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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

Perhaps it is a good thing that Congress has returned home to states and districts and is no longer around to respond to the economic roller coaster on Wall Street. We all can watch from the same perch the panic in the markets as it ebbs and flows, feeling fairly powerless to intervene—regardless of our status—waiting it out together. It provides an extraordinary backdrop for the presidential campaigns and those in states and districts as well. It will hopefully help to suppress the negative advertisements and the outrageous accusations that dominate the airwaves and the internet, and require the candidates to tell us what they will actually do to get us through the crisis.

Capitol Hill is a quiet place these days. Members make periodic cameo appearances—particularly those who are not running for re-election and those who have retired. Staff who are around have time to meet and talk and plan for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Appropriations staffers are preparing for the conference committee meetings that must take place in order to develop a massive omnibus spending plan to finalize the FY 2009 budget. That bill will hopefully be enacted before the Continuing Resolution expires on March 6, 2009. Late January or early February is the hinted goal.

Optimistic about the chances for strong Democratic victories, majority staff are counting on adding that \$25 billion above the Administration's request for domestic discretionary spending that the Congress invested in appropriations bills that were passed in committee this year, but never enacted. If they are correct, the outlook for education funding for FY 2009 is far rosier than one would anticipate watching the nightly news and seeing the Dow plummet. Never ones to be overly optimistic, these same Democratic staffers warn

that “next year” is the one that will be really tough on education funding. There is little to do at this point but wait and hope for the best.

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## **2. ED Hosts Public Hearing on HEOA Regulations**

The Department of Education (ED) has begun its effort to promulgate regulations following the enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-315). The Department is working on a “Dear Colleague letter” to provide some guidance on the new law. The letter could be released as soon as the end of October. Many of the new law’s provisions became effective when the law was signed in August, and the guidance will be helpful to affected parties. Other provisions warrant more detailed regulatory guidance and ED has hosted a series of public meetings to hear concerns from the higher education community. Such a meeting was held in Washington, DC this week and many representatives of national associations participated.

The comments touched on a number of issues, including implementation of changes to the rules that govern the so-called “90/10” rule, the increased use of technology in higher education and attendant changes to regulation affecting distance learning, as well as the new emergency notification requirements arising from the tragedy at Virginia Tech and other incidents. Accreditation was also addressed by a number of commenters. Transparency in the process, as well as the underlying transfer of credit policies and related issues prompted the urging of the appointment of a separate negotiating team on accreditation issues.

Teacher preparation programs are revamped by the new law’s revision of Title II of the Higher Education Act. Commenters argued that a number of new provisions warrant regulatory guidance, including the provisions related to accountability for teacher preparation programs, required data collection and sharing, as well as some of the provisions related to stipends and service requirements for teacher candidates. In addition, it was suggested that the Teach For America program and alternative certification programs should be required to submit the same data reports as other teacher preparation programs.

The new law also includes a number of provisions that affect students with disabilities on college campuses. A new program meant to extend certain education services to students with disabilities, as well as the new Title II initiative that aims to arm K-12 classroom teachers with the skills to manage special needs students and new universal design for learning efforts led a number of commenters to urge ED to regulate carefully in this area.

The Department of Education will hold its final public hearing on October 15, 2008. Following the collection of input via written and oral comments, the Department will issue *Federal Register* notices signaling next steps. The Department is posting transcripts of public hearings and other information on this process at:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html>.

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### 3. First National Math Panel Forum Meets

The National Mathematics Advisory Panel (National Math Panel) released its final report, *Foundations for Success*, on March 13, 2008. The report contains 45 findings and recommendations on numerous topics, including curricular content, learning processes, instructional practices and materials, teachers, assessments, and future research priorities. In response to a recommendation from the Panel, the Department of Education, in partnership with the Conference Board of Mathematical Sciences, hosted a Forum this week to bring together various organizations and interested parties to discuss ways to use the findings as a platform to improve mathematics education in the United States.

