



Politics and Policy Report November 11 - November 18, 2013

Congressional Update

President Signs Bill to Provide Students Better Access to EpiPens: Last week, the President signed the *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act* (H.R. 2094) into law. This bill would amend the *Public Health Service Act* with respect to asthma-related grants for child health services giving preference to a state that allows self-administration of asthma and anaphylaxis medication. Accordingly, in these states, elementary and secondary schools would: 1) permit trained personnel to administer epinephrine to students having an anaphylactic reaction; 2) allow schools to maintain a supply of epinephrine that would be easily accessible to trained personnel; and 3) require a plan be developed for having one or more designated personnel trained in the administration of epinephrine on the school premises during the school day. The *School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act* moved quickly through Congress. It was introduced by Representative Phil Roe (R-TN) in May, passed by the full House by voice vote in July and then passed by the Senate with unanimous consent in October. NAESP supported this legislation.

Harkin, Miller and Hanna Introduce Early Learning Bill: As reported, last week the Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee Tom Harkin (D-IA), Ranking Member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, George Miller (D-CA) and Representative Richard Hanna (R-NY), introduced the *Strong Start for America's Children Act*, an early childhood education bill that, over a ten-year timeframe, aims to expand and improve early learning opportunities to improve kindergarten readiness for children across the birth to age 5 continuum. The bipartisan legislation builds upon President Obama's early learning proposal introduced in his FY 2014 Budget Request; however, it is not as expensive nor does it include a doubling of the tobacco tax to help pay for the new investments. Specifically, the bill would establish a new federal-state partnership to provide access to high-quality prekindergarten programs for four-year old children from families earning below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL) and encourage states to spend their own funds to support preschool for young children with family incomes above that income level. Additionally, the legislation would establish partnerships between Early Head Start programs and child care providers to help child care centers and in-home providers improve the quality of coordinated, comprehensive services for infants and toddlers through age three. The bill would also amend the Child Care Development Block Grant to allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to reserve \$100 million to support child care

training, licensure and improve health and safety standards to improve the quality of child care programs and ensure children receive care for at least a year before they have to re-determine eligibility.

As the national representative of the nation's elementary and middle level principals, NAESP will continue to advocate in support of this legislation. The federal investment is needed to bolster state systems in early learning as student success relies on systems and schools to provide a seamless continuum of learning for children from age three to grade three, or effective P-3 alignment.

Online Privacy Protection for Children: Last week Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) introduced the *Do Not Track Kids Act* (S. 1700) which would amend the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 to extend, enhance, and revise the provisions relating to the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information of children. This legislation would require websites to offer an eraser button, allowing parents and kids to delete embarrassing or inappropriate posts, and a digital marketing bill of rights to limit the information that companies can collect about children from their online activity and social media posts. The bill has bipartisan support with Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Mark Steven Kirk (R-IL) as cosponsors. For more information, [click here](#).

Budget Update

The House Education and the Workforce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held back-to-back hearings on the reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act* (HEA) to examine how to streamline and make more user-friendly the application system for federal student aid. There appeared to be some consensus on what changes might be necessary and a willingness to consider radical modifications to the system.

Also on the agenda this week was the second in-person meeting of the budget conferees charged with working out a spending plan for FY 2014, finding a substitute for the sequester and exploring possible new revenues to fund critical government services. While the conversation was polite, little if any progress toward a compromise could be detected. Several deadlines are approaching that are key to avoiding another government shutdown. The first is December 2nd, which is when appropriators would like to get started working out a conference agreement for specific government agency budgets. Appropriators need a "top-line" agreement on the total amount of spending for the year to get started—this will fall somewhere between \$1.047 trillion and \$967 billion. December 13th is the second deadline, when the full work of the conference committee must be completed, including any resolution to the sequester cuts.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has released the latest deficit figures. For the month of October, the federal government only overspent their budget by \$91 billion, compared to the \$120 billion in overspending for October 2012. Overall, the deficit has been reduced by 50 percent over the last four years.

Administration Update

New NCLB Waiver Renewal Guidelines released: On Thursday, November 14th, the Department of Education (ED) sent a letter to state education chiefs that outlined new instructions for states looking to renew their No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waivers. ED's new instructions have been described as a "backing off approach" compared to the original draft guidance issued in August. ED's original NCLB waiver renewal instructions required states to: 1) Take additional steps to ensure the equitable distribution of effective teachers for at-risk students; and 2) Use Title II money for professional development to prepare teachers to implement college and career ready standards for all students. Both of these original draft guidelines were eliminated in the newly released guidance.

ED officials have asserted that the new NCLB waiver renewal instructions were intended to appease states by softening their demanding work load of implementing new reforms, such as the implementation of college and career ready standards, accountability systems and new teacher and principal evaluation. ED acknowledges that both areas are still of high priority and will be addressed in every state and the new—less onerous—guidelines will allow ED more time to gather additional information on successes and challenges in the implementation of the reform efforts. States have until the end of February to apply for their one year NCLB waiver renewal. For more information, click [here](#).

Other Topics of Interest for Principals

NDD United Releases Report on Impact of Sequestration: On Wednesday, November 13th, Non-Defense Discretionary (NDD) United, a coalition working to protect NDD funding from additional cuts to all programs that fall under this umbrella, hosted a briefing to highlight the release of the report, "Faces of Austerity: How Budget Cuts Have Made Us Sicker, Poorer, and Less Secure." This report is a product of hundreds of organizations across sectors that collaborated to share stories about how cuts to NDD funds in the federal budget have impacted citizens throughout the country. The briefing hosted panelists representing Head Start programs, university-based research, public parks and a variety of other sectors impacted by cuts to NDD federal funds. The moderator, Emily Holubowich, Co-Chair of NDD United, clarified that while sequestration was only a 5 percent cut to all federal programs, the stories in this report reveal that sequestration cut much deeper than merely 5 percent, and in many cases was closer to 25, 50 and in some cases, even 100 percent, once the cuts rippled out into the communities. For a copy of this report, click [here](#).

What We Are Reading

[Duncan's 'White Moms' Remark](#) (Ed Week)

[Duncan Tries To Quell Uproar Over Common Core](#) (Washington Post)

[First Lady's New Initiative: College, "Whatever It Takes"](#) (New York Times)

[Killing Cursive is Killing History](#) (Huffington Post)

[Public Schools Delay or Deny Special Education Services for Most Vulnerable Students](#) (NBC)

[After-School Activities Make Educational Inequality Even Worse](#) (The Atlantic)

[Over 9,000 Students in Schools with Expanded Days](#) (National Center on Time and Learning)

[Effective Instructional Time Use for School Leaders: Longitudinal Evidence From Observations of Principals](#) (American Educational Research Association)

[Faces of Austerity: How Budget Cuts Have Made Us Sicker, Poorer, and Less Secure](#) (NDD United)

[Open Doors 2013 Report on International Educational Exchange](#) (Institute of International Education)