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Policy Update: February 2022

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 the SRCD Policy Fellow

Parisa Parsafar, Ph.D., is a SRCD Executive Branch Policy Fellow who is placed at the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). Read about how Parisa's work at NICHD has informed her understanding of health policy implementation at the federal level and built on the skills she developed as a former SRCD Congressional Fellow.

Are you interested in learning more about the contributions that SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows have made at their placements? Visit the SRCD website to read Spotlights and abstracts describing their work.

Legislative Branch Updates

FY 2022 Appropriations Update

President Biden Signs Stopgap Funding Measure Into Law

On February 18, President Joe Biden signed H.R. 6617 "the Further Additional Extending Government Funding Act" into law, a stopgap funding measure that extended Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations to federal agencies through March 11, 2022. The measure passed the U.S. Senate with a 65-27 vote and the U.S. House of Representatives with a 272-162 vote. By temporarily extending federal funding, the stopgap funding measure, otherwise known as a "continuing resolution," prevented a government shutdown that would have happened when the prior continuing resolution expired on February 18. Relatedly, House and Senate appropriations Committee leadership reached a "framework agreement" earlier this month that laid the groundwork for the completion of the FY 2022 appropriations process. Upon the Senate's passage of H.R. 6617, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) stated, "This framework was the result of weeks of careful negotiations between myself, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Granger, and I want to thank them and their staff for all the late nights and weekends that it took to get us to this point...We look forward to presenting our final agreement to members to review in the coming weeks. By passing this continuing resolution, we can remove the unnecessary threat of yet another government shutdown and allow the Appropriations Committees to complete our work."

House Passes the America COMPETES Act

On February 4, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 4521 the "America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength Act of 2022" or the America COMPETES

Act, a legislative package that aims to bolster the United States' scientific competitiveness on a global scale. Of note, H.R. 4521 includes a reauthorization and expansion of the National Science Foundation (NSF), in addition to investments in other federal agencies and initiatives. According to the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the America COMPETES Act is "... an important step to strengthen our supply chains, revitalize domestic manufacturing, and reinvigorate the innovation engine of our economy to ensure that the United States remains globally competitive in the 21st century. H.R. 4521 is aligned with the President's vision to enhance American economic and scientific competitiveness; build a stronger, more diverse, and more inclusive innovation ecosystem; and invest in strengthening critical supply chains, our domestic industrial base, and regional economic growth and development." The bill passed along party lines with a 222-210 vote. Of note, the Senate passed a related bill last year, S. 1260 the "United States Innovation and Competition Act" or the USICA Act, that would need to be reconciled with H.R. 4521. Congressional lawmakers will likely convene a conference committee to resolve differences between the bills. For more information about the America COMPETES Act and NSF reauthorization, read the Consortium for Social Science Association's (COSSA) summaries.

Additional Hearings of Interest

Serving All Students: Opportunities to Promote Healthy, Supportive School Environments. On February 16, the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee of the U.S. House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing on "Serving All Students: Promoting a Healthier, More Supportive School Environment." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

ARPA-H and the Future of Biomedical Research. On February 8, the Health Subcommittee of the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) titled, "ARPA-H: The Next Frontier Of Biomedical Research." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Lessons Learned from COVID-19: Addressing Barriers to Employment for People with Disabilities. On February 8, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) held a hearing on "Lessons Learned from COVID-19: Highlighting Innovations, Maximizing Inclusive Practices and Overcoming Barriers to Employment for People with Disabilities." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Protecting Youth Mental Health Part I: A Federal Response. On February 8, the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance held a hearing on "Protecting Youth Mental Health: Part I - An Advisory and Call to Action." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Health Equity Gaps for Individuals with Disabilities and Chronic Conditions. On February 3, the Health Subcommittee of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on "Bridging Health Equity Gaps For People with Disabilities and Chronic Conditions." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

The Future of Medicare Financing. On February 2, the Subcommittee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance held a hearing on "The Hospital Insurance Trust Fund and the Future of Medicare Financing". View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: Responding to the Crisis. On February 1, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) held a hearing on "Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: Responding to the Growing Crisis." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

President Biden Announces Temporary OSTP Leadership

On February 16, the White House released a statement about the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) leadership. President Joe Biden announced that Dr. Alondra Nelson will take on the responsibilities of the Director of the OSTP and Dr. Francis Collins will take on the responsibilities of the Science Advisor to the President and Co-Chair of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology for the time being. Of note, Dr. Nelson is currently the OSTP's Deputy Director for Science and Society. Meanwhile, Dr. Collins recently stepped down from the position of Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) after serving in that role for over 12 years. President Biden's announcement follows Eric Lander's resignation from both posts earlier this month. Both Dr. Nelson and Dr. Collins will serve in a temporary capacity until a permanent leader is nominated and confirmed. For more information about the

OSTP leadership transition, read the White House statement.

