

# Still Alive: Top Bills on Our Radar as Legislative Session Resumes

January 2026

On January 13, 2026, the 114th General Assembly will kick off its second and final year. Tennessee's legislative sessions are two years long, and during the second year of each session, bills that have not failed, been withdrawn, or been passed are still alive and able to move through the committee process to a vote and enactment. Legislators can also propose new bills, and 2026 will see a new annual budget.

The first year of the 114th General Assembly in 2025 was [an impactful one for education](#), with major changes to school vouchers, school turnaround, and more. As we look ahead to the conclusion of this General Assembly, here are bills we are still watching with interest:

## Threats to Education for All

### **HB 793/SB 836**

*Rep. William Lamberth, Sen. Bo Watson*

**! Status:** In House Finance Subcommittee, Passed Senate

This bill is designed to challenge a constitutional and long-standing legal precedent that guarantees all children living in the United States access to free public school, regardless of documentation status, upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in [Plyler v. Doe](#).

- The version of the bill that passed in [the Senate differs from the version under consideration in the House](#), and the two chambers will have to come to consensus for the bill to pass.
- [EdTrust-Tennessee](#) and our partners in the [Education for All Tennessee](#) coalition oppose this legislation.

## Expanded Data Reporting on Tennessee's New Voucher Program

### **HB 1052/SB 1338**

*Rep. Sam McKenzie, Sen. Jeff Yarbrow*

**! Status:** In House K-12 Subcommittee, Assigned to Senate Education General Subcommittee

This bill would expand data reporting on the students who are receiving the new statewide voucher, including capturing data on how many students were previously enrolled in public school.

- While this particular bill may be unlikely to advance, we are likely to see similar proposals filed given the [ongoing scrutiny over a relative lack of data](#) about the new statewide voucher program.
- EdTrust-Tennessee wants public funds to fund public schools exclusively, and we believe [more data are needed](#) on student demographics and achievement as part of the new statewide voucher program.

# Pre-K Funding for Students with Disabilities

**HB 401/SB 679**

Rep. Mark White, Sen. Dawn White

**Status:** In House Finance Subcommittee, In Senate Finance Committee

This bill would include funding for Pre-K students with disabilities as part of Tennessee’s K-12 public school funding formula, the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA); right now, TISA only includes funding for grades K-12.

- This bill was placed behind the budget in 2025, so passage will be contingent on budget appropriations in 2026. The House version of the bill has been amended, so the two chambers will have to come to consensus for the bill to pass.
- EdTrust-Tennessee recognized this bill as a 2025 [Ten for Tennessee](#) awardee.

# Addressing Student Basic Needs

Reduced-Price School Lunch <b>HB 1153/SB 740</b> Rep. Susan Lynn Sen. Bobby Harshbarger	Menstrual Hygiene Accessibility <b>HB 39/SB 155</b> Rep. Elaine Davis Sen. Raumesh Akbari	Hunger-Free Campus Grants <b>HB 7/SB 172</b> Rep. Michael Hale Sen. Becky Massey
Expands funding to cover the cost of reduced-price meals for students who qualify based on income.	As amended, establishes a grant program for public high schools to provide feminine hygiene products to students at no charge.	Establishes a grant program for higher education institutions to address hunger on their campuses.

**Status:** All three bills are in House Finance Subcommittee and Senate Finance Committee

- These bills were placed behind the budget in 2025, so passage will be contingent on budget appropriations in 2026.
- EdTrust-Tennessee recognized all three bills as 2025 [Ten for Tennessee](#) awardees.

# Support for Tennessee’s Community Schools

**HB 225/SB 364**

Rep. Kirk Haston, Sen. Richard Briggs

**Status:** Taken Off Notice in House Education, In Senate Education

This bill establishes a grant program to support the establishment and sustainability of community schools, which offer coordinated academic, health, and support services to students and families both during and outside of school hours.

- EdTrust-Tennessee recognized this bill as a 2025 [Ten for Tennessee](#) awardee.

## School District Governance

### **HB 662/SB 677**

*Rep. Mark White, Sen. Brent Taylor*

**Status:** Different Versions Passed the House and Senate

This bill establishes criteria and a process by which school districts experiencing low student performance would be governed by an appointed body rather than their school board.

- This bill was amended in rapid succession as it progressed through the legislature, with different versions identifying different sets of districts who would be impacted, but most debate centered on Memphis-Shelby County Schools.

## Financial and Coaching Support for Tennessee Promise Students

### **HB 148/SB 686**

*Rep. Mark White, Sen. Dawn White*

**Status:** In House Finance Subcommittee, In Senate Finance Committee

This bill makes permanent the completion grant pilot program, which provides coaching and emergency aid to Promise students from low-income backgrounds, and adds coaching support for all Promise students regardless of income.

- This bill was placed behind the budget in 2025, so passage will be contingent on budget appropriations in 2026.
- EdTrust-Tennessee recognized a similar bill as a 2024 [Ten for Tennessee](#) awardee.

We hope you will follow along with us as the session begins. Our [legislative tools and resources](#) including our [weekly legislative newsletter](#) and bill tracker are designed to keep advocates in the loop as the session unfolds.

**For more information on the bills included in this resource, please email [jmillsmcferron@edtrust.org](mailto:jmillsmcferron@edtrust.org)**