



Legislative Update Week 6
February 18th, 2023



Pictured above left to right: The SCEA Lobbyist, John Brisini; The SCEA President, Sherry East; The SCEA Public Affairs Specialist, Heaven Hale.

Sunscreen in Schools

After nearly an hour in subcommittee on Wednesday, [S.256](#), Sunscreen at School, received a favorable report.

To the surprise of all the senators on the subcommittee and many in the room, students are not allowed to have sunscreen at school unless they have a prescription, parents' permission, and it is included in a student's Individual Health Plan (IHP).

[S.256](#) would change that in an effort to combat skin cancer, the most common cancer in the U.S. and worldwide. Having five or more sunburns more than doubles a person's risk for melanoma so preventing sunburns in children and adolescents has a significant impact.

The subcommittee passed the measure unanimously and the full Senate Education Committee will consider [S.256](#) on Wednesday.

Aspiring Educator Scholarships

[S.125: Scholarship Stipend](#) would provide scholarships for aspiring teachers to help with the increasing teacher recruitment crisis. The bill is written to encourage more students to pursue a career in education by lowering the amount of student debt they will have after graduating.

[S.125](#) was given a favorable report.

Fire Drills

Currently there are two different codes with different requirements for public school fire drills. Excessive drills causing continuous disruptions in instructional time.

[S.203: Public School Drills](#) would help to unify school district's drill policies and lessen instructional disruptions, while also making sure students are prepared for emergency situations.

The SCEA submitted written testimony in favor of the bill.

Seizure and Safe Schools Act

[Seizure and Safe Schools Act H.3309](#) was introduced on Tuesday by the Ways and Means K-12 Subcommittee. Chairperson Bradley asked the interested parties to work on amendments and reconvene at a later date.



The SCEA President, Sherry East, giving testimony on H.3309

Open Enrollment

The House Ways and Means K-12 Subcommittee read house bill [H.3843: Open Enrollment](#) for the first time on Tuesday.

This bill will allow students to cross district lines and enroll in schools of their choice. The SCEA President, Sherry East, spoke to the committee and addressed concerns around transportation and funding inequities that may occur if this legislation is passed.

Vouchers

The push for vouchers for private and religious schools continued this week.

"Providing Academic Choice in Education" (PACE) (S.285) was heard by the Senate Finance K-12 Subcommittee on Tuesday.

S.285 is another voucher scheme that will indirectly fund private and religious institutions that could discriminate against students. This bill was heard by the Senate Finance K-12 Subcommittee on Tuesday.

The language of the bill was debated and amended several times in committee before being passed as favorable to be heard by the Full Committee, expected next week.

The "Scholarship Trust Fund Bill" (S.39) did not see any movement from committees this week.

This is another voucher bill that will only provide about 2% percent of South Carolina's students with scholarships to send their children to private schools, while costing taxpayers nearly 90 million in funds.

Take Action On Vouchers!

Ballot Initiative

House Bill H.3591 is a joint resolution to amend the South Carolina Constitution – allowing public tax dollars to go directly to private schools, taking away from the already scarce resources our public schools have. The SCEA is concerned that the wording on the ballot will confuse voters.

This bill was given a favorable report on Tuesday.

To see the potential ballot question: click here.

Censorship

The "South Carolina Transparency and Integrity in Education Act," H.3728 saw no movement last week, but remains on The SCEA radar. This bill could potentially make it difficult for teachers to teach certain material, and will require schools to share curriculum with parents, and create a complaint form for them to use.

The SCEA fears that some educators may become burdened with unnecessary complaints, and fears for the future of education in black history and other cultural topics.

Express opposition to H.3728.

TAKE ACTION NOW TO STAND UP FOR TRUTH!

Upcoming Meetings of Interest

Below are meetings scheduled for next week on bills of interest to you. You can click on the date link to view the agenda and the bill number to see the legislation.

[Tue 2/21 in Blatt Room 433](#)

[H.3067](#) (Special Needs Student School Bus Attendants); [H.3308](#) (School Psychologists); [H.3360](#) (Center for School Safety and Targeted Violence)

[Tue 2/21 2:30 PM in Blatt Room 403](#)

[H.3726](#) (Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act)

[Wed 2/22 in Blatt Room 433](#)

[H.3067](#) (Special Needs Student School Bus Attendants); [H.3295](#) (Education: Competency-based Education); [H.3308](#) (School Psychologists); [H.3360](#) (Center for School Safety and Targeted Violence); [H.3843](#) (Open Enrollment)

[Wed 2/22 10:00 AM in Gressette Room 105](#)

[S.123](#) (First Steps); [S.124](#) (Noncertified Teacher Pilot Program); [S.125](#) (Scholarship Stipend); [S.203](#) (Public school drills); [S.245](#) (Booster Clubs); [S.256](#) (Sunscreen at School)

[Wed 2/22 10:00 AM in Gressette Room 408](#)

[H.3312](#) (Child Food and Nutrition Services Study Committee)

Introductions of Interest

Below are bills that were introduced in the House and Senate this week that may be of interest to you. We have provided a brief description as well as a link to the full text of each bill. Please review and let us know if you have any comments or concerns.

