



Week 12: March 26-28, 2024



The SCEA President Sherry East with Senator Tameika Isaac Devine. Senator Mike Fanning is in the background.



H.4289: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

On Wednesday, the full House debated [H.4289](#), which would ban universities from requiring Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) training; prevent them from hiring or admitting students based on race, sex, gender, or ethnicity; bans universities from requiring or considering diversity statements as part of an admission or employment application; and requires universities to report on an annual basis the total number of administrative and nonteaching positions they have that relate to DEI.

During committee discussion last week, many committee members raised concerns about how this bill would likely increase discrimination against minority faculty and students. During public comment, many faculty and students spoke about the harmful impact this bill would cause on minority students and staff.

The House passed the bill in an [84-30](#) vote that fell largely on party lines. It now goes to the Senate.

H.4703: South Carolina STEM Opportunity Act

On Tuesday, the House Education & Public Works Committee discussed [H.4703](#). This bill establishes the “South Carolina STEM Opportunity Coalition” from the existing SC Coalition for Mathematics and Science and S2TEM

Centers.

The House Education & Public Works Committee approved the bill. It now goes to the House floor.

H.5245: Charter School Admissions

[H.5245](#) would allow charter schools to give enrollment preferences to children of active-duty military families and to children of charter school employees, so long as their enrollment does not account for more than 20% of total students.

The House Education & Public Works Committee gave this bill a favorable report on Tuesday. Then on Thursday, the House passed this bill in a 101-0 vote. It now heads to the Senate.

H.4702: Computer Science Education Initiative Act

[H.4702](#) creates a statewide computer science education plan for public high schools and requires that every public high school offer at least one computer science course starting with the 2024-2025 school year.

On Tuesday, the House Education & Public Works Committee reported favorably on this bill. On Thursday, the House passed this bill in a 101-5 vote. It now heads to the Senate.

S.1188: Expulsion Requirements

On Wednesday, the Senate Education Subcommittee heard public comment on [S.1188](#), which changes the notification requirements regarding student expulsion. Currently, as part of an expulsion procedure, the school board must schedule a hearing for the student and notify parents/legal guardians in writing. This bill requires the written notification to include explicit mention of the family's right to have legal counsel present at the hearing and the right to request the investigative file for the student.

The Subcommittee reported this bill favorably as amended, so now it goes to the full Senate Education Committee.

S.161 & S.150: Private and Charter School Students in Public School Sports

[S.150](#) and [S.161](#) both outline requirements for public school sports programs to admit private school and charter school students. Students who attend a private or charter school would be permitted to try out for a public school sports team, provided they live in the public school's zone boundaries, the school they attend is not in the South Carolina High School League, the school they attend does not have that sport available for the student, and the student meets eligibility requirements.

The Senate Education Subcommittee reported both bills favorably, so they will now go to the full committee.

H.4649: Security Personnel in Schools

[H.4649](#) would allow school districts with more than 15,000 students to hire private security companies to provide security for schools. Individuals and companies providing security services must be licensed as a security business, and schools would still have to use school resources officers as directed by law.

On Thursday, the House passed this bill 103-0. It now heads to the Senate.

S.1158: Prohibiting Open Carry on School Grounds

Earlier this month, the Governor [signed a bill](#) into law that allows people over 18 to carry a weapon either concealed or openly without a permit. After that law was enacted, Sen. Shane Massey introduced [S.1158](#), which prohibits students who are 18 or older from carrying a firearm on public school grounds, even if it is locked in their car.

This bill is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. We will continue to monitor and provide updates.

H.4280: Educator Assistance Act

If passed, [H.4280](#) would make certifications permanent unless revoked or suspended.

Currently, teachers must earn 120 hours of continuing education credits every five years to renew their teaching certificate and stay in the classroom. This bill would make certifications permanent unless revoked or suspended.

It would also allow teachers to get out of their contract for up to 10 days, following the posting of the district salary schedule. Currently, teachers must sign contracts by May 10th, which is often before the salary schedule is posted. This bill also changes the way school districts and the state board deal with “breach of contracts.” Moreover, it streamlines the burden of data collection that is placed upon school districts.

This bill passed the House last May but has not yet moved in the Senate. Contact Senate Education Chairman Greg Hembree and ask him to schedule this bill for a committee hearing:

[Click Here to Send Your Email](#)

Statewide Primary Elections

Statewide primary elections will be held on June 11, 2024. To vote in the primary elections, you must be registered to vote at least 30 days before the election.

