

## The Education Report

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*The Education Report*, a weekly publication of WPLLC, provides an executive summary of public policy issues affecting American education. **Please use the bookmarks below to navigate to your area of interest:**

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## 1. Budget and Appropriations

This week on Capitol Hill, the Senate was in recess while the House was in session. Next week, that will flip—the Senate will be in town while the Members of the House return to their districts. With the Senate away, the House approved a disaster relief package just before leaving town. That \$36 billion measure, which ultimately passed by a vote of 353-69, did create some last minute drama and heartburn for fiscal conservatives. In addition to supporting areas recovering from an astounding hurricane season, the bill essentially eliminates \$16 billion in debt for the National Flood Insurance Program. That element angered taxpayer advocates and fiscal conservatives. Of course, Members still approved the bill overwhelmingly. There will be additional disaster packages in coming weeks and the White House seems to sense the concerns, as evidenced by a Friday letter from Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney. The missive to House Appropriations Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ) identifies \$5.6 billion in cuts that "are prudent as the discussion around emergency funding of all types continue." The idea of presenting offsets for disaster relief is one fraught with sensitivities, but Mulvaney suggests the cuts might be considered in future talks. To date, disaster relief has cost \$51 billion, and the next package is expected to be even bigger than any of those that have passed.

As for the larger budget issues, this week House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said that she expects the FY 2018 budget deal to come with increased domestic spending to match the higher defense spending figures Republicans want. That is encouraging to the education community, although the details will be important. There are only six weeks that both the House and Senate are in session between now and the December 8<sup>th</sup> expiration of the continuing resolution that is keeping the government going. The wheeling and dealing will heat up soon.

And...speaking of the fiscal year that started almost two weeks ago, with the House having approved an FY 2018 budget resolution that proposes cuts to (mostly higher) education spending of \$211 billion over ten years, and the Senate Budget Committee having approved a measure that outlines similar reductions, advocates will be watching a would-be House-Senate negotiation on a budget resolution closely. Of course, the bigger political issue in the debate is the reconciliation instructions that Republicans hope will serve as the vehicle for tax reform efforts. The Senate still needs to approve its resolution, and could do so next week.

In other education policy news, 59 senators wrote to Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty Murray (D-WA), the leaders of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, urging them to act on the long-languishing *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*. The House passed a bipartisan bill overwhelmingly earlier this year, but the Senate has yet to release a proposal or even discuss a timetable for considering the matter. Maybe the urging of 59 colleagues will produce some action.

Over at the Executive Branch, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos unveiled her priorities that will guide awards for the Department of Education's competitive grant programs. There are eleven priorities—that's a lot. Enough to make the community wonder—if everything is a priority, is anything a priority? The community will have thirty days to share their thoughts with the thin staff at the Department. Speaking of...the Secretary's boss, President Donald Trump, addressed continued griping about open positions at many agencies that make communications difficult to navigate, saying in a Forbes interview that the size of some federal agencies is "unnecessary." "I'm generally not going to make a lot of the appointments that would normally be — because you don't need them," he said. "I mean, you look at some of these agencies, how massive they are, and it's totally unnecessary. They have hundreds of thousands of people."

As of last week, Trump had submitted nominations to the Senate for just 165 out of more than 600 key positions, leaving 289 without a nominee. And that doesn't even begin to consider the other 600 jobs that require Senate confirmation. (Of the 165 nominations submitted by the president, 142 have been confirmed by the Senate.) Only two appointees have been confirmed at ED—the Secretary and Peter Oppenheim, who heads up the Legislation and Congressional Affairs office at 400 Maryland Avenue.

That's it. For now.

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## 2. In Brief

### **CYFJ HIGHLIGHTS TRENDS FOR KEEPING YOUTH OUT OF ADULT COURTS**

Wednesday morning, the Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ) hosted an event for the release of their most recent publication, "Raising the Bar: State Trends in Keeping Youth Out of the Adult Courts." In honor of Youth Justice Action Month, a distinguished panel highlighted policy actions that hold states accountable to prosecuting children and young adults according to their age, rather than as adults in the criminal justice system. Jeree Thomas, CFYJ policy director and author of the report, presented four trends in state legislative reforms that have surfaced in recent years; trends that essentially remove youth from the adult criminal justice system. Panelists were asked to discuss the strides that have been accomplished and what more can be done in order to prevent the "loss of protections and services of juvenile court without individual case review or consideration of individual circumstances." Richard Sears, state senator from Vermont, began

