

Not getting Members Matter to your inbox? Members Matter is sent to all the email address on file for all The SCEA members. Don't forget to check your junk folder or the Promotions folder of Gmail.

To check your email on file with The SCEA, contact Membership at membership@thescea.org or call 803-551-4141.



Legislative Update Week 10

March 19, 2022

Top 3 Things to Know

1 House Budget - The House began debate on the state's \$14 billion budget on Monday, and approved it later that evening. Traditionally the budget debate continues for days, but this year was different with the House's quick passage. There was little debate, with most of the discussion on amendments centered on the state's health plan and abortion services, potential vaccine passports, state employee pay bonuses, and a pay raise for legislators.

The proposal for a \$4,000 increase to the **state minimum** salary schedule [did not change](#). It's important to note that many educators would not receive a raise based on the proposal. [You can advocate for your legislators to fund raises for **all** educators and school staff by clicking here.](#)

Few amendments were successful, but a PEBA exemption from earning limitations was approved, as was a suspension of name image likeness endorsements for collegiate athletes.

The budget has been sent to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration.

2 Open Enrollment - The Senate Education Subcommittee met once again to discuss [S.544](#), a statewide open enrollment bill. The SCEA has several concerns about this legislation that have yet to be addressed. [The SCEA testimony from March 2nd outlining our concerns can be read here.](#)

During this meeting, [3 amendments](#) were proposed by Senator Talley (Spartanburg). Of the amendments, 2 passed and 1 was carried over. The first amendment that passed

(Amendment No. 1) clarified language that open enrollment language to be inter-district rather than intra-district. The second amendment that passed (Amendment No. 3) amended the process for applying for open enrollment and the process for appealing denials.

The amendment that was carried over (Amendment No. 2) attempted to set the application deadline of the process to Jan. 31st and to allow a district to charge a fee for out-of-district students to help school districts cover differences in the cost of funding an open enrollment student. [The full meeting summary can be read here.](#)

S.544 will be discussed by the Full Senate Education Committee this Wednesday.

3 S.531 - On Tuesday, the Senate Education Subcommittee heard testimony on and chose to give a favorable report to **S.531**, legislation that seeks to prevent transgender from participating in sports. **S.531** [is similar to many bills around the country that attack transgender youth](#). NEA General Counsel [published a memo](#) breaking down legislation from around the country with steps educators can take. [NEA EdJustice also has a page](#) dedicated to supporting LGBTQ+ youth where you can become informed and take action.

Don't forget that with any legislation or issue, you can reach out to your elected official by phone, email, or even social media [using this tool!](#)

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

Use Your Educator Voice!

👍 **Senators not sponsoring harmful voucher bill S.935.** [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.

👎 **Jeers - Senator Senn (Charleston) for adding her name to be the 21st out of 29 Republican Senators** to sponsor private school vouchers through **S.935**.

[Use this link](#) to check out whether one of these 21 Republican Senators is your Senator, and to let them know you are disappointed in their support for **S.935**, a bill that harms public schools.





Above: Rep. Govan poses for a lunchtime picture with The SCEA President Sherry East on March 8, 2022 ahead of the final hearing for public comment on anti-truth bills H.4325, 4343, 4392, 4605, & 4799.

State Superintendent's Race

This week former educator Representative Jerry Govan Jr. (Orangeburg) announced his bid for South Carolina state superintendent of education during a press conference at the Statehouse on Friday. Representative Govan will run as a Democrat.

In the press conference, among other issues, Representative Govan announced increased pay for educators as a high priority. The floor for first-year teachers in the House's budget proposal approved March 14 is \$40,000, but Govan wants to raise it to \$60,000.

Only three candidates have officially filed to run: Ellen Weaver, Kizzi Gibson, and Sheri Few—all as Republicans. Several other candidates have also declared their intention to run for Superintendent Molly Spearman's soon-to-be vacant seat.

They include:

- Democrat Gary Burgess
- Republican Cindy Bohn Coats
- Republican Kathy Maness
- Republican Travis Bedson

Take Action!

South Carolina's students deserve to have fully staffed schools & a highly qualified educator every classroom. **Legislators need to fund it.**

Urge your Senator and Representative to [fund raises for ALL](#) South Carolina educators and schools staff.

**Advocate for raises
for ALL!**

The Full Senate Education committee voted to give harmful voucher bill **S.935 a favorable report**. [It is more important than ever to advocate now!](#)

You can help get the word out by [sharing on social media](#) and, most importantly, [writing to your Senator now!](#)

**Take Action to Stop
Vouchers Now!**

Testimony on anti-Truth bills in the House Education and Public Works Committee may have concluded, but testimony is not the only way to make your voice heard on this important issue.

Visit [The SCEA Honesty in Education Action Center](#) to make calls and email all committee members now!

Stand Up for Truth!



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](#)

The Week Ahead & Legislation of Interest

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



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!](#)

Want the latest on federal legislation?

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

