NEWS | POSTED NOVEMBER 21, 2019

Policy Update: November 2019

SRCD's *Policy Update* monitors policy developments in Washington, D.C., including federal priorities for developmental science, and legislation and programs relevant to child development. It also contains information on conferences and training opportunities, new reports, and requests for comments. *Policy Update* also highlights the work and experiences of SRCD Policy Fellows in the column *Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow*.

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SRCD News Related to Child and Family Policy

Spotlight on SRCD U.S. State Policy Fellow

Caroline Martin was a SRCD State Policy Pre-doctoral Fellow placed in the Vermont Agency of Education. Read about her work this past year on projects related to Vermont's Universal Pre-Kindergarten System.

Are you interested in learning about the contributions past SRCD State Policy Fellows have made at their placements? Visit the SRCD website to read abstracts describing their work.

Apply Now! SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Programs

We are seeking applicants for the SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Programs for the 2020-2021 academic year. There are two fellowship programs: **federal** and **state**. The fellowships provide researchers with immersive opportunities to (1) learn firsthand about policy development, implementation, and evaluation, and (2) use their expertise to inform child and family public policies and programs that support diverse populations. Through these experiences, fellows also learn how to communicate with policymakers and formulate more informed questions for policy-relevant research. All fellowships will run from September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021.

What is the Federal Policy Fellowship Program? There are two types of federal fellowships: **congressional** and **executive branch**. Both fellowships are full-time immersion experiences in Washington, D.C., where fellows work as resident scholars within congressional or federal executive branch agency offices. We welcome applications from early, mid-career, and advanced professionals. More information about the program, application requirements, and the submission process is available on the SRCD website.

What is the State Policy Fellowship Program? There are two types of state fellowships: **pre-doctoral** and **post-doctoral**. Both fellowships are full-immersion experiences, where fellows work as resident scholars in state executive branch agency offices. Fellows will receive support from a state supervisor and an academic mentor during the fellowship experience. More information about the program, application requirements, and the submission process for letters of intent is available on the SRCD website.

The Application Portal is Now Open!
Deadline to Submit Applications and Letters of Intent is
January 3, 2020, 11:59pm Eastern

Questions? Email policyfellowships@srcd.org

Legislative Branch Updates

Highlights

FY20 Appropriations: Stopgap Measure Expected to Pass as Deadline Looms

Congress is expected to pass a second Continuing Resolution (CR) bill to temporarily extend funding for the government until December 20. The House of Representatives passed the new stopgap funding bill on Tuesday by a 231-192 vote, and, at the time of this writing, the Senate is set to vote on the bill on Thursday as the previous CR is set to expire at midnight on November 21. Although the majority of spending levels are equal to the FY19 appropriations, there are a few special provisions in the CR, including a boost in funding for the U.S. Census Bureau in order to ensure the 2020 Decennial Census has sufficient funding. After returning from the Thanksgiving holiday, Congress will need to work together to reconcile discrepancies across all 12 appropriations bills in order to avoid a government shutdown.

Congressional Briefing on Early Childhood Development in Conflict and Crisis Settings

On November 19, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Basic Education Coalition, Catholic Relief Services, Global Campaign for Education – US, LEGO Group, RESULTS, RTI International, Sesame Workshop, and UNICEF-USA hosted a briefing, "Ensuring All Children Thrive: Early Childhood Development in Conflict and Crisis Settings." The Executive Vice President for Mission, Mobilization, and Advocacy at the Catholic Relief Services, Bill O'Keefe, gave opening remarks where he emphasized the need for nurturing early learning environments for children displaced by conflict and crisis across the world. Dr. Fan Tait, Chief Medical Officer of the American Academy of Pediatrics, followed by giving a brief presentation on children's brain development and the importance of early experiences in preventing abnormalities, noting the scientific evidence that indicates harmful impacts of persistent and frequent adverse childhood experiences on early brain development. Sarah Gesiriech, U.S. Government Special Advisor on Children at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), then followed with an overview of USAID's recent initiatives, which are informed by the *Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity: A U.S. Government Strategy for International Assistance (2019–2023)*. This strategy outlines three strategic goals: 1) Build Strong Beginnings; 2) Put Family First; and 3) Protect Children from Violence.

Dr. Pia Britto, Chief of Early Childhood Development at UNICEF, then provided a summary of the current state of children living in conflict and crisis settings, citing over 29 million babies globally were born into conflict areas in 2018 and only a limited number of humanitarian response plans included a specific objective related to early development. She emphasized that the focus of humanitarian strategies needs to shift from helping children "survive," to helping them "thrive." Danny Labin, Vice President of International Projects at Sesame Workshop, was the last panelist and discussed the unique position of Sesame Workshop to use media to teach audiences specific tools and strategies to support children's learning and development around the world. He mentioned their recent efforts to deliver early learning programming to displaced children and caregivers affected by the Syrian crisis and the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh, noting that their work is focused on providing strategies (e.g., belly breathing) that can be applied across very different contexts. Karen Hughes, Senior Manager of Government and Public Relations in the Americas for The LEGO Group, ended the briefing with a short interactive play-based activity with the audience to demonstrate the importance of play.

