



Missouri Equity Education Partnership-Action mobilizes those who support diversity, equity, and inclusion for ALL! Please see the calls to action outlined below and join us in bending the arc towards equity ensuring Missouri schools are a safe, welcoming space where folks can learn all things.

CALLS TO ACTION

1. CONTACT ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES!

Contact the Regulatory Oversight Committee before Tues 4/9, 4:30pm to oppose [SB 727 \(Koenig\)](#), the education omnibus, and protect public education based on these [talking points](#).

Contact the Legislative Oversight Committee by Tues 4/9, 3:30pm to vote against [SJR 74 \(Coleman\)](#) and preserve direct democracy.

ALSO [Call YOUR representatives and urge them to oppose BOTH of these bills.](#)

2. [Submit written testimony to the Special Committee on Education Reform!](#)

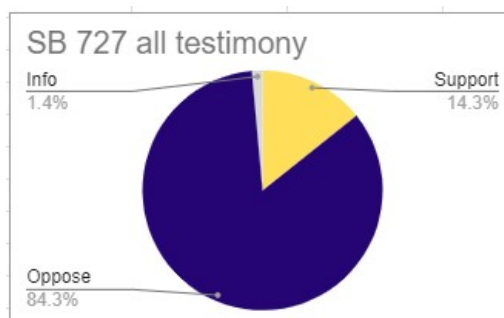
[HB 2938 \(Baker\)](#) will allow anyone with an associate degree to be certified by individual districts.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS VISIT

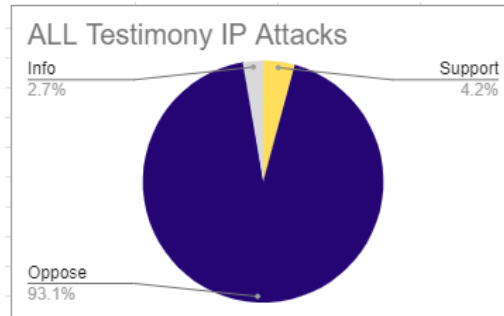
<https://www.missouriequityaction.com/>

RECAP OF LAST WEEK

The Special Committee on Education Reform voted SB 727 out of committee on a party-line vote of 6-2 with Chair Davidson and Rep Mark Sharp absent. This bill has had overwhelming opposition, reflected in testimony in both the House and the Senate. Additionally, six education organizations have drafted a succinct letter of opposition. (Resources section below.) This is the education omnibus with voucher tax credit and charter expansion at its core, and has faced overwhelming opposition from public school advocates and homeschooling advocates as well. The graphic reflects all testimony from the House and Senate. All of the additional ornaments can be found in the [167 pages](#) of this “Christmas Tree.” It is in oversight. Please see the call to action above.



The Initiative Petition process saw attacks on two fronts. First, the Elections and Elected Official Committee voted out SJR 74 (Coleman) along party lines 12-5 with one Republican absence. It is in oversight. Please see the call to action above. Additionally, the House perfected and voted to the Senate [HJR 86 \(Black\)](#). This mirrors SJR 74 with the “ballot candy” intact. This includes scare tactics prohibiting non-citizens’ ability to vote and precluding foreign interference; our law already prohibits these from happening. It was voted out 106-49, along party lines. It will likely be assigned to a committee early this week. Again, testimony against all IP bills has been overwhelmingly opposed to changing it. The graphic reflects all testimony from the House and Senate.



The Elementary and Secondary Education Committee originally scheduled a second hearing on [HB 2184 \(Haffner\)](#) to combine it with Rep. Paula Brown’s [HB 1851](#) as directed by an oversight committee. Instead, it was switched to executive session only and the bill was voted out a second time exactly as it had been voted out the first time because a way forward combining the bill could not be found. Rep. Brown dropped her better bill from the discussions. The actual vote has not been reported so the bill has not been returned to oversight yet.

The House Special Committee on Governmental Accountability voted HB 1650 (Christensen) out of committee. This is the anti-drag bill. We oppose this bill and will continue to monitor it, but we believe there are other priorities for the House at this time and it is unlikely to move forward.

The House also passed budget bills over to the Senate. There were no cuts to programs we monitor, but there was no additional funding either, despite several opportunities offered by the Democrats. They also sent HJR 86, seeking to end the IP process as Missouri has known it for a century, to the Senate.

The Senate third read several bills to the House, but none that we have been monitoring. There was also an hours-long filibuster on Wednesday night which prevented further action that evening.

Expected Actions This Week

Due to the solar eclipse, the House and the Senate will hold technical sessions on Monday, April 8 at 10am and 4pm respectively. Most committees that regularly meet on Mondays have been moved to later in the week; the Senate has scheduled two hearings (Judiciary and Elections) for Monday as of publication of this update. The [FRA \(Federal Reimbursement Allowance\)](#) still looms large.

COMMITTEES

Only one committee has scheduled a pertinent hearing as of publication of this update.

House Special Committee on Educational Reform, Wed Apr 10, 2024 12pm, Joint Hearing Room 117

[Watch the hearing](#)

[HB 2938 \(Baker\)](#) would create waivers for some DESE regulations if they show success. This bill also allows districts to grant certifications for anyone with an associate degree, placing them on the district salary schedule, grant tenure, and contribute to PSRS. The certificate would not need to be renewed. *We oppose this bill.* [Please submit written testimony.](#) This was originally scheduled for 3/25.

FLOOR ACTION AND DEBATE

Predicting Floor Debate in either chamber is difficult. We monitor both calendars frequently. We expect that once SB 727 and SJR 74 are out of oversight, they will move to the House floor. If they are amended in any way, there will be another vote required in the Senate and likely a conference committee convened, requiring further votes in both chambers.