NIH RFI: The Interaction of Sleep and Emotion Regulation to Improve Health and Well-Being Across Health Conditions

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a request for information on "Research Challenges and Needs in the Interaction of Sleep and Emotion Regulation to Improve Health and Well-being Across Health Conditions." NIH requests feedback, comments, and ideas from the scientific community to better understand research needs and priorities on how the interaction between sleep and emotion regulation influences health. The RFI notes, NIH is interested in "...the challenges and research needs that can best be addressed through a concerted and coordinated effort to enhance research and development on how the interaction of sleep disturbances and emotional regulation impact physiological processes implicated in health and health conditions such as but not limited to hormonal changes associated with puberty or menopause, cancer, coronary heart and pulmonary disease, metabolic disorders, substance use and alcohol use disorder, neurological disorders, and mental health disorders." Read the RFI for more information and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments by **February 28, 2022.**

DCL: Future Topics for the NSF Convergence Accelerator

The National Science Foundation (NSF) released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) outlining a request for information (RFI) on topics for the NSF Convergence Accelerator. The NSF Convergence Accelerator was launched in 2019 with the following intended goals: "to accelerate use-inspired convergence research in areas of national importance and societal challenges, and to initiate convergence team-building capacity around exploratory, potentially high-risk proposals addressing selected convergent research topics." More specifically, this RFI solicits feedback from "...industry institutions of higher education (IHEs), non-profits, state and local governments, and other interested parties on potential NSF Convergence Accelerator tracks for the next round of funding, anticipated in fiscal year (FY) 2023." Please note the RFI does not request research proposals. Please read the Dear Colleague Letter for more information and consider submitting a response. Interested parties should submit their responses by **February 28, 2022**.

NIH RFI: NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a request for information requesting feedback on "the Framework for the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)." The RFI notes, "The purpose of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for DEIA is to articulate NIH's vision for embracing, integrating, and strengthening diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) across all NIH activities to achieve the NIH mission. The Strategic Plan will capture activities that NIH will undertake to meet the vision of the Strategic Plan, and will be organized around accomplishments, needs, opportunities, and challenges in addressing DEIA in the NIH workforce, its structure and culture, and the research it supports. NIH has implemented a range of other past and current initiatives and is planning initiatives in the future to advance DEIA. Among them, the UNITE initiative was established in 2021 to identify and address structural racism within the NIH-supported and the greater scientific community. Please note that an RFI on a Draft 2022-2026 Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) Strategic Plan was released on January 12, 2022 and, therefore, open for public comment at the same time as a Framework for the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). You are encouraged to respond to both." Read the full RFI for more information about this opportunity and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments by **April 3, 2022**.

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) *Interactive Knowledge Map: The Effects of Parenting Programs for Incarcerated and Reentering Fathers.* Improving parenting outcomes for fathers with criminal justice involvement can be a challenge for Responsible Fatherhood (RF) programs. To help RF programs better serve these fathers, this report summarizes the impact literature on parenting programs for incarcerated and reentering fathers.

(2) *Strengths and Stressors in Region XI Head Start: The Role of Social Support and Economic Condition in the Well-Being of Children and Families from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (AIAN FACES 2019).* This report aims to explore the economic conditions and forms of social and community support children and families have, examine the associations between social and community support and economic condition, and examine whether economic condition and social and community supports predict child and family well-being.

(3) *Performance of New Cognitive Assessments with Head Start Children: Emerging Evidence from the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES 2019) and the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (AIAN FACES 2019)*. This report explores whether the updated direct cognitive assessments in FACES 2019 and AIAN FACES 2019 provide fair estimates of children's skills and knowledge in the domains being measured.

(4) *Defining and Measuring Access to Child Care and Early Education (CCEE) with Families in Mind*. This report describes the Access Guidebook's definition of access to child care and early education and discusses how if policymakers use this definition, they may be more likely to build the supply of CCEE and provide resources to families that meet their varying needs and preferences.

(5) *Using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Funding to Provide Housing Assistance During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. This report examines how TANF agencies supported families early in the COVID-19 pandemic and describes housing related challenges that families faced during the pandemic, both nationally and in four communities visited as part of this study.

