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## *Legislative Update Week 6*

*Feb. 19, 2022*

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# Top 3 Things to Know

**1 Senate Voucher Fight** - The Senate Education Subcommittee met for a 7th time on Wednesday to discuss voucher bill [S.935](#). In the past seven meetings, many concerns were expressed by educators, parents, and constituents, as well as by Subcommittee Members Senator [Jackson](#) (Richland) and Senator [Hutto](#) (Orangeburg). In fact, over 700 South Carolina constituents have used The SCEA's call to action to ask the Subcommittee to urge them to oppose [S.935](#).

Wednesday's meeting centered on proposed amendments to the harmful voucher legislation. Senator Jackson proposed several amendments, including equity-focused amendments regarding the bill's very limited non-discrimination clause. When the committee took a vote on expanding the non-discrimination clause to include sexual orientation, only Senators [Jackson](#) and [Hutto](#) in favor, while Senators **Massey** (Edgefield)\*, **Rice** (Pickens)\*, and **Talley** (Greenville) voted against expanding anti-discrimination to include LGBTQ+ students. This means that should the bill pass, schools accepting vouchers would be able to deny admission to LGBTQ+ students. [The full meeting summary can be read here.](#)

Despite the outpouring of concern and opposition to this voucher bill, [which even received national attention](#), Senators **Massey** (Edgefield)\*, **Rice** (Pickens)\*, and **Talley** (Greenville) voted to give the bill a favorable report to move to the Full Senate Education Committee.

Because Wednesday's meeting was **not** live-streamed by the statehouse, [The SCEA provided a livestream of the meeting that you can watch here.](#)

The first full committee discussion will take place this Wednesday. [Read more to take](#)

**action!**

**2 Honesty in Education** - The House Education and Public Works Committee met to listen to public testimony on several bills that seek to pit parents against educators. [H.4325](#), [H.4343](#), [H.4392](#), [H.4605](#), and [H.4799](#) on their surface claim to focus on banning "Critical Race Theory" but in actuality impose top-down censorship policies about topics not part of the SC education standards.


Superintendent Molly Spearman testified that she supports some type of permanent legislation, but also stated she believes the bills send the state down a dangerous path, harming students' ability to learn a full picture of American history. The overwhelming majority of testimony, including members of the public, educators, parents, and more testified against these anti-Honesty in Education bills. [You can watch the full hearing by visiting this link and scrolling down to the link for February 16, 2022 – 1:15pm, House Education and Public Works Committee.](#)

Another hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 1st. [Read more to learn how to take action!](#)

**3 A Day On for Public Education: Virtual Day of Action** - On Monday, The SCEA is hosting a Day ON for Public Education! We will hear from NEA and The SCEA officers, education advocates, legislators, and members like you and engage in collective advocacy to make sure the voice of educators is heard anywhere decisions about Public Education are made! [Register for the Virtual Day of Action here.](#)

[Check out the Week Ahead with Legislation and Meetings of Interest!](#)

## Use Your Educator Voice!

 **Cheers** - The Senate [unanimously passed S.946](#), a bill for unencumbered time for teachers. The SCEA has played a critical role in advocating for this legislation to be introduced, amended to be favorable, and Unencumbered Time is a key part of our Legislative Agenda. [Click here to thank your Senator for listening to educator and to urge your Representative to support S.946.](#)

**Senators not sponsoring harmful voucher bill S.935**, as well as **Senators Jackson (Richland)** and **Hutto (Orangeburg)** for not supporting a favorable report of harmful voucher bill [S.935](#), during subcommittee meetings on Wednesday.

[Use this link to check out whether your Senator is one of the Senators not sponsoring S.935 and to send an email thanking them for not sponsoring and urging them not to support the bill.](#)

**Rep. Allison (Spartanburg)** removed her name as a sponsor of anti-Honesty in Education bill H.4325. [Click here to thank Rep. Allison for removing her name from H.4325 and to ask her to also remove her name from H.4343.](#)

 **Jeers** - Twenty out of 29 Republican Senators are sponsoring [S.935 Education Scholarship Account Vouchers](#).

[Use this link to check out whether one of these 20 Republican Senators is your state Senator, and to let them know you are disappointed in their support for S.935, a bill that harms public schools.](#)

Rep.s [White](#) (Anderson) and [Thayer](#) (Anderson) added their names to sponsor harmful anti-Honesty in Education bill [H.4605](#).

Rep. [White](#) also added his name to sponsor [H.4343](#), an additional anti-Honesty in Education bill.



**Above:** The SCEA member Crystal Rouse testified against anti-Honesty in Education bills in the House EPW committee on Wednesday.

## Take Action!

Another hearing will be held on **Anti-Honesty in Education bills** [H.4325](#), [H.4343](#), [H.4392](#), [H.4605](#), and [H.4799](#) **will take place** March 1st.

If you previously emailed to give testimony and have not yet been heard, you can email [gingerlee@schouse.gov](mailto:gingerlee@schouse.gov) and request what number you are to speak at the next hearing. We recommend replying from your original email with the date and time you originally requested since the order is determined on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you want to learn more and take action, the NAACP Legal Defense and

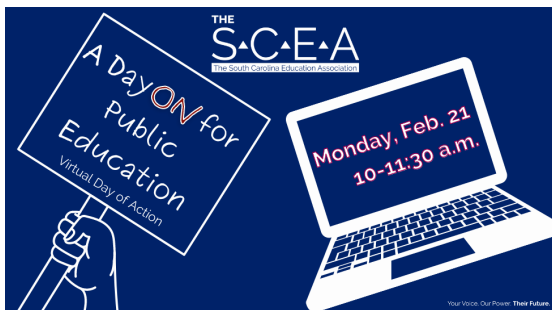
Educational Fund (LDF) has [a comprehensive resource](#) for learning about each bill, as well as how to draft and submit testimony. [In addition, you can reach out to The SCEA Public Affairs for support in taking action!](#)

The Full Senate Education committee will discuss harmful voucher bill **S.935** for Wednesday at 10 a.m.

**You can help** get the word out about this harmful legislation and the severe consequences it could have for public schools by [sharing on social media](#) and, most importantly, [writing to your Senator now](#).

**Click below to send an email to your Senator!**

**Email Your Senator Now!**



## RSVP Now!

Don't miss **A Day On for Public Education**, The SCEA's virtual day of action! With our collective voice, we can move the issues that matter to your profession, your students, & your community.

[Register for the Virtual Day of Action here.](#)



Contact your elected officials at any level on any issue.

Click this button to find their contact information, including email, phone number, and even their Facebook or Twitter.

**Find & Contact Elected Officials**



Do you believe every South Carolina student deserves a great public school?

Make sure your state Senator & Representative know that Public Education issues will have most impact your decision as a voter.

**Take the Pledge!**

**The Week Ahead &**

**Want the latest on federal**

## Legislation of Interest

[Click here for a look at the meetings scheduled for next week](#) on bills of interest to education.

## legislation?

[Check out Education Votes by NEA and subscribe to the weekly Education Votes email.](#)

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