



The Consortium of State School Boards Associations  
Weekly Education Report  
**LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON**

**NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

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*The COSSBA Education Report*, a weekly publication, provides an executive summary of public policy issues affecting American K-12 education and employment. **Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:**

1. **News, Publications, & Updates on COSSBA Policy Priorities**
  - **Child Nutrition**
    - **USDA Investing \$50M to Strengthen School Meals**: On Thursday, November 10, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service **launched** a new and innovative initiative for healthier school meals through a \$50 million grant opportunity that will support collaboration with the food industry to develop nutritious school meals for students.
2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
  - **Impact on State School Board Associations**
3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
  - **Education Leaders Examine Science of Learning in the Classroom**: On Wednesday, November 9, The Brookings Institute and the Center for Universal Education hosted a webinar titled, "Making schools work: How the science of learning can help students thrive." The webinar discussion centered on the release of **Making Schools Work: Bringing the Science of Learning to Joyful Classroom Practice**, a book written by teachers, school administrators, and scientists to create a model of learning that works for the classroom.
  - **AEI Looks at 2022 Midterms' Impact on Education Policy**: On Wednesday, November 9, The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) hosted an event titled, "What Will The 2022 Midterm Elections Mean for Education?" Participants

focused on the 2022 Reading and Math NAEP results and examined the prospect of bipartisan solutions going into the next congress and what those solutions may or may look like.

4. **New Publications**

• **2022 Across the Aisle Report: What Votes and Parents Want in Education**

*The Hunt Institute* (November, 2022)

America's ever-changing educational landscape inspired The Hunt Institute to explore whether parent and voter priorities had shifted since their **last report** was published. In partnership with Lake Research Partners, The Hunt Institute conducted an updated nationwide survey of parents and voters to hear their concerns, gauge their priorities, and establish a path forward for transforming America's education system for the better.

5. **In the News**

• **DeSantis, Conservatives Score More Florida School Board Wins**

*Politico* (November 8, 2022)

• **Early Returns: How is Education Fairing in the 2022 Midterms?**

*K-12 Dive* (November 9, 2022)

• **Question of the Month: What Should Districts' Cybersecurity Priorities Be?**

*K-12 Dive* (November 10, 2022)

6. **Weekly Calendar - What's coming up this week?**

- **Webinar: Starting and Sustaining Community Schools:** The Brookings Institute will host a webinar on "How district leaders start and sustain community schools."

*Monday, November 14*

- **Webinar: How Schools Are Helping Special Education Students Recover**

**From the Pandemic:** Education Week will host a forum to focus on the pandemic's impact on populations of students who sometimes receive less attention in broader conversations about special education. Education Week staff will talk with experts and working educators about how the pandemic complicated challenges for these students and what schools are doing to make up for lost time and services due to the pandemic.

*Wednesday, November 16*

7. **Future Hearings & Events**

- No future events of note.

8. **On The Floor of Congress This Week**

• **Senate Floor**

○ H.R. 7900: *National Defense Authorization Act*

○ Consideration of Judicial Nominees

• **House Floor**

○ S. 4524: *Speak Out Act*

- Both chambers will be hosting a new member orientation.

9. [Bills to Watch](#)
  - [H.R. 7309](#): Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022
10. [Important U.S. House and Senate Links](#)
11. [About BPAG](#)

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## 1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

### CHILD NUTRITION

#### USDA INVESTING \$50M TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOL MEALS

On Thursday, November 10, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service [launched](#) a new and innovative initiative for healthier school meals through a \$50 million grant opportunity that will support collaboration with the food industry to develop nutritious school meals for students. This launch follows through on a commitment made in the [administration's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#) and marks the second phase of USDA's \$100 million [Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative](#). "Building on the momentum from September's White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, we're investing in innovative solutions and challenging industry to partner with us to ensure every student has access to healthy school meals," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Competitive grants will be awarded to support and enhance the food supply chain for K-12 schools. **Grantees may include food producers, suppliers, and distributors; school districts; and community partners.** The grants will support schools' ability to access a wider variety of healthy, appealing products and promote innovation by food producers and suppliers, including local producers and small and disadvantaged businesses. The request for applications is open through February 1, 2023. For more information, see the [Request for Applications](#).

