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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, making progress on appropriations bills, healthcare reform and climate change legislation. Next week marks the July 4 recess, so Members needed accomplishments to discuss with constituents during the week at home—a need that spurred all of the activity. Though the House succeeded in passing three more spending bills, the content of which was non-controversial—the procedures continued to cause partisan heartburn.

In the interest of time, and because another “death by amendment” strategy appeared on the horizon, the House Rules Committee insisted that all floor debates in the House regarding appropriations bills be under the terms of a “Limited Rule”. This caused loud protests from the Republicans and numerous motions for adjournment that were rejected. These tactics succeeded in slowing down the process, but the bills were adopted on strongly bi-partisan votes and it appears the House is on track to finish all 12 spending bills by the end of July. In the Senate, several appropriations measures were the focus of Committee activity, but floor action in the Senate has been even more problematic than the House, as one Senator can block action at any time.

Beyond action on the appropriations front, three Subcommittees in the House held hearings this week on the comprehensive healthcare reform legislation that was introduced last Friday. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee continued to slog its way through week two of their mark-up, acknowledging by Thursday that they would not finish before the recess—it appears they were the last to know. The Senate Finance Committee will get started with the mark-up of their portion of healthcare reform after the recess. In the House, the climate change legislation was the focus of Committee action, pressure from the White House, and many closed door sessions, and it now appears ready for floor action soon.

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2. In Brief

DUNCAN URGES CHARTER SCHOOLS TO HELP TURN AROUND SCHOOLS

On Monday, at the 2009 National Charter School Conference, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called on charter school leaders to become “active players in the national effort to turn around low-performing schools and to take aggressive actions to ensure their schools are held accountable for student results.” Duncan has set a goal of turning around 5,000 low-performing schools. Duncan emphasized, once again, that through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, the Department of Education would be making competitive grants to states under the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund and to districts and nonprofits from the \$650 million What Works and Innovation Fund. He also warned his audience that the charter school community must be responsible for holding their schools accountable. “The charter movement is putting itself at risk by allowing too many second-rate and third-rate operators to exist,” he said. “Charter authorizers need to do a better job of holding schools accountable – or people will, by leaving.” Duncan’s speech was the third in a series of four focusing on the reform strategies states must address under the ARRA, and to qualify for funds under the Race to the Top Fund. For more information visit:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/06/06222009e.html>

DUNCAN ANNOUNCES GRANTS TO HELP GIRLS IN MATH AND SCIENCE

On Tuesday, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan joined White House Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett and several all-star women athletes and scientists for a roundtable discussion of so-called “Title IX”, which refers to a provision of the Education Amendments of 1972 that banned many discriminatory activities in education and educational institutions. During the event, Duncan announced the award of \$2.4 million in grants to 13 groups to support projects that will help high school girls gain higher proficiency in math and science. “These grants go hand-in-glove with our efforts to improve equity and access for women and girls in the classroom and on the playing field,” Duncan said. “While much has been accomplished since Title IX was enacted, we must continue to push for further progress. Fairness and equity continue to be important issues that contribute to gaps in achievement between students.” The four-year grants were made under the Women’s Educational Equity Act Program within the Department of Education. The program provides financial assistance to enable educational agencies to meet the requirements of Title IX. The grantees were selected from 63 eligible applicants. Grantees received additional points if their projects included activities to help at-risk students meet challenging state academic standards and graduate. All of the awardees will serve females at the secondary level. For more information visit:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/06/06232009.html>

ED CONTINUES TO AWARD SFS FUNDING

The Department of Education continues to award State Fiscal Stabilization Funds made available by the passage of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)*. These funds have been awarded to eligible states that have completed Part 1 of the State Stabilization Application. With the July 1 deadline approaching, more states are being added to ED’s list of states approved to receive funding. So far, the Department has awarded over \$24 billion to 37 states. Over the past two weeks, Washington, D.C. has been approved to receive \$60 million of ARRA funds, Alaska was approved for \$76 million, New Mexico was approved for \$230 million, \$134.5 million was approved for New Hampshire, \$70 million was approved for North Dakota, and Nebraska has been approved for \$191 million. These

funds will help reform education and protect the jobs of teachers. For more information on states that have submitted applications for SFS Funds, including the approved applications, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/statestabilization/resources.html>. To view information on what states are doing with the funds visit:

<http://www.edgovblogs.org/duncan/2009/04/state-stabilization-fund-update/>.