Check your voter registration and stay up to date on important election information from The SCEA at the link below.

[Click Here to Check Your Registration](#)

PAC Committee Interest

If you are interested in serving on the committee to make political recommendations, please email President Sherry East at seast@thescea.org.

Education Bills That Moved This Week

[HB4649: PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS](#)

(Bannister, B)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-19-275 SO AS TO PROVIDE

PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH MORE THAN FIFTEEN THOUSAND STUDENTS MAY USE CERTAIN SECURITY PERSONNEL TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND SECURITY ON SCHOOL PREMISES IF LICENSED AS A PROPRIETARY SECURITY BUSINESS, AND TO PROVIDE DISTRICTS REMAIN OBLIGATED TO USE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY LAW; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-60, RELATING TO PROPRIETARY SECURITY BUSINESS LICENSURE, SO AS TO ADD PROVISIONS CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS APPLYING FOR LICENSURE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-80, RELATING TO SECURITY OFFICER REGISTRATION CERTIFICATION, SO AS TO PROVIDE THE SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION SHALL IMPLEMENT CERTAIN RELATED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-140, RELATING TO EXCEPTIONS FROM PRIVATE SECURITY AND INVESTIGATION AGENCY LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO CLARIFY THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THESE REQUIREMENTS.

- 3/26/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Erickson, Bradley
- 3/27/2024 - Debate adjourned
- 3/28/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Rivers
- 3/28/2024 - Amended
- 3/28/2024 - Read second time
- 3/28/2024 - Roll call Yeas-103 Nays-0
- 3/28/2024 - Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day

HB4655: UNSTRUCTURED AND SELF-DIRECTED RECESS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Haddon, P)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-10-10, RELATING TO STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE, SO AS TO REQUIRE CERTAIN MANDATORY MINIMUM PERIODS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECESS IN FOUR-YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE EACH YEAR IN ADDITION TO OTHER CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS, AND TO PROVIDE RECESS PERIODS MUST BE HELD INDOORS DURING TIMES OF INCLEMENT WEATHER; TO REDESIGNATE ARTICLE 1 OF CHAPTER 10, TITLE 59 AS "PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY"; TO PROVIDE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL TAKE CERTAIN MEASURES TO CONFORM THEIR RESPECTIVE REGULATIONS AND RULES TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT; AND TO CLARIFY THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT PREVAIL TO THE EXTENT THEY CONFLICT WITH ANY SUCH REGULATIONS AND RULES.

- 3/26/2024 - Introduced and read first time
- 3/26/2024 - Referred to Committee Senate Education

HB4702: COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION INITIATIVE ACT

(Davis, S)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SOUTH CAROLINA COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION INITIATIVE ACT" BY ADDING SECTION 59-29-250 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPANSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS THROUGH THE CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A STATEWIDE COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION PLAN AND THE REQUIREMENT THAT EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL OFFERS AT LEAST ONE COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSE THAT MEETS CERTAIN CRITERIA, AND TO PROVIDE RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

- 3/26/2024 - House Education and Public Works, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)
- 3/26/2024 - House Committee recommends passage, as amended, Education and Public Works
- 3/27/2024 - Committee report House Education and Public Works: Favorable with amendment
- 3/28/2024 - Amended
- 3/28/2024 - Read second time
- 3/28/2024 - Roll call Yeas-101 Nays-5
- 3/28/2024 - Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day

HB4703: SOUTH CAROLINA STEM OPPORTUNITY ACT

(Davis, S)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SOUTH CAROLINA STEM OPPORTUNITY ACT" BY ADDING ARTICLE 17 TO CHAPTER 1, TITLE 13 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) COALITION, THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION FUND WITHIN

THE STATE TREASURY, AND THE SC STEM COALITION ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND TO PROVIDE THEIR RESPECTIVE PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS.

- 3/26/2024 - House Education and Public Works, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)
- 3/26/2024 - House Committee recommends passage, as amended, Education and Public Works
- 3/27/2024 - Committee report House Education and Public Works: Favorable with amendment
- 3/28/2024 - Amended
- 3/28/2024 - Read second time
- 3/28/2024 - Roll call Yeas-107 Nays-0
- 3/28/2024 - Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day

HB4548: EARNINGS LIMITATION

(Oremus, M)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 9-1-1790, RELATING TO THE EARNINGS LIMITATION FOR A RETIRED MEMBER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA RETIREMENT SYSTEM UPON THE RETURN TO COVERED EMPLOYMENT, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THIS LIMITATION DOES NOT APPLY TO MEMBERS WHO RETURN TO COVERED EMPLOYMENT AS A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER.