The event featured remarks from Department of Education leadership and members of the Panel, although much of the agenda focused on allowing teams to work in breakout sessions to formulate plans for collaborating in states and districts to improve efforts to prepare students to be successful in algebra.

During his remarks, Deputy Secretary of Education Ray Simon assured the crowd that the report is not a judgment of any single component of the mathematics education system, but a prescription for a system that is “broken”. He urged attendees to take the report and its findings as their own as they worked in groups throughout the day.

In her lunchtime remarks, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings talked about the significant effort and time Panel members invested in producing the report. She also pointed to the proficiency goals of No Child Left Behind, asserting that achieving grade level achievement in math and reading by 2014 is a “modest” goal. She said, “You would think we were asking for the stars and the moon—for something that’s undoable or unreasonable or unnecessary. We’re not. We’re talking about baseline, grade-level skills. That’s what I want for my children. That’s what you want for yours. Why would we think other families want less for theirs?”

She also cited Math Now as an important effort. She said the program, which was authorized as part of the America COMPETES Act, “aims to translate the Math Panel’s findings into practical tools for educators.” She also said, “Unfortunately, Congress has not funded the program. I hope that they will do so soon. In the meantime, it’s up to all of us to spread the word about the panel’s work.”

The teams in attendance were charged with developing action plans and at the end of the day the various groups reported back to the larger group to share their action plans. For more information on this meeting and the efforts of the Panel, visit

[http://www.cbmsweb.org/NMP\\_Intro.htm](http://www.cbmsweb.org/NMP_Intro.htm) and  
<http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/mathpanel/index.html>

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### 4. Educational Entrepreneurship: What do the Candidates Think?

On Wednesday, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) hosted an event focused on social entrepreneurship and how key principles of this business model can most

effectively be utilized by the education sector. Two representatives from the presidential campaigns – Michael Johnston, Obama for America, and Lisa Graham Keegan, McCain-Palin 2008 – were featured panelists as both candidates have expressed their support for entrepreneurial activity in the education sector and address it in their education platforms. Specifically, Keegan highlighted Senator John McCain’s (R-AZ) support for choice-based school reform and entrepreneurial endeavors, such as charter schools. Johnston spoke about Senator Barack Obama’s (D-IL) idea to create a new public-private Social Entrepreneurship Agency in the White House, in addition to continuing to support successful charter schools and programs like Teach For America. Both panelists agreed that “educational entrepreneurship” has merit, and therefore the bulk of the discussion focused on how the federal government can remove obstacles inhibiting the work of promising new organizations and providers of these services.

Moderating the discussion, Frederick Hess, Resident Scholar and Director of Education Policy Studies at AEI, outlined what he views as “barriers to entry” that prohibit or obstruct entrepreneurial endeavors. This includes: scarcity of venture capital for fueling entrepreneurial activities; inadequate efforts to encourage a population of entrepreneurial educators and reformers; the need for additional research and development; and the need for quality control of these new endeavors. Hess further explores these findings in a new book he edited titled, *The Future of Educational Entrepreneurship: Possibilities for School Reform*. He, along with presenter Arthur C. Brooks, incoming president of AEI, argue that the nexus between entrepreneurship and education reform is not easy to identify and that the demand for quality education does not necessarily produce quality supply. Efforts such as school choice and vouchers have failed to effectively foster the necessary climate for successful K-12 education reform efforts, they argue. Both Keegan and Johnston agreed that not all innovation is good, but said the federal government can provide metrics to hold innovative programs accountable.

While also agreeing that “human capital” is a key component of any successful entrepreneurial endeavor, the candidates’ surrogates disagreed on how to attract and retain high quality teachers. Senator McCain is distressed that colleges of education are attracting and graduating the lowest performing student applicants, thus maintaining the status quo and, as a result, he would completely reconfigure Title II funds and their allocation. Specifically, in a McCain administration, Title II dollars would be allocated to schools based on overall performance and student achievement as opposed to being used for professional development opportunities for all teachers in low performing schools. In an Obama Administration, the emphasis would be placed on new programs to help attract, retain and reward teachers, such as teacher residency programs and incentives to teach at hard to staff schools and in hard to staff subject areas. There would also be a new office on social entrepreneurship, which would help to grow ventures in multiple sectors.

