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Policy Update: December 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 Child and Family Policy News

Spotlight on SRCD U.S. State Policy Fellow

Meghan McDoniel, Ed.M., is a former SRCD U.S. State Policy Fellow who was placed in the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning. Read about her work related to the agency's capacity building through the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5).

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

Deadline Approaching: 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.

Interested in Applying? Watch these webinars on why you should apply to the fellowship programs and learn tips & tricks for preparing your application.

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: Two Massive Appropriations Packages Await President's Signature

The House and Senate passed two large spending measures this week that include all 12 appropriations bills for fiscal year (FY) 2020. Last year, disagreements over funding for a wall along the U.S. southern border triggered a 35-day government shutdown. Policymakers, however, reached a compromise on this issue for the FY20 appropriations by deciding to maintain FY19 spending levels for a border wall. *Congressional Quarterly* indicates that the President is expected to sign these appropriations into law before the December 20 deadline, otherwise risking another government shutdown.

The first minibus (H.R. 1158) includes four bills: Defense; Homeland Security; Commerce, Justice, Science; and Financial Services. Funding for Commerce, Justice, Science includes $8.3 billion in funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), which is a $203 million increase from FY19. For more information, read the Senate summary and the House summary.

The second minibus (H.R. 1865) includes eight bills: Agriculture; Energy and Water; Interior and Environment; Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs; State and Foreign Operations; and Transportation and Housing and Urban Development. Discretionary spending levels for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies would increase by $4.9 billion from FY19, totaling to $184.9 billion. The bill includes a $2.6 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), totaling to $41.7 billion, and an $8 million increase in funding for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), totaling to $623.5 million. For more information, read the Senate summary and the House summary. To see a breakdown of the funding for NSF, NIH, and IES, read a summary by the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS).

House Committee Hearing on Immigration Policies and Harm to Children

On December 4, the House Committee on Education and Labor held a hearing, "Growing Up in Fear: How the Trump Administration's Immigration Policies Are Harming Children." Chairman Bobby Scott (D-VA) opened the hearing by stating that the purpose of this hearing was to "understand and address the impact of the Trump Administration's immigration policies on children—particularly undocumented children and children from mixed-status families." He noted, "Protecting access to education and nutrition services for all children is critical to ensuring that the nearly 20 million children growing up in immigrant families in our country—regardless of status—have an opportunity to reach their full potential." Ranking Member Virginia Foxx (R-NC) emphasized in her opening statement, "Congress must address the root causes of the immigration crisis—not its symptoms."

A panel of witnesses followed by discussing an array of issues, including: the increased and persistent feeling of fear, stress, and anxiety that many documented and undocumented children are experiencing due to a rise in uncertainty about their own and parents' safety; the harmful short- and long-term impacts of chronic stress on children's development; drops in school attendance and observed children's inability to focus in the classroom due to fears of parents being arrested or deported while on the way to or at school; a shortage of school mental health professionals and the added workload on teachers and administrators to help children manage their distress; the challenge of identifying victims of child trafficking in the immigration system; the decline of eligible families participating in essential social service programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Medicaid, due to fears that use of these services would negatively impact the family's ability to remain in the U.S.; and the positive impacts of immigration policies that support immigrant families, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), on children's physical and mental health. Watch the full recording and read witness testimony.

Witnesses included: Dr. R. Gabriela Barajas-Gonzalez, Assistant Professor, Department of Population Health, NYU School of Medicine; Pedro Martinez, Superintendent, San Antonio Independent School District; Mark H. Metcalf, Former Immigration Judge; and Dr. Olanrewaju Falusi, Pediatrician and Executive Committee Member, American Academy of Pediatrics' Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health, Past President, American Academy of Pediatrics' D.C. Chapter. Dr. Barajas-Gonzalez was a co-author of the SRCD *Social Policy Report*, "Applying a Community Violence Framework to Understand the Impact of Immigration Enforcement Threat on Latino Children."

House Committee Hearing on Paid Family and Medical Leave

On December 10, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing, "Examining the Need for Comprehensive National Paid Family and Medical Leave." Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) opened the hearing by stating, "Right now, we are one of only two nations in the world that does not provide our workers with any form of paid family or medical leave: the United States and Papua New Guinea." She mentioned, "providing [paid family and medical leave] is a significant and important investment in our future," and noted recent movement on this issue through the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, which was signed into law on Thursday and authorized 12 weeks of paid leave for all federal employees when caring for a newborn or newly adopted child. However, she noted, the provisions would not cover paid leave for medical reasons. Representative Gerald Connolly (D-VA) then gave opening remarks, noting "We must continue to fight for paid family caregiving leave and leave to care for one's own medical needs." Ranking Member Jim Jordan (R-OH) followed by giving his opening statement where he stated, "Paid family leave is certainly a well-intentioned policy, but we have an obligation as policymakers to thoughtfully consider the proposals, the need for the proposals, and their potential consequences."