ADMINISTRATION NOMINATES DANN-MESSIER FOR POST AT ED

This week, the Obama Administration announced its intention to nominate Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier to serve as Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education in the Department of Education (ED). Dann-Messier is currently the President of Dorcas Place, an Adult and Family Learning Center in Providence, Rhode Island. Prior to coming to Dorcas Place she worked at the Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University. She also previously served at ED as Secretary Richard Riley's Regional Representative for Region I in Boston, Massachusetts. She also formerly directed two TRIO programs, the Rhode Island Educational Opportunity Center and the Educational Talent Search Program of the Community College of Rhode Island. Dr. Dann-Messier is a member of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education and chairs the Academic and Student Affairs subcommittee for the board. For more information visit:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President-Obama-Announces-More-Key-Administration-Posts-6-24-09/

SENATE MARKS UP CJS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

This week, the Senate Appropriations Committee marked up the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) FY 2010 appropriations bill. CJS Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) reminded Committee Members that the bill provides funds to some of the nation's most important science research and education programs. She also noted that legislators have a responsibility to ensure that these programs are properly funded while providing stewardship over taxpayer dollars and enforcing accountability and oversight. This bill recommends that \$878.8 million be provided to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST) and \$4.7 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The bill also recommends spending \$18.7 billion at NASA, \$17 million more than the President's request. The Senate bill also provides \$6.9 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the same amount that was included in the House-passed bill, and \$446 million above the FY 2009 enacted level. This is \$1.08 billion less than the President's request. Within NSF, \$858 million would be reserved for the Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate, \$5 million less than the House's \$863 million, the same as the President's request of \$858 million, and \$13 million over the \$845 million enacted in FY 2009. The Senate bill does not provide specific funding recommendations for the NSF Math and Science Partnerships or the Robert Noyce Scholarship Program. The House passed its version of the FY 2010 CJS Appropriations bill on Thursday, June 18. For more information, visit: <http://appropriations.senate.gov>.

VIDEO GAMES AND TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERED AS EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

On Tuesday, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars held a panel discussion on how video games and other technology might be leveraged to improve educational and health outcomes for children and young adults. At the event, the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop released its new report, "Game Changer: Investing in Digital Play to

Advance Children's Learning and Health." The report recommends: expanding video game research and development programs; creating innovative partnerships; modernizing teaching and health delivery techniques; and educating the media on the positive possibilities of video games. With regard to classroom use, Michael Levine, Executive Director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center, emphasized that teachers are unable to effectively use these new tools if they do not understand them themselves. The panelists agreed that more research is needed to demonstrate to policy makers that educational games work, and that "serious" video games have the capacity to change the educational landscape. Scot Osterweil, Creative Director at the Education Arcade, emphasized that educational video games need to take a hint from the entertainment industry and develop many small games prior to developing a larger game in order to determine what qualities will make the larger game successful. To read the full report visit: http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?event=summary&event_id=539385.

NCATE RELEASES NEW ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

On Tuesday, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) held an event titled, "Redesign and Transformation of Accreditation to Build Evidence of What Works and Strengthen Focus on P-12 Student Needs." At the event, NCATE President Jim Cibulka announced NCATE's major redesign of accreditation of teacher education requirements. Cibulka noted that the redesign creates two alternative pathways to accrediting the nearly 700 teacher education programs throughout the country. The first path is the "Continuous Improvement" track, which aims to raise the target level of performance beyond the "acceptable" level. The second pathway is the "Transformation Initiative" track, which "encourages institutions to build the base of evidence in the field about what works in teacher preparation and help the P-12 schools they serve address major challenges, from raising student achievement to retaining teachers." Cibulka said that institutions seeking the NCATE "seal of approval" must either demonstrate that they are working to surpass their "acceptable level" to reach an "excellent" level of performance or that they are making transformative changes in key areas, such as: Strengthening the clinical focus of their programs to better prepare educators to meet the needs of today's P-12 students and foster increases in student learning; Demonstrating the impact of their programs and graduates on P-12 student learning; Increasing knowledge about what works in teacher education to improve P-12 student learning, using a research and development strategy to build better knowledge and help institutions use that knowledge to improve programs, and Addressing critical needs of schools, such as recruiting talented teachers and bolstering teacher retention. For more information on the new accreditation requirements visit:

http://www.ncate.org/public/062309_TeacherEdRequirements.asp

CAP RELEASES REPORTS ON TENURE AND TEACHER EVALUATION

This week, the Center for American Progress (CAP) held an event featuring the release of two new reports and a discussion of their findings. "Fixing Tenure: A Proposal for Assuring Teacher Effectiveness and Due Process" and "So Long, Lake Wobegon? Using Teacher Evaluation to Raise Teacher Quality" are separate reports on two issues crucial to any efforts to reform the teaching workforce. Assuming the broadly-accepted premise that quality teachers and teaching are the most important in-school elements in producing student achievement, the two reports attempt to examine current problems in the teacher evaluation and tenure systems and recommend improvements. The report on tenure examines whether tenure, as it currently operates at the state level, meets its original goals of assuring a high quality veteran teaching force and protecting teachers from arbitrary and capricious dismissal.

