning Community, “a multi-state effort to make kindergarten a transformational experience at the start of each student’s formal education journey.”
 - **[Application for New FY 23 Grant to Strengthen CTE Now Available](#)**: The Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has posted a notice inviting applications for new FY 2023 awards from the Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant Program for their Career-Connected High Schools program.
4. **[New Publications](#)**

- **K-12 Education is Vital to Success of Biden Administration’s Investment**

Agenda

Center for American Progress (August, 2023)

Last year, the President signed three bills into law containing education related funding- the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act. This issue brief outlines why state and local governments must coordinate with K-12 schools in order for the implementation of this historic legislation to be as effective and equitable as possible. These schools can serve as valuable partners in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs; career and technical education; and dual-enrollment programs that provide training for the emerging and growing industries funded by these three laws.

5. **In the News**

- **Secretary Miguel Cardona Announces “Back to School Bus Tour 2023: Raise the Bar”**

US Department of Education (August 24, 2023)

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

- **Building a Sturdy Bridge to Kindergarten**: The Hunt Institute will hold a webinar on how kindergarten serves as an essential bridge between preschool and K-12 education.
September 11 at 2pm ET
- **State Policy to Support Early Literacy Success**: The National Association of State Boards of Education will hold a webinar on advancing state policy to support early literacy success for young children.
September 11 at 2:30pm ET
- **Senate Judiciary Committee on Book Bans**: The Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on “Book Bans: Examining How Censorship Limits Liberty and Literature.”
September 12 at 10am ET
- **Be Well: Centering Mental Health in Schools**: In the webinar hosted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), a panel of school leaders, students, federal government officials, and experts will discuss the current state of student and educator mental health and policies we can collectively advocate for to improve the tools available to K-12 schools.
September 13 at 4pm ET

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

- **Senate floor**
 - **Consideration of nominations**
 - **H.R.4366** – an act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024
- **House Floor**
 - **H.R. 4365** – Making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes

- [H.R. 1435](#) – Preserving Choice in Vehicle Purchases Act

8. [Important U.S. House and Senate Links](#)

9. [About BPAG](#)

1. **COSSBA Policy Priorities**

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY AND E-RATE

CISA CREATES VOLUNTARY ED TECH PLEDGE TO BOOST K-12 CYBERSECURITY

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) created a voluntary pledge for K-12 Ed Tech software providers to demonstrate commitment to creating better built-in security for their products. Overall, CISA’s pledge asks companies to “take ownership of security outcomes,” “embrace radical transparency and accountability,” and “lead from the top.” However, the agency will not enforce the voluntary pledge nor follow up on a company’s adherence to these commitments. Six prominent Ed Tech companies have already signed the pledge, including PowerSchool, ClassLink, Clever, Global Grid for Learning, Instructure and D2L, according to CISA. [Read more](#).

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2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up**

Last week, the Senate returned to Washington, DC, after the annual August recess; their House peers will return this week. As expected, the largest concern for returning lawmakers is how to address FY 2024 spending before the end of FY 2023—which is only weeks away.

Lawmakers were working on the twelve FY 2024 spending bills right up until they left town. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed all twelve of its bills with bipartisan support. The House has not matched that effort. The lower chamber has only approved one FY 2024 spending bill on the floor—the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs package—and only a handful have won approval from the full committee. Not one House bill has garnered a vote from a single House Democrat.

During the recess, Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) met via teleconference with House Republicans several times to share his desire to pass a continuing resolution (CR) that would keep the federal government running through December to provide the time needed to resolve FY 2024 spending. That desire was met with a number of “requirements” from members of the House Freedom Caucus. In response, the Speaker is reportedly considering attaching billions of dollars in disaster relief to a CR, while leaving out Ukraine aid. That proposal would be at odds with what House Democrats (and maybe some House Republicans), the Senate and the White House would like to see. (The Administration has a long [list](#) of more than \$40 billion it wants for aid to Ukraine, disasters, and other programs that it feels are underfunded.)

In the meantime, both chambers will be trying to make some progress on spending bills. Senate leadership hopes to see a package of three bills on the floor this week. That “mini-bus” could include the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs and Agriculture bills – the Senate Appropriations Committee approved both unanimously – and the State-Foreign Operations bill. The Senate might then consider a second package of FY 2024 bills the week of September 18.

The House may consider its defense appropriations bill this week, and the House Rules Committee posted notices that the Homeland Security could also be considered this week, followed by the State-Foreign Operations bill next week. It is also possible that all of these plans could change.

