



**February 14, 2022**

### **BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS**

There was encouraging news last week regarding FY 2022 spending. House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders said Wednesday they have a deal on a "framework" that will allow them to start writing compromise spending bills for the fiscal year that is almost half over. While details are scarce, it has been reported that the agreement is to have "parity," or equal increases for defense and nondefense spending. That is good news for education advocates who are hoping to see spending levels for domestic programs near the increases proposed in the House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education plans. Another issue that had been slowing progress was policy riders, with Democrats and Republicans at odds over many of them. Negotiators have reportedly agreed to leave current law policy riders in place, and that all four Appropriations Committee leaders would have to agree to remove or add any others. While specific figures haven't been shared publicly, the agreement paves the way for staff to get to work on agency and program spending levels. They will presumably have until March 11 to complete their work, assuming the Senate passes the temporary spending measure the House approved last week to avoid a government shutdown when the current stopgap bill expires on February 18.

In the days and weeks before appropriators finally set the stage for the development of an omnibus spending bill, they had been hearing from governors, state legislators, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others that a year-long continuing resolution would be troubling. That scenario would complicate executing the investments included in last year's infrastructure package and would short-change many of the programs that states and localities are relying upon to navigate the ongoing hardships posed by the pandemic. Education advocates felt similarly, noting that the increases proposed by the White House, the House and the Senate have transformational potential for schools, institutions of higher education, students and families.

This week will be a busy one for Congress. Not only will appropriators be hard at work, the many committees and staff involved in the development and passage of the America COMPETES bill and the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act are hoping leadership will give them direction on a House-Senate conference on the sweeping bill. In addition, the House and Senate education committees will hold hearings of interest. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee will hold a Tuesday hearing on workforce development. The panel's House peers will examine healthy and supportive school environments.

### **BPC DISCUSSES STRENGTHENING CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

On Monday, February 7, the Bipartisan Policy Center's (BPC) Food and Nutrition Security Task Force and members of Congress held a virtual discussion of a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening child nutrition programs through the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR). These recommendations were aimed at strengthening food and nutrition security in and outside of school; strengthening food and nutrition security in pregnant and postpartum women and young children through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and strengthening food and nutrition across programs. Child nutrition programs, such as the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, summer and afterschool meals programs, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), play a crucial role in ensuring food and nutrition security among the nation's youth. In-school recommendations included ensuring all children have access to nutritious foods by providing school breakfast, school lunch, afterschool meals and summer meals to all students at no-cost, along with greater investment in kitchen infrastructure and nutrition education. Out of school recommendations consisted of



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increasing access to out-of-school programs and making summer EBT a permanent program to allow students to access EBT benefits during school breaks, holidays, closures and other emergencies. WIC-focused recommendations consisted of enhancing the value of the WIC benefit, as well as utilizing technology to modernize and simplify the utilization of WIC benefits. Program recommendations included maintaining or strengthening nutrition standards for all programs to better align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, streamlining eligibility, enrollment, and sharing data across programs, and supporting an increase in the accessibility, affordability, and intake of fruits and vegetables in child nutrition programs. To access the webinar and full recommendations, click [here](#).

### **OECD AND NCEE RELEASE REPORT ON TRENDS SHAPING EDUCATION IN 2022**

On Monday, February 7, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the National Council on Education and the Economy (NCEE) hosted a webinar to discuss their recent report, “Trends Shaping Education 2022.” The publication explores “megatrends affecting the future of education, from early childhood through to lifelong learning. Each chapter starts by examining the impact of COVID-19 before turning to the trends and their implications for education.” The report is broken into five chapters: growth, living and working, knowledge and power, identity and belonging, and our changing nature. In addition, the report offers scenarios to explore the implications of multiple alternative futures. The report highlights how an unexpected event like the pandemic can lead to major shifts. It also tries to answer the question, “How can education contribute to connecting learners with the natural world?” as climate changes continue to prove harmful to earth’s natural spaces. For more information on the report, please click [here](#).

### **BROOKINGS AND AEI DISCUSS REPORT ON CHILDHOOD POLICY**

On Tuesday, February 8, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and the Brookings Institution released a consensus report, “[Rebalancing: Children first – a consensus report on childhood in the United States](#),” and hosted a virtual discussion of how lawmakers can improve children’s life outcomes through budget-neutral policies. Diana Whitmore Schanzenbach, director of the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University, and Cecilia Rouse, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, discuss the importance and value of public investment in children, while acknowledging the financial difficulties parents may face that lead to an inability to invest in their children as they would like. Michael R. Strain, director of Economic Policy Studies at AEI, then spoke with Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT) on his proposal to expand the child tax credit. Romney describes his proposal as a way to boost America’s birth rates, while taking precautions against discouraging employment. The final panel of the event was led by Richard Reeves, economic studies senior fellow at the Brookings Institution; panelists discussed the importance of improving low-income children’s academic performance, the science of early-age brain development, and how investments in children’s health can improve long-term outcomes. To watch a recording of the event, please click [here](#).

### **HELP COMMITTEE CONSIDERS ED NOMINEE GLENNA WRIGHT-GALLO**

On Thursday, February 10, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee voted on the nomination of Glenna Laureen Wright-Gallo to be assistant secretary of education for special education and rehabilitative services at the U.S. Department of Education. Support for Wright-Gallo and the other nominees was bipartisan. The committee voted 14-8 in favor of Wright-Gallo’s nomination. Notably, Senators Mitt Romney (R-UT), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) crossed party lines, voting for Wright-Gallo’s nomination. For more information, click [here](#).