For more information visit:

[http://www.aei.org/events/eventID.1797,filter.all/event\\_detail.asp](http://www.aei.org/events/eventID.1797,filter.all/event_detail.asp).

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## 5. In Brief

### **CEP HOLDS BRIEFING ON FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION**

On Monday, the Center on Education Policy (CEP) held a public forum, “Rethinking the Federal Role in Elementary and Secondary Education.” Sharing his opinion that the policy process regarding the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has “frozen up” – there still is no renewal or extension – Jack Jennings, President and CEO of CEP, believes the education community should step back and ask fundamental questions about the role of the federal government in elementary and secondary education. The event showcased the work of Dr. Paul Manna, Assistant Professor at the College of William and Mary, who presented his paper on the history of the federal role in elementary and secondary education. One of Manna’s main observations is that the federal government’s role has made positive contributions to education, but has usually fallen short of its stated goals. Manna believes the federal government is quite good at defining broad policy goals, distributing resources at the local level, and disseminating research. He shared his opinion that the federal government does poorly when administering “silo” programs that are not tied to broad goals and when seeking substantive results from schools (versus procedural results). To learn more about the event, visit <http://www.cep-dc.org/>.

### **AAP HOSTS DISCUSSION ON INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

On Monday, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) held a panel discussion on data showing that "investing in children's early health and education is a vital economic growth strategy." Panelists also mentioned a recently released report, "Telluride Principles for Investing in Young Children", which provides a framework for understanding and discussing how to prioritize resources for early education programs. Sara Watson from the Pew Center on the States, stated that recognizing the importance of health as an essential building block for child development is an important investment we can make to ensure that children develop into successful and productive adults. She added that children who participate in early health and early education programs demonstrate higher academic achievement, are less likely to repeat a grade or need special education, are more likely to enroll in college, are less likely to participate in criminal activity and are more likely to have higher wage earnings and be more productive. She noted that the health benefits include being less likely to depend on public assistance, such as welfare, and less likely to smoke or abuse drugs or alcohol. For more information visit: <http://www.aap.org/>

### **NCTET HOLDS FORUM ON EXPANDING BROADBAND IN SCHOOLS**

On Monday, the National Coalition for Technology in Education and Training (NCTET) held a forum titled, “Broadband 3G: The Expanding Need for Bandwidth in Schools.” At the event, Bijaya Devkota, the Chief Information Officer at Charles County Public Schools in Maryland, described the steps taken to make that school system the first in the nation to “become totally wireless.” The Charles County schools connected all of their school buildings with a 2-gigabit line and implemented a network-based application to improve the efficiency of the administration. Devkota admitted that it was challenging to make these changes, but the results have been very positive. “Teachers and faculty can

access educational resources, improve collaboration and handle administration tasks more efficiently,” he said. “Student performance is expected to improve, as students have access to rich multimedia content, for more effective learning at each student’s individual pace.” The panelists all agreed on the need for increased E-Rate funding, which is the primary source of dedicated technology funding for schools. E-Rate funds have been capped at \$2.25 billion for the last ten years, which falls short of meeting schools’ increasing needs. For more information, visit [www.nctet.org](http://www.nctet.org).

