



ALABAMA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
SCHOOL BOARDS

## Federal Newsletter on Education as shared by COSSBA – July 25, 2022

### **HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MARKS UP FY23 LABOR-H BILL**

Last week, the House made progress on Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro's (D-CT) ambitious goal to pass all FY 2023 spending bills before the August recess. A six-bill "minibus" spending package was approved on Wednesday. The package included the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill, as well as Agriculture, Energy and Water, Financial Services, Interior, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs proposals. With just one more week on the House's legislative calendar before the scheduled recess, it is unlikely that all spending packages will be passed by then. As the list of bills that might pass gets narrowed, it seems even more unlikely that the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending plan will win approval before lawmakers leave Washington, DC, for the August recess.

In the Senate, Appropriations Committee Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT) had a second operation this week to address a fractured hip he suffered last month, slowing any "four corner" agreements on overall FY 2023 spending. The committee is expected to release spending proposals next week without any House-Senate agreement on topline numbers or the defense versus non-defense allocations.

There wasn't much news last week on the status of a would-be reconciliation package after Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) made it clear he would only support a bill that extended some Obamacare subsidies and addressed prescription drug prices. Even though the West Virginia lawmaker has indicated he might be open to adding provisions to the package if inflation figures improve in August, the White House and other Democratic leaders indicate that they want to pass what they can now. That means getting a bill to the House and Senate floors this week. The House is scheduled to leave town at the end of this week, but that could change if more time is needed to get the bill to the White House.

The other bill that was keeping advocates busy last week is the latest iteration of competitiveness legislation. One week ago, it looked as though the Senate was poised to pass a piece of legislation that invested \$52 billion in relief for the semiconductor industry, leaving thousands of pages of legislative efforts to address the country's competitiveness out. Over the weekend, however, Senator Todd Young (R-IN) and others told Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) that the smaller package would win more Republican votes if it included provisions that update the National Science Foundation. A

procedural vote confirmed that assertion, and the Senate is expected to approve a package this week that will address the needs of the semiconductor industry, create a new directorate at the National Science Foundation and address some STEM education needs. Advocates who worked with the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on their section of the larger competitiveness bill were disappointed that the proposals to create a K-12 computer science program and a new STEM pathways effort will not be part of the package that is expected to be on President Joe Biden's desk soon.

Members of Congress, staff and advocates are facing another busy week, but just about everyone has August 5 circled on their calendar. That's the date that the Senate will leave for recess — one week after their House colleagues escape the heat of Washington, DC.

### **ED RELEASES NEW GUIDANCE ON SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

On Tuesday, July 19, the Department of Education's (ED) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) released new guidance intended to help public elementary and secondary schools fulfill their responsibilities to meet the needs of students with disabilities and avoid the discriminatory use of student discipline. The new resources reflect the concern that some students with disabilities are not receiving the supports and services necessary to address their educational needs, including their disability-based behavior. The resources include an intensive report on supporting students with disabilities and avoiding discriminatory use of student discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and an accompanying fact sheet; questions and answers addressing the needs of children with disabilities and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA) discipline provisions; a guide for stakeholders; and a letter from Secretary Cardona to educators, school leaders, parents and students. The press release and resources can be viewed [here](#).

### **HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD INVESTMENTS**

On Wednesday, July 20, the House Committee on the Budget held a hearing titled, "Examining the Powerful Impact of Investments in Early Childhood for Children, Families, and Our Nation's Economy." Witnesses included Dr. Hilary Hoynes, a professor of economics and public policy and Haas Distinguished Chair in Economic Disparities at the University of California Berkeley; Dr. Maureen Black, distinguished fellow in early childhood development at RTI International and professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Maryland School of Medicine; Rasheed Malik, senior director for early childhood policy at the Center for American Progress; and the Honorable Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House of Representatives. Chairman John Yarmuth's (D-KY) opening remarks highlighted the nation's underfunded education system. Notably, he addressed the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson* and stated, "If every life was truly sacred in this country, we wouldn't be having a hearing about programs to keep mothers and their children healthy, fed, and cared for — we'd be fully funding them." Ranking Member Jason Smith's (R-MO) opening remarks focused on the current economy and called out Democrats for "purposely" making the economic suffering of U.S. citizens worse. Both Hoynes' and Black's testimonies centered on research they have produced. Black underscored conditions that are necessary for children to thrive, thus contributing to a healthy and productive society, and Hoynes examined how a social safety net can impact children's health and economic future. "Social safety nets for families with children represent investments in the human capital of children, not simply transfers to adults," Hoynes said. Malik reviewed the development of high quality, affordable and abundant childcare infrastructure, while Gingrich focused on the government's failure to improve the lives of children, and pleaded Congress to balance the budget using the same approach congressional Republicans implemented when he was Speaker of the House. "The greatest problem Washington has today is its

inability to learn what works and what fails in the real world,” said Gingrich, arguing that power should be returned to governors and state officials. An archived recording of the hearing can be found [here](#).

