

AUGUST 8, 2008

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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

After passing a 1,200 page bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and getting one of twelve appropriation bills approved by the House, Congress remains in recess until September 8. One chamber of Congress, however, was not as quiet as usual during the first week of the August recess. A number of House Republicans took to the House floor, despite the adjournment, to insist that Congress address the energy crisis instead of going home. By weeks end, after starting with a respectable contingent of participating Members, the number of protesting Republicans dwindled to about a dozen.

On Thursday, House Republican leaders sent a letter to their Democratic colleagues asking for their help in getting House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) to hold a vote on energy legislation. In part, the letter said, "If you agree that Congress should not be taking a five-week vacation until we address the energy crisis, will you join us in publicly calling on Speaker Pelosi to reconvene the House and allow a vote on increasing American-made energy?" Democrats have dismissed the Republican efforts as a political stunt. Reconvening the House seems highly unlikely. What is more likely is that the few Republicans left on the floor today will be gone next week.

Elsewhere in Washington, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its estimate of the FY 2008 budget deficit. The CBO prediction of \$400 billion is slightly more than the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) forecast of \$389 billion, released last month. OMB also predicts a deficit of \$482 billion in FY 2009, a figure well above the \$413 billion record set in FY 2004. Both OMB and CBO have cited the tax rebates stemming from the \$150 billion economic stimulus package enacted in February and the slowing economy as reasons for the increase.

At the Department of Education, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced that Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah and Virginia have

been approved to allow school districts to offer Supplemental Educational Services (SES) to students attending Title I schools in year one of school improvement status. This will allow States to offer tutoring ahead of schedule. Florida, Georgia, Illinois and Indiana had already been approved for the same flexibility under the recently announced Differentiated Accountability pilot program. (For more information see the press release here: <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/08/08042008.html>.)

This was a slow week in the nation's Capitol and it will likely wind down even further as the month moves on. When the Congress returns to Washington in September they will have to pick up the pace significantly if they are to complete the actions necessary on the FY 2009 budget to keep the government operating after September 30, the date the current fiscal year expires.

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2. In Brief

FORDHAM INSTITUTE WILL HOLD EDUCATION OLYMPICS

In conjunction with the Olympic Games in Beijing, China, the Thomas B. Fordham Institute will hold the 2008 Education Olympics. K-12 students from around the world will compete in 58 events designed to measure student performance and educational attainment. The Fordham will be broadcasting the two-week competition online, which can be viewed here: <http://www.edolympics.net/>.

NASP EDUCATION POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) recently released a report of education policy recommendations, *Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach: Excellence in Education for the 21st Century*. The report outlines five principles necessary to improve K-12 education by lowering barriers to learning and teaching and providing effective student support services. According to the report, the effective student support services help teachers, parents, and school administrators know how best to ensure that students are ready and able to learn. They also help guide progress monitoring and comprehensive accountability measures that inform better instruction and provide a valid picture of student and school achievement. To read *Ready to Learn*, visit: <http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/2008campaignpolicydocument.pdf>.

AEE LIVE FROM BEIJING

Alliance for Excellent Education president and former governor of West Virginia Bob Wise will be reporting from the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China (sort of), in a series of webcasts for the next two weeks. The Alliance will be airing a series of videos from Governor Wise that connect the athletic events in Beijing to various international education measures, emphasizing the need for a national commitment to help America's high school students acquire the skills they need to remain competitive in the global economy. To view Governor Wise's series of webcasts, visit: <http://www.all4ed.org/>.

LIVE, THREE-DAY DISCUSSION ON NCLB

This week, NewTalk.org held a three-day, live, online discussion about the future of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) titled, "Do We Need a Basic Rewrite of No Child Left

Behind?” The forum, which was held from Tuesday through Thursday, featured a large panel of education experts who provided the majority of the discussion on the first day of the forum. All the panelists were in agreement that NCLB should be revised in one way or another. Among the many suggestions made for revising NCLB, panelists recommended including more subjects for standardized testing and improving the testing methods; using the federal government to create national standards for NCLB rather than leaving this task up to the states; improving student curriculum to ensure that it is well-rounded; reducing class sizes and reassessing the classification of “highly qualified teachers.” For a full transcript of the discussion, visit: <http://newtalk.org/2008/08/do-we-need-a-basic-rewrite-of.php>.

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3. New Publications

“Ready to Learn, Empowered to Teach: Excellence in Education for the 21st Century” National Association of School Psychologists (August 2008)

<http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/2008campaignpolicydocument.pdf>

“Recommendations for Assessing English Language Learners: English Language Proficiency Measures and Accommodation Uses” National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (August 2008)

<http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/reports/R737.pdf>

“Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How” National Academies (August 2008)

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=12446>

“Preparing High School Students for Successful Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Employment” National High School Center (August 2008)

http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/PreparingHSSStudentsforTransition_073108.pdf

“The State of Our Nation’s Youth” Horatio Alger Association (August 2008)

<http://www.horatioalger.org/pdfs/0708SONY.pdf>

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4. In the News

“Clinton Honors 46 Schools for Anti-Obesity Efforts” USA Today (8/7/08).

http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/weightloss/2008-08-07-obesity-schools_N.htm

“Teacher Lobbying Raises Union’s Ire” Washington Post (8/6/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/05/AR2008080503102.html>

“Many Middle Schools in Bay State Stumbling” Boston Globe (8/6/08).

http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/08/06/many_middle_schools_in_bay_state_stumbling/

“Summer Often Spells No Vacation From Homework” Washington Post (8/5/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/04/AR2008080402231.html>

“School Supply List Gets Longer as Money Gets Tighter” Lexington Herald-Leader (8/5/08).

<http://www.kentucky.com/211/story/480395.html>

“Congress Approves Bill Aimed at Controlling College Costs” USA Today (8/4/08).

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-07-31-college_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip

“Lessons Far From Home” Washington Post (8/3/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/29/AR2008072902645.html>

“Fast Learners” Washington Post (8/3/08).

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/29/AR2008072902646.html>

“Education Should Lift All Children” Detroit Free Press (7/31/08).

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080731/OPINION01/807310343/1069>

“Walz-Graves Is Common Sense to Us” Wall Street Journal (7/24/08).

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121686417145279809.html>

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5. About WPLLC

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