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# Policy Update: December 2020

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

**Deadline Approaching: 2021-2022 SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Program Applications**

We are seeking applicants for the SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Programs for the 2021-2022 academic year. There are two fellowship programs: federal and state. The fellowship programs aim to (1) provide fellows with firsthand experience in policymaking, program implementation, and evaluation; (2) provide agencies greater access to research expertise on a diverse range of child development topics to enhance evidence-based policy development, implementation, and evaluation that support diverse populations; and (3) build a network of experts that bridge developmental science, policymaking, and practice. 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, 2021 to August 31, 2022.

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.

***Deadline to Submit Applications and Letters of Intent: January 4, 2021, 11:59PM Eastern.*** Have Questions? Email policyfellowships@srcd.org.

**New *Child Evidence Brief* on the Impact of COVID-19 Job and Income Loss on Child Well-Being Released**

SRCD has recently released a *Child Evidence Brief*, "COVID-19 Job and Income Loss Jeopardize Child Well-Being: Income Support Policies Can Help," which details the impact of COVID-19 driven increases in job loss and income instability on child and family well-being. The authors note that renewal and reinstatement of economic supports will reduce the stress of economic uncertainty, help financially stabilize families, and enhance parents' capacity to support their children's development. Learn more about *Child Evidence Briefs*.

**Becoming an Ally and Co-Conspirator in Developmental Science Webinar: Recording Available**

On November 18, SRCD held a webinar titled, "Becoming an Ally and Co-Conspirator in Developmental Science." As a continuation of efforts to address structural and systemic racism, discrimination and oppression, this webinar in the SRCD Ethnic and Racial Issues Committee's Anti-Racist Series explored allyship and becoming a co-conspirator within the context of developmental science. Participants were invited to explore how they can be agents of change to dismantle the hegemonic ideologies, theories, and methodologies that have shaped the field of development science and reified through the curriculum, advising, mentoring, research, funding, and service that have become the hallmark of the field. The panelists introduced participants to grounding terminology; co-constructed an understanding through the sharing of personal and professional experiences in relation to allyship and becoming a co-conspirator; and identified steps that can be taken to begin or expand efforts to disrupt ideas and dismantle long-standing structures that have contributed to scholarship that fails to capture the lived experiences of intersectional Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) or minoritized individuals. The panelists provided recommendations for funders and discussed policies and practices in academic settings to support allyship and becoming a co-conspirator in the field.

Child development experts included: Drs. Mona M. Abo-Zena, University of Massachusetts Boston; Diamond Y. Bravo, University of California, Riverside; Gabriela Chavira, California State University, Northridge; Hyung Chol (Brandon) Yoo, Arizona State University; Lionel C. Howard, George Washington University; and Mariah M. Contreras, Tufts University (Q&A moderator). **To view the recording, visit SRCD's YouTube channel**.

## Legislative Branch Updates

***FY 2021 Appropriations and COVID-19 Relief Update***

**Congressional Lawmakers Discuss FY 2021 Omnibus Spending Package and COVID-19 Relief**

On December 11, President Donald Trump signed H.R. 8900, the "Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021, and Other Extensions Act," into law. The continuing resolution that has funded the government since Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 began on October 1 expired on December 11. Congressional lawmakers and President Donald Trump averted a government shutdown last week by signing another stopgap bill into law before the deadline. The Senate passed H.R. 8900 with a voice vote on December 11 and the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill with a 343-67 vote on December 9.

H.R. 8900, a continuing resolution, provides federal agencies with funding through December 18, 2020. While the passage of H.R. 8900 provided funding for one additional week, Congress needs to pass another FY 2021 spending bill before the December 18 deadline to stymie a government shutdown. Of note, Congressional leaders made progress on an approximately $1.4 trillion FY 2021 omnibus spending package this week.

As lawmakers from both chambers continue to discuss COVID-19 relief, Congressional leaders are concurrently making progress on a COVID-19 relief bill.

## Executive Branch Updates

### *Highlights*

**President Trump Nominates New Members to the National Board for Education Sciences**

President Donald Trump nominated eleven new members to the National Board for Education Sciences (NBES) this month. NBES is the advisory group that oversees the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education. According to the IES, the National Board for Education Sciences consists of fifteen voting members who are appointed by the President of the United States "...and are highly qualified to appraise education research, statistics, evaluations, or development." Several seats on the board have remained vacant for years and NBES has not convened since 2016 because of the quorum related to unfilled seats on the board.

