



Legislative Update Week 11
March 25th, 2023



Pictured from left to right: The SCEA Membership and Leadership development specialist, Albert Jones; The SCEA President, Sherry East; Former House Rep., Rita Allison; Representative Tim McGinnis; The PSTA Taskforce Rep., Patrick Kelly

Censorship

The Senate Education Subcommittee heard public testimony on [H.3728: "South Carolina Transparency and Integrity in Education Act"](#) on March 14, but the committee ran out of time for everyone who signed up to testify. The next scheduled public hearing is Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.

The SCEA strongly opposes this bill.

Every single South Carolina child deserves to receive an honest, accurate education that prepares them for the future—no matter their zip code. This bill inserts the state government into classrooms, jeopardizes educators' ability to provide an accurate education, and could prevent students from learning about vital parts of our state's history. Students need to learn the good and the bad of our shared history so that they can learn from the mistakes of the past to create a better future.

Take action now to stand up for truth!

Gender Identity

The Senate Medical Affairs committee heard testimony from invited parties on S.627 on Thursday.

The majority of this bill, which was introduced last week, pertains to medical care, except for a section that prevents employees of public schools from “knowingly withholding from a minor’s parent or legal guardian information that [their] gender is inconsistent with [their] sex.”

It also requires educators to inform parents/legal guardians if they “know or suspect that a student suffers from gender dysphoria [or] gender identity disorder.”

The SCEA fears this bill could strip educators of their privacy and prevent a safe environment for them to effectively communicate with students. It could also make teachers the arbiters of appropriate gender behavior and expression and could force educators to out transgender and nonbinary students. All South Carolina educators and students deserve to feel reflected, respected, and protected in public schools.

Public testimony will be heard on March 29. The SCEA will follow live on our Twitter account @TheSCEA.

Send your feedback on this bill to seast@thescea.org.

Teacher Task Force Listening Session

The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force hosted their final listening session on Monday. Educators took the opportunity to speak about the teacher shortage and steps they think the state should take to reduce the shortage.

The task force is still accepting feedback on staffing shortages. Share your story

and give input by using this link: <https://bit.ly/scrrtaskforce>.

The SCEA will continue to provide updates regarding the outcomes from the Task Force.

Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act

On Thursday, the Senate Education Committee heard both H.3726: Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act and S.305. The committee reported favorably on both bills.

S.305 states that an “individual’s prior work experience may be awarded on an initial teaching certificate if the prior experience is in or related to the content field of the certificate” and that “existing certificate holders may also receive the same credit for prior work experience.”

H. 3726: Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act aims to consolidate workforce development entities and streamline the development process by creating the Office of Statewide Workforce Development Coordination within SCDEW, which would oversee publicly funded workforce development services.

[Visit The SCEA Action Center!](#)

Numbers to Know

- **54%:** Percentage of gun deaths by suicide in South Carolina in 2020
- **38:** Number of public charter schools in the state
- **4:** Number of NCAA Final Four championships for the South Carolina Women's Basketball Team
- **37:** Number of states that allow the medical use of cannabis products
- **\$3.13:** Average amount for gas prices in South Carolina
- **8:** Number of states that ban gender-affirming healthcare for people under 18 years old

Education Bills That Moved This Week

[To follow all education bills that moved this week click here.](#)

SB305: WORK EXPERIENCE CREDIT FOR NEW TEACHERS (YOUNG, JR. T)

- Current Status: 3/23/2023 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage Education Subcommittee
- State Bill Page: [SB305](#)

HJR3312: CHILD FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES STUDY COMMITTEE (HADDON P)

- Current Status: 3/23/2023 - Read third time and returned to House with amendments
- State Bill Page: [HJR3312](#)

SB126: CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HEMBREE G)

- Current Status: 3/22/2023 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage, as amended, Subcommittee on SB 126
- State Bill Page: [SB126](#)

Bills That Saw No Movement, but We Continue to Monitor

[S.285](#), Providing Academic Choice in Education, encourages companies, institutions, or individuals to fund scholarships for students to attend private schools. Donors would receive a state tax credit up to \$10,000. The current program only applies to special-education students. Supporters of the bill believe it would provide parents with more options to send their child to private school. The bill passed the Senate but is still waiting for a House subcommittee hearing.

[H.3591](#) would repeal an amendment in the state constitution that prohibits the use of public tax dollars to fund private and religious schools. H.3591 would allow legislators to provide public funds into private schools that can discriminate against certain children. This would also remove funding from public schools, further harming the remaining students. This bill saw no movement this week and remains in the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

Teacher Contracts: As The SCEA discussed during its [Facebook Livestream](#), and pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-420, teachers who have been offered reemployment by the district must notify the district's board of trustees in writing of their acceptance of the contract before May 11 (i.e., by May 10). If you are thinking about switching jobs or are making a career change, don't sign until the deadline.

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 3/28 in Blatt Room 433](#)
[H 4023](#) (First Steps)

[Wed 3/29 9:30 AM in Gressette Room 105](#)
[H 3728](#) (Transparency and Integrity in Education Act)

[Wed 3/29 9:00 AM in Gressette Room 209](#)
[S.627](#) (Gender Identity)

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.

S. 654: Barnwell School District Consolidation **Hutto**

- Senator Brad Hutto (D-Orangeburg) has introduced legislation to consolidate the Barnwell County School Districts into a single district. It was deemed a local bill and was given 2nd Reading on Thursday.

S. 671: Language Equality and Acquisition of Deaf Kids Act (LEAD-K) **Talley**

- Senator Scott Talley (R-Spartanburg) introduced a bill to enact the "Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids Act" to develop a resource that parents of deaf or hard-of-hearing children may use to monitor and track expressive and receptive language and the developmental states towards English literacy. The bill was referred to the Senate Education Committee.
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