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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

The Congress was hard at work this week, in early and out late, holding hearings and mark-ups, and even making progress on a major Administration priority—energy reform. Why all the activity? The Memorial Day recess begins next week and Members were anxious to get out of town with accomplishments to share with their constituents. The major task before them was the passage of a \$90 billion plus emergency supplemental spending bill to support wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Though the House and Senate managed to pass their respective versions of the measure, the basis of which was a package sent to the Hill by the White House, they did not get to meet to conference the bills.

Work on the supplemental spending bill delayed action on the FY 2010 Budget. The so-called 302B allocations—when the Appropriations Committees meet to decide how much money each subcommittee will have to spend—was postponed until after next week's recess. Also following the recess, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is scheduled to make his first appearance before the House and Senate Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriation Subcommittees. Though it is clear that the leadership in the Congress wants to support the President as much as possible, Members of the Appropriations Subcommittees have minds of their own when it comes to spending on specific programs. Secretary Duncan will be warmly greeted, as he was before the House Education and Labor Committee this week, but the budget proposal for the Department of Education will not be rubber stamped by House Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman David Obey (D-WI), his Senate counterpart, Subcommittee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA), or their colleagues.

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2. Two Events Focus on Educating English Language Learners

This week, the National Education Association (NEA) and the Urban Institute hosted separate forums to discuss the education of English language learners (ELLs), the unique challenges these students face, and the need for the public education system to better meet their needs. Even with the implementation of certain provisions in Title I and Title III of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, there is growing evidence that most schools, faced with the dual challenge of increasing English language proficiency while simultaneously improving academic proficiency in the content areas, are *not* meeting the challenge of educating students with limited English proficiency. Although ELLs are the fastest growing population in public schools, national test scores show that ELLs' academic performance levels are significantly below their peers in nearly every measure of achievement.

Presenters at both events agreed that there is a shortage of trained teachers and administrators who know how to teach and support ELL students. According to David Rogers, Executive Director for Dual Language Education, who presented at the NEA symposium, as well as Manny Rivera, CEO of Global Partnership Schools and former New York State Deputy Education Secretary, this is due to poor pre-service training at colleges of education. He argues they are not preparing teachers to teach the students in 21st century classrooms. Speakers stressed the need for systemic reform and leadership at both the school and district levels. Educators need access to ongoing, embedded professional development and time for planning and reflection among ESL and content area teachers. Dr. Elena Izquierdo, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics and Bilingual Education at the University of Texas at El Paso said, "Two way dual language programs are the Ferrari of education." Quality programs of this nature require: all students to achieve high levels of language proficiency in both languages of instruction; achieving at or above grade level academically as well as in language proficiency; positive cross cultural attitudes; a belief that being multilingual is an asset; ongoing assessment and adaptation.

When the Urban Institute panelists were asked what role the federal government could play to help bring about reform, Kathleen Leos, President of the Global Institute for Language and Literacy Development and former director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition, said, "It's really important that schools understand that they have to change to meet the needs of the students. A lot of schools think students and families need to change to meet the needs of the schools." Panelists stressed that providing a fair and equitable education for ELLs is a civil rights issue and currently there is a disconnect between the goals of *No Child Left Behind* and actual classroom practice. Bethany Little, Chief Education Counsel to Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), noted that while the federal government should not mandate classroom instruction practice, it can help incentivize systemic change beginning with increased access to early childhood education, quality health care and an expectation that all students will graduate high school ready to go to college.

For more information go to: www.urban.org/publications/311468.html or <http://www.nea.org/home/29914.htm>.

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3. In Brief

MELENDEZ NOMINATED FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

This week the Obama Administration announced the nomination of Dr. Thelma Melendez to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education. Melendez currently serves as the Superintendent of Schools in the Pomona Unified School District in Pomona, CA. She is known for her work on improving teaching and learning, and accelerating student performance, and has worked with the Stupski Educational Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation. Melendez has written several articles for national education publications, and has spoken extensively on the role of school administrators, the achievement gap, women in education, and the issues of race and class.

CEF HOLDS CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING ON FY2010 BUDGET

On Monday, the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) held a briefing for Congressional staff in response to President Obama's FY 2010 budget request for the Department of Education. The event highlighted several sections of the budget request, including: elementary and secondary education; career and technical education; higher education; education research and other related programs. CEF members expressed appreciation for increases in funding for programs including early childhood, an expanded Striving Readers middle and high school program, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and a college access and completion fund. However, concerns were also articulated over cuts to programs including career and technical education, TRIO and GEAR UP. CEF urged Congress to make additional investments in education funding for the success of America's students. To read the full budget response, visit: www.cef.org

CAPITOL HILL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF K-12 COMPUTING EDUCATION

On Wednesday, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) joined a number of groups with interests in the computing field and computing education to host a briefing on the importance of rich computer science curriculum in K-12 education. The event focused, in part, on the work of Dr. Joanna Goode in the Los Angeles Unified School District. There, she and her colleagues, with support from the National Science Foundation, have worked to expand computer science education opportunities in the district. The program they developed and studied includes a rich high school-level computer science curriculum, strong professional development for teachers and counselors, as well as a concerted effort to engage minority and at-risk students. Her comments echoed those of Chris Stephenson, Executive Director of the CSTA, who told the audience about the importance of exposing young people to curriculum that impart computational skills and educating them on the opportunities available to would-be computer scientists. For more information on the event and the issues surrounding the place of computer science in K-12 education, visit: <http://www.csta.acm.org/>.

