The Consortium of State School Boards Associations Weekly Education Report

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Jared Solomon, Editor
jsolomon@bosepublicaffairs.com

Della Cronin, Editor
dcronin@bosepublicaffairs.com

Bob Moran, Editor
rmoran@bosepublicaffairs.com

Sarah Lamson, Deputy Editor
slamson@bosepublicaffairs.com

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**
   - **Broadband Connectivity & E-Rate**
     - **FCC Proposes Scaling Back or Eliminating $2 Billion Program:** On Thursday, the Federal Communications Commission voted 2-1 to issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeking comment on significant changes to the E-Rate program, including the possibility of limiting or eliminating it entirely.

2. **Budget and Appropriations Wrap-up**
   - **Impact on State School Board Associations**

3. **In Brief – Last Week in Washington**
   - **ED Approves Vermont Waiver for Greater Federal Funding Flexibility**: The Department of Education approved Vermont's Returning Education to the States Waiver, making it the fourth state—joining Iowa, Louisiana, and Indiana—to receive this type of flexibility over federal education funding.
   - **House Panel Explore Modern Apprenticeships as Alternative Pathway:** On Wednesday, the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee held a hearing on "modern apprenticeships" to examine how earn-and-learn models can address skills gaps, rising college costs, and rapid changes in the labor market.
   - **Democrats Move to Impeach ED Secretary Over Dismantling Plan:** Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), a senior member of the House Education and

Workforce Committee, has introduced three articles of impeachment against Education Secretary Linda McMahon, making McMahon the first U.S. education secretary to face formal impeachment charges.

4. **New Publications**
   - **Review of U.S. Department of Education Changes in Staffing and Operation**
     U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General (June 2026)
     This review describes changes in staffing**,** operations, contracts, and grants at the U.S. Department of Education from January 20, 2025, through March 31, 2025.

5. **In the News**
   - **LAUSD Approves Strict Limits On Screen Time For Students. Here's What You Need To Know**
     ABC 7 News (June 24, 2026)
   - **Los Angeles Schools Superintendent Alberto Carvalho Resigns Amid FBI Probe**
     Fox News (June 22, 2026)
   - **Education Department Layoffs Hindered Congressionally Mandated Activities, Inspector General Reports**
     Government Executive (June 23, 2026)
   - **Judge Blocks Trump Plan That Would Limit Graduate Student Loans In Nursing And Other Fields**
     AP News (June 25, 2026)
   - **Scott Condemns ED for Approving Indiana's K-12 Funding Waiver**
     Congressman Bobby Scott (June 26, 2026)
   - **Trump Immigration Policies Fueled Absenteeism Uptick, Research Says**
     K-12 Dive (June 25, 2025)

6. **Weekly Calendar - What's coming up this week?**
   - **AI and The Future of Teaching and Learning**: The Center for Universal Education at Brookings will hold a virtual discussion on how generative AI is reshaping teaching, learning, and student development.
     Monday at 11am ET
   - **AI and The Future of Teaching and Learning**: The Center for Universal Education at Brookings will hold a virtual discussion on how generative AI is reshaping teaching, learning, and student development.
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7. **Weekly Calendar - Future Events**
   - **Inside the FCC's E-Rate Proposal**: The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition will hold a webinar explaining the FCC's draft proposal on E-Rate, including questions about screen time, rural and urban funding, and the future of the program, and will walk attendees through how to file a comment with the FCC.
     July 16 at 2pm ET

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

- **Senate floor**
- **House floor**
  - **H.R. H.R. 8884** – Removing Barriers to Work for Disabled Americans Act
  - **H.R. 8800** – National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2027
  - **H.R. 8595** – National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027
  - **H. Res. 1383** – Commemorating the one-year anniversary of the enactment of the Working Families Tax Cuts.
  - **Legislation that may be Considered:**
    - **H. Con. Res. 108** – Directing the President pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution to remove United States Armed Forces from hostilities in Lebanon.
    - Additional legislative items are possible.