The first witness of the hearing, Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), followed by outlining the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act, a bill she introduced that would provide U.S. workers with access to a universal paid family and medical leave for up to 60 days with partial income. A second panel of witnesses then discussed a variety of topics, including: the need for a national, comprehensive paid family and medical leave policy that is cost-effective, equitable, and sustainable; the strong bipartisan support for comprehensive state paid leave laws, such as in New Jersey where paid family and medical leave has recently expanded; the growing business support for a national paid leave law; and the importance of ensuring a national paid family and medical leave is implemented so that racial and gender inequities are reduced, rather than exacerbated. Witnesses on this panel included: Jacqui Silvani, MomsRising; Vicki Shabo, Senior Fellow, Paid Leave Policy and Strategy, Better Life Lab, New America; Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development; Aaron Seyedian, Founder, Well-Paid Maids; Rachel Greszler, Research Fellow, The Heritage Foundation; and Jennifer Tucker, Senior Policy Advisor, The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation. Watch the full recording and read witness testimony.

Additional Hearings of Interest

House Subcommittee Hearing on E-Cigarette Epidemic and Children

On December 4, the Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing, "The Federal Response to the Epidemic of E-Cigarette Use, Especially Among Children, and the Food and Drug Administration's Compliance Policy." The witness for this hearing was Mitch Zeller, Director, Center for Tobacco Products, Food and Drug Administration. Watch the full recording.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

RFI: 2020 NIMH Strategic Plan for Research

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) within the National Institutes of Health requests information on the draft 2020 NIMH Strategic Plan for Research, which will inform the NIMH's research directions and priorities over the next five years. The mission of the NIMH is "to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure." The four overarching goals of the strategic plan are: (1) Define the Brain Mechanisms Underlying Complex Behaviors; (2) Examine Mental Illness Trajectories Across the Lifespan; (3) Strive for Prevention and Cures; and (4) Strengthen the Public Health Impact of NIMH-Supported Research. The deadline to submit a comment is January 2, 2020, 11:59pm Eastern. Read the full request for information and submit a comment.

RFI: Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for Sexual & Gender Minority Health Research

The Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office (SGMRO) in the Division of Program Coordination, Planning and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI), Office of the Director, National Institutes of Health, seeks input on refining their fiscal years 2021-2025 sexual and gender minority (SGM) health research strategic plan. Over the next five years, SGM-related scientific goals include a priority on specific populations where research is limited, such as persons with differences in sex development (DSD), intersex, bisexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, persons who have detransitioned/desisted people, and SGM populations in Native communities. Currently, the SGMRO is considering topics such as health equity, research across the life span, trauma-informed research, community and culturally grounded research, and strengths-based approaches. The deadline to submit a comment is January 24, 2020, 5:00pm Eastern. Read the full request for information

and submit a comment.

RFI: American Research Environment

The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) requests comments on how federal agencies can "maximize the quality and effectiveness of the American research environment." Input will be used to inform the activities of the Joint Committee on the Research Environment (JCORE), a committee established in May 2019 by the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC). The request for information (RFI) seeks input on JCORE's four main topical areas: (1) Ensure rigor and integrity in research; (2) Coordinate administrative requirements; (3) Strengthen the security of America's science & technology research enterprise; and (4) Foster safe, inclusive, and equitable research environments. Each priority also includes additional questions for input in the RFI. The deadline to submit a comment is January 28, 2020, 11:59pm Eastern. Read the full request for information and submit a comment.

Additional Updates of Interest

Institute of Education Sciences: Future Research Directions

The Director of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Mark Schneider, recently posted a blog entry that provides further clarity on future IES research directions, including plans for off-cycle grants and a shift towards a greater emphasis on requiring development projects to have a clear plan on how to scale up. Read the full blog post for further information.

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) *Migrant & Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Study 2017: Key Indicator Slides*. This report provides a national picture of MSHS programs, centers, families, and children across the U.S. in 2017.

(2) *Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Parents' Well-Being*. This brief provides a glimpse into the well-being of parents in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.

(3) *Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG 1.0) Impact Study: Three-Year Impacts Report*. This report documents the average impact across the diverse HPOG 1.0 programs, as well as impacts for selected subgroups of study participants.

(4) *Competencies of Infant and Toddler (I/T) Teachers and Caregivers: A Review of the Literature*. This literature review examines what is known about the links between I/T teacher or caregiver competencies and outcomes in several areas (child, family, teacher/caregiver, classroom, and/or program).

(5) *Engaging Young Men Involved in Chicago's Justice System: A Feasibility Study of the Bridges to Pathways Program.* This report presents findings from a feasibility evaluation of the Bridges to Pathways program, a program for young men in Chicago between the ages of 17 and 21 years who were involved with the criminal or juvenile justice system and lacked a high school credential.

