



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations
Weekly Education Report
LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON

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Jared Solomon, Editor

jsolomon@bosepublicaffairs.com

Della Cronin, Editor

dcronin@bosepublicaffairs.com

Bob Moran, Editor

rmoran@bosepublicaffairs.com

Sarah Lamson, Deputy Editor

slamson@bosepublicaffairs.com

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**
 - **Broadband Connectivity and E-Rate**
 - **Congress Stalls as Critical Affordable Connectivity Program Runs out of Money**: The FCC will stop accepting new applications after February 7 in anticipation of the program running out of money by April. Without congressional action, one in six households could lose broadband access, FCC spokesperson Paloma Perez said.
Punchbowl News (January 26, 2024)
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
 - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
 - **ED Releases 2024 National Education Technology Plan**: The Department of Education (ED) on Monday released the 2024 National Educational Technology Plan (NETP): A Call to Action for Closing the Digital Access, Design and Use Divides.
 - **FutureED, Panorama Discuss Strategies to Support Early Literacy**: On Monday, FutureED held a webinar titled, “Building Early Literacy Programs,” where district leaders discussed the importance early literacy plays in a child’s life and emphasized its correlation with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life.

- **Learning Policy Institute Hosts Event on Effective School Leadership:** On Tuesday, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) and EdPrepLab hosted a webinar on preparing and developing effective school leaders for school transformation. The panel examined valuable policy efforts that are proven to help increase access to high-quality, comprehensive school leader preparation and development programs.
- **Policy Experts, Researchers Examine Measures of Youth Well-Being:** On Thursday, the Urban Institute hosted a webinar titled, “Expanding How We Understand Youth Well-Being,” that highlighted eight distinct areas, or “domains,” of youth well-being and best practices for measuring them.

4. **New Publications**

- **Scaling Up High-Dosage Tutoring is Crucial to Students’ Academic Success**
Center for American Progress (January, 2024)
This new report emphasizes that as states, districts, and the federal government begin to implement tutoring initiatives to address learning loss, it is important that they consider the type of tutoring being offered, as not all forms of tutoring reap the same benefits, and districts may need help in determining how to select and implement the best programs.
- **Predicted Academic Performance: A New Approach to Identifying At-Risk Students in Public Schools**
Brookings (January, 2024)
The availability of modern education data systems has not translated into meaningful improvements in how consequential state policies use data to identify students in need of additional resources and supports. This report shows that Predicted Academic Performance (PAP) is more effective than common alternatives at identifying students who are at risk of poor academic performance and can be used to target resources toward these students more effectively than alternative risk indicators.
- **Cybersecure 2024: Exploring the Intersection of People, Partnerships, and Technology in K-12 Cybersecurity**
Clever (January, 2024)
Clever’s 2nd annual Cybersecure Report equips decision-makers accountable for student data with the latest trends in K-12 cybersecurity synthesized from intelligence gathered from over 800 district technology leaders. The report contains insight that can aid school security planning for 2024 and beyond.

5. **In the News**

- **US Department of Education Issues Resource for School Administrators on Importance of Safe Firearm Storage**
United States Department of Education (January 25, 2024)
- **CMS Announces \$50 Million in Grants to Deliver Critical School-Based Health Service to Children**
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (January 24, 2023)
- **Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$25M in Grant Awards to Advance Career Connected High Schools**
United States Department of Education (January 24, 2024)

- **NCES Data Sheds Light on Post-Pandemic Shifts for SROs, Mental Health Resources**
K-12 Dive (January 24, 2024)
 - **2 Final Title IX Regulations Will Likely Be Delayed - Again**
Higher Ed Dive (January 19, 2024)
6. **Weekly Calendar - What's coming up this week?**
 - **Hearing: House Oversight Subcommittee on Oversight of K-12 Public Education**: The House Oversight and Accountability Health Care and Financial Services Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "America's Report Card: Oversight of K-12 Public Education."
Tuesday at 2pm ET
 7. **Future Hearings & Events**
 - **Benefits of the District of Columbia's Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund for Workforce Well-Being and Retention**: The Urban Institute will hold a webinar titled, "Benefits of the District of Columbia's Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund for Workforce Well-Being and Retention."
February 7 at 1pm ET
 8. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**
 - **Senate floor**: Consideration of Nominations
 - **House floor: H.R. 7024** – Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024, as amended
 9. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**
 10. **About BPAG**

1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY AND E-RATE

CONGRES STALLS AS CRITICAL AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM RUNS OUT OF MONEY

The FCC **will stop accepting** new applications after February 7 in anticipation of the program running out of money by April. Without congressional action, one in six households could lose broadband access, FCC spokesperson Paloma Perez said. Households enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program began receiving notices this week from their providers about the impending impact on their internet bills. The \$14 billion program — included in the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* in 2021 — is helping 23 million households, according to the FCC. Read more [here](#).