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## 2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

Nearly a week after the election, candidates, party leaders, advocates and citizens are still waiting for the final determinations regarding which party might control the House of Representatives, while it has been confirmed that the Democrats will at a minimum keep control of the Senate. As has been said repeatedly over the last week, the "red wave" anticipated by Congressional Republicans didn't materialize, and tight races are being decided by the slimmest of margins. Given the uncertainty surrounding the results and the pending leaderships decisions, it's difficult to create a comprehensive analysis of the election results and what they might mean for spending decisions in the current Congress or an education agenda in the next one. Though this means draconian cuts for education funding are probably less likely.

Republicans will surely pick up seats in the House, but how many remains to be seen. Current projects look like they could end up with 220 or 221 seats—a two or three vote majority. Even those guesstimates are handicapped with a +/- 7 seats disclaimer, which means leadership in the House isn't clinched by either party - yet. That hasn't stopped Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) from declaring victory for his party, his intentions to run for Speaker of the House, and [announcing a transition team](#). His Republican Caucus is disappointed in Tuesday's results, however, and there [could be a challenge](#) to his presumed leadership of a Republican-led House.

New member orientation begins this week, and a Republican leadership election is scheduled for Tuesday.

Following Democratic wins in Arizona and Nevada, Democrats have kept their majority in the Senate, along with Vice President Kamala Harris's tie-breaking vote. If the Democrats also win the December 6th Georgia Senate run-off, they would have 51 members. Overall, there was only one Senate seat flip following Pennsylvania Lt. Governor John Fetterman's (D) defeat of Mehmet Oz (R).

The Republicans in the Senate seem to also be pushing against leadership. On Friday, Senators Rick Scott (R-FL), Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Mike Lee (R-UT) circulated a letter calling for a delay in the leadership election, and asking candidates a broad range of questions about the management and policy preferences of the next Republican leader. The letter expresses disappointment in the mid-term results and says, in part, "[W]e propose that we postpone leadership elections until after we know who all our members will be and we all have a chance to hear from leadership candidates as to what type of collaborative conference governing model we should adopt."

Against the backdrop of pending results and inter- and intra-party bickering, advocates of every stripe are aware that the continuing resolution funding the federal government expires in just over a month. That's not a lot of time. Education advocates and others interested continue to press for higher spending levels while possible, but the clock is definitely ticking. There are a number of possibilities for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 spending: pass another continuing resolution to get government operations through the New Year; pass a year-long continuing resolution to fund agencies and programs at current levels; or, develop an omnibus spending bill that sets funding levels for agencies for the remainder of the fiscal year. Each option has supporters and detractors. It remains to be seen what kind of sway the supporters and detractors will have in coming weeks.

### **How does this impact State School Board Associations?**

While the ultimate outcome of the November elections are still somewhat unclear, in all likelihood the split decision and close outcome of the House will likely mean a better outcome for funding levels for education spending. However, it remains up-in-the air whether an FY 2023 omnibus funding bill will pass in the lame duck session, which begins this week, though the likelihood of that has probably increased. Given the very slim control Republicans would likely have, there is less incentive to push FY 2023 spending decisions into next Congress. A possible debt ceiling fight could also lead to caps on federal discretionary spending, similar to those implemented in 2011, which could have serious effects on overall spending for education programs. The clamor among Democratic leadership to address the debt ceiling before the end of this Congress is also growing but no path forward has been decided.