### **ED AND MALDEF ENSURE PROPER USE OF ELL FUNDS**

This week, the Department of Education (ED) and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) demanded that states end the misuse of federal education funds for English language learners (ELLs). Several states have been using the funds provided under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), to supplant state or local funding, instead of supplementing the state funding for ELL programs. According to NCLB, these funds must “supplement, not supplant,” state and local funding. “Although Congress has appropriated over \$700 million in annual funding for students under Title III of the NCLB, many of these dollars have not actually been used to improve educational services for ELLs,” noted Peter Zamora, MALDEF Washington, D.C. Regional Counsel. In addition to the directive against the misuse of federal education funds for ELLs issued by ED, MALDEF has also written to the education superintendents of key states serving large numbers of Latino students, including California, Texas, Georgia, Illinois and Arizona. These letters call on superintendents to follow the Department of Education’s guidelines regarding their spending practices at the state and local level and ensure that they allocate federal funds for English Language Learner students appropriately. For more information on MALDEF, visit: <http://www.maldef.org/>.

### **ACF ANNOUNCES HEAD START GRANT TO PREVENT OBESITY**

On Monday, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced the winner of a \$12 million grant to prevent obesity among Head Start children. The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) of Reston, Virginia, was awarded the four-year competitive grant to establish a National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play. The center will assist Head Start programs in creating healthy learning environments in their classrooms and playgrounds, and educating children and their families about the importance of a healthy diet and physical activity. The center will also offer Head Start grantees technical assistance and sub grants to support the improvement and construction of playgrounds. “The National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play will help Head Start address one of the greatest dangers to America’s children: overweight and obesity,” said Patricia Brown, director of ACF’s Office of Head Start. “This center will help Head Start build on the many excellent programs already underway.” For more information, visit [www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov).

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## 6. New Publications

“Postsecondary Institutions in the United States: Fall 2007 and Degrees and Other Awards Conferred: 2006-07, and 12 Month Enrollment 2006-07” National Center for Education Statistics (October 2008).

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008159>

“Relationships, Rigor and Readiness: Strategies for Improving High Schools” MDRC (October 2008).

<http://www.mdrc.org/publications/498/preface.html>

“Quality Schools and Healthy Neighborhoods: A Research Report” Brookings Institution (October 2008).

[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/09\\_dc\\_public\\_schools\\_garrison/volume\\_1.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/09_dc_public_schools_garrison/volume_1.pdf)

“Conditions of Education in California 2008” PACE (October 2008).

[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/09\\_dc\\_public\\_schools\\_garrison/volume\\_1.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/09_dc_public_schools_garrison/volume_1.pdf)

“Digital Quality of Life” Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (October 2008).

<http://www.itif.org/index.php?id=179>

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## 7. In the News

“81% Got Diplomas On Time This Year” Washington Post (10/9/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/08/AR2008100801674.html>

“Video Game Helps Math Students Vanquish on Archfiend: Algebra” New York Times (10/8/08).

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/08/nyregion/08video.html?\\_r=2&ref=education&oref=slogin&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/08/nyregion/08video.html?_r=2&ref=education&oref=slogin&oref=slogin)

“For Students with Special Needs, A Vow of Assistance” Washington Post (10/8/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/07/AR2008100702921.html>

“A Push to Curb the Casual Use of Ugly Phrases” New York Times (10/8/08).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/08/business/media/08adco.html?ref=education>

“Harvard Gets \$125 Million for Biological Engineering Institute” Boston Globe (10/7/08).

[http://www.boston.com/news/health/blog/2008/10/harvard\\_gets\\_12\\_2.html](http://www.boston.com/news/health/blog/2008/10/harvard_gets_12_2.html)

“Parents Seek More School Input” Chicago Tribune (10/7/08).

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/content/education/chi-cps-survey05oct05,0,4049852.story>

“Students Feeling Economy’s Crunch” Seattle Times (10/6/08).

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008231486\\_loanproblems06m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008231486_loanproblems06m.html)

“Using Video Games as Bait to Hook Readers” New York Times (10/6/08).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/06/books/06games.html>

“Recess Will Never be the Same” Baltimore Sun (10/6/08).

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/education/k12/bal-ha.playgrounds05oct05,0,3656488.story>

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## 8. About WPLLC

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