[H.3961](#)

Dorchester School District 2: Murphy

Representative Chris Murphy (R-Dorchester), Representative Gary Brewer (R-Charleston), Representative Gil Gatch (R-Dorchester) and others introduced a bill to change the method of electing the seven members of the board of trustees of Summerville schools district 2 from at-large to single-member districts.

The bill was referred to the Dorchester Delegation.

[H.3990](#)

Opioid Antidote Administration in Schools: Dillard

Representative Chandra Dillard (D-Greenville) introduced a bill to require schools to develop a policy for the emergency administration of an opioid antidote to a student, staff member, or other person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid overdose.

The bill was referred to the House Education and Public Works Committee.

[H.3983](#)

School Employees: Williams

Representative Robert Williams (D-Darlington) introduced a bill to permit employers to grant employees specified paid leave to attend public school functions or to engage in volunteer teaching activities during the employees work hours.

The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

[H.3987](#)

Anderson School District 1 and 5: Thayer

Representative Anne Thayer (R-Anderson) introduced a bill to reassign a tract of land

(impacted property) that is presently zoned for Anderson County School District 5 to Anderson County School District 1. The bill was referred to the Anderson Delegation.

Numbers to Know

- **45,000:** Number of applicants at UofSC this year
- **53,400:** Number of people in SC with Epilepsy
- **97:** Number of mass shootings in the U.S. in 2023
- **1:** Number of forensic labs in all 46 counties of the state
- **20:** Number of weeks that a woman can legally get an abortion in South Carolina

Education Bills That Moved This Week

To follow all bills that The SCEA is tracking click [here](#).

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING (HEMBREE G)

- Current Status: 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Education and Public Works
- State Bill Page: [SB134](#)

HJR3591 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (SMITH, JR. G)

- Current Status: 2/16/2023 - Committee report House Judiciary : Favorable
- State Bill Page: [HJR3591](#)
- News Stories:
 - 12/28/2022 - [Funding of religious schools, abortion access: SC legislation to watch for in 2023 session](#)

SB299 JOINT CITIZENS AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN (SHEALY K)

- Current Status: 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Education and Public Works
- State Bill Page: [SB299](#)

HB3360 CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY AND TARGETED VIOLENCE (POPE T)

- Current Status: 2/15/2023 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor : Felder
- State Bill Page: [HB3360](#)

SB334 SCHOOL BOARD VACANCIES (CAMPSER G)

- Current Status: 2/15/2023 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage Education Subcommittee
- State Bill Page: [SB334](#)

SB256 SUNSCREEN AT SCHOOL (JOHNSON M)

- Current Status: 2/15/2023 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage, as amended, Education Subcommittee
- State Bill Page: [SB256](#)

HB3309 SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT (GILLIAM L)

- Current Status: 2/14/2023 - House Subcommittee Adjourned debate EPW: K12 Education Subcommittee
- State Bill Page: [HB3309](#)

In The News

Bill banning “Carolina Squat” passes South Carolina Senate

It also passed with an amendment stating that only tickets would be issued as penalties for the first 180 days after the bill takes effect, a suggestion that was made by Myrtle Beach Police Chief Amy Prock last month.

WISTV

GOP-pushed Statehouse bill allows SC adults to legally carry a handgun without training

Legislation removing all training requirements to legally carry a handgun in South Carolina is again advancing in the GOP-dominated state House of Representatives.

The Post & Courier

More and tougher penalties for prostitution and human trafficking proposed in SC

Criminal penalties for prostitution and human trafficking may soon be heightened for some while lessened for others, and victims of dating violence could see expanded protections, as new proposals make their way through the S.C. Senate.

The State

SC GOP seeks control of Greenville County Republican party reorganization

Eighteen months after an insurgent “MAGA” movement took over the Greenville County Republican Party, the South Carolina GOP headquarters that’s at odds with the group is planning to seize control of the county party’s upcoming local organizational efforts.

The Post & Courier

SC comptroller’s \$3.5 billion general fund reporting error alarms lawmakers

South Carolina’s top accountant overstated the state’s general fund balance by \$3.5 billion due to double counting some of the state’s finances, prompting calls for an investigation from the powerful chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

The Post & Courier

SC “critical race theory” bill “undermined” by proposed changes, says GOP lead sponsor

The lead Republican sponsor of a House proposal that seeks to place new guidelines on how certain topics can be taught to South Carolina students chastised her colleagues’ attempts to amend the bill Wednesday, saying their efforts “undermined” the bill’s intent.

The State

SC pushes for Mexican drug cartels to be declared foreign terrorist organizations

The attorney general for South Carolina joined 20 other states in a letter to President Biden urging Mexican drug cartels to be federally designated as foreign terrorist organizations.

WTHR

Palmetto flag design bill for SC flies through Senate committee

The story goes that during the 1776 siege of Charleston when Col. William Moultrie’s indigo Liberty flag was blown off the ramparts by the British bombardment, a plucky young sergeant ran into the open to retrieve and hoist it once more.

The Post & Courier

Warmer waters, more salt, fewer blue crabs: a grim report urges SC lawmakers to act

In 2021, blue crab landings in South Carolina reached a 50-year low. This was no surprise.

The Post & Courier

SC Supreme Court, on heels of abortion ruling, now all male for the 1st time in 35 years

South Carolina Judge Gary Hill will become the state Supreme Court’s next justice, marking the first time in more than three decades the high court will not have a female justice on the