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### **3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington**

#### **EDUCATION LEADERS EXAMINE SCIENCE OF LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM**

On Wednesday, November 9, The Brookings Institute and the Center for Universal Education hosted a webinar titled, "Making schools work: How the science of learning can help students

thrive.” The event featured Pasi Sahlberg, an educator and author; Angela Duckworth, a professor psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and the co-founder of Character Lab; Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, a Stanley and Debra Lefkowitz faculty fellow in the Department of Psychology at Temple University; Carol Lautenbach, former assistant superintendent for teaching and learning design at Godfrey-Lee Public Schools in Michigan; Robert Pianta, dean and professor of early childhood education at the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Virginia; and Eduardo Escallon Largacha, founder of the Spanish Center and dean of the School of Education at Universidad de los Andes in Colombia. The webinar discussion centered on the release of *Making Schools Work: Bringing the Science of Learning to Joyful Classroom Practice*, a book written by teachers, school administrators, and scientists to create a model of learning that works for the classroom. *Making Schools Work* examines how to reimagine education systems that work for all children; one that is culturally responsive, inclusive, effective, and joyful. Hirsh-Pasek and Sahlberg opened the event with a conversation on what is and is not working in schools and in the classroom. Sahlberg referenced the global pandemic’s impact on school-aged children and subsequent declines in literacy and math, stating that “the picture is very grim... and it’s difficult to find good news when we look at education.” Even so, “what’s going wrong” cannot be answered by looking at the past couple years, Sahlberg explained. “I think we need to go back to the foundations of education” while considering its social aspects as well, Sahlberg said. Following the opening conversation, a panel discussion between Hirsh-Pasek and her colleagues offered insights through a scientific lens. Lautenbach spoke to her experience galvanizing education reform in Michigan, explaining how Godfrey-Lee Public Schools addressed numerous inequities that persisted: gaps in traditional measures of achievement, discipline referrals, attendance, and graduation rates. After those inequities became clear, Lautenbach and her colleagues, as well as students and families, created a system that was based on students’ potential strengths and interests. From there, she explained, “we began a design thinking journey” and discovered the joyful strengths-based system that she examined in *Making Schools Work*. Escallon elaborated on how practice can influence policy and research, bringing those on the ground into high-level decision making and explained how policymakers, caregivers, and teachers need to work together on understanding the “science of learning and development” in order to implement meaningful learning with quality interaction. Pianta, during closing remarks, turned to teachers, stating that educational professionals should be more empowered and restrictions on them should be loosened. At the same time, “their knowledge of contemporary child adolescence and development has to increase rapidly.” Lautenbach added that educators, under the systems and processes analyzed in her book and highlighted throughout the webinar, are becoming “curriculum designers,” rather than “content deliverers.” An archived recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).

### **AEI LOOKS AT 2022 MIDTERMS’ IMPACT ON EDUCATION POLICY**

On Wednesday, November 9, The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) hosted an event titled, “What Will The 2022 Midterm Elections Mean for Education?” The event featured Derrell Bradford, president of 50CAN; Frederick M. Hess, director of education policy studies at AEI; Bethan Little, principal at EducationCounsel; Nat Malkus, deputy director of education policy studies at AEI; and Andy J. Rotherman, cofounder of Bellwether Education. Bradford suggested that policymakers are not realizing the severity of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results, claiming “billions of dollars were printed” without a clear and cohesive strategy around where those investments should be made in response to the critical learning loss

grade school students experienced. Bradford emphasized the gravity of the situation and implied that the learning loss impacts will be apparent for the next twenty years. Quoting former Secretary of Education Bill Bennet, Bradford stated, “The 8th grade math results mean that the next generation of American scientists will be a smaller one...and no one [wanted] to [address] it ahead of the midterms.” Even so, Bradford suggested that the American education system is heading in a positive direction due to family involvement and turnout in the midterm elections. He concluded that Republicans will look at Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in the 118th Congress as a solution moving forward. Hess stated that if Republicans take control of the House of Representatives, “there will be a lot of oversight and investigation, looking at where the COVID funds are going, pandemic response, Centers for Disease Control guidance relating to schools reopening, and the role of [teachers unions]...” Hess also expressed that while education is an important issue for both parties, he does not foresee bipartisan progress on education policy and legislation taking place over the next two years. Little addressed survey data showing that Americans “trusted Democrats on investing in schools and Republicans on improving schools,” which suggests that Americans do not tie investment to improvement, she asserted. In exploring issues around ‘school choice’, Little proposed that Democrats will need to brainstorm strategic investments in public education to determine what it is that schools and students desperately need. On issues that neither party seems able to grasp, Rotherman confronted challenges with schools providing a sense of belonging and inclusion, while simultaneously struggling with how to address gender identity and other controversial topics with young children. “Whichever party can find its way to invest and improve its agenda [on education] will probably have a position that will resonate with a lot of voters,” Rotherman asserted. An archived recording of the event can be found [here](#).