- 3/27/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor : Hart, Henderson-Myers
- 3/27/2024 - Amended
- 3/27/2024 - Read second time
- 3/27/2024 - Roll call Yeas-111 Nays-0
- 3/28/2024 - Read third time and sent to Senate

SB150: PRIVATE SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION

(Turner, R)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-63-100, RELATING TO NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SO AS TO PROVIDE LIMITED SITUATIONS IN WHICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ATTEND A PRIVATE OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY PARTICIPATE IN HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE SPORTS OFFERED AT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 59-63-100(A), RELATING TO DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO ADD DEFINITIONS FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL AND CHARTER SCHOOL.

- 3/27/2024 - Senate Education Subcommittee on S.150, S.161 and S.1173, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)
- 3/27/2024 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage Senate Education Subcommittee

SB161: PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL SPORTS

(Young, Jr., T)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-63-100, RELATING TO NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SO AS TO PROVIDE LIMITED SITUATIONS IN WHICH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ATTEND PRIVATE SCHOOLS MAY PARTICIPATE IN HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE SPORTS OFFERED AT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS; AND BY FURTHER AMENDING SECTION 59-63-100, RELATING TO PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT BY HOME SCHOOL, CHARTER SCHOOL, AND GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL STUDENTS, SO AS TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS.

- 3/27/2024 - Senate Education Subcommittee on S.150, S.161 and S.1173, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)
- 3/27/2024 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage, as amended, Senate Education Subcommittee

Introduction of Interest

Below are bills that were introduced 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. 1205: State Building Construction Energy Standards

Davis

Senator Tom Davis (R-Beaufort) introduced legislation to delete the exemption of compliance for a building designed, construction or rehabilitated and maintained in compliance with the Energy Independence and Sustainable Construction Act of 2007 regarding energy conservation plans.

This bill would also require any new state-owned building to comply with the latest edition of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Condition Engineers. Any new state-owned building over 15,000 square feet would be required to be commissioned by the third-party commission agent prior to final acceptance. This bill was referred to the Senate Medical Affairs Committee.

S. 1213: South Carolina Student Physical Privacy Act

Climer

Senators Wes Climer (R-York) and Josh Kimbrell (R-Spartanburg) introduced legislation to require every public school restroom and changing facility that is accessible by multiple persons at the same time be designated for use only by members of one sex. The public school with authority over that building would be required to ensure that all restrooms and changing facilities provide its users with privacy from members of the opposite sex.

Additionally, during any public school authorized-activity or event where students share overnight lodging, a student would not be allowed to share a bedroom or multioccupancy restroom with a member of the opposite sex, unless such persons are members of the same family, such as a parent, guardian, sibling, or grandparent. This bill was referred to the Senate Education Committee.

S. 1214: Hemp-derived Cannabinoids

Tedder

Senator Deon Tedder (D-Charleston) introduced legislation to regulate the sale and distribution of products containing a hemp-derived cannabinoid. This bill would establish an offense for a person knowingly selling or distributing a product containing a hemp-derived cannabinoid to a person who is under eighteen years of age or purchasing a product containing a hemp-derived cannabinoid on behalf of a person who is under eighteen years of age.

A person or entity that is in the business of manufacturing or selling products containing a hemp-derived cannabinoid in this State, including as a producer or retailer, would be required to obtain a license from the Department of Agriculture authorizing the person or entity to engage in that business prior to the commencement of business, as well as other requirements.

This bill also adds references to hemp-derived cannabinoids to tobacco-free school campus policies.

This bill was referred to the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

H. 5355: School Board Standardization and Health Care Act

Pendarvis

Representative Marvin Pendarvis (D-Charleston) introduced legislation to provide a minimum stipend of \$500 for all school board members in South Carolina for each month in which they convene and an additional \$50 per diem.

This bill would create an independent commission composed of two members of the majority party in the General Assembly and two members of the largest minority party in the General Assembly to convene once each decade to redistrict the boundaries for school board members.

This bill would also include school board members with the employees and retirees eligible for state health and dental insurance plans.

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

H. 5356: Laurens County

Gilliam

Representatives Doug Gilliam (R-Union) introduced legislation to provide the boards of trustees of School Districts 55 and 56 in Laurens County with total fiscal autonomy. This bill would eliminate an equalization formula for the imposition of school taxes for Schools Districts 55 and 56 in Laurens County.

This bill is currently residing in the House.