This briefing was co-sponsored by Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Chris Coons (D-DE), who recently jointly introduced the *Global Child Thrive Act* (S.2715). A companion bill (H.R.4864) was introduced by Representatives Joaquin Castro (D-TX) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). This legislation would allow for the integration of early childhood development programming into existing foreign assistance programs. The *Global Child Thrive Act* builds on current initiatives implemented by USAID and the U.S. Government Special Advisor on Children in Adversity. Read the full press release to learn more.

Congressional Briefing on Maternal and Child Health

On November 7, March of Dimes held a briefing, "Making the Grade on Maternal and Child Health: 2019 March of Dimes Report Card." Stacey Stewart, President and CEO of March of Dimes, opened the briefing by noting, "For the fourth year in a row, more babies are born too soon," citing that the preterm birth rate in 2018 was 10.02%, whereas the preterm birth rate was 9.57% in 2014. Dr. Rahul Gupta, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical and Health Officer of March of Dimes, followed by giving an overview of the 2019 March of Dimes Report Card, including: preterm birth rates worsened in 30 states between 2017 and 2018; preterm birth rates are disproportionately higher for Black and American Indian/Alaska Native women; and preterm births cost the U.S. about $25.2 billion in 2016. Dr. Gupta recommended a number of policy actions, such as to "provide affordable, quality public health insurance programs to women before pregnancy," to "extend Medicaid coverage for postpartum moms," and to address maternity care deserts in under-served and rural communities.

Panelists then followed with brief presentations and discussed a variety of topics, including: Perinatal Quality Collaboratives (PQCs), which are "state or multi-state networks of multidisciplinary teams that are working to improve measurable outcomes for maternal and infant health;" the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) support of PQCs in 13 states; Delaware Division of Public Health's recent initiative to increase access to contraceptives, especially immediately postpartum, in order to decrease the number of unplanned pregnancies; the need for federal funding to support cross-sector initiatives to increase investment and service alignment in under-resourced communities; and the importance of continued federal funding to support research on preventing preterm births and improving infant and maternal health. Panelists included: Tiffany Spina, Parent Advocate; Dr. Zsakeba Henderson, Medical Officer, Maternal and Infant Health Branch, Division of Reproductive Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director, Division of Public Health, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services; and Dr. Andrew Bremer, Acting Chief, Pregnancy and Perinatology Branch, *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Development, National Institutes of Health.

Additional Hearings of Interest

Senate Subcommittee Hearing on STEM Engagement for a 21st Century Education

On November 5, the Subcommittee on Aviation and Space of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation held a hearing, "Building the Space Workforce of the Future: STEM Engagement for a 21st Century Education." Witnesses included: Shella Condino, Physics Teacher, Oakton High School; Dr. Josh Gladden, Vice Chancellor of Research, University of Mississippi; Jeffrey Manber, Chief Executive Officer, Nanoracks; and Dr. Linda Tarbox Elkins-Tanton, Managing Director, Interplanetary Initiative and Principal Investigator of NASA Psyche Mission, Arizona State University. View the full recording and read witness testimony.

House Subcommittee Hearing on Native American Child Protection Act

On November 13, the Subcommittee for Indigenous People of the United States of the House Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing on the Native American Child Protection Act (H.R.4957). Witnesses included: Spike Bighorn, Deputy Bureau Director, Office of Indian Services, U.S. Department of the Interior; Rear Adm. Brandon L. Taylor, Chief of Staff, Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services; Aurene Martin, Board Member, National Indian Child Welfare Association; Anita Fineday, Managing Director, Indian Child Welfare Association; and Dr. Art Martinez, Tribal Child Welfare Specialist, Tribal Law and Policy Institute. View the full recording and read witness testimony.

Senate Committee Hearing on Lung Illnesses and Rising Youth Electronic Cigarette Use

On November 13, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing, "Examining the Response to Lung Illnesses and Rising Youth Electronic Cigarette Use." Witnesses included: Mitch Zeller, Director, Center for Tobacco Products, U.S. Food and Drug Administration; and Anne Schuchat, MD, Principal Deputy Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. View the full recording and read witness testimony.

