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Policy Update: April 2021

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*.

Table of Contents

- Spotlights on the SRCD Policy Fellows - Andrew McGee & Alayna Schreier
- President Biden's FY 2022 Discretionary Funding Request
- NSF Convergence Accelerator: Request for Letter of Intent
- NIH ECHO Program: Request for Information
- NIH HEAL Initiative Idea Exchange: Call for Input
- NSF Dear Colleague Letter: SBE Trans-Atlantic Call for Proposals, Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World
- NIH Releases NIH-Wide Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan
- Federal Reports
- U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

SRCD Child and Family Policy News

Spotlights on the SRCD Policy Fellows - Andrew McGee & Alayna Schreier

Andrew (Drew) McGee is a SRCD State Policy Pre-doctoral Fellow placed in the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) in the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). Read about Drew's work expanding access to early childhood services and implementing early intervention and prevention efforts. Two examples of this work include expanding home visiting and improving access to early childhood mental health (ECMH) consultation services in Colorado.

Alayna Schreier, Ph.D., is a SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow placed in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Read about Alayna's work enhancing the systems that serve children and families through systems alignment and coordination as well as the integration of trauma-informed care.

Legislative Branch Updates

FY 2022 Appropriations

President Biden's FY 2022 Discretionary Funding Request

On April 9, the Office of Management and Budget released President Joe Biden's $1.5 trillion FY 2022 discretionary funding request (the "skinny budget"), providing Congress with the President's discretionary funding recommendations for the fiscal year that will begin on October 1st. The President's preliminary request would address a wide array of policy topics of interest to members, including but not limited to funding increases for K-12 education (e.g., investments in Title I grants for high poverty schools), medical research (e.g., supporting research on the opioid epidemic), housing (e.g., funding for housing choice vouchers), and gun violence prevention (e.g., funding for a U.S. Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services evidence-based community violence intervention initiative). Notably, the President's request would provide the U.S. Department of Education with $102.8 billion, a 41% increase over the FY 2021 enacted level, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) with $131.7 billion, a 23.5% increase above the FY 2021 enacted level, and the National Science Foundation with $10.2 billion, a 20% increase above the FY 2021 enacted level.

The Biden Administration will release the President's FY 2022 Budget this Spring. For a comprehensive summary of the President's discretionary funding recommendations, read the White House's press release and the FY 2022 discretionary funding request.

Additional Hearings of Interest

Senate Committee Holds Hearing on America's Child Care Sector

On April 27, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing on "Supporting Children, Workers and Families by Strengthening America's Child Care Sector." Witnesses included: Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Chief Policy Officer, Zero to Three; Susan Gale Perry, Chief Deputy Secretary, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; Dasja Reed, Parent, New Orleans; and Khadija Lewis Khan, Executive Director, Beautiful Beginnings Child Care Center. View the full recording and read witness testimonies.

House Committee Holds Hearing on Paid Leave, Child Care, and the Economy

On April 21, the House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing, "In Their Own Words: Paid Leave, Child Care, and an Economy That Failed Women." Witnesses included Agnes Braga, Working Mom, Speech Language Pathology Assistant; Bethany Fauteaux, Working Mom, Child Care Worker; Rebecca Gonzalez, Working Mom, Child Care Facility Owner; Molly Moon Neitzel, Working Mom, Ice Cream Shop Owner; Joy Spencer, Working Mom, Director of a Non-Profit for Women; and Linda Smith, Director, Early Childhood Initiative, Bipartisan Policy Center. View the full recording and read witness testimonies.

House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Improving Access to Behavioral and Mental Health Care

On April 15, the Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor held a hearing on "Meeting the Moment: Improving Access to Behavioral and Mental Health Care." Witnesses included Brian D. Smedley, Ph.D., Chief of Psychology in the Public Interest, Public Interest Directorate, American Psychological Association; Christine Yu Moutier, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; James Gelfand, Senior Vice President, Health Policy, The ERISA Industry Committee; and Meiram Bendat, J.D., Ph.D., Founder, Psych-Appeal. View the full recording, read witness testimonies, and member statements.

House and Senate Subcommittees Hold Hearings on the President's FY 2022 Funding Request and NSF

On April 13, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations held a hearing on "A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Request for the National Science Foundation and Securing U.S. Competitiveness." The sole witness was Sethuraman Panchanathan, Ph.D., Director, National Science Foundation. The next day, the House Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations held a hearing on "The National Science Foundation's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request." The sole witness was Sethuraman Panchanathan, Ph.D., Director, National Science Foundation. View the full recordings and transcripts of Director Panchanathan's testimonies from the Senate Subcommittee hearing and the House Subcommittee hearing.