For more information about the nominees, read the following announcements: December 3 announcement, December 8 announcement, December 10 announcement, and December 16 announcement.

**National Science Board Holds Meeting**

The National Science Board, the advisory group that oversees the National Science Foundation (NSF), met on December 9 and 10. Notably, this is the first National Science Board meeting since President Donald Trump appointed the final two members to the board: Matthew Malkan, Professor of Physics and Astronomy, University of California, Los Angeles; and Scott Stanley, Vice President of Technology and Co-Founder, Techno Planet, Inc.

For more information about the recent National Science Board meeting, read the public agenda and view the recording.

**Request for Information: Guidance on Current Research on the Prevention of Black Youth Suicide**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) issued a request for information (RFI) on the risks for and prevention of death by suicide and suicidal ideation and behaviors (SIB) of Black children and adolescents. NIMH is seeking input from a range of stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, healthcare providers, individuals who work for schools and social welfare organizations, among others) to better understand Black youth suicide risk and build on evidence-based preventive programs and services.

The RFI notes, “Over the past several years, there has been a significant increase in the rate of suicide and suicidal ideation and behaviors (SIB) among Black youth. From 2001 to 2015, Black youth under 13 were twice as likely to die by suicide compared to their White peers, and the suicide death rate among Black youth was found to be increasing faster than any other racial/ethnic group. In response to these trends, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) convened an Emergency Taskforce in 2019 to examine Black youth suicide and mental health. In December 2019, the Taskforce released its report, “Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America," which summarized key epidemiological and clinical findings about Black youth suicide, and provided several research, practice, and policy recommendations for addressing the crisis.”

Read this request for information for more information and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments via the NIH RFI website by **January 15, 2021.**

**Request for Information: National Science Foundation Seeks Input on Evidence-Building Activities**

The National Science Foundation released a request for information seeking input on opportunities to build on “ongoing efforts to identify priority questions that can guide evidence-building activities by soliciting input from the public.”

Read this request for information and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments to Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, splimpto@nsf.gov by **December 31, 2020.**

**NSF Dear Colleague Letter: Broadening Participation in STEM Entrepreneurship and Innovation (BPINNOVATE)**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) issued a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) on broadening participation in STEM entrepreneurship and innovation, welcoming proposals that identify strategies to mitigate barriers and improve access to STEM entrepreneurship and innovation for individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The DCL notes, "To increase national competitiveness and broaden opportunity for our Nation's vast and diverse population of potential entrepreneurs, we seek greater knowledge of how disability, race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, geography, and other factors relate to innovation and entrepreneurship. This DCL encourages investigators to develop comprehensive studies that use the intersectionality of identities as a framework to examine interventions and phenomena within the innovation and entrepreneurial space and invites submission to the NSF Science of Science program."

Read the full Dear Colleague Letter for more information about this opportunity. Interested parties should submit proposals to the Science of Science program by **February 9, 2021**.

***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) *Graphical Overview of State TANF Policies as of July 2019*. This report is a companion to the 2019 Welfare Rules Databook and provides a graphical overview of some of the policy differences across states.

(2) *Implementation of an Intensive Job Search Program for Cash Assistance Recipients: The STRIVE Program in Westchester County, New York*. This report describes the operation of an intensive job search assistance program for cash assistance recipients in Westchester County, New York, and provides lessons for other policymakers and program administrators interested in the approach.

(3) *Initial Implementation of the 2014 Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).* This report summarizes the initial changes states and territories made in response to policies outlined by the CCDBG reauthorization. Researchers, policymakers, program leaders, families, and providers may find the information useful when thinking about the effects of these policy changes on family and provider experiences with the subsidy system.

**New Reports and Briefs from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation**

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

(1) *The Multiethnic Placement Act and Transracial Adoption 25 Years Later.* The Multiethnic Placement Act, as amended, enacted in 1994 and known as MEPA (or MEPA/IEP to acknowledge amendments passed in 1996), prohibits child welfare agencies that receive federal funding from delaying or denying foster or adoptive placements because of a child or prospective foster or adoptive parent's race, color or national origin and from using those factors as a basis for denying approval of a potential foster or adoptive parent. This report uses data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and child welfare monitoring visits, supplemented by interviews with adoption officials and stakeholders in three states, to explore trends in transracial adoption as well as attitudes about MEPA of those involved in making adoptive placements.