CAP HOLDS BRIEFING ON INCREASING COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION

On Thursday, the Center for American Progress (CAP) held a briefing, "Getting To Work: The Tough Journey of Getting To More Postsecondary Degrees," at which a panel of education experts discussed increasing the number of students enrolling in postsecondary study and the overall graduation rates of postsecondary students. Louis Soares from CAP discussed the findings of a report titled, "The Other College." The report finds that two-year

colleges have experienced continually increasing enrollment rates. However, the report also shows that students attending two-year colleges are less likely to graduate than students attending four-year colleges. In agreement with Soares, Rick Stephens, Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Boeing, stressed the need to improve the alignment between high school, two-year colleges, and four-year colleges in order to reduce the need for remediation in postsecondary education and to increase graduation rates. For more information visit: <http://www.americanprogress.org/events/2009/05/postsecondary.html>.

CBC FOUNDATION HOLDS BRIEFING ON PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS

On Thursday, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Foundation held a briefing to discuss “Promise Neighborhoods”, the moniker for a new \$10 million initiative in President Obama’s FY 2010 Budget Proposal. The Administration hopes to provide one-year planning grants to non-profit, community-based organizations that want to develop comprehensive neighborhood programs for children and youth, inspired by the Harlem Children’s Zone in Harlem, New York. PolicyLink and the Harlem Children’s Zone have joined together to develop a series of recommendations on how to successfully replicate the program in other communities, which include creating a pipeline of programs, engaging the community, and producing measurable results. David Johns, Senior Education Policy Advisor for the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, said that if the initiative is successful, policymakers will explore a legislative vehicle for the program. For more information, visit www.cbcfinc.org.

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4. New Publications

“Local Demand for School Choice” Institute for Education and Social Policy (May 2009).
<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/003/238/Local%20Demand%20For%20School%20Choice.pdf>

“Using Assessments to Improve Learning and Student Progress” Pearson Issue Papers (May 2009).
http://www.pearsoned.com/pr_2009/051309.pdf

“Teachers, Performance Pay, and Accountability” Economic Policy Institute (May 2009).
http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/books-teachers_performance_pay_and_accountability/

“Peer Effects on Children’s Language Achievement During Pre-Kindergarten” University of Virginia (May 2009).
<http://www.edweek.org/login.html?source=http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/05/20/32report-=2100>

“Promoting Economic Mobility By Increasing Postsecondary Education” Pew Charitable Trusts (May 2009).
http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Economic_Mobility/PEW_EM_Haskins%207.pdf

5. In the News

“LA Unified Makes Computer Science Accessible” Los Angeles Times (5/21/09).

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-digital-divide21-2009may21,0,4195521.story>

“Report Prompts Call for Rules on Restraining Students” Washington Post (5/21/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/20/AR2009052002520.html>

“Mere 30 Point Bump on SAT Can Pay Off Big in Admissions” USA Today (5/21/09).

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-05-20-SAT-prep_N.htm

“Credit Reform Means New Era for College Students” Boston Globe (5/21/09).

http://www.boston.com/news/education/higher/articles/2009/05/21/credit_reform_means_new_era_for_college_students/

“Report: U.S. Students Lag in Biosciences” USA Today (5/21/09).

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-05-18-science-students_N.htm

“Got an Opinion on AP Courses? Join the Club” Washington Post (5/20/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/19/AR2009051903721.html>

“Panel Concerned About the Abuse of Disabled Students” New York Times (5/19/09).

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/20/education/20brfs-PANELCONCERN_BRF.html?ref=education

“End is Near in a Fight on Teaching of English” New York Times (5/19/09).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/20/education/20flores.html?ref=education>

“Senioritis is One Symptom of Creative Deficit in Class” Washington Post (5/18/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/17/AR2009051701883.html>

“Montgomery Co. Touts 7 Keys to College Readiness as an Academic Pathway” Washington Post (5/18/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/17/AR2009051701884.html>

“Gingrich, Sharpton Finally Teammates: Close Education Gap” Washington Post (5/17/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/16/AR2009051602265.html>

“Psst Need the Answer to No.7? Click Here” New York Times (5/17/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/15/AR2009051503434.html>

“Algebra for All: The Push for Higher Math” Washington Post (5/16/09).
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/15/AR2009051503434.html>

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6. About WPLLC

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