

FEBRUARY 19, 2010Della Cronin, Editor
dcronin@wpllc.net

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:**

1. [Budget and Appropriations](#)
2. [In Brief](#)
3. [New Publications](#)
4. [In the News](#)
5. [About WPLLC](#)

1. Budget and Appropriations

This week marked the President's Day recess week on Capitol Hill. It was a good time for Members to be at home as the frozen remnants of back-to-back storms frustrated commuters trying to move in and around the Nation's Capitol. Things got so bad that the city was forced to call in skilled snow laborers from cities like Boston to help with the street clearing efforts. Today, however, the sun has been shining and warm weather is predicted for the weekend. Hopefully at least one obstruction to bi-partisanship will be eliminated by Monday—the snow. Some of last week's cancelled hearings have been rescheduled, and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's appearance before the House Budget Committee is expected on February 25th, and he might appear before the House Education and Labor Committee as soon as March 3rd.

There were a few other hints of potential camaraderie throughout the week. The Congress agreed to the appointment of a bi-partisan commission by President Obama to examine the enormous deficit, its impact on economic prosperity and possible congressional action. Almost all of the 60 presidential appointments that were put on hold by disgruntled Republicans were allowed to move closer to confirmation. And, most importantly for education advocates, the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the House Education and Labor Committee announced their intention to move forward with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The Administration was particularly pleased by this announcement, as its education spending plan reflects a rewritten ESEA bill that will be hard for appropriators to consider if authorizing legislation is not written and passed in record time—six months, to be exact. So, while this announcement signals the start of a concerted effort to get the job done by the key policy makers charged with the task, no one underestimates the challenge.

In discussing this assignment, Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), one of these key legislators (Senators Harkin (D-IA), Enzi (R-WY), and Dodd (D-CT), and Representatives Miller (D-CA), Castle (R-DE), Kildee (D-MI) and Kline (R-MN) are also on the list), put it well when he told a reporter, "A thousand-page bill is likely to get bogged down." Better, he said, "to work on a big

problem step by step." One of the most unique aspects of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act is that it has never been amended. It is hard to think of another major education bill that did not require a technical corrections package to address mistakes and unintended consequences shortly after being signed by the President. That has not been allowed for NCLB. So far it is clear that Secretary Duncan will not be satisfied with minor corrections. His proposed rewrite of ESEA calls for a comprehensive review and re-visioning of federal support for public education. It's difficult to take issue with the goal he has articulated—put US students back on top in the academic achievement arena. Finding agreement on how to get there will require a great deal of conversation.

[Back to top.](#)

2. In Brief

LAWMAKERS AND DUNCAN CALL FOR ESEA ACTION

Building on the release of President Obama's FY 2011 budget request, this week there were press reports and other announcements that suggested there is growing momentum behind a push for action on reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) this year. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke to representatives of colleges of education and school administrators this week, saying that he was working with education policymakers to move changes to current law. Announcements from Republican and Democratic lawmakers involved in these conversations supported that call. On Thursday, the House Education and Labor Committee Chairman and Ranking Member, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education issued a joint statement saying, "Today, we're announcing a bipartisan, open and transparent effort to rewrite No Child Left Behind – a law that we all agree is in need of major reform. It will start with a series of hearings in the coming weeks to explore the challenges and opportunities ahead as we work to ensure an excellent education is available to every student in America. With a real commitment to innovation, we invite all stakeholders who share our serious interest in building a world-class education system to email us their suggestions." The Committee has scheduled a hearing on charter schools next week. The Committee also invited stakeholders to send input and suggestions for improving ESEA to eseacomment@mail.house.gov. The deadline for comments is March 26, 2010.

CAP RELEASES REPORT ON EXPANDED LEARNING TIME

This week, the Center for American Progress hosted a briefing to discuss a recent report on the benefits of expanded learning time and the many partners that do and can support the effort. The report's findings are drawn from study of four public schools in Massachusetts and one public charter school in New Jersey. The authors, Kathleen Traphagen and Christine Johnson-Staub, note that many schools seeking to maximize student success partner with external organizations that offer a variety of resources to students and teachers. Schools partner with community-based organizations, youth development agencies, health care and human service agencies, institutions of higher education, and cultural and arts institutions to deepen academic content, offer enrichments, train teachers, and ensure access to health, social, and other services for students and families. They argue that ELT offers an opportunity for schools and external organizations to create strategic relationships that reach a new level of intensity and have a deep, substantive impact on students and teachers within the expanded school day. Managing and sustaining these partnerships, however, is a complex and challenging task, as they learned from their work in

compiling the report. For more information, visit:

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/expanded_time.html.

PRESIDENT OBAMA LAUNCHES HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT CHALLENGE

This week, President Obama launched a “Race to the Top High School Commencement Challenge” on www.whitehouse.gov. He invited public schools across the country to compete to have him speak at their graduation this spring. Building on his challenge to young people at the beginning of the school year “to take responsibility for their education, study hard and graduate from high school”, this competition “encourages schools to show how they are making great strides on personal responsibility, academic excellence and college readiness.” Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said of the announcement, “The Race to the Top Commencement Challenge is an amazing opportunity for our nation’s high schools to share their accomplishments and aspirations. I look forward to hearing about the many dedicated principals, teachers and parents who work tremendously hard to ensure and promote academic excellence, and I look forward to hearing about the many students across this country who are putting their education first and taking responsibility for their future.” Applications should be completed by students and must be submitted by a high school’s principal to

www.WhiteHouse.gov/Commencement no later than Monday, March 15th at 11:59 pm EST.

Each school may submit only one application and applying high schools must be public.