### **COLLEGE IN HIGH SCHOOL ALLIANCE EXAMINES EQUITABLE DUAL ENROLLMENT**

On Wednesday, July 20, the College in High School Alliance held a webinar to examine research priorities for advancing equitable dual enrollment. Panelists included Jason Taylor, associate professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Utah; Mike Beam, assistant vice president for school partnerships at the Advance College Project at Indiana University; Xiaodan Hu, assistant professor in the Department of Counseling and Higher Education at Northern Illinois University; Julie Edmunds, program director for secondary school reform at SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; John Fink, senior research associate for the Community College Research Center at Columbia University; and Joel Vargas, vice president of programs at Jobs for the Future (JFF). The event primarily examined a new study from the University of Utah titled, “Research Priorities for Advancing Equitable Dual Enrollment Policy and Practice,” which was authored by several panel participants, including Taylor, Hu, Edmunds and Fink. Intended to address a decline in postsecondary enrollments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the report underscored the evidence-based practice of dual enrollment and similar programs that have positive impacts on student outcomes, including college enrollment and completion. The study’s authors outlined its key takeaways, which include: 1) About 9% of high school students are enrolled in college each year, a number that shows “no sign of slowing down,” according to the report; 2) Dual enrollment is evidence-based with broad positive impacts; 3) Dual enrollment expands learning opportunities and college access and can improve local communities; 4) Dual enrollment addresses increased demand for college-level education; 5) These programs have broad support from students, families, schools and policymakers; and 6) Dual enrollment programs require intentional alignment and integration with secondary and postsecondary systems. Given these key takeaways, report authors advise the prioritization of research on equity and justice, influence on access and outcomes, refining outcome measures, expanded research on student experience, and the pursuit of emerging research topics. “What research at early colleges can really help do is help policymakers and researchers think about what else needs to be in place besides just the college courses to make sure you have a successful dual enrollment program,” Edmunds added. Similarly, Beam spoke to the connection between practice and research saying, “For many decades, the practice far outpaced the research... but instead, research should be stretching the practice forward.” The University of Utah study can viewed [here](#).

### **WALLACE FOUNDATION DISCUSSES FEDERAL FUNDS FOR SUMMER LEARNING**

On Wednesday, July 20, the Wallace Foundation held a webinar titled, “Using Federal Funds for Summer Learning and Afterschool: A New Guide for Providers, School Districts, and Intermediaries.” The event featured Gigi Antoni, director of learning and enrichment at The Wallace Foundation; Shital Shah, senior advisor for strategic partnerships at the Department of Education (ED); Sean Worley, author of the NewResource and policy advisor at EducationCounsel; and Barbara Couto Sipe, president and CEO of NextUp RVA. The webinar also included perspectives from district and city leaders on funding summer learning and afterschool initiatives. Antoni opened the event by discussing the effectiveness of afterschool programs and their ability to address the diverse needs of youth and children, yet despite their benefits, “they are not magic,” she added and underscored three critical elements of any out-of-school time (OST) program: Preparing for programming delivery, building ecosystems of support, and creating equitable conditions for learning. Shah examined the use of federal funds in local school districts, how to expand afterschool programs, and briefly outlined ED strategic partnership goals. She encouraged cities, schools and community organizations to advocate for universal access to OST

programs, citing their research-backed and evidence-based capabilities. Efforts to increase access to OST programs would decrease opportunity gaps in communities, Shah added. Antoni was later joined by Couto Sipe and other OST program leaders, including Dr. Michael Hinojosa, former superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) and Nathan Beck, coordinator of Madison Out-of-School Time. Each leader described their unique roles within the education system and the importance of OST programs. Hinojosa discussed DISD partnerships with city officials and referenced several campuses that have switched from the traditional school-year calendar to a full year school calendar with more emphasis on OST programs. Couto Sipe highlighted her work at NextUp, an intermediary between schools and OST providers, and the organization's success at providing better coordination, funding and accountability to school districts in Richmond, Virginia. Following the panel presentation, Antoni highlighted and examined the Wallace Foundation's new guide, "Building, Sustaining and Improving: Using Federal Funds for Summer Learning and Afterschool," which is intended to help district leaders, OST providers and intermediaries identify federal funding streams to support summer and afterschool learning. The guide can be viewed [here](#).