The report concludes that tenure laws need fixing, and its author, Joan Baratz-Snowden of the Education Study Center, has a number of recommendations for doing so. Morgaen Donaldson from the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education examines teacher evaluation practices in "So Long, Lake Wobegon?" The report explores how teacher evaluation might best be implemented. First, it examines the structure of teacher evaluation and the role of student learning in assessments of teachers' effectiveness. It then draws on research to examine why teacher evaluation has generally had little effect on instruction, learning, and achievement. Finally, the report assesses the prospects for teacher evaluation reform, concluding that the time is right for major change. For more information on the event and the reports, visit

<http://www.americanprogress.org/events/2009/06/teacherevaluation.html>.

BBA RELEASES NEW REPORT ON SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

On Thursday, the Broader, Bolder Approach to Education Campaign (BBA) held an event to release its new report, "School Accountability, A Broader, Bolder Approach: Report of the Accountability Committee of the Broader, Bolder Approach to Education Campaign." Tom Payzant of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Christopher Cross, Former President of the Council for Better Education, presented the report's recommendations. Most notably, the report calls for: aggressively working for school reform, focusing on providing smaller classes in early grades and high quality teachers to disadvantaged children and improving teacher and school leadership training; providing high-quality early-childhood care and education that promotes not only academic readiness but also other skills necessary for life success; making sure that disadvantaged children have the health and dental care they need to be physically able to attend school, possibly by creating full-service school clinics; and improving the quality of out-of-school time by providing cultural, athletic, and academic enrichment, in order to prevent children, especially the disadvantaged, from losing ground while out of formal school. The session was highlighted by the Committee's assurances that the project can succeed because it is the first attempt at qualitative assessment based on outputs, and because the political climate is ripe, but they emphasized that creating incentives and accountability are key steps in ensuring the project's success. For more information or to read the report, visit: <http://www.boldapproach.org/>.

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3. New Publications

"Financial Accounting for Local and State School Systems: 2009 Edition" National Center for Education Statistics (June 2009).

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2009325>

"So Long, Lake Wobegon? Using Teacher Evaluation to Raise Teacher Quality" Center for American Progress (June 2009).

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/06/teacher_evaluation.html

"Fixing Tenure: A Proposal for Assuring Teacher Effectiveness and Due Process" Center for American Progress (June 2009).

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/06/teacher_tenure.html

“Exploring What Works in Science Instruction: A Look at the Eighth-Grade Science Classroom” ETS (June 2009).

<http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.c988ba0e5dd572bada20bc47c3921509/?vgnextoid=e206bc7c3dfc1210Vgn3a864f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD>

“School Accountability, A Broader, Bolder Approach: Report of the Accountability Committee of the Broader, Bolder Approach to Education Campaign” Broader, Bolder Approach to Education Campaign (June 2009).

<http://www.boldapproach.org/>.

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4. In the News

“Supreme Court Says Child’s Rights Violated by Strip Search” New York Times (6/26/09).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/26/us/politics/26scotus.html?bl&ex=1246161600&en=7d3d3a405a62733a&ei=5087%0A>

“Some Professors' Jitters Over Twitter Are Easing” Washington Post (6/26/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/25/AR2009062504027.html>

“As Plants Close, Teenagers Focus More on College” New York Times (6/25/09)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/26/business/26grads.html?hpw>

“Streamlined Process for Federal Student Aid” Washington Post (6/24/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/23/AR2009062303385.html>

“Students Stage Mock Graduation to Advocate for Undocumented” Washington Post (6/24/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/23/AR2009062303406.html>

“Students Without Borders” Washington Post (6/24/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/23/AR2009062303440.html>

“Easing a College Financial Aid Headache” New York Times (6/23/09).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/24/education/24fafsa.html? r=1&ref=education>

“Education Dept. Dumps Symbolic Schoolhouse of No Child Left Behind” Washington Post (6/23/09).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/22/AR2009062202971.html>

“Court Affirms Reimbursement for Special Education” New York Times (6/22/09).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/23/education/23special.html?ref=education>

“Education Chief to Warn Advocates That Inferior Charter Schools Harm the Effort” New York Times (6/22/09).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/22/education/22duncan.html?ref=education>

“Do Schools Need More PE Time to Fight Obesity?” USA Today (6/22/09).

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-06-21-physical-education_N.htm

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5. About WPLLC

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- Meeting and Conference Planning

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