

## Washington Update February 21, 2020

The Congress was in recess this week, with all eyes on the 2020 election season. So there wasn't too much action in DC; but next week things will kick up again.

Dear Colleagues:

### **1. Secretary DeVos to Defend President Trump's Budget Proposal before House Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Subcommittee Next Week**

Next Thursday, February 27 at 10 AM, Secretary Betsy DeVos will make her annual appearance before the House Subcommittee on Labor/HHS/Education to defend President Trump's budget, which calls for a \$5.6 billion cut in education spending. If past is prologue, we can expect feisty questions from Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and other members of the Committee – none of whom have ever warmed to a Trump education budget proposal. There is likely to be high praise for the recommended \$763 million increase for Career and Technical Education in the Trump budget, but little else. Even school choice proponents are likely to balk at the recommendation to fold the \$400 million federal Charter School program into a block grant. The \$5 billion "Education Freedom Scholarship" proposal (aka vouchers) has never gained traction anywhere on Capitol Hill -- nor amongst most voucher advocates -- who don't want the federal government and all the regulations it brings in the middle of voucher initiatives.

We expect the House to move rather quickly to mark up their appropriations bills, with the goal of passing them on the House floor by the end of June. We may see a markup for a House Labor/HHS/Education FY 2021 spending bill as early as April.

Meanwhile, in the Senate, the Labor/HHS/Appropriations Subcommittee has invited outside parties to submit written testimony on the FY 2021 spending bill by May 22.

To watch the House Hearing Feb. 27 at 10 AM:

[https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/labor-health-and-human-services-education-and-related-agencies-116th-congress/congress\\_hearing](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/labor-health-and-human-services-education-and-related-agencies-116th-congress/congress_hearing)

To submit written testimony to the Senate Subcommittee:

<https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/LaborHHS%20OWT%20Guidelines%20FY2021.pdf>

### **2. Sec. DeVos Expands Use of Federal Work Study Funds for Higher Education**

Sec. DeVos announced that 190 institutions of higher education have been approved to participate in a new pilot program with Federal Work Study Funds. These pilot programs are intended to boost support for off-campus work study programs in the private sector and for work experiences required by academic programs, such as student teaching and clinical placements. Thus, it appears that at the approved institutions, students preparing to be teachers might be paid for their student teaching or clinical placements with work

study funds. It is not clear if any of the participating institutions will actually utilize this option.

See: [https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/secretary-devos-expands-earn-and-learn-opportunities-students-190-schools-through-federal-work-study-reform-initiative?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/secretary-devos-expands-earn-and-learn-opportunities-students-190-schools-through-federal-work-study-reform-initiative?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

For a list of the 190 participating institutions see:  
<https://experimentalsites.ed.gov/exp/pdf/FWSInvitees.pdf>

### 3. AFT Recommends Three Presidential Candidates for Its Members to Support

In a surprise move yesterday, the 1.7 million member American Federation of Teachers recommended that its local and state affiliates endorse or support three candidates for President: VP Joe Biden, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). Widely interpreted as a rebuke to billionaire Michael Bloomberg, the early announcement is seen as necessary prior to the upcoming March primaries, which will yield over 60% of delegates to the summer Democratic presidential convention. Mayor Bloomberg has long been an antagonist of teachers' unions with his staunch support for charter schools and once comparing teacher unions to the National Rifle Association.

President of AFT Randi Weingarten said that the three candidates the AFT is recommending all have "significant support" with AFT members because of their records working with unions on public education, higher education, labor and civil rights. Sen. Warren is being supported by the Massachusetts chapter of the AFT and the Boston Teachers Union. The Scranton Federation of Teachers is backing Joe Biden. And United Teachers Los Angeles has endorsed. Sen. Sanders.

The AFT announcement does not amount to an official union endorsement, which is expected later. The other national teachers' union, the National Education Association, has not yet made any announcements about their support for a presidential candidate.

See: <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/483994-american-federation-of-teachers-to-members-support-warren-sanders-or-biden>

### 4. New Resources for Educators

- **The Learning Counsel** is out with the first of a two part series on *Who Will Teacher the Children?* Part One, *Where We are Now*, provides an overview of the "serious educational crisis" that is the teacher shortage. Part Two will address the role of leadership in slowing and reversing the shortage:  
<https://thelearningcounsel.com/article/who-will-teach-children>

- **The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)** has updated its *Supporting Inclusive Schools for the Success of Each Child: A Guide for States on Principal Leadership* guide. See: <https://ccssoinclusiveprincipalsguide.org/>

I will be at the AACTE annual meeting in Atlanta next week. With the theme of **Disrupting Inequities: Educating for Change**, the convening promises to be provocative and inspirational. I am particularly excited about hearing from the awesome National Teacher of the Year, Rodney Robinson. Check it out: <https://aacte.org/> There will be no Washington Update next week, but I hope to see you in Atlanta, or at least on twitter @janewestdc.

Best,

Jane