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#### **4. New Publications**

##### **2022 Across the Aisle Report: What Votes and Parents Want in Education**

*The Hunt Institute* (November, 2022)

America’s ever-changing educational landscape inspired The Hunt Institute to explore whether parent and voter priorities had shifted since their [last report](#) was published. In partnership with Lake Research Partners, The Hunt Institute conducted an updated nationwide survey of parents and voters to hear their concerns, gauge their priorities, and establish a path forward for transforming America’s education system for the better.

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#### **5. In the News**

##### **DeSantis, Conservatives Score More Florida School Board Wins**

*Politico* (November 8, 2022)

##### **Early Returns: How is Education Fairing in the 2022 Midterms?**

*K-12 Dive* (November 9, 2022)

##### **Question of the Month: What Should Districts’ Cybersecurity Priorities Be?**

*K-12 Dive* (November 10, 2022)

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## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

### 6. Weekly Calendar

**Key:** E&S – Elementary & Secondary; H – Higher Education; D – Disability Policy

#### Monday, November 14, 2022

##### **Webinar: Starting and Sustaining Community Schools (E&S)**

**Subject:** The Brookings Institute will host a webinar on “How district leaders start and sustain community schools.”

**Participants:** Rebecca Winthrop, director, Center for Universal Education, Brookings; Reuben Jacobson, director, education policy and leadership program, American University; Adrienne Battle, director, Metro Nashville Public Schools, TN; Dan Domenech, executive director, AASA; Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, superintendent, Hartford Public Schools; and Ingrid Williams-Horton, director of community schools, Prince George’s County Public Schools.

**Time:** 10:00 AM

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

#### Wednesday, November 16, 2022

##### **Webinar: How Schools Are Helping Special Education Students Recover From the Pandemic (E&S)**

**Subject:** Education Week will host a forum to focus on the pandemic’s impact on populations of students who sometimes receive less attention in broader conversations about special education. Education Week staff will talk with experts and working educators about how the pandemic complicated challenges for these students and what schools are doing to make up for lost time and services due to the pandemic.

**Time:** 2:00 PM

**Registration:** Register [here](#).

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### 7. Future Hearings and Events

No future events of note.

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### 8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

#### **Senate Floor:**

**H.R.7900:** *National Defense Authorization Act*

Consideration of judicial nominees

#### **House Floor:**

**S. 4524:** *Speak Out Act*

Both chambers will be hosting a new member orientation.

## 9. Bills to Watch

### Authorization Bills

H.R. 7309 *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022*

Sponsor: Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA)

(5/17/22 Passed by House; 4/5/22 Passed by House Ed and Labor Committee;  
3/31/22 Introduced in House)

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## 10. Links for Up-to-Date Information on Hearings, Legislation, and Events

[U.S. House and Senate 2022 Schedule](#)

[U.S. Department of Education](#)

[U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions](#)

[U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor](#)

[U.S. Senate Budget Committee](#)

[U.S. House Budget Committee](#)

[Congressional Budget Office](#)

[Federal legislative information](#)

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### 11. About BPAG

[Bose Public Affairs Group](#) is a full-service government affairs and public relations consulting firm that has built a reputation for producing results. We partner with clients committed to excellence in education and other social services to achieve policy and advocacy success by:

- leveraging our expertise and passion;
- strategizing intelligent solutions; and,
- Creating meaningful impact.

Our team includes long-term insiders in education policy from Pre-K through higher education, innovative thinkers and savvy strategists that provide a comprehensive array of customized client services. We have the knowledge, skills, and relationships that are necessary for successful advocacy at all levels. From grassroots to grass tops and everything in between, our broad-based legislative practice approaches every project with the same degree of determination and professionalism. BPAG provides expertise in a variety of services:

- Government Relations
- Research and Analysis
- Advocacy Training
- Association Management
- Strategic Communications
- Policy Events

For more information, please visit our [website](#).

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