9. **Important U.S. House and Senate Links**

10. **About BPAG**

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1. COSSBA Policy Priorities

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY & E-RATE

FCC PROPOSES SCALING BACK OR ELIMINATING $2 BILLION PROGRAM

On Thursday, the Federal Communications Commission voted 2-1 to issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeking comment on significant changes to the E-Rate program, including the possibility of limiting or eliminating it entirely. Chairman Brendan Carr argued that the program, which provides discounts on telecommunications services and equipment for schools and libraries, should be reexamined in light of increased student screen time, noting that more than half of students now use computers for up to four hours each day. Carr also pointed to the substantial expansion of broadband access since the program's creation in 1996, questioning whether E-Rate has fulfilled its original mission and whether continued funding remains consistent with Congress's intent. Commissioner Anna Gomez strongly opposed the proposal, arguing that it mischaracterizes a screen-time inquiry to advance unwarranted proposals to terminate or dramatically narrow the program. She maintained that decisions about student screen time belong with parents, educators, and other levels of government—not the FCC—and that Congress never intended the agency to revisit the program's scope based on educational philosophy. Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) also criticized the proposal, warning that it could undermine educational equity and reverse decades of established policy. Advocacy organizations, including the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition, Public Knowledge, and the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, voiced similar concerns, emphasizing E-Rate's role in connecting more than 100,000 schools and 11,000 libraries nationwide. This NPRM follows last year's decision by the Carr-led FCC to eliminate E-Rate funding for Wi-Fi hotspot lending and school bus Wi-Fi service. The

FCC is expected to make a final decision in the coming months, and legal challenges are considered likely if the agency moves to significantly reduce or eliminate the program.

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2. Budget and Appropriations Wrap-Up

The annual appropriations process took a back seat last week as larger political and fiscal disputes increasingly shaped the outlook for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 spending bills. The biggest development came in the Senate, where the Appropriations Committee abruptly postponed what would have been its first full committee markup of FY 2027 appropriations legislation. The committee had been scheduled to consider four bills—including the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) bill, which funds the National Science Foundation, NASA, the Department of Justice, and numerous education and research activities—but the markup was canceled before lawmakers could convene.

The postponement reflects continuing disagreement between Republicans and Democrats over overall discretionary spending levels. Senate Appropriations Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) has repeatedly emphasized her desire to move regular appropriations bills on a bipartisan basis, while Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) has argued that negotiations remain far apart on topline funding levels. Earlier this month, Murray remarked that the two sides remained "miles apart" on an overall agreement, and the committee has now postponed markups twice as those negotiations have failed to produce a compromise.

The Senate's delay stands in sharp contrast to the House, which has continued advancing its appropriations work. The House has now passed two FY 2027 appropriations bills on the floor—Military Construction–Veterans Affairs and Agriculture—while the Appropriations Committee has completed action on all 12 annual spending bills, leaving House leadership to determine whether and when additional measures will receive floor consideration.

At the same time, events outside the appropriations process threw much of Congress's legislative agenda into uncertainty. President Donald Trump unexpectedly canceled the signing ceremony for a bipartisan housing package that had passed both chambers with overwhelming support. Instead, the President announced that he would withhold his signature until Congress advances his broader election legislation. The decision disrupted legislative planning in both chambers and complicated discussions about what Congress can realistically accomplish before the August recess.

The dispute also illustrates how the President's broader policy priorities increasingly intersect with fiscal policy. Republican leaders continue discussing the possibility of pursuing a third reconciliation package later this year to advance additional elements of the Administration's agenda. While reconciliation would allow certain budget-related legislation to pass the Senate with a simple majority, any new package would still have to satisfy the Senate's procedural rules and win nearly unanimous Republican support. Given competing legislative priorities, growing concerns over deficits, and narrow congressional majorities, the path forward for a third reconciliation bill remains uncertain.

Appropriators also received a new challenge last week when the Trump Administration formally requested approximately $87.6 billion in emergency supplemental funding, most of it tied to military operations involving Iran. According to Office of Management and Budget Director Russ

Vought, roughly $67 billion would support Department of Defense operations, including munitions procurement, operational costs, and classified activities.

News outlets have also reported that Senate appropriators are interested in considering a broader supplemental package rather than limiting any legislation solely to Iran-related funding. Although education funding has not emerged as part of those discussions, a broader supplemental could theoretically provide another vehicle for addressing pressing bipartisan funding needs that fall outside the regular appropriations process. Examples include the growing Pell Grant funding shortfall, disaster-related education needs, and other emerging priorities that may prove difficult to accommodate within the FY 2027 discretionary spending caps. At the same time, any supplemental package is likely to face significant political headwinds, both because of opposition to the Iran conflict and bipartisan support would almost certainly be necessary for enactment.