(6) *Specialized Case Management for Young Adults in Extended Federal Foster Care*. This brief describes how some states currently provide case management specialized for young adults (over age 18).

(7) *Measuring Readiness for Change in Early Care and Education (ECE)*. This brief provides a framework for understanding readiness within the ECE field and shares examples of how ECE researchers are currently attempting to capture the dimensions of readiness—and factors that support readiness—using different data collection methods and standardized measurement tools.

(8) *Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness Review: Executive Summary & Brief - September 2019*. This report provides an overview of the Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) review process and a summary of the results.

(9) *Family Strengthening Research (FY2018)*. This report describes the major research investments of OPRE's Division of Family Strengthening through Fiscal Year 2018.

(10) *Supporting the Use of Administrative Data in Early Care and Education Research: Resource Series*. This set of resources is intended to strengthen the ability of state/territory child care administrators and their

research partners to utilize administrative data to address policy-relevant early care and education research questions.

(11) *The Connection between Head Start and State or Territory Early Care and Education Systems: A Scan of Existing Data*. This report provides a concise synthesis of existing data on the connection between Head Start and other parts of the early care and education system.

New Report from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

A new publication is available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *State Residential Treatment for Behavioral Health Conditions: Regulation and Policy Environmental Scan*. This report summarizes the peer-reviewed and grey literature on oversight of residential care for mental health and substance use care in the U.S., excluding inpatient hospital care.

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) *Limited Certificated Teachers in Washington: Barriers to Becoming Fully Certificated and Needed Supports*. This report presents findings of a statewide survey of limited certificated teachers in Washington in order to better understand how to support these teachers' interests and needs.

(2) *2016/17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17)*. This report describes the methods and procedures used in the 2016/17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17).

(3) *Highlights of U.S. PISA 2018 Results Web Report*. This report provides key comparative information on the reading, mathematics, and science literacy performance of 15-year-old students in the United States and 77 other countries and education systems.

(4) *An Introduction to Adaptive Interventions and SMART Designs in Education*. This report aims to provide information on building and evaluating high-quality adaptive interventions and review the components of sequential, multiple assignment, randomized trial (SMART) designs, discuss the key features of the SMART, and introduce common research questions for which SMARTs may be appropriate.

(5) *Evidence Snapshot: Passport Reading Journeys*. This report summarizes the research on Passport Reading Journeys, a supplemental literacy curriculum that is designed to improve reading comprehension, vocabulary, word study, and writing skills of struggling readers in grades 6-12.

(6) *U.S. Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) 2012/2014/2017: Main Study, National Supplement, and PIAAC 2017 Technical Report*. This report is designed to provide researchers with an overview of the design and implementation of PIAAC in the U.S.

(7) *PIAAC International Highlights Web Report*. This report provides overall results for all three Program for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) domains, as well as results for the following key variables: educational attainment, current employment status, nativity, and self-reported health status.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The December FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight six funding opportunity announcements (FOA) from this month's FFO:

- *CDC: Grants to Support New Investigators in Conducting Research Related to Preventing Interpersonal Violence Impacting Children and Youth*. A purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide support for an intensive, supervised (mentored) career development experience in violence prevention research leading to research independence. Applications are due by March 13, 2020.
- *NIH: Blueprint Program for Enhancing Neuroscience Diversity through Undergraduate Research Education Experiences*. This funding opportunity is intended to support creative educational activities that should prepare undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups underrepresented in biomedical and behavioral sciences to enter Ph.D. degree programs in the neurosciences. Applications are due by February 19, 2020.
- *NIH: Jointly Sponsored Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award Institutional Predoctoral Training Program in the Neurosciences*. The Jointly Sponsored NIH Predoctoral Training Program in the

Neurosciences (JSPTPN) is an institutional program that supports broad and fundamental research training in the neurosciences. The primary objective is to prepare students to be outstanding scientists equipped to pursue careers in neuroscience. Applications are due by May 26, 2020.

- *NIMH: Addressing Suicide Research Gaps: Understanding Mortality Outcomes*. This funding opportunity seeks to support efforts focused on linking pertinent data from healthcare system records (e.g., suicide attempt events) to mortality data so that a more accurate understanding of the risk factors for, and the burden of, suicide among those seen in structured healthcare settings can be discerned. Applications are due by February 10, 2020.
- *NIMH: Sustainable Evidence-Based Mental Health Practices in Low-Resource Settings to Achieve Equity in Outcomes*. This funding opportunity supports research on piloting or developing and testing the effectiveness of strategies to deliver evidence-based mental health services, treatment interventions, and/or preventive interventions (EBPs) in low-resource mental health specialty and non-specialty settings within the U.S. Applications are due by February 24, 2020.
- *NSF: Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER)*. The CAREER Program is a Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty who have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the mission of their department or organization. Applications are due by July 27, 2020.

Read about these and other funding opportunities.