



Thursday, February 18, 2021

## I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **President Biden supports up to \$10,000 in student loan debt relief** – At a town hall meeting on Tuesday night, [President Biden said](#) he would support canceling up to \$10,000 in student loan debt per borrower but not the \$50,000 that some congressional Democrats support. On Wednesday, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the President would not take action until the Justice Department reviews whether the President has the authority to issue such an executive action on debt relief, or whether it requires legislation, which is the path the President had previously urged. He said he also supports eliminating interest on federal student loans – which is already the case through September 30.
- **House Budget Committee markup of reconciliation bill on Monday** – On February 22 at 1pm ET, The House Budget Committee will hold a [virtual markup](#) to compile the reconciliation legislation submitted by 12 House committees (9 of the 12 committees marked up their recommendations, including the House Education and Labor Committee, which provides funding for the Department of Education, child care, and other education-related programs). The Budget Committee cannot change the underlying bills but when the House Rules Committee meets later next week it will likely make in order (or self-execute) a Manager’s Amendment that makes any needed technical changes or policy changes requested by Democratic leadership. The House plans to vote on the reconciliation bill late next week and then the Senate will take up the House bill and substitute its own version, which is will be similar but not identical. Democrats aim to have the bill completed before March 14.

## II. Advocacy

- **CEF meeting with Domestic Policy Council** – Yesterday CEF’s four officers and ACG staff met with two of the Biden Administration’s education staff on the Domestic Policy Council: Kathy Valle, formerly of the House Education and Labor Committee staff who is now coordinating higher education policy, and Maureen Tracey-Mooney, who is coordinating K-12 policy as Special Advisor to the President on education. CEF expressed appreciation for the hundreds of billions of dollars for education in the Administration’s American Rescue Plan now working its way through Congress while emphasizing the need for additional increased investments in the long-term and ongoing education programs that have been underfunded for years. The DPC staff noted that the Administration is still formulating its fiscal year 2022 budget request (we expect a budget outline without program-level detail to be released possibly in late March) but that the President remains

committed to the education policies that were at the heart of his campaign. They include increased education investments along the continuum such as expanded pre-K education, tripling Title I funding (presumably over several years), fully funding IDEA (also presumably over the course of years), and making college more affordable by making community college free and making two years of free public university for families with income less than \$125,000.

- **Role for CEF and social media in support of education funding** – The DPC staff stressed one action that would be useful from the education community: “lifting up” examples of just what the COVID-relief money is making possible in education as well as what the needs are. This is something CEF can do via [our #HearOurEdStories social media campaign](#). Our Social Media Committee is working on plans for another #HearOurEdStories push in late March, and we will share information and ask for CEF members’ input well in advance.
- **CEF Hill Teams meeting with Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI) on Tuesday** – Earlier this week, members of CEF’s Hill Teams and Advocacy Committee met with Noor Teebi, the education staffer for Rep. Lawrence, one of the two Democrats who just joined the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee. We are continuing to request meetings with other new members of the education authorizing and funding committees.

### III. Events

- **CEF’s 117<sup>th</sup> Congress Welcome Reception (via Zoom) next Thursday, February 25** – While we wait until a time that we can once again mingle over brownies and beverages, we’re throwing a Zoom reception for congressional education staffers and CEF members next week, Thursday, February 25, from 4:30-5:30 ET. It’s a busy time but we wanted to provide an opportunity to introduce CEF to new education staff and – equally important – have the education community come together for some camaraderie! We’ll have breakout rooms to allow for conversations and will encourage people to mingle – i.e., move from room to room. We’re asking people to RSVP just so we have a sense of how many breakout rooms to attend, but all CEF members and Hill staff are welcome! [RSVP link is here](#), and the Zoom link to attend next week is [here](#). This afternoon we will share the email invitation with CEF’s Hill Teams and Advocacy Committee and the Social Media Committee and ask that members amplify the invitation by also sending it to their congressional staff contacts.
- **CEF’s upcoming schedule -**
  - **Tomorrow - Friday, Feb. 19** – No CEF meeting during the congressional recess.
  - **Thursday, Feb. 25** – 4:30-5:30 p.m. ET, [Zoom CEF 117<sup>th</sup> Congress Welcome Reception](#). See details above.
  - **Friday, Feb. 26** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
  - **Friday, March 5** - 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
  - **Friday, March 12** – no CEF meeting.
  - **Friday, March 19** - 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
  - **(tentative) Wednesday, March 24 – 2-3:30 p.m.** – Zoom briefing for congressional staff and CEF members: “Impact of COVID-19 on Education Jobs” (link and details to come).