The next few weeks will continue with efforts to keep the government open and complete FY 2024 spending. There could be a government shutdown starting on October 1. In fact, some are saying that scenario is quite likely. In the meantime, lawmakers who would prefer to avoid that result will continue to try to balance the many interests, demands and politics involved.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

The Senate Appropriations Committee passed its bipartisan Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill. The Senate bill is much preferred by COSSBA and other education advocates to the House Subcommittee passed bill, which has not been considered by the full House Appropriations Committee. Some Republican members of the full committee are reportedly uncomfortable voting for a proposal that would cut Department of Education spending by \$22.1 billion, and gut Title I and Title II, among other cuts and policy proposals. It is likely that any funding for education will be resolved in an end of year omnibus bill and not resolved by moving either of these individual bills.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

ED LAUNCHES NEW COMMUNITY TO ADVANCE KINDERGARTEN LEARNING

On Thursday, September 7, the Department of Education (ED) [launched](#) the Kindergarten Sturdy Bridge Learning Community, “a multi-state effort to make kindergarten a transformational experience at the start of each student’s formal education journey,” the press release states. ED will invite state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to participate in a “community of practice” where they can learn from their peers, receive technical assistance, and share best practices to enhance the kindergarten experience including the transitions into kindergarten and 1st grade. “Getting kindergarten right has to be top of mind for all of us, because what happens there sets the stage for how a child learns and develops well into their elementary years and beyond,” said Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “Ensuring that kindergarten is a sturdy bridge between the early years and early grades is central to our efforts both to Raise the Bar for academic excellence and to provide all students with a more equitable foundation for educational success.” This announcement comes as Secretary Cardona is embarking on his “Back to School Bus Tour 2023: Raise the Bar” featuring stops in Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Additional efforts by the Biden-Harris Administration to enhance early learning are highlighted [here](#). This includes the first-ever preschool incentive demonstration program the ED established to expand access to high-quality preschool in school and community-based settings for children eligible to attend Title I schools.

APPLICATION FOR NEW FY 23 GRANT TO STRENGTHEN CTE NOW AVAILABLE

The Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has [posted a notice](#) inviting applications for new FY 2023 awards from the Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant Program for their Career-Connected High Schools program. About \$24

million is available for these competitive grants from funding allocated to the Perkins Act's National Programs line item in the FY 2023 appropriations bill. The new grant program seeks to identify, promote and implement innovative strategies to strengthen and modernize CTE programs. Its funding will be awarded to projects that demonstrate efforts to increase students' access to career-connected high schools, which the Education Department defines as those that offer systematic postsecondary counseling and career advising, dual or concurrent enrollment, work-based learning, and programs that offer opportunities to earn an industry-recognized credential. 25 percent of available grant funding will be set aside for rural communities. The notice also lists competitive preferences, including applications submitted as a partnership and applications focused on serving students from families with low incomes. The deadline to apply is October 13, 2023.

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4. New Publications

K-12 Education is Vital to Success of Biden Administration's Investment Agenda

Center for American Progress (August, 2023)

Last year, the President signed three bills into law containing education related funding- the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act. This issue brief outlines why state and local governments must coordinate with K-12 schools in order for the implementation of this historic legislation to be as effective and equitable as possible. These schools can serve as valuable partners in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs; career and technical education; and dual-enrollment programs that provide training for the emerging and growing industries funded by these three laws.

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5. In the News

Secretary Miguel Cardona Announces "Back to School Bus Tour 2023: Raise the Bar"

US Department of Education (August 24, 2023)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

Weekly Calendar

Monday, September 11, 2023

Webinar: Building a Sturdy Bridge to Kindergarten

Subject: The Hunt Institute will hold a webinar on how kindergarten serves as an essential bridge between preschool and K-12 education.

Time: 2:00 p.m. ET

Registration: Register [here](#).

Webinar: State Policy to support Early Literacy Success

Subject: The National Association of State Boards of Education will hold a webinar on advancing state policy to support early literacy success for young children.

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.ET

Registration: Register [here](#).

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Hearing: Senate Judiciary Committee on Book Bans

Subject: The Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on "Book Bans: Examining How Censorship Limits Liberty and Literature."

Witnesses: Max Eden, research fellow, American Enterprise Institute; Alexi Giannoulias, Illinois Secretary of State; Cameron Samuels, co-founder, Students Engaged in Advancing Texas; Nicole Neily, president, Parents Defending Education; and Emily Knox, associate professor, University of Illinois.

Time: 10:00 a.m. ET

Registration: Live stream available [here](#).

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Webinar: Be Well: Centering Mental Health in Schools

Subject: In a webinar hosted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), a panel of school leaders, students, federal government officials, and experts will discuss the current state of student and educator mental health and policies we can collectively advocate for to improve the tools available to K-12 schools.

Participants: Lindsay Burton, Associate Director, School Safety Task Force, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Melissa Schlinger, Vice President of Innovations and Partnerships, CASEL; Kim Karr, Executive Director, Digital4Good; Mary Pat Cumming, Principal, The FAIR School for Arts - Minneapolis, Minnesota; Tracy Wilson, Principal, Grand Haven High School - Grand Haven, Michigan; Robyn Taylor, Principal, Hutchison Career Center - Fairbanks, Alaska; Roderick Sheppard, Principal, Florence High School - Florence, Alabama; Mohammed Shedeed, Former Co-Facilitator, NASSP Student Mental Health Network, freshman at University of Pittsburgh

Time/Location: 4:00 p.m. ET

Registration: Register [here](#).

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6. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor:

- Consideration of nominations
- [H.R.4366](#) – an act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024

House Floor:

- [H.R. 4365](#) – Making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes
- [H.R. 1435](#) – Preserving Choice in Vehicle Purchases Act

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

[U.S. House and Senate 2023 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](#)

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

[Congressional Budget Office](#)

[Federal legislative information](#)

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8. 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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