These links to follow the calendars take you to the current day (or next day if the chamber has adjourned).

[House](#)

[Senate](#)

Last week, we saw concrete evidence that grassroots activism makes a difference and can absolutely turn the tide. We are still celebrating school board elections around the state which rejected hate and voted for students rights to attend diverse and inclusive schools, and bent the arc closer equity and justice.

Communities put equity candidates on boards all over the state; one municipality saw a clean sweep and changed their city council to a more equitable and diverse board in this single election! We are making a difference.

There are six weeks left before the end of session on May 17, and this week is short. Hearings will slow down because there is not really enough time to get things through both chambers. Our focus will shift to close monitoring of the Chamber debates, and sometimes things happen quickly, unexpectedly, and sometimes at odd hours of the day or night. It is not uncommon to send out updates on individual asks. Please know, though, that every email, every piece of written testimony, every share of the calls to action and updates moves the needle in some small way. We need everyone to keep bending the arc towards justice.

Please continue for resources.

If you have not joined our companion organization, please [join Missouri Equity Education Partnership](#) and receive alerts via email. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#).

RESOURCES

Talking points for SB 727 - Education Omnibus

ONE LINE TALKING POINTS

- Vouchers violate century old American/democratic principles of taxes for public services
- Vouchers violate centuries old founding principles of church/state separation.
- Vouchers send public tax dollars to non-public schools.
- Vouchers go to non-public schools with little to no accountability.
- Vouchers create a double standard of accountability between public and non-public schools.
- Vouchers could reduce every district's revenue.
- Vouchers take students out of neighborhood schools and teachers and programs will be cut
- Voucher states experience devastating expansion costs after just a few years in place.
- Voucher costs could lead to cuts from other state departments.
- SB 727 includes pieces of others' bills to sway opponents, Democrats included.
- Voucher/Charter expansion is EVERYBODY'S problem, coming soon to your area.
- SB 727 Is detrimental to the majority in our districts, community, and livelihoods.

LONGER TALKING POINTS/ANALYSIS

- **VOUCHERS** are tax dollars to private/religious and hit on all districts' revenue AND enrollment creating a ripple effect impacting all stakeholders. This bill is a voucher tax credit bill. It started as a REFUNDABLE tax credit, meaning folks could get back more than their tax burden. It is now NON-REFUNDABLE meaning the amount can't exceed the burden, but it still takes revenue from the coffers, and could change back easily.
- **MAJOR STATE CUTS WILL BE NECESSARY.** State cuts to things like social services will be needed to fund the \$500M, and will affect the entire state and especially underserved communities' services.
- **VOUCHERS AND CHARTERS WILL EXPAND** in future years. This has happened in other states. They start out voluntary and move to mandatory. This current bill expands charters into *districts who have not held a local vote or had local input on to desirability*. According to the Iowa Rural Education Association in 2023 before they passed vouchers, "With recent expansions to unlimited open enrollment to any public school in Iowa, combined with Iowa's current public investment in private religious schools and homeschool exceeding \$80 million, even small demonstration programs or pilot projects should be resisted; the camel's nose under the tent is soon followed by the humps." The 2024 platform cites dozens of financial issues, costs, and implications now that the legislation passed and the plan is in place.
- **THE GOOD STUFF WILL BE BACK.** This bill has many provisions that are desirable and common sense. If those other bills are so good as to sway legislators now, they'll be back in the future, and we can remind them, "You supported this before!"
- For additional information on school choice, please visit [School Choice Fast Facts and Statistics](#)

Thank you to Jere Hochman for the information behind this document. It is mostly his with some editorial changes.

Letter to elected officials from education associations



Dear Members of the General Assembly,

We are writing to express our opposition to the passage of SB 727 as it stands today. Our coalition is made up of educators, administrators, support staff, principals, school board members, and people involved in every aspect and level of public education—from the janitor’s closet to the lunchroom to the classroom to the ball field to the principal’s office, district office, and local board of education.

At its core, SB 727 aims to expand the existing voucher system introduced in 2021, coupled with a provision allowing charter schools to be established within any Boone County school district without sponsorship by the local school board. Although amendments made during Senate floor action have introduced some positive elements, our overarching concerns with the bill remain significant.

As educators, we are concerned the bill moves the state in the wrong direction by expanding unaccountable charter schools into more communities without consulting the local school board while also expanding vouchers that divert resources away from students in neighborhood public schools in favor of a few students attending private institutions with little oversight or accountability.

Acknowledging the Senate’s efforts to increase state funding for public schools—through adjustments to the basic funding formula and incorporating provisions from other bills of this session—we remain cautious. The perfected bill’s revised fiscal note, estimating a \$467 million rise in state costs upon full implementation, ignites concern over the sustainability of these increases. This is especially pertinent given the calculated adjustments for the upcoming fiscal years under MSIP 6 and the impending reduction in revenues due to forthcoming enacted tax cuts.

As educators and parents, we oppose SB 727 because we are deeply committed to the well-being and future success of all students. The bill’s unfunded mandates risk placing local school districts in difficult positions, possibly forcing them to increase taxes or cut critical services. Such measures would undermine the comprehensive quality of education and the supportive learning environments crucial for student growth and achievement.

Respectfully submitted,

**Missouri American Federation of
Teachers**

**Missouri Association of Elementary
School Principals**

**Missouri Association of School
Administrators**

Missouri National Education Association

Missouri School Boards Association

Missouri Parent Teachers Association