



Thursday, May 14, 2020

## I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **House to vote on HEROES Act tomorrow** – The House of Representatives will vote tomorrow on the HEROES Act, a massive coronavirus relief measure that includes more than \$100 billion in direct education funding, student loan relief, almost \$1 trillion in relief for state and local fiscal relief, e-rate funding, and more education-related assistance, among many other funding and policy provision. It is expected to pass with Democratic support but the Senate is unlikely to take up the bill as written. Instead, Senate leadership wants to wait to see what the needs are after the already-enacted relief measures are implemented. The Republican Senate has some different priorities – including providing liability protections for employers as they reopen – and balks at much of the nearly \$3 trillion HEROES Act, expressing concern about the federal debt. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell spoke earlier this week in support of more federal support, noting that “Additional fiscal support could be costly, but worth it if it helps avoid long-term damage and leaves us with a stronger recovery.”
- **Senate HELP Committee hearing on reopening schools and work** – At Tuesday’s Senate HELP Committee hearing on “Safely Getting Back to Work and Back to School” federal health officials expressed concern and caution about the conditions that would need to be in place for a return to in-person teaching and learning, with Dr. Fauci noting that it’s unlikely a vaccine or treatment will be available before schools are due to start for the 2020-2021 academic year. I’ve attached ACG’s hearing summary with some of the specifics. Since the hearing, President Trump has come out more strongly for reopening schools, although acknowledging that the decision is up to governors in each state. Yesterday, Education Secretary DeVos, Vice President Trump, and other members of the President’s coronavirus task force met with some higher education leaders on a call to discuss reopening campuses. The Vice President’s office released a [memo](#) listing the participants and providing a general description of the conversation, including the guidance that is being developed and the issues with reopening. Some colleges have already announced that they will provide online learning for the fall semester.
- **Student loan interest rates set for the coming year** – The May auction of 10-year Treasury notes set the rates for federal student loans for the coming academic year, which will be locked in for the life of these newly issued loans. They are the lowest – or close to the lowest – rates in the history of the program.

## 2020-2021 New Federal Student Loan Rates

Undergraduate Direct Loans: 2.75%

Graduate Direct Loans: 4.30%

Graduate and Parent PLUS Loans: 5.30%

## II. Advocacy

- **Submit your advocacy events for CEF’s social media “Member of the Week”** – CEF is highlighting the advocacy work of our members while cross-pollinating with your grassroots networks on social media by featuring a “Member of the Week.” We’re asking you to submit information about your upcoming events – virtual advocacy days, conferences, briefings, etc., – at this [link](#) so that we can highlight them and your organization on Twitter and Instagram. We will be in touch with you as we get close to your event to get your material - language and images – that we can use and then link to your own sites.

## III. Events

- **CEF Research Briefing on Education Technology: Equity of Access, Assessment, and Research Findings** – Friday, May 22, 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET. Join [via Zoom](#) or dial in at 301-715-8592, meeting ID 994 9698 4362. Panelists include:
  - [Verna Lalbeharie](#), Managing Director of Digital Age Personalized Learning, American Institutes for Research
  - [Noelle Ellerson Ng](#), Associate Executive Director of Policy and Analysis, AASA: the School Superintendents Association
  - [Sean J. Smith, PhD](#), Professor of Special Education, University of Kansas
  - Corey Williams, Federal Lobbyist, National Education Association
  - Higher education panelist still pending
- **CEF’s upcoming schedule –**
  - **Friday, May 15** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker: Mark Laisch, Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee minority staff.
  - **Friday, May 22** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. [Zoom Research Briefing on Education Technology: Equity of Access, Assessment, and Research Findings](#). See details above.
  - **Friday, May 29** – No meeting during scheduled congressional Memorial Day recess.
  - **Friday, June 5** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. Zoom Friday meeting. Guest speakers: Emily Smith and Peter Mills, Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT).
  - **Tuesday, June 9** – 1:00-5:00 p.m., CEF virtual Hill Advocacy Day/Day of Action. Details coming soon!
  - **Friday, June 12** – No Friday meeting – this is a change from the original schedule.
  - **Friday, June 19** - 9:30-11:00 a.m. Zoom Friday meeting. Guest speaker TBD.

- **Friday, June 26** - 9:30-11:00 a.m. Zoom Quarterly Committee meeting.