Following the application deadline, the White House and Department of Education will select six finalists. These schools will then be featured on the White House website and the public will have an opportunity to vote for the three schools they think best meet the President’s goal. The President will select a national winner from these three finalists and visit the winning high school to deliver the commencement address to the class of 2010. For more information, visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/president-obama-department-education-announce-race-top-high-school-commencement-cha>.

ED AND HHS HOLD INTERAGENCY BRIEFING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD ISSUES

On Thursday, Joan Lombardi, the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Jacqueline Jones, the Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Early Learning at the Department of Education (ED), hosted a briefing to discuss current early childhood priorities and interagency initiatives. Jones opened the briefing with an examination of the President’s FY 2011 Department of Education budget proposal. Specifically, she highlighted the areas in the budget proposal that would provide funding for early childhood services within the context of the Administration’s broad plan for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In response to questions about the consolidation of funding for programs, such as Parent Information Resource Centers in the President’s proposal, Jones attempted to quell concerns about the elimination of dedicated funding for certain programs by saying that the Administration hopes to fund activities, including parent engagement and involvement, under a variety of its proposed consolidated programs. Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, the Director of Head Start, then provided an overview of Head Start’s Roadmap to Excellence, which aims to improve school readiness and promote long-term success. She noted that Head Start has identified two main, guiding themes to help reach these goals: 1) ensure every Head Start child is exposed to effective, appropriate learning experiences both in the program and at home, and 2) assure the integration of Head Start into a continuum of high-quality early care and education that spans from birth to age eight. Shannon Rudisill, the Associate Director of the Child Care Bureau, then spoke on the bureau’s goal of implementing pathways to stronger policies and accountability, as

well as pathways to excellence for childcare. The pathways will provide a framework for the bureau's efforts to assist states in the adoption of high-quality standards, enhanced licensing requirements, and improved performance and rating systems. Finally, Lombardi concluded the briefing by identifying HHS and ED's work to develop and support crosscutting initiatives to improve the delivery of early childhood services for all children.

[Back to top.](#)

3. New Publications

“6th Annual AP Report to the Nation” (February 2010)

<http://www.collegeboard.com/html/aprtn/?excmpid=CBF13-ED-1-aprtn>.

“The Numbers We Need: How the Right Metrics Could Improve K-12 Education” (February 2010) <http://www.aei.org/outlook/100940>.

“Expanded Time, Enriching Experiences Expanded Learning Time Schools and Community Organization Partnerships” (February 2010)

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/pdf/elt_partnerships.pdf.

“Schools Without Diversity: Education Management Organizations, Charter Schools, and the Demographic Stratification of the American School System” (February 2010)

<http://epicpolicy.org/publication/schools-without-diversity>.

“The Foreclosure Generation: The Long-Term Impact of the Housing Crisis on Latino Children and Families” (February 2010) <http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/download/61725>.

“New York City's Changing High School Landscape High Schools and Their Characteristics, 2002-2008” (February 2010) <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/543/overview.html>.

[Back to top.](#)

4. In the News

“Schools Face Big Budget Holes as Stimulus Runs Out” Washington Post (2/14/10)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/14/AR2010021401876.html?hpid=sec-education>.

“How well are U.S. Colleges Run?” USA Today (2/16/10)

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-02-17-collegeattitudes17_ST_N.htm.

“Obama: No Weeknight Television for Malia, Sasha” Associated Press (2/17/10)

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jVf6ZQg6sAIQ0H7BspbfOERBwtBAD9DTI19G6>.

“House Announces Bipartisan Effort to Rewrite No Child Law” Washington Post (2/18/10)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/18/AR2010021801885.html?hpid=topnews>.

“Gates Awards 15 Grants for Common-Standards Work” Business Journal (2/18/10)
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/02/18/22gates.h29.html?tkn=OPYFtGvQ%2BJkWBODelzqalxSIP8MgIsyQIva&cmp=clp-edweek>.

“Rhode Island District Threatens to Fire All 74 of High School's Teachers” ABC World News (2/18/10) <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/rhode-island-school-fire-teachers/story?id=9866139&page=1>.

“Education Reform, One Classroom at a Time” Washington Post (2/19/10)
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/18/AR2010021802919.html?hpid=opinionsbox1>.

“Obama to Students: See you at Graduation” Washington Post (2/19/10)
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/19/AR2010021901366.html>.

“Funding Push Helps Prompt O'Malley to Seek Tenure Reform for Maryland Teachers” (2/19/10) <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/19/AR2010021902610.html?hpid=newswell>.

[Back to top.](#)

5. About WPLLC

For over 30 years, the principals and staff at WPLLC have specialized in the field of education, making sure the voices of associations and nonprofit organizations are heard—on Capitol Hill and in the media. As a full service government affairs and public relations firm, we work in strong partnership with our clients to position them for the greatest success now and in the future. Working as a team, relationships are structured to maximize the strengths of each client; the client’s mission is our driving force as we help them clarify needs, set goals and craft and implement successful strategies. WPLLC provides expertise in a variety of services:

- Government Relations
- Public Relations & Communications
- Policy Research and Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Grassroots Activities
- Association Management
- Meeting and Conference Planning

For more information, please call us at 202.289.3900 or visit our website at wpllc.net.

• • •

This publication contains links to Internet sites for the convenience of World Wide Web users. Washington Partners, LLC is not responsible for the availability or content of these external sites, nor does Washington Partners, LLC endorse, warrant or guarantee the information, services, or products described or offered at these other Internet sites.

Copyright 2010. Washington Partners, LLC. Redistribution of this memorandum or its content outside the immediate organization of the intended recipient without the express prior permission of Washington Partners, LLC is prohibited.

Readers are encouraged to send comments about this publication to Della Cronin at dcronin@wpllc.net or call 202.289.3900.