the conversation by explaining that the traditional saying, “if you’re old enough to do the crime, you’re old enough to do the time” is inaccurate – the evidence regarding human brain development amongst adolescents suggests there should be a different way of treating them. He further expressed that his home state of Vermont hopes to accomplish that all 16 and 17 year-olds that have not completed one of the “major crimes” will be treated in the family court, and that the family court will keep jurisdiction until the age of 19. Gerald Mallow, state senator from South Carolina, said his state is one of the few that has expungement, a court-ordered process that allows systems-involved youth to enter back into education or the workforce and contribute to society by erasing certain convictions from their criminal record. Moreover, the state is currently in the process of raising the juvenile age to 19. According to the report, 19 states and the District similarly altered their laws within the past two years. Future challenges involve shining a spotlight on how to “best serve, support, and rehabilitate all youth, including those charged with serious offenses.” For more information, click [here](#).

### **AYPF TALKS AFTERSCHOOL AND SEL**

On Wednesday, The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) held a webinar outlining national research and the best practices from across the country pertaining to the intersection and benefits of afterschool programs and social-emotional learning (SEL). The discussion centered on making it clear that SEL helps support the “academic, personal, and professional development” of children and youth. According to Carrine Deeds, senior policy associate at AYPF, the premise behind the discussion was to detail why afterschool, or out-of-school time, “is a critical component of the ecosystem of services for young people that is uniquely positioned to ensure 21<sup>st</sup> century readiness.” She elaborated on how SEL, if implemented in afterschool programs, aids in the building of a coalition that supports young people and aligns with employability and social skills, such as awareness of social norms, how to relate to others, respecting oneself, critical thinking, and much more. Furthermore, Erica Curry Van-Ee, founder of Urban Curry Consulting, expressed the importance of collaborating with national experts to create quality SEL measurement indicators for the “purposes of continuous improvement.” Finally, Daniel Tsin, director of data and accountability at Urban Alliance, discussed how social-emotional learning can be reinforced through a variety of other settings, such as out-of-school work experience programs, citing the Urban Alliance’s youth employment programming targeted at high school students. Their primary internship program focuses on “at risk” youth and provides them with a professionalism “boot camp,” on the job work experience, on-site mentors, and continued support after their completion of the program. According to Tsin, programs such as these further prepare children and young adults for college, a career, and life. For more information, click [here](#).

### **COMMUNICATING THE BENEFITS OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

On Wednesday, Advance CTE, in coordination with the House and Senate Career and Technical Education Caucuses, hosted an event to share key research and discuss how participants can see CTE’s value and promise in their own communities, work, and lives. Kate Kreamer, deputy executive director, Advance CTE, kicked off the event by highlighting key findings from their research. She outlined that CTE students and their parents are more satisfied with their education experience compared to those not involved with CTE, and said that CTE students and parents care about the career benefits of CTE but also believe that it’s beneficial in preparing for post-secondary schooling. She did note the challenge that CTE has with recognition among parents, students, and the general public, and how many parents still see CTE programs as a “lower track” than preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities. Representative Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson (R-PA), co-chair of the Congressional CTE Caucus, underscored the importance of

the federal support for CTE and voiced optimism that the Senate will move on a bipartisan reauthorization of the *Carl D. Perkins CTE Act* soon. David Etzwiler, CEO, the Siemens Foundation, talked about the need for industry and the advocacy community to have understandable language when pitching students and parents on the benefits of CTE. He noted that the best selling point of Siemens' CTE program, "STEM Middle- Skill Initiative," is that students and parents are discovering unambiguous pathways to careers. Lynne Gilli, assistant state superintendent, Division of Career and College Readiness, Maryland State Department of Education, cautioned that without Congress' reauthorization of the *Perkins CTE Act*, implementing and expanding high-quality CTE programs will be difficult on states, asserting that it's virtually impossible to achieve "2025 achievement goals with 1990's funding." Lauren Fillebrown, a student at Pennsylvania State University, and a CTE and Future Farmers of America (FFA) alumni, concluded the event by talking about the incredible opportunities that CTE has presented to her—getting a postsecondary degree and preparing her for a high-quality job in the agriculture industry. For more information, click [here](#).