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

With the House out last week, there wasn't much public progress on the FY 2024 appropriations process. It has been reported that Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) and House Appropriations Chair Kay Granger (R-TX) have found it difficult to determine

allocations for each spending subcommittee in the wake of a broader agreement on overall spending. Theories abound as to the challenges. Chair Granger isn't as accommodating to member-driven project spending (aka earmarks) as her Senate colleague. That makes for difficult math. The Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee has millions of dollars of funding for earmarks for education and other programs. The bill the House spending subcommittee approved, but was never considered by the full committee or the House, doesn't have any earmarks. The same is true for other bills the two appropriations leaders must negotiate.

As of Friday, Appropriations Subcommittee leaders still don't know how much money they have to allocate for programs for FY 2024—the fiscal year that began on October 1, 2023. That means their staff still don't have the guidance they need to develop spending bills that accommodate federal programs and earmarks. Controversial policy riders are another complicated matter to navigate.

There is an assumption that FY 2024 spending will ultimately be resolved via the passage of two or more spending packages that include multiple bills. That resolution would avoid the across the board cuts required by the *Fiscal Responsibility Act* if a full-year continuing resolution (CR) were passed. Regardless, January is almost over. February is a short month. March will be here soon, and it seems reasonable to ask Congress to pass spending bills five months into the current fiscal year by the time the latest CR expires.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

As explained previously, education advocates are resolved to an education funding bill in which level spending for any particular program will be considered a “win,” but continue to press their case with lawmakers to guard against any increases at other agencies in the massive Labor, Health and Human Services and Education package that would require offsetting cuts to education programs.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

ED RELEASES 2024 NATIONAL EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN

The Department of Education (ED) on Monday released the 2024 National Educational Technology Plan (NETP): A Call to Action for Closing the Digital Access, Design and Use Divides. While previous NETPs have largely surveyed the state of education technology, the ED's 2024 NETP points to three key factors, or “divides,” that limit impactful education technology usage to support teaching and learning. Those divides include, 1) The Digital Use Divide, addressing opportunities to improve how students use technology to enhance their learning; 2) The Digital Design Divide, addressing opportunities for educators to expand their professional learning and build the capacities necessary to design learning experiences enabled by technology; and 3) The Digital Access Divide, addressing opportunities for students and educators to gain equitable access to educational technology. In a statement, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona celebrated the release, saying, “As we work to ‘Raise the Bar’ in education, it's essential we focus on empowering teachers to become designers of active learning, using technology in effective ways to engage and inspire students. The 2024 National Educational Technology Plan is a forward-thinking approach to reframing and realizing the potential of educational technology to enhance the instructional core, reduce achievement gaps,

and improve student learning in our schools.” Complementing the 2024 NETP, the ED also released guidance that aims to increase understanding of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act’s* requirements regarding assistive technology devices and services for children with disabilities, in addition to a collection of federal resources to support students’ digital health, safety, and citizenship.

FUTURE ED, PANORAMA DISCUSS STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT EARLY LITERACY

On Monday, FutureED held a webinar titled, “Building Early Literacy Programs.” The event was spearheaded by Panorama Education Advisor Janice Silver and featured a panel of educators from Racine Unified School District (RUSD) - Melissa Damaschke, assistant principal of Knapp Elementary; Richard Wytonick, principal of Knapp Elementary; and Janelle Decker, acting chief academic officer of RUSD. The district leaders discussed the importance early literacy plays in a child’s life and emphasized its correlation with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life. Within the span of just a few years, RUSD experienced a transformative shift in proficiency rates from 8-12 percent to 30-45 percent across grade levels. Decker credited these results to the strategic plan RUSD developed during the Covid-19 pandemic coupled with the adoption of early literacy legislation at the state level. The district’s strategic plan took on a preventative approach and focused resources on lower grade levels. It included collaboration with the national collective impact agency StriveTogether and adoption of the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model. The district also developed a “Must Do/May Do” guide for teachers to prioritize essential tasks within the literacy curriculum, in addition to engaging key stakeholders, including parents, through a portal called Raising Readers - offering support and resources for at-home learning. Decker highlighted the importance of being data-driven, pointing to specific curriculum measures such as letter sound and oral reading fluency assessments and utilizing effective tools to track progress. Damaschke added that preparing educators is a key component of a successful early literacy program. She argued that understanding the science of reading and how the brain works are foundational skills that can help teachers better support their students. A recording of the webinar is here.

