



Florida School Boards Association FEDERAL NEWS & INFORMATION

March 7, 2022

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

President Joe Biden delivered his first official [State of the Union address](#) last week. While war in Europe and an ongoing pandemic were central to the speech, there was also content related to education and workforce development. In discussing the toll the pandemic has taken on students, he noted the importance of mental health supports, saying he intends to ask Congress to invest \$1 billion in school psychologists and counselors. He also asked Americans to support schools and students, saying they should consider volunteering to be mentors and tutors, or joining the teaching workforce. As he did last year, he called for pre-K for all 3- and 4-year olds — an element of the languishing Build Back Better proposal. Pell Grants should be larger, he said, and minority-serving institutions need more support. (More on President Biden's proposal for the country's economy is [here](#).) The education community is eagerly awaiting the details of his proposals, which will be conveyed in the FY 2023 White House budget request. Rumors on the date of its delivery vary, but a "skinny budget" could come as soon as mid-March, with a detailed request to follow in April. Other rumors say the request will be unveiled in late March.

As for FY 2022 appropriations, negotiations continue, but Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) told reporters mid-week that talks had hit a "snag." By week's end, it seemed that staff were continuing to make progress, but there are concerns that they would not finish their work by March 11 — the date the current continuing resolution expires. Legislative riders continue to provoke partisan disagreements, and the size of the \$1.5 trillion measure doesn't support speedy consideration.

The White House also sent its request for a supplemental spending bill to the Hill last week. President Biden is asking for \$32.5 billion to address the Ukraine crisis and COVID needs. There appears to be bipartisan support for the \$10 billion that would support Ukraine. The funds for COVID have already met resistance, with some questioning the need for more funds and pointing to the lack of transparency and accountability for spent COVID relief funds.

There will certainly be action on FY 2022 appropriations this week. It seems likely that there will be another continuing resolution — likely the last one for this cycle — before an omnibus is on the floor of either chamber.

CEF DISCUSSES "SHORTAGES IN THE EDUCATION LABOR FORCE"

On Wednesday, March 2, the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) hosted a webinar on "Shortages in the Education Labor Force." Participants included Miren Algorri, owner, Little Blossoms Child Care, CA; Mark Davey, district superintendent, Champlain Valley Educational Services, NY; Kari Oyen, assistant professor of counseling and psychology in education, University of South Dakota; and Megan Schneider, associate vice chancellor for federal relations, University of Houston System. Algorri began by stating that federal investments in childcare must increase significantly. She urged Congress to bring forward a comprehensive early childhood education plan to provide childcare for all families who need it. The conversation continued with Oyen discussing the critical shortage in school psychology, both in terms of practitioners and in the availability of graduate education programs and faculty needed to train the workforce necessary to keep up with the growing student population. She believes Congress can help by passing a robust FY2022 spending bill that includes significant investments by strengthening the school psychology workforce and cosponsor bills to help more students access the comprehensive mental health services they deserve. Schneider spoke on federal funding in higher education specific to workforce issues. Funding for the future workforce means greater support of minority-serving institutions, greater student aid support through Pell Grant, funding for STEM fields, greater support of



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CTE programs within existing institutions of higher education, and support for the UT Pilot Program in micro-credentialing for graduates in historically low-earning fields, according to Schneider. For more information on CEF, please click [here](#).