House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Charting the Path to Educational Equity Post-COVID-19

On March 25, the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor held a hearing on "Lessons Learned: Charting the Path to Educational Equity Post-COVID-19." Witnesses included Marc H. Morial, J.D., President and CEO, National Urban League; Jennifer Dale, Parent; Selene A. Almazan, Esq., Legal Director, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc.; and Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools, Miami-Dade County Public Schools. View the full recording, read witness testimonies, and member statements.

House Committee Holds Hearing on Equal Pay Day and the Long-Term Impacts of Gender Inequality

On March 24, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing on "Honoring 'Equal Pay Day': Examining the Long-Term Economic Impacts of Gender Inequality." Witnesses included Khara Jabola-Carolus, Executive Director, Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women; C. Nicole Mason, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Women's Policy Research; Patrice Onwuka, Director, Center for Economic Opportunity, Independent Women's Forum; Ai-jen Poo, Executive Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance; and Megan Rapinoe, U.S. Women's National Team and Equal Pay Advocate. View the full recording, read witness testimonies, and read statements.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

NSF Convergence Accelerator: Request for Letter of Intent

The National Science Foundation (NSF) issued a program solicitation about the NSF Convergence Accelerator, seeking letters of intent. The Convergence Accelerator program addresses societal issues through convergence research, "Using a convergence approach and innovation processes like human-centered design, user discovery, and team science and integration of multidisciplinary research, the Convergence Accelerator program seeks to transition basic research and discovery into practice—to solve high-impact societal challenges aligned with specific research themes (tracks)." To learn more about this opportunity, read the solicitation. Letters of intent are due by **May 5, 2021.** The full proposal deadline is June 14, 2021.

NIH ECHO Program: Request for Information

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a time-sensitive Request for Information (RFI) on "Enhancing the Science for the Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program." The ECHO Program was initiated five years ago with a "…mission to enhance the health of children for generations to come. The impact of ECHO's observational research rests on availability of combined data from multiple diverse pre-existing and ongoing maternal-child cohort studies, driven by the ECHO-wide Cohort data collection protocol. To date the ECHO-wide Cohort data platform contains data on over 50,000 children and their families." This RFI seeks input from the scientific community and the public on opportunities to enhance the science of the program. For more information about this information request, read the full request for information. Interested parties must submit their responses by **May 25, 2021** to NIHKidsandEnvironment@od.nih.gov.

NIH HEAL Initiative Idea Exchange: Call for Input

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative issued an Idea Exchange titled, "Moving HEAL Research into Action." The NIH HEAL initiative aims to "…provide lasting, scientific solutions to the opioid crisis. The initiative is funding hundreds of projects nationwide to improve pain management and the prevention and treatment of opioid misuse and addiction." Through this Idea Exchange, the initiative seeks public input on solutions to the opioid crisis, ideas on how research can address the crisis, and guidance regarding how to disseminate HEAL results to communities. For more information about this call, visit the HEAL Idea Exchange's communications platform. The comment period

for this opportunity closes on **June 1, 2021.** Please note interested parties must register first (free registration) to submit their ideas**.**

NSF Dear Colleague Letter: SBE Trans-Atlantic Call for Proposals, Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World

On April 20, the National Science Foundation (NSF) released a Dear Colleague Letter on the NSF Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences' (NSF/SBE) participation in the Trans-Atlantic Platform Call for Proposals, Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience in a Post-Pandemic World (T-AP RRR). The T-AP RRR is a grant competition that will provide researchers with the opportunity to participate in international collaborative research projects on the effects of COVID-19 on society and how to better support recovery and renewal efforts post-pandemic. According to NSF, "T-AP RRR will support collaborative research teams from four continents: Africa (Republic of South Africa); Europe (Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom); North America (Canada, the United States); and South America (Brazil and Colombia). Teams must include researchers based in at least three participating T-AP RRR countries and must include partners from both sides of the Atlantic, i.e., from Europe/Africa and the Americas." For more information about this opportunity, read NSF's Dear Colleague Letter. Interested parties must submit their proposals by **July 12, 2021.**

NIH Releases NIH-Wide Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) released "NIH-Wide Minority Health and Health Disparities, Strategic Plan, 2021-2025: Taking the Next Steps." The strategic plan includes three broad categories to advance minority health and health disparities research and foster health equity: "(1) Scientific Research, such as advancing the understanding of the root causes of health disparities; (2) Research-Sustaining Activities, such as strengthening the national research capacity to address minority health and health disparities, especially in minority-serving institutions; and (3) Outreach, Collaboration, and Dissemination, such as cultivating and expanding the community of researchers and advocates in the area of minority health and health disparities." The National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) led this effort in consultation with all NIH institutes, Offices, and Centers. For more information about the strategic plan, read the NIMHD news release and the strategic plan.

