

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. The House brings Drag center stage! The House Special Committee on Public Policy is hearing on Wednesday, Mar 7 at noon in the Joint Hearing Room, 117.

[HB 1650 \(Christensen\)](#) will classify businesses that allow drag performances as sexually explicit businesses therefore facing restrictions imposed on such businesses. Anyone who participates in a drag performance open to the public at a child-friendly venue will be subject to felony charges. ***We, along with our partner organization, PROMO, oppose this bill.***

Join us in Jefferson City on Wednesday! [Sign up here](#)  
[Submit written testimony](#) if you cannot attend in person.

2. Protect accurate history! Join us in Jefferson City on Wednesday, March 6 at 8 am in the Senate Lounge before the Senate Select Committee on Empowering Parents and Children to oppose

- [SB 918 \(Hoskins\)](#) which is ANOTHER attempting to censor history, going so far as to prohibit certain texts rather while somehow requiring civics. History cannot be taught in such a way that acknowledges discrimination based on race or gender. ***We oppose this bill.***
- [SB 819 \(Ben Brown\)](#) which modifies homeschool requirements and definitions as well as establishes FLEX (Family Led Educational eXperiences) Schools, further weakening public schools and creating division in the homeschool community. ***We oppose this bill. If you cannot attend in person, contact the committee to voice your opposition using the link above.***

*Only in-person testimony will be part of the official record, but if you cannot testify in the SENATE, please [contact the committee](#) to make your voice heard using this link:*

3. Higher education students, please use [this link](#) to share the importance of clubs and organizations in your life. ***HB 1518 (Hudson)***, which will allow some students to face discrimination, could be taken up this coming week.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS PLEASE KEEP READING

### Recap from Last Week

**The Senate Select Committee on Empowering Parents and Children (EMPAC)** originally had a bill adding a new category of homeschooling (FLEX) on its agenda, but removed it around noon on Tuesday..

**The House Special Committee on Educational Reform heard HB 1911 (Richey)** to create refundable tax credits to assist families who choose non-public education by giving them public money while providing no accountability or transparency. MOEEP-A appeared in person to oppose this bill. [Listen to our testimony.](#)

**The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee**

- **Heard HB 2160 (Baker)** is another Parents Bill of Rights bill that tried to thread a very tiny needle regarding student-teacher interactions and teaching history. Only one person in attendance spoke in favor. The rest of the testimony, as well as all but one witness who submitted online testimony, was in opposition. Some districts are seeing the “chilling effect” even the threat of some of these bills have because parents who want to protect their children from racial bullying are meeting resistance because schools are afraid of discussing race. MOEEP-A appeared in person to oppose this bill. [Listen to our testimony.](#)

- **Voted out HB 2184 (Haffner)**, an accreditation/assessment bill; it has not been assigned to oversight as of publication. It's the lesser of the two assessment bills; HB 1851 (P. Brown) is MUCH better.

**The House Emerging Issues Committee voted out HB 2309 (Schnelting)** on Thursday. This is the "Defining SEX Act," which codifies definitions of male and female for the state. This bill was heard in January on a slate of several anti-LGBTQ+ bills, but action was postponed. It has not been assigned to oversight yet.

**House administrative oversight voted out HB 1518 (Hudson)** allowing discrimination of marginalized communities on college campuses; it can be brought up for debate this week. It is on a House Calendar and can be taken up at any time.

**The House perfected HB 2634 (Smith) which would defund Planned Parenthood.** Debate, once again shortened by calling the Previous Question. It will likely move to the Senate this week.

## **Following are this week's expected actions.**

**Please note:** Things change quickly for a variety of reasons, and not all committees have posted their agendas as of this update. Additionally, some bills are out of committee so there are new sections under each chamber letting you know about expected floor debate which changes without much notice.

All hearing updates can be found at these links:

House: <https://house.mo.gov/AllHearings.aspx> Senate: <https://www.senate.mo.gov/hearingsschedule/hrings.htm>

**SOME OF THE BILLS BELOW MAY ALSO APPEAR IN THE CALLS TO ACTION ABOVE.**

## **HOUSE COMMITTEES**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC POLICY Wed 3/6/24 12:00 pm, Joint Committee Room (117)**

**Watch the hearing!**

- **HB 1650 (Christensen)** will classify businesses that allow drag performances as sexually explicit businesses. Anyone who participates in a drag performance open to the public at a child-friendly venue will be subject to felony charges. This bill assumes that any performance with male or female impersonators assumes they are prurient. In a hearing on a similar bill last session, the sponsor said in answer to a question that all drag is sexual in nature. ***We oppose this bill. See the call to action above.***

## **HOUSE FLOOR ACTION**

The calendar can change quickly. Please check the [House Calendar](#) for updates. You can also [watch House debate live](#) when they are in session.

The following bills could come up this week.

- **HB 1518 (Hudson)** leading to discrimination of marginalized communities
- **HB 2634 (Smith), which would defund Planned Parenthood**, will likely come up for Third Read early in the week and move to the Senate.

**Contact YOUR representative** to encourage a NO vote on both of these bills.

## **SENATE COMMITTEES**

**Senate Sel. Com. Empowering MO Parents and Children Tues, 2/20, 8 am Senate Lounge**

**Listen to the audio.**

- **SB 918 (Hoskins)** is ANOTHER attempt to censor history, specifically name-checking the *1619 Project* and CRT. Under this bill, history cannot be taught in such a way that acknowledges that any race or gender has been inferior.. Historically, bills with this content have overwhelming opposition. ***We oppose this bill.***
- **SB 819 (Ben Brown)** establishes FLEX (Family Led Educational eXperiences) Schools and changes the definition of homeschools. This is an effort to circumvent the opposition from the homeschool community to voucher bills and tax credits. They are concerned that with government money comes accountability, and we

agree with that premise; we just do not oppose it. Funneling funds to non-public schools and requiring no accountability or transparency harms public schools. This bill is creating division not only between public/private concerns but also within the homeschool community. ***We oppose this bill. See the call to action above.***

## **SENATE FLOOR ACTION**

The calendar can change quickly. Please [check the Senate Calendar](#) for updates. You can also [listen to live Senate debate](#) when they are in session.

**There are two bills on the Senate Calendar still waiting to be assigned to a committee.**

- **HB 1989 Open Enrollment (Pollit)** which we oppose.
- **HB 1488 Child Care Tax Credits (Shields)** which we have monitored and do not oppose.

**SB 1392 (Trent), a voucher bill, is #2 on the Formal Perfection Calendar and could come up for debate first this week. However, in the Senate, things change.**

***Committees may post and/or amend hearings as the week goes on. Please stay tuned.***

These folks keep coming back with the same old bills, the same old rhetoric, but their support is not growing; their ideas are not getting better. In fact, their own ranks are also starting to see that extreme edges are scary places to be. Do not let them wear us down. Do not fall for their insinuations that speaking truth to power is fruitless. We are planting seeds every time we speak in a hearing, visit with an elected official, write an email, submit testimony, or make a phone call.

What do you get when you plant a lot of seeds?

An orchard FULL of fruit.

Keep planting seeds.