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*Legislative Update Week 2*  
*January 21, 2023*

## **Welcome Back!**



Another week passes and education remains top priority for South Carolina legislators.

The full Senate continued debate on [S.39](#), a bill for "Education Scholarship Trust Funds"—a private school [voucher scheme](#) using public tax dollars.

During debate on S.39, Senator Tom Davis (Beaufort) introduced Amendment 10, an amendment that could make the voucher scheme even more expensive and harmful by merging a voucher tax credit bill — the PACE bill (Tuition Vouchers – not the alternative certification program) — with S.39's voucher system. This will increase the cost from \$90 million of public funds to \$190 million or more!

[Your Senator needs to hear from you now.](#) Tell them to vote NO on S.39!

S.39 and private school voucher bills would send public money to private schools that can pick, choose, and discriminate against some of South Carolina's most vulnerable students—all without doing anything to support or improve the public schools that proudly welcome, accept, and educate ALL students. Write to your Senator: Tell them to keep public tax dollars in public schools!

On Wednesday, members of the House Workforce & Economic Development Committee spoke at a press conference at the State House. Speaker Murrell Smith (R-Sumter) described his recommendations which are focused on keeping talent in South Carolina.

After several meetings during the fall, committee members introduced legislation, the "Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act."

Members have met over the past months to determine what they can do to bolster the economy and retain workers within the state. The bill creates the Office of Statewide Workforce Development Coordination within the Department of Employment and Workforce to centralize all state and local efforts.

Additional conversations on the bill are expected as it is vetted through the committee process.

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## **Numbers to Know**

- **7.8%:** Increase in the number of students in SC public schools over the past 20 year
- **3,071,865:** Number of South Carolinians who have been fully vaccinated
- **750,000:** School children in South Carolina
- **\$6,000:** State funding per pupil to send child to private school
- **2,446:** Cellphones confiscated from inmates in SC prisons
- **\$360,000,000:** Estimated cost for the I-95 project

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## **In the News:**

[SC senators advance bill to resume executions by "shielding" drug suppliers](#)

Legislation that would enable executions to resume by lethal injection is advancing in the S.C. Senate as lawmakers await a ruling on whether death by firing squad or electrocution is constitutional.

*The Post & Courier*

[South Carolina Supreme Court set for all-male bench](#)

No woman is expected to serve on the South Carolina Supreme Court for the first time in 35 years.

*Associated Press*

[Bill seeks to stop scammers from preying on vulnerable in SC who win large settlements](#)

Legislation advancing in the state Senate seeks to stop companies from preying on vulnerable South Carolinians by turning a lifetime of settlement payments into pennies, as happened to a client of accused killer Alex Murdaugh.

*The Post & Courier*

## Increasing fine for left lane slowpokes gets quick traction

A bill allowing police to charge a bigger fine for people driving slow in the left lane of interstates and other multilane highways is one of the first to be taken up at the South Carolina Statehouse in 2023.

*Associated Press*

## [SC governor wants to replace state planes, but some lawmakers call them a “luxury”](#)

South Carolina’s governor wants \$10 million to replace the state government’s aging planes, but some lawmakers think it’s time to ground the fleet.

*The Post & Courier*

## [Party like it’s 1832: SC Statehouse’s far right pushes nullification](#)

The message was pretty simple. It was written in all-capitalized white letters on blue shirts: “NULLIFY.”

*The Post & Courier*

## [South Carolina Supreme Court on track to be all male for the first time in 35 years](#)

The S.C. Supreme Court will soon be all male for the first time in 35 years after the two women vying to replace the high court’s only female justice withdrew from the race.

*The Post & Courier*

## [People urged to fight on, keep history from repeating itself as King Day at Dome returns](#)

The speeches at the Statehouse on Jan. 16 for King Day at the Dome spanned a wide range of topics, from Confederate monuments to school choice, but one theme rang throughout: People need to fight to keep history from repeating itself.

*The Post & Courier*

## [Arthur Ravenel Jr., politician and bridge namesake affectionately known as “Cousin Arthur,” passes away](#)

Arthur Ravenel Jr., the former congressman and state senator who for more than half a century cast a long shadow over Lowcountry politics with his familiar Southern drawl, has died. He was 95.

*The Post & Courier*

## [Tax money for students for private school on SC Senate floor](#)

South Carolina senators said a bill that would give some less well off parents and guardians up to \$6,000 a year for private school tuition will be the first thing they debate in the 2023 session.

*South Carolina Public Radio*

## [A man’s world in SC’s State House? Not if Katrina Shealy has anything to say about it \(she does\)](#)

Katrina Shealy had something to say.

*The State*

## [SC Legislature House Freedom Caucus plans to make waves. What do they want?](#)

What happened in Congress when a far-right cadre of Republicans upended the House speaker’s vote could soon be a model for ultra conservatives in South Carolina who believe this ruby-red state is still too liberal.

*The Post & Courier*

## [Ellen Weaver: This can be the year of opportunity for SC students](#)

As I begin my tenure as South Carolina’s state superintendent of education, I am excited for the journey ahead and honored by the trust that has been placed in me by the people of this state. With the turning of each new year, we have the chance to renew our shared commitment to our students and their future, ensuring that every child in our state has the opportunity to get a great education.

*The Post & Courier*

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# Education Bills That Moved This Week

To follow all The SCEA tracked bills, click [here](#).

**SB39 EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND (GROOMS L)**

**Current Status: 1/19/2023 - Scrivener's error**

**corrected State Bill Page: [SB39](#)**

News Stories: 1/17/2023 - [Tax money for students for private school on SC Senate floor](#)

1/17/2023 - Editorial: [If private schools get SC tax money, they need to be accountable to taxpayers](#)

1/10/2023 - [Abortion, taxes, school choice: What to watch in 2023 as SC lawmakers return to the State House](#)

12/28/2022 - [Funding of religious schools, abortion access: SC legislation to watch for in 2023 session](#)

**HB3464 CRITICAL RACE THEORY INSTRUCTION PROHIBITION (LONG S)**

Current Status: 1/19/2023 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor:

State Bill Page: Oremus [HB3464](#)

**HJR3591 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (SMITH, JR. G)**

Current Status: 1/19/2023 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor:

W.Newton

State Bill Page: [HJR3591](#)

News Stories: 12/28/2022 - [Funding of religious schools, abortion access: SC legislation to watch for in 2023 session](#)

**HB3515 ENTREPRENEUR FREEDOM ACT (PACE J)**

Current Status: 1/18/2023 - Member(s) request name removed as sponsor:

Beach

State Bill Page: [HB3515](#)

**HB3617 PAID FAMILY LEAVE (BERNSTEIN B)**

Current Status: 1/18/2023 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor:

State Bill Page: Carter [HB3617](#)