(2) *Administering Work-Related Requirements Across Human Services Programs: Service Delivery Approaches.* This report discusses two primary approaches for providing employment-related services to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and public housing program participants to help them meet work-related requirements. The findings are based on discussions with state and local administrators and workforce development partners in three states.

**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), U.S. Department of Education:

(1) *The Transition to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): State and District Approaches to Implementing Title I and Title II-A in 2017-18.* This report, based on national surveys administered in 2018, describes state and district policies and practices in the law's core areas of content standards and assessments, identification of and support for low-performing schools, and educator effectiveness (Title I and II-A). The report also compares the policies and practices in 2018 to 2014, prior to ESSA.

(2) *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (*TIMSS) 2019 U.S. Highlights Web Report*. TIMSS is administered every 4 years and is used to compare the mathematics and science knowledge and skills of 4th and 8th-graders over time. This report is on the mathematics and science achievement of U.S. students relative to their peers in other education systems in 2019.

(3) 2*012 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:12) Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS): Data File Documentation*. This report describes the methodology used in the 2012/17 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS). BPS:12 PETS is the third data release for a study of a nationally representative sample of first-time beginning postsecondary students.

(4) *Teacher Performance Evaluations in U.S. Public Schools*. This report compares the sources of information in evaluating teacher performance and how the information is used by traditional public school and public charter school principals in the United States.

(5) *Dual or Concurrent Enrollment in Public Schools in the United States*. This report examines dual or concurrent enrollment (enrollment in a class that offers both high school and college credit) at public schools in the United States with students enrolled in grades 9–12.

(6) *Participation in a Professional Development Program on Culturally Responsive Practices in Wisconsin*. Through continued support from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, a professional development training program for culturally responsive practices, Building Culturally Responsive Systems, has been one of the primary models to inform culturally responsive practices. Using data from the 2012/2013–2018/2019 school years, this report and brief examine the program's uptake and reach across the state and its relationship to school outcomes.

(7) *The Association between Teachers' Use of Formative Assessment Practices and Students' Use of Self-Regulated Learning Strategies*. This report describes surveys by three Arizona school districts of more than 1,200 teachers and more than 24,000 students in grades 3–12 in spring 2019 to better understand the relationship between their teachers' use of formative assessment practices and their students' use of self-regulated learning strategies, to help shape related teacher development efforts moving forward.

(8) *Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the United States: Results From the 2015–16 National Teacher and Principal Survey*. This report provides descriptive statistics and basic information from the 2015–2016 National Teacher and Principal Survey Public School Teacher Data File.

(9) *College Enrollment and Completion among Texas High School Graduates with a Disability*. This report used longitudinal administrative data from Texas to examine college enrollment and completion among four statewide cohorts of Texas public high school graduates (2006/2007 through 2009/2010) by disability status in high school, type of disability, and other student characteristics.

(10) *Single Stop USA's Community College Initiative Intervention Reports*. This What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention report and brief summarizes the research on Single Stop USA's Community College Initiative, an intervention that supports community college students and their families by offering screening and application assistance to obtain public benefits.

(11) *Principal Professional Development in U.S. Public Schools in 2017-18*. This report examines professional development topics and activities reported by public school principals.

## U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The December 2020 FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight a few funding opportunities from this month's FFO:

(1) An IES funding opportunity will support innovative or unconventional research that has the potential to lead to new scientific paradigms, new and more effective approaches to education practice or policy, or transformative technologies that substantially increase learner outcomes. Applications are due by February 25, 2021.

(2) An NIH funding opportunity for research will help identify and explain the mechanisms and pathways by which interventions targeting social drivers of mental illnesses affect the mental health and functioning of children and/or adolescents (ages 5-24 years) living in World Bank designated low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and previously designated LMICs re-categorized as high income on or after January 1, 2021. Applications are due by March 18, 2021.

(3) An NSF funding opportunity will encourage research collaborations in social, behavioral, and economic science between scholars at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and scholars in other institutions or organizations. Applications are due by March 5, 2021.

Read about these and other funding opportunities.