



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.

CALL TO ACTION

THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE MO HOUSE WHO VOTED AGAINST SB 727! *Though the vote did not go the way we hoped, many of these folks pushed for Missouri students until the very end, and we are grateful for their representation.*

SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY AGAINST HB 2938! *This bill will allow individual districts to confer teaching certificates to anyone with an associates' degree..*

THANK SENATOR GREG RAZER (SD7) FOR HIS YEARS OF SUPPORT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION! *He will be resigning his MO Senate seat soon to serve on the MO Tax Commission.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS VISIT

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

RECAP OF LAST WEEK

SS2/SB 727, Sen. Koenig's education omnibus bill, was voted TRULY AGREED TO AND FINALLY PASSED on Thursday, 4/18. After days of negotiations and political machinations, it passed with the bare minimum 82 votes required. Those who supported this bill needed it to go through the House with no amendments, and there were over 20 in the pipeline; opposition was bipartisan. On Wednesday, 4/17, Rep. Christofanelli worked with the Senate to have his HB 2287, a non-controversial virtual education bill, taken up and amended to "fix" some concerns in SB 727 surrounding homeschooling and firearms. It passed back to the House on Thursday and was also voted Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed. No amendments to SB 727 were considered. SB 727 has a few more procedural steps to move through before going to the Governor's desk. *We are still opposed to this bill and looking at next steps. For now, please see the call to action above.*

The Senate General Laws Committee heard SB 787 (Razer) for the 25th year in a row. This bill seeks to add gender identity and sexual orientation to MoNA (Missouri Non-Discrimination Act) to protect the LGBTQ+ community against employment and housing discrimination as well as providing for fairness in public spaces. This is likely the last time Sen. Razer will present a bill; he has been appointed to the Tax Commission and upon confirmation in a few weeks will resign from the Senate. *We support this bill.*

Actions This Week

COMMITTEES

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

House Special Committee on Educational Reform, Tues Apr 23, 2024 12pm, Hearing Room 3

Watch the hearing

HB 2938 (Davidson) will allow districts to issue certificates to people with an associates' degree who pass a background check. Up to 25% of staff can hold these district certificates, and they will be valid until the district revokes them. They are not transferable to other districts. Individuals holding these certificates will be "deemed a teacher for purposes of minimum salary requirements in section 163.172, the teacher tenure act in sections 168.102 to 168.130, and the public school retirement system of Missouri created in sections 169.010 to 169.141." We are concerned this bill will lead to underprepared educators in districts already struggling to recruit and retain educators, widening the equity gap. There is no provision to match the area of study of the associates' degree to the curriculum being taught, nor is there an age requirement. With dual enrollment programs in Missouri, some high school graduates are also conferred an associates' degree. We understand the teacher shortage is impacting schools all over the state, but we believe this bill is not a solution. *We oppose this bill.*

Other committees may post hearings/agenda. The Senate Hearing Calendar shows the focus will be on budget hearings. Lately, Senator Trent has waited until returning from the weekend to post hearings for the Senate Select Committee on Empowering Missouri Parents and Children. Additionally, SB 1125 (B. Brown) has a bill attacking DEI on college campuses has been postponed several times and could come up again. *Please stay tuned.*

FLOOR ACTION AND DEBATE

Predicting Floor Debate in either chamber is difficult. We know the FRA must be passed prior to the budget and there is a statutory deadline for the budget to be passed. We suspect this will be the focus. In addition, several bills were laid over to move HB 2287 forward to get SB 727 passed, and HB 1989 (Pollitt) governing open enrollment, can still move forward in the Senate and HB 2634 has returned to the House. We monitor both calendars frequently.

[House](#)

[Senate](#)

We have four weeks left before the end of session, including this week. We will continue to closely monitor Chamber debates, and remain in contact with others in our partnership to determine next steps as remaining legislation moves. Sometimes things happen quickly, unexpectedly, and at odd hours of the day or night. It is not uncommon to send out updates with single-issue calls to action during these last weeks. We will keep you informed. The passage of SB 727 has been a bitter pill to swallow, but we will continue to focus on what we *can* do. We continue to plant seeds and make changes that seem small right now, however; small drops of water wear down mighty mountains over time.

We will send messages to our elected leaders via ballot boxes in the August primaries and general election in November.

Thank you for all you have done and will continue to do!