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE HOSTS EVENT ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

On Tuesday, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) and EdPrepLab hosted a webinar on preparing and developing effective school leaders for school transformation. The webinar, part of EdPrepLab’s Fourth Annual Policy Summit, featured remarks provided by LPI’s CEO Linda Darling-Hammond and Principal Research Manager Marjorie Wechsler. A panel discussion followed, featuring Will Jordan, research officer at The Wallace Foundation; Danny Carlson, chief of staff for the Education Department’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education; Aman Dhanda, chief engagement officer at the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP); and Rebecca Cheung, assistant dean for the University of California. The panel examined effective policy efforts that are proven to help increase access to high-quality, comprehensive school leader preparation and development programs. Wechsler and Darling-Hammond presented research on how effectively preparing principals improves student outcomes and teacher retention. Wechsler then outlined best methods for developing school leaders, while Darling-Hammond focused the policy levers for improving principal performance, including candidate licensures criteria and development program approval criteria. During the panel discussion, Jordan offered discussion on how best to overcome the critical challenges facing principals. Cheung articulated the necessity of providing rigorous training and support

systems for new principals, while Dhanda analyzed the challenge of sustaining comprehensive training material that remains relevant to the continually evolving education field. Further discussion centered on the unique challenges faced by principals in rural areas and examples of successful leadership programs nationwide. A recording of the webinar will be posted [here](#).

POLICY EXPERTS, RESEARCHERS EXAMINE MEASURES OF YOUTH WELL-BEING

On Thursday, the Urban Institute hosted a webinar titled, “Expanding How We Understand Youth Well-Being,” that highlighted eight distinct areas, or “domains,” of youth well-being and best practices for measuring them. The domains include physical health; mental and behavioral health; education and learning; economic stability; physical and psychological safety; social networks and relationships; community and belonging; and sense of purpose. The webinar focused on a new [research report](#) that summarizes both traditional and emergent approaches to measurement and notable gaps in each area. The report also examines key themes relevant to all domains, particularly the critical need to include young people in the process of developing well-being concepts and indicators and to improve understanding of how well-being dynamics differ across identities. In addition to an overview of the new report, the webinar featured a panel of policy experts and research associates from the Urban Institute, the Aspen Institute, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Notably, the panel underscored a [series of new resources](#) published by the Urban Institute that aim to refine how domains of youth well-being are assessed. The panel examined important considerations and guidelines to keep in mind when conceptualizing well-being for young people. Juan Martinez Pineda with the Aspen Institute particularly provided an overview of the [youth-led participatory action project](#) that promotes youth-centered programming that positions young people as experts in their lived experience. Pineda also accentuated the central role of culture in the development of well-being metrics. A recording of the event can be found [here](#).

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4. New Publications

Scaling Up High-Dosage Tutoring is Crucial to Students’ Academic Success

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2 Final Title IX Regulations Will Likely Be Delayed – Again

Higher Ed Dive (January 19, 2024)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Hearing: House Oversight Subcommittee on Oversight of K-12 Public Education

Subject: The House Oversight and Accountability Health Care and Financial Services Subcommittee will hold a hearing on "America's Report Card: Oversight of K-12 Public Education."

Witnesses: Virginia Gentles, director, Independent Women's Forum's Education Freedom Center; Nat Malkus, senior fellow and deputy director of education policy studies, American Enterprise Institute.

Time and Location: 2:00 p.m.; 2154 Rayburn HOB.

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

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Webinar: Benefits of the District of Columbia’s Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund for Workforce Well-Being and Retention

Subject: The Urban Institute will hold a webinar titled, “Benefits of the District of Columbia’s Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund for Workforce Well-Being and Retention.”

Participants: Justin B. Doromal, senior research associate, Urban Institute; Erica Greenberg, senior fellow and co–principal investigator, District of Columbia Child Care Policy Research Partnership, Urban Institute; Laura Jimenez Parra, research associate, Urban Institute; Sara Mead, deputy superintendent of early learning, District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education; Heather Sandstrom, senior fellow and principal investigator, District of Columbia Child Care Policy Research Partnership, Urban Institute

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Registration: Register [here](#).

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor: Consideration of nominations

House Floor: [H.R. 7024](#) – Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024, as amended

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9. 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](#)

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10. 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:

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- Research and Analysis
- Advocacy Training
- Association Management
- Strategic Communications
- Policy Events

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