### **IMPORTANCE OF CHILDCARE IN WORKFORCE ADVANCEMENT**

On Thursday, ReadyNation hosted a briefing covering the need for childcare reform in advancing America's workforce. The event featured conversation from medical professionals, economists, and child advocates regarding ReadyNation's recent report, "High Quality Childcare: A two-generation solution for a productive American workforce," and a discussion on the *Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act*, introduced by Representatives Kevin Yoder (R-KS) and Stephanie Murphy (D-FL). The report highlighted the advantages of a quality childcare system for the present workforce, given that proper and adequate childcare allows for increased "participation, stability, and productivity" in the labor force. Moreover, excellent childcare permits advanced educational outcomes for the children, which will be economically valuable in the future. Under the current childcare system, issues with access, affordability, and quality persist. According to the publication, confronting these issues requires resources and support from all stakeholders, including the state, local, and federal governments, and especially business leaders. Representatives Yoder and Murphy spoke enthusiastically of their bill, the PACE Act, which proposes altering current tax policies intended to help families afford quality childcare, to make them "more effective and more generous." Specifically, the bill advances the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) and improves Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), all the while making childcare more affordable for low income and middle class families. For access to the report, click [here](#).

### **SECRETARY DEVOS ANNOUNCES DISCRETIONARY GRANT PRIORITIES**

On Wednesday, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos announced new priorities for distributing funds through existing discretionary grant programs, targeting the expansion of school choice and the promotion of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and computer science education. The announcement is a familiar one and the first time this new Secretary has shared specific policy priorities. DeVos' department is seeking comment for the next 30 days on 11 new proposed priorities. STEM and computer science made the cut after the Trump administration last month told DeVos to spend at least \$200 million in existing grant funds per year (starting in FY 2018) on the promotion of high-quality STEM education and, in particular, computer science education. Published and announced in the federal register and on the department's blog, the 11 priorities include: Empowering Families to Choose a High-Quality Education that Meets Their Child's Unique Needs; Promoting Innovation and Efficiency, Streamlining Education with an Increased Focus on Improving Student Outcomes, and Providing Increased Value to Students and Taxpayers; Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths to

Obtaining Knowledge and Skills; Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the Development of Skills that Prepare Students to be Informed, Thoughtful, and Productive Individuals and Citizens; Meeting the Unique Needs of Students And Children, including those with Disabilities and/or with Unique Gifts and Talents; Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science; Promoting Literacy; Promoting Effective Instruction in Classrooms and Schools; Promoting Economic Opportunity; Encouraging Improved School Climate and Safer and More Respectful Interactions in a Positive and Safe Educational Environment; Ensuring that Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families Have Access to High-Quality Educational Choices. To view the full announcement published in the Federal Register, click [here](#).

### **59 SENATORS CALL FOR PERKINS CTE REAUTHORIZATION IN LETTER**

On Thursday, a bipartisan group of 59 senators sent a letter to Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) of the Senate Health, Education, Pensions, and Labor (HELP) Committee urging them to take up the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act* “as soon as possible during the 115th Congress.” “It is crucial that the Senate work in a bipartisan effort to help our nation’s students acquire the skills needed to be successful in today’s work environment,” the senators wrote in the letter, which was signed by Jim Inhofe (R-OK), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND), Rob Portman (R-OH) and 55 other senators. A spokesperson for Sen. Alexander’s office said that Perkins CTE reauthorization is a “top priority.” The house passed their reauthorization bill earlier this year. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has previously said she’s looking forward to working with Congress on reauthorizing the Perkins Act, though the Trump administration hasn’t weighed in on legislation. President Trump has signaled support for apprenticeship programs and recently nominated state representative Timothy Kelly (R-MI) to be Assistant Secretary of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. For more information and to read the letter, click [here](#).

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### **3. New Publications**

#### **A Five-Year Status Report on the AAU Undergraduate STEM Education Initiative**

American Association of Universities (October 2017)

#### **Family Engagement and School Readiness: Building on Family Strengths to Promote Success**

Department of Health and Human Services (October 2017)

#### **Surveying the Military**

Ed Choice (October 2017)

#### **Dual Language Learners: A National Demographic and Policy Profile**

Migration Policy Institute (October 2017)

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### **4. In the News**

#### **GOP's Collins Not Running For Governor, Will Stay In Senate**

Associated Press (Oct. 13, 2017)

#### **Eli Broad, Patron of Los Angeles, to Step Down From His Philanthropy**

New York Times (Oct. 12, 2017)

#### **Biden criticizes new campus sexual assault guidelines, Harvey Weinstein**

Chicago Tribune (Oct. 12, 2017)

## Teachers' Union, Towns Sue State to Stop Education Cuts US News (Oct. 11, 2017)

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### **5. About WPLL**

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