Looking ahead, appropriators will continue oversight work even as formal markups remain on hold. The House Appropriations Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Subcommittee will hold an oversight hearing tomorrow. The sole witness will be Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Russ Vought. While the hearing will broadly examine OMB's budget and management responsibilities, members are expected to question Vought about the Administration's proposed revisions to the Uniform Guidance governing federal grants—changes that have generated considerable concern among universities, nonprofit organizations, state governments, and other recipients of federal financial assistance.

Congress will soon pause for the Independence Day recess, although Washington's attention has already begun shifting toward the nationwide America 250 celebration marking the nation's 250th anniversary—a series of commemorations that has become increasingly visible (and audible) throughout the capital. That excitement added to World Cup soccer and the success of the USA Men’s team provide some distraction to advocates and lawmakers. For now.

How does this impact State School Board Associations?

Federal education funding remains uncertain. The delay in the Senate appropriations process increases the likelihood that FY 2027 education funding decisions will be pushed later into the year, potentially requiring a continuing resolution and delaying clarity on federal resources available to states and school districts.

School boards should also monitor discussions around a potential third Reconciliation package and proposed changes to the federal Uniform Guidance governing grants. While no additional education funding has been proposed yet, Reconciliation could become a vehicle for certain education priorities and changes to federal grant rules could affect how districts administer and comply with federally funded programs.

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3. In Brief – Last Week in Washington

ED APPROVES VERMONT WAIVER FOR GREATER FEDERAL FUNDING FLEXIBILITY

The Department of Education approved Vermont's Returning Education to the States Waiver, making it the fourth state—joining Iowa, Louisiana, and Indiana—to receive this type of flexibility over federal education funding. The waiver allows Vermont to consolidate more than $4 million in state-level activity funds across three Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

programs through fiscal year 2029: Title II-A, which supports effective instruction; Title IV-A, which funds student support and academic enrichment; and Title IV-B, which supports 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Collectively, the four states with approved waivers now account for more than $80 million in consolidated federal funding. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon framed the approval as part of the Trump Administration's broader effort to reduce federal bureaucracy and give states greater authority to direct education funding more effectively. The initiative stems from Executive Order 14242, signed in March 2025. Vermont Education Secretary Zoie Saunders said the waiver will enable the state to take a more coordinated approach to implementing evidence-based practices, particularly those aimed at improving literacy, math achievement, attendance, and student engagement, while also reducing administrative burdens on state staff. Don Tinney, president of the Vermont chapter of the National Education Association, acknowledged that the waiver affects a relatively small portion of the federal funding Vermont's public schools receive. However, he cautioned that without adequate guardrails, some students and families could lose access to needed resources. Tinney also expressed broader concerns about the Trump Administration's approach to public education and urged the Vermont Agency of Education to proceed cautiously as it implements the new flexibility.

HOUSE PANEL EXPLORES MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS AS ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY

On Wednesday, the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee held a hearing on "modern apprenticeships" to examine how earn-and-learn models can address skills gaps, rising college costs, and rapid changes in the labor market. Chairman Burgess Owens (R-UT) argued that a four-year degree should not be the only path to economic mobility and highlighted the Trump Administration's efforts to expand apprenticeships into emerging fields, including artificial intelligence and advanced technologies. Ranking Member Alma Adams (D-NC) praised registered apprenticeships as the "gold standard" for workforce training, citing their strong completion and employment outcomes, while criticizing what she described as inconsistent Republican support for funding and program quality. Witnesses emphasized that apprenticeships are expanding well beyond the traditional skilled trades. Caliber Collision highlighted its Registered Technician Apprentice Program, which supports between 800 and 1,800 apprentices at any given time across 41 states. The program combines paid on-the-job training with mentoring and has graduated approximately 3,000 debt-free apprentices nationwide. A Texas analysis found that each apprentice gains more than $500,000 in lifetime earnings while generating more than $3 million in broader societal benefits. Reach University's president described the institution's "apprenticeship degree" model, in which working adults begin in paid positions, earn academic credit for job-based learning, pay no more than $75 per month out of pocket, and advance into higher-paying roles with the same schools and hospitals that employ them. John Ladd of Jobs for the Future urged Congress to modernize and expand registered apprenticeships through a bipartisan reauthorization of the National Apprenticeship Act. He called for clearer roles across the apprenticeship ecosystem, stronger connections among pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship, degree apprenticeship programs, and a long-term growth strategy to reach 1 million active apprentices. A representative from Independent Electrical Contractors highlighted the industry's need for approximately 80,000 new electricians each year and described how group sponsorship, AI-enabled tutoring, and wraparound support services are helping small contractors participate without lowering training standards. Members of both parties agreed that expanding apprenticeships will be critical to building resilient talent pipelines in

advanced manufacturing, information technology, cybersecurity, healthcare, and skilled trades. A comprehensive summary prepared by BPAG is linked here.