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) *We Grow Together (WGT): Use of Technology to Support Early Care and Education Professional Development*. This webinar describes findings related to technology from the field test of WGT, a professional development (PD) system for caregivers working with infants and toddlers in center-based care and family child care homes.

(2) *Recovery Coaching Interventions for Families Involved with the Child Welfare System: Moving Toward Evidence-Based Practices*. In the child welfare system, recovery coaches work with parents with substance use disorder (SUD) who either have had or are at risk of having a child removed from the home. This report shares the results of the initial step in ACF's overall effort to move recovery coaching interventions in child welfare to the next level of evidence.

(3) *Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Performance Measures 2013–2017*. The PREP performance measures data provide systematic information about program operations and outcomes for all PREP grantees, their provider organizations, the programs they operate, and the youth they serve. This report and brief highlight nationwide trends for PREP between 2013 and 2017.

(4) *Understanding Leadership in Early Care and Education (ECE): A Literature Review*. This report examines what is known about what leadership looks like within center-based ECE settings and how it functions to improve center quality and, in turn, children's experiences and outcomes.

(5) *Assisting Families Experiencing Homelessness with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Funding: Findings from a Survey of TANF Administrators*. This report considers the extent to which TANF agencies across the country are using TANF funds to serve and support families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

(6) *COVID-19 Response in Region XI American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start: How Children's Centers and Programs Faced the Pandemic*. This webinar explores findings from the spring 2020 data collection of AIAN Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) 2019 related to program and center responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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) *COVID-19 and Economic Opportunity: Unequal Effects on Economic Need and Program Response*. This report summarizes what is known about poverty, food insecurity, housing, and early childhood education during the pandemic, and the uneven reach of programs designed to address them.

(2) *COVID-19 and Economic Opportunity: Inequities in the Employment Crisis*. This report demonstrates that overall employment figures mask the disparate impacts on some communities of color, women, and low-wage workers. Employment conditions are not improving for everyone, most notably for women of color, and the report notes steps are needed to ensure the recovery is equitable.

(3) *Mental Health Consequences of COVID-19: The Role of Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)*. This report estimates the rate of new onset of mental health conditions among individuals with a COVID-19 diagnosis who had no mental health conditions or mental health-related health services utilization in the 12 months prior to their COVID-19 diagnosis; and (2) quantifies the contribution of SDOH indicators to the development of the mental health condition.

(4) *Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Data Sharing at the Community Level*. This report represents a landscape review of community-level efforts to address SDOH, followed by interviews with participants in three community-level initiatives that have built networks to coordinate clinical and social services.

(5) *Mental Health Treatment Need and Treatment System Capacity*. This report presents an overview of trends in mental health treatment need and system capacity to provide treatment between 2014 and 2018 using existing data sources.

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 2018 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) Study*. This report presents detailed information about the 2018 NAEP ORF study, the first such NAEP study since 2002. This report highlights the key concepts and findings of the 2018 NAEP ORF study.

(2) *Supporting Students with Health Conditions in District of Columbia Public Schools*. This report aims to understand how the prevalence of health conditions differs by student characteristics, whether students are supported through a 504 plan or an individualized education program (IEP), and the relationship between student health conditions and education outcomes.

(3) *Analyzing Teacher Mobility and Retention: Guidance and Considerations Reports*. This report provides the foundational information needed to answer policy-relevant research questions related to teacher mobility and retention and presents the decision points and steps necessary for conducting basic mobility and retention analyses. This report is the second in a two-part set and builds on the foundational information in report 1.

(4) *Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Survey Analysis: Descriptive Statistics*. This report presents aggregate summary statistics of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) capacity based on state-level response to the 2018 SLDS survey collection, as well as a data file of individual-level state response.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The April 2021 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 Administration for Children and Families (ACF) funding opportunity to establish and maintain three Culturally-Specific Special Interest Resource Centers (CSSIRC) that will enhance intervention and prevention efforts for victims of domestic violence for members of racial and ethnic minority groups: African

American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Latino/Latina. **Applications are due June 21, 2021**.

(2) A National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funding opportunity to test the effectiveness of combined interventions to both detect and intervene to reduce risk of suicide and suicide ideation and behavior (SIB) and/or non-suicidal self-harm (NSSI) among Black children and adolescents. **Applications are due by June 29, 2021.**

(3) A National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) funding opportunity to support regional comprehensive research centers on the prevention, treatment, and management of chronic diseases associated with health disparities. NIH-designated U.S. health disparity populations currently include Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, underserved rural populations, and sexual and gender minorities. **Applications are due June 11, 2021.**

Read about these and other funding opportunities.