### **NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION EXAMINES MORE EQUITABLE WORKFORCE SYSTEMS**

On Thursday, July 21, the National Skills Coalition (NSC) held a webinar to examine how policymakers can support the development of more equitable workforce systems. Participants included Nakeisha Ricks, senior fellow for workforce development at the National Skills Coalition; Tracey Carey, executive director of Midwest Urban Strategies; Sheridan Nixon, director of advancement strategy at Dallas College; Brandee Davis, director of economic and financial mobility at United Way of Greater Nashville; and Michelle Wilson, director of evaluation and learning at the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. The event highlighted three primary ideas, which each correspond with NSC reports: 1) the need for data on how different workers and businesses fare in economic recovery – data that would provide recommendations on how to diminish structural inequities in recovery investments; 2) a roadmap for racial equity designed to decrease racial and ethnic disparities in educational attainment and access; and 3) advocating for skills policy that contributes to tackling the disparate impact of economic crises on workers of color, immigrants and workers with a high school diploma or less. Carey highlighted the operational capacity of workforce development boards and how intermediary organizations, such as Midwest Urban Strategies, can help address operational challenges. "One of the most important things that we can do is organize," Carey stated. She added that organizations need to focus on how to develop pipelines within their own industry and affirmed that investing in your own talent is a solution to addressing operational capacity. Speaking about workforce partnerships and community pathways to employment for more people of color, Wilson expressed the need for more disaggregated data that highlights the communities most in need and the drivers of those inequities. With disaggregated data, Wilson says, "You now have the information to say, 'this is the problem, this is who it's impacting, and here are the solutions we can offer.'" An archived recording of the webinar will be posted [here](#), and NSC resources on economic recovery and racial equity can be found [here](#).

### **HUNT INSTITUTE AND EDUCATION LEADERS DISCUSS TEACHER RETENTION**

On Thursday, July 21, the Hunt Institute hosted a webinar entitled "Why Educators Are Leaving the Profession and How to Stem the Tide." The conversation included educators who left the classroom as well as school system and state leaders who are working to increase support for educators, boost retention and rebuild the workforce. Participants included Harrison Peters, CEO of Men of Color in Education Leadership and former state turnaround superintendent in Providence, RI; Jonathan Song, a former special education teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District; Dr. Donald Fennoy, former Palm Beach County School District superintendent; and Dr. Margie Vandeven, commissioner of

elementary and secondary education at the Missouri Department of Education. The conversation started out by addressing many of the issues that happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The biggest problems that panelists highlighted were the immediate move to virtual learning and the lack of a coherent strategy to deal with the pandemic at the state level or national level. This exacerbated already existing issues, as one panelist described the role of being a teacher in a Title I school as that of “miracle worker.” Several panelists described the shortage numbers as a crisis, adding that ramifications have likely not sunk in yet for policymakers or the broader public. Each panelist agreed that while salary is important, the broader issue is respect for the teaching workforce and the profession in general. Teachers must be treated as professionals and equals who are valued members of a team, as opposed to simply workers doing their job. One panelist said, “When employees feel valued, that’s when retention happens.” Additionally, as several panelists pointed out, leaders need to recognize that younger professionals entering the profession are different than their counterparts from 20 or 30 years ago, which might require shifts in management styles. Turning to long-term solutions, the panel wrapped up with a discussion of what policy solutions states and communities should be looking at. Several panelists discussed the benefits of Master-Teacher mentoring programs as well as “grow-your own” and apprentice teacher programs. There was also an intensive back-and-forth conversation over teacher certification and dramatically streamlining the process. Everyone agreed that content knowledge and certification were important but were interested in finding better ways to demonstrate that knowledge. Finally, Dr. Vandeven discussed the Blue Ribbon Commission that Missouri has convened to make policy recommendations, which may be helpful to readers. An archived recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).

### **NYC EXAMINES EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA, IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

On Thursday, July 21, the Coalition for Community Schools and Children’s Aid National Center for Community Schools held a webinar titled, “Effectively Using Data for Continuous Improvement in Community Schools.” The event addressed the central role that data and continuous improvement play in community schools and the diverse voices that community schools engage to inform improvement. The webinar featured a diverse group of experts, including Bianca del Rio, executive director of University-Assisted Community School Programs at the Netter Center for Community Partnerships; Elisa English, chief program officer of Counseling in Schools; Abe Fernández, director of Children’s Aid National Center for Community Schools; Dr. Neil Harris, principal of A-Tech High School in New York City; Anna Maier, senior policy advisor and researcher for the Learning Policy Institute; Monica Medina, Ph.D., clinical associate professor in the School of Education at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI); José Muñoz, director of the Coalition for Community Schools; Kayla Patrick, special assistant for the Office of Planning Evaluation and Policy Development at the U.S. Department of Education; and Sarah Peterson, senior director of attendance, research and innovation at the NYC Department of Education. Maier kicked off the event by highlighting results from a Learning Policy Institute Community School evidence review from 2017, as well as a RAND Corporation assessment of the impact of the New York City Community Schools Initiative from 2020. Following Maier, Medina focused on defining “community,” best ways to examine community school data and the importance of collaboration. “What’s very important is developing authentic partnerships and sometimes bringing people to the table that you wouldn’t otherwise think about,” Medina said. Peterson examined New York City’s exceptional success with community schools, highlighting the city’s community school system’s growth from 45 schools at inception to over 400 schools come 2023. Peterson also examined data from the RAND Corporation assessment showing the significance of staff and educator collaboration around student needs, which reduced chronic absenteeism and improved student outcomes. Harris followed with his experience at A-Tech High School and provided the audience with strategies on how to develop similar models in their schools.