(6) *2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Snapshot: Child Care Cost Burden for U.S. Households with Children Under Age 5*. The purpose of this report is to release child care and early education (CCEE) cost burden findings for households with young children using the most recent national data available from the 2019 NSECE Household Survey. Affordability issues can affect parents' choices, decision-making, and ability to access high quality CCEE for their children.

New Reports 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) *Federal Economic Stimulus Projected to Cut Poverty in 2021, Though Poverty May Rise as Benefits Expire*. To get a clear picture of how federal economic stimulus in 2021 supported people struggling economically, this report provides a series of projections including how many people are in poverty in 2021 compared with 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) *Integrating Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and OB/GYN Care: Policy Challenges and Opportunities Final Report*. This report and brief aim to address the treatment care models for pregnant and postpartum women with SUD by describing opportunities to integrate OB/GYN and SUD care as well as barriers to integrated care delivery.

(3) *The Role of Health and Human Service Providers in Preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) Research Brief*. This brief is based on findings from an environmental scan of peer-reviewed and grey literature and a meeting of nationally recognized FASD experts that ASPE hosted in September 2019 to discuss policies on prevention, identification, and interventions with individuals affected by FASD.

(4) *State Responses to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD): Effective Strategies and Ongoing Challenges Research Brief*. This brief synthesizes effective state and local level strategies for prevention, identification and intervention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

(5) *Parents' Intentions to Vaccinate Children for COVID-19 by Child Age: Sociodemographic Factors and Reasons for Hesitancy*. This report examines hesitancy among parents to vaccinate children ages 5-11 and 12-17 using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey.

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) *Digest of Education Statistics, 2020*. The 56th in a series of publications initiated in 1962, the Digest's purpose is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of education from prekindergarten through graduate school. This report contains data on a variety of topics, including the number of schools and colleges, teachers, enrollments, and graduates, in addition to educational attainment, finances, and federal funds for education, libraries, and international comparisons.

(2) *Black or African American Teachers: Background and School Settings in 2017-18*. This report examines the background and school settings of Black or African-American teachers in public and private schools in the Unites States in school year 2017–18, by selected school and teacher characteristics.

(3) *National Household Education Surveys Program of 2019 Data File User's Manual*. The 2019 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES:2019) Data File User's Manual provides documentation and guidance for users of the NHES:2019 data files, which include data from the Early Childhood Program Participation survey and the Parent and Family Involvement in Education survey.

(4) *National Household Education Surveys Program of 2019: Qualitative Study of Nonresponding Addresses*. This report documents the methods and findings of a qualitative study of nonrespondent addresses to the 2019 administration of the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES:2019).

(5) *Social Belonging Intervention Report*. This What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention report and brief summarize the research on Social Belonging interventions that support postsecondary success. These interventions aim to reduce the impacts of negative stereotypes that may burden students in underrepresented groups and affect their persistence in college.

(6) *Growth Mindset Intervention Report*. This What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention report and brief summarize the research on Growth Mindset interventions that support postsecondary success. These interventions aim to improve college persistence and academic achievement by encouraging students to view intelligence as a "malleable" characteristic that grows with effort, and to view academic challenges as temporary setbacks that they can overcome.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The February 2022 FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight a few funding opportunities from this month's FFO:

(1) **Grant to Analyze National Incidence of Child Maltreatment in the U.S**: An Administration for Children and Families (ACF) funding opportunity to support researchers conducting secondary analyses of data to inform the ongoing and accurate national surveillance of child abuse and neglect. Applications are due by April 4, 2022.

(2) **Grant to Evaluate Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Youth Violence**: A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding opportunity to expand the evidence base for the prevention of community

violence involving youth ages 10-34 years through funding National Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (Youth Violence Prevention Centers or YVPCs). Applications are due by April 18, 2022.

(3) **Grant to Evaluate the Health Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic-Related Food and Housing Policies and Programs**: A National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding opportunity to identify and evaluate the ongoing and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing specifically on governmental (local, state, tribal, federal) policy and programmatic actions that address two specific social determinants of health: food/nutrition security and housing security. Applications are due by April 7, 2022.

(4) **Grant to Conduct Pressing COVID-19 Mental Health Research**: A National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funding opportunity to address urgent, time-sensitive mental health research questions related to COVID-19, including broader secondary impacts of the pandemic as well as research on the intersection of mental health, COVID-19, and HIV. Applications are due by April 25, 2022.

Read about these and other funding opportunities.