

Legislative Stalemate, Modest Ed Funding Increases Possible

Several days of a stalemate in the Senate continue. The legislature has been at a standstill primarily over bills not specific to education, such as the statute of limitations for child sexual assault victims (Boyer, Carter) and income tax rates (Mesnard). While the holdup has mainly been focused on the Boyer/Carter-Mesnard gridlock, the rare need to negotiate instead of just ramming through unilateral budget priorities means more funding for higher education, school counselors and a few other programs may come to fruition.

If you are not already following our as-they-happen updates in the Budget Watch Facebook event, log in for frequent alerts and updates. The next possibility of publicly visible progress will be Monday morning when the Legislature reconvenes.

Here is where the bills we have been tracking stand at this time. **THANK YOU** to everyone who has been showing up, watching from home, making calls, and emailing and posting your support or opposition all session long! YOU have made all the difference! We're in the final stretch...

Join Us at the Capitol

Follow our ongoing updates on Facebook at [SOSAZ Budget Watch event](#).



Your next opportunity to watch at the Capitol or at home is: **House Monday at 10 a.m., Senate Monday at 11 a.m.**

Times Subject to Change

[Here's how to get there and where to park](#)

HB2749 (K-12 education; budget reconciliation; 2019-2020) The K-12 funding package was amended to add a watered-down version of Rep. Townsend's teacher retaliation bill, a requirement that the Superintendent of Public Instruction contract with a third-party vendor for ESA financial management, an increase to Results-Based Funding by \$400/student for alternative high schools in the top 27% of the spring 2018 statewide assessment, a removal of the Arizona Community Schools Pilot Program, and a few other items we have not been emphasizing. These amendments were passed in bulk by the House on party lines and now need a vote in the Senate, where they can be upheld, voted down, or modified.

SB1349 (family college savings program) creates a new way to keep tax dollars out of the state's general fund by encouraging Arizona families to spend their 529 savings on K-12 private school tuition and expenses. We opposed this bill, which passed on partisan lines and was signed by the governor on May 22.

SB1451 (statewide ballot measures; circulators; procedures) passed through its conference committee and got a final vote in both houses. The provision that would have given the Attorney

General sole authority to write descriptions for ballot measures has been removed. Now, the bill only adds requirements for out-of-state and paid circulators. It now heads to the governor's desk for his signature.

SB1485 (school tuition organization; inflator) ends the 20% annual automatic growth of corporate private school tax credits (STOs) by gradually decreasing the cap to 2% or inflation over the next 5 years, keeping \$263 million in the state budget and available for public education. It was sent to the governor's desk on May 24.

HB2758 (empowerment scholarships; qualified school) This bill was designed specifically to address the recent issue of Navajo families in the Window Rock area being misled into using their ESA vouchers at an out-of-state private school, which is illegal. The Democratic representatives of Legislative District 7 worked with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Republican leadership and Save our Schools Arizona to hold the eight families harmless for funds already spent and to give them one year to find a legal schooling option (either public or via the ESA program) without expanding ESA vouchers. The bill awaits the governor's signature.