DEMOCRATS MOVE TO IMPEACH ED SECRETARY OVER DISMANTLING PLAN

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), a senior member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, has introduced three articles of impeachment against Education Secretary Linda McMahon, making McMahon the first U.S. education secretary to face formal impeachment charges. The resolution alleges that McMahon acted with "willful intent" to dismantle the Department of Education by unlawfully transferring more than 100 programs and major offices—including those overseeing special education and civil rights enforcement—to other federal agencies without congressional approval. An inspector general report released this week found that the department has reduced its workforce by roughly 40 percent and canceled more than $1 billion in grants and contracts, significantly limiting its ability to carry out congressionally mandated responsibilities. Bonamici's articles of impeachment accuse McMahon of refusing to comply with federal law by transferring statutory responsibilities to the Departments of Health and Human Services and Justice, making false statements during her Senate confirmation hearing by pledging to faithfully administer congressionally appropriated funds, and breaching the public trust by withholding funding for migrant education, afterschool programs, and community schools. McMahon has defended the changes as part of an effort to reduce the federal bureaucracy and "put students, parents, and taxpayers first." House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman Tim Walberg (R-MI) dismissed the impeachment effort as "political theater." While the impeachment of a cabinet official is historically rare and the resolution is widely viewed as unlikely to advance, it is expected to focus renewed attention on the Department of Education's restructuring and the broader debate over the federal government's role in education.

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4. New Publications

Review of U.S. Department of Education Changes in Staffing and Operations
U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Inspector General (June 2026)
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5. In the News

LAUSD approves strict limits on screen time for students. Here's what you need to know
ABC 7 News (June 24, 2026)

Los Angeles schools superintendent Alberto Carvalho resigns amid FBI probe
Fox News (June 22, 2026)

Education Department layoffs hindered congressionally mandated activities, inspector general reports
Government Executive (June 23, 2026)

Judge blocks Trump plan that would limit graduate student loans in nursing and other fields
AP News (June 25, 2026)

Scott Condemns ED for Approving Indiana's K-12 Funding Waiver
Congressman Bobby Scott (June 26, 2026)

Trump immigration policies fueled absenteeism uptick, research says
K-12 Dive (June 25, 2025)

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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

6. Weekly Calendar

Monday, June 29, 2026

Webinar: AI and the Future of Teaching and Learning
Subject: The Center for Universal Education at Brookings will hold a virtual discussion on how generative AI is reshaping teaching, learning, and student development.
Participants: Michael B. Horn, adjunct lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education, and co-founder, Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation (moderator); Andreas Schleicher, director, Education and Skills, OECD; and Rebecca Winthrop, director, Center for Universal Education, and senior fellow, Global Economy and Development, Brookings.
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Contact: Watch online **here.**

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7. Future Hearings and Events

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Webinar: Inside the FCC's E-Rate Proposal
Subject: The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition will hold a webinar explaining the FCC's draft proposal on E-Rate, including questions about screen time, rural and urban funding, and the future of the program, and will walk attendees through how to file a comment with the FCC.
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Contact: Register **here.**

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8. On The Floor of Congress This Week

Senate Floor

House Floor

H.R. 8884 – Removing Barriers to Work for Disabled Americans Act *(Sponsored by Rep. Scott (GA) / Ways and Means Committee)*

H.R. 8800 – National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2027 *(Sponsored by Rep. Rogers (AL) / Armed Services Committee)*

H.R. 8595 – National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2027 *(Sponsored by Rep. Diaz-Balart / Appropriations Committee)*

H. Res. 1383 – Commemorating the one-year anniversary of the enactment of the Working Families Tax Cuts. *(Sponsored by Rep. Van Duyne / Ways and Means Committee)*

Legislation that may be Considered:

H. Con. Res. 108 – Directing the President pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution to remove United States Armed Forces from hostilities in Lebanon. *(Sponsored by Rep. Tlaib / Foreign Affairs Committee)*

Additional legislative items are possible.

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

U.S. House and Senate 2026 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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10. 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
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- Advocacy Training

- Association Management
- Strategic Communications
- Policy Events

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