



*Legislative Update Week 16*  
*April 30, 2022*

## Top 3 Things to Know

**1** *The Senate Passes a plan for inadequate raises* - This week the Senate passed a budget plan that not only fails to guarantee a raise for educators but also sets a lower increase to the minimum teacher starting salary and steps of the state minimum salary schedule.

During debate on the budget, Senator Mike Fanning challenged the Senate proposal on changes to the school funding formula as a rule violation, as the Senate formula changes make permanent changes to current law, which is a violation of Senate Rule 24.

Unfortunately, Senator Fanning's points of order were all overruled. It is difficult to understand how this ruling was reached considering that these proposals do, in fact, change current law because the funding formula is part of current law.

In addition, Senator Fanning attempted to pass an amendment that would require any changes to the funding formula to be done through the legislative process rather than rushed through a proviso, would have guaranteed ALL educators a raise, and would have protected dual credit and vocational courses. However, the amendment was tabled.

During the budget vote, Senators Fanning, McLeod, Stephens, and Matthews all voted "no" on the two education sections with the new flawed funding formula and inadequate raises

- [The roll call vote on tabling Senator Fanning's amendment can be found here.](#) Senators voting "aye" voted not to allow raises for all educators to be put to a vote. 13 Senators voted "no."
- [A video of Senator Fanning speaking to the amendment can be found here](#)
- [Live-tweets of the budget debate can be found here](#)
- [Live-tweets of the budget vote can be found here](#)

As a result of this disappointing budget passed by the Senate, for the first time in the history of South Carolina both the House and Senate have passed versions of the budget that do not guarantee a raise to ALL teachers but, instead, only ensure a raise to some teachers.

Stay tuned on how to take action to advocate for the best possible increase for educators in this budget. In the meantime, [make sure your legislators know that you are keeping track to see if they listen to educators during session to "make the grade" at the ballot box in November.](#)

**2** *Unencumbered time given favorable report, moves to House Floor* - [S.946](#) the unencumbered time bill was heard in the House Education and Public works committee on Tuesday.

The SCEA President Sherry East testified and provided important information on unencumbered time, [including comparative data from surrounding and competing states.](#)

As a result, the committee voted unanimously to give S.946 a favorable report. [A full meeting summary can be read here.](#)

Unencumbered time is a top priority in The SCEA Legislative Agenda, and The SCEA has worked hard to make sure this important legislation advanced this session.

[You can help make sure your Representative votes yes on this important legislation by sending them an email.](#)

**3** *House Voucher Fight* - Skipping the subcommittee process that allows for public comment, the Full House Ways & Means committee met this week to discuss [S.935](#), the harmful voucher legislation passed by the Senate.

During the meeting they chose to strike all of S.935 and insert language from [H.4879](#), the House voucher bill that failed to meet the crossover deadline. [A full meeting summary can be found here.](#)

[You can help stop harmful vouchers by sending an email to your representative](#) ahead of floor debate on this bill that sends public dollars to schools that can discriminate against children.

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!](#)



Above: Senator Mike Fanning argues in favor of raises for all; The SCEA President Sherry East testifies on unencumbered time for educators.

# Use Your Educator Voice!

👍 Cheers - Representatives Alexander, Rivers, Brittain, Felder, L. Bennett, and Gatch on K-12 subcommittee of the House Education and Public Works Committee for giving a favorable report to S.946 to give teachers daily unencumbered time.

Senators Fanning, Kimpson, Matthews, Scott, Corbin, Jackson, Malloy, Sabb, Allen, Hutto, Loftis, McLeod, and Stephens for voting "no" on tabling Amendment 31 of the budget, which would have given raises to ALL educators, protected vocational courses and dual credit, and required that the legislative process, rather than a budget proviso, be used for changing the school funding formula.

Senators Fanning, McLeod, Stephens, and Matthews for voting "no" on the education sections of the budget that include the new, flawed education funding formula and inadequate raises for ALL educators.

👎 Jeers - Senators Campsen, Cromer, Garrett, Gustafson, Kimbrell, Rice, Shealy, Frye Verdin, Bennett, Climer, Gambrell, Grooms, M. Johnson, Reichenbach, Setzler, Turner, Young, Alexander, Cash, Davis, Goldfinch, Hembree, Peeler, Senn, Talley, and Williams for voting to table the amendment to give ALL teachers a raise.

## 🔴 Take Action! 🔴



Working conditions ARE learning conditions. Educators need to have a guaranteed duty-free protected time during the day.

Urge your Representative to vote YES on protected time through S.946.

[Email your Representative now!](#)

# Stand Up for Public Schools

Say **NO**  
to voucher schemes

South Carolina's Public Schools and students are under attack from harmful legislation.

Your Representative needs to hear from you NOW.

Tell them: Stand up for Public Schools. Say NO to voucher schemes!

Email your Representative now!

South Carolina Ranks

**#50**

in average teacher  
salary change

*Our schools deserve better!*

Rankings of the States 2021, NEA Research, April 2022

South Carolina is

**1 of 3 states  
to decline**

in average teacher  
salary change

*Our schools deserve better!*

Rankings of the States 2021, NEA Research, April 2022



# The SCEA Unveils New Nationwide Data on Educator Pay

On Tuesday, The South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA) and the National Education Association (NEA) unveiled findings from four national reports on educator pay and school funding. The reports cover multiple topics including school staff wages and college faculty pay, as well as state spending on students. The reports paint a dire picture about the state of public education in America.

The big takeaway? Educator pay has failed to keep up with inflation. In fact, teachers today are making \$2,179 less, on average, than they did 10 years ago when you factor in inflation.

"The reports on educator and support professional salaries are yet another alarm sounding in South Carolina's dire educator and school staff shortage crisis," said high school science teacher and The SCEA President Sherry East. "As our Senators begin debate on a budget proposal that fails to guarantee a raise to most educators, the national data shows that South Carolina is one of only three states with a decrease in average teacher salary, even without adjusting for inflation."

[Read the full press release here to learn more.](#)

## House Elects New Speaker

On Thursday, Representative Murrell Smith (R-Sumter) was elected as the new House Speaker, succeeding Jay Lucas (R-Darlington). The unanimous election slates Rep. Smith to take over leadership when regular session ends May 12.

With his new role, the House will have to elect a new Ways and Means Chairman. In addition, the House Republican Caucus will have to decide on a new House Majority Leader since Rep. Gary Simrill (R-York) has also announced he's not running for reelection.



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.](#)