Joint Committee Hearing on Connecting More People to Work

On November 20, the Joint Economic Committee held a hearing, "Connecting More People to Work." Witnesses included: Dr. Veronique de Rugy, Senior Research Fellow, Mercatus Center; Oren Cass, Senior Fellow, Manhattan Institute; Dr. Jay Shambaugh, Director, The Hamilton Project, Senior Fellow in Economic Studies, The Brookings Institution; and Jose Ortiz, Jr., Executive Director, New York City Employment and Training Coalition. View the full recording and read witness testimony.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

Request for Nominations: Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building

The Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, U.S. Department of Commerce, seeks nominations for the recently established Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building, created by the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*. The Advisory Committee is tasked to "review, analyze, and make recommendations on how to promote the use of Federal data for evidence building," including topics on data sharing, data linkages, and coordinating data availability or sharing for cross-agency evidence building. The chair of the Advisory Committee will be the Chief Statistician of the United States and members of the committee will consist of both federal and non-federal members. There will be twelve appointed Federal

members and at least 10 non-Federal members. The deadline to submit a nomination for non-Federal members is December 4, 2019. Learn more information and submit a nomination.

Federal Reports

New Reports and Briefs from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *Native Culture & Language in the Classroom Observation Report and Brief*. This report describes the Native Culture & Language in the Classroom Observation (NCLCO), which is a measure that records the types of culturally significant materials that surround children in Region XI Head Start classrooms. The brief provides a short summary of the observational measure.

(2) *Understanding Rapid Learning Methods: Frequently Asked Questions and Recommended Resources*. This report is a guide for readers who wish to understand, employ, or encourage use of rapid learning methods in social service settings.

(3) From Savings to Ownership: *Third-Year Impacts from the Assets for Independence Program Randomized Evaluation*. This report presents findings from a randomized evaluation of the Assets for Independence (AFI) program at two sites: Prosperity Works in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and RISE Financial Pathways in Los Angeles, California.

(4) *A Dozen Policy Questions You Can Answer with Your Agency's Administrative Data: A Webinar for Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies*. This webinar is designed to support CCDF Lead Agency staff and their partners in using existing administrative data to address policy questions posed by state legislators, agency heads, local child care providers, and other stakeholders.

(5) *Competency Frameworks for Infant and Toddler Teachers and Caregivers*. This report describes the Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies (ITTCC) project, a scan of competency frameworks relevant to teaching and caregiving of infants and toddlers in group (center-based and family child care) settings.

New Report from the Children's Bureau

A new publication is available from the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *The AFCARS Report*. This report summarizes data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) for FY2018.

New Reports and Briefs from the Institute of Education Sciences

Several new publications are available from the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Department of Education:

(1) *Students' Perceptions of Bullying*. This report investigates the relationship between bullying components included in the 2017 School Crime Supplement (SCS), and the various personal characteristics that students believed to be related to the bullying they experienced.

(2) *Student Perceptions of School Discipline and the Presence of Gangs or Guns at School*. This report investigates the relationship between students' perceptions of school discipline and their own behavior as well as the relationship between students' perception of school discipline and unfavorable school conditions.

(3) *Electronic Bullying: Online and by Text*. This report investigates the relationship between those students who were bullied online or by text and their demographic characteristics.

(4) *Highlights of the 2017 U.S. PIAAC Results Web Report*. This report highlights results for U.S. adults from the most recent 2017 data collection of the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) in comparison with the combined 2012/14 data collection.

(5) *InsideTrack Coaching*. This report summarizes the research on InsideTrack Coaching, an intervention designed to provide proactive, personalized coaching to help students identify and overcome both academic and non-academic barriers to college persistence and graduation.

(6) *Beginning Postsecondary Students Study 12/17 (BPS:12/17): Data File Documentation*. This report describes the methodology used in the 2012/17 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study.

(7) *Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)*. This report summarizes the research on *Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)*, an intervention for community college students that is designed to remove barriers to college success and completion for students seeking associate degrees.

(8) *U.S. Results from the 2018 International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) Web Report*. This report provides comparative information about the computer and information literacy of 8th-grade students in the United States and 13 other education systems that participated in the International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) 2018.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The November FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination, including three highlighted funding opportunities. The first is a CDC funding opportunity to support research that will help expand and advance our understanding about what works to prevent violence that impacts children and youth, collectively referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including child abuse and neglect, teen dating violence, sexual violence, youth violence, youth/parent suicidal behavior, and exposure to adult intimate partner violence. The second is a NICHD funding opportunity soliciting applications for research center grants designed to advance the diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and amelioration of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The third is a NIH funding opportunity to enhance diversity in the neuroscience workforce and maintain a strong cohort of new and talented, NIH-supported, independent investigators from diverse backgrounds in BRAIN Initiative research areas. Read about these and other funding opportunities.