Agenda

- Meet the team
- What’s Up in Washington?
- Federal Funding
- Federal Agency Updates
- ARP spending and issues
- Head Start
- Child Nutrition Reauthorization
- Loan Forgiveness for Educators
- Keeping You Informed
- Public Schools Week
What’s Up In Washington?

• We wish we knew. <bad joke>

• Hat Trick of Items in a Holding Pattern:
  • Annual Appropriations
  • School Meals Flexibility
  • Head Start and Vaccine Mandate Implementation

• So much of what we need done depends on how other—seemingly completely unrelated—things shake out:
  • SCOTUS nomination
  • Dems trying to figure out what they’re going to do with Build Back Better
  • What (if anything?) can be done before mid terms?
Federal Funding: FY22

- The President, House, and Senate have all advanced initial FY22 budget proposals that include significant increases for Title I and IDEA, and education program funding overall.
  - FY22 federal spending → district funding for SY 2022-2023
- Congress did not complete FY22 appropriations work on time, and we are under a Continuing Resolution (CR) until March 11.
  - We do NOT support a year-long CR for FY22.
Federal Funding: FY23

- Like most other things on the Hill, next steps and final details for FY22 will be impacted by what is (or isn’t!) in budget reconciliation. With BBB Act stalled, appropriators started engaging in high-level discussions for FY22, but time is running out.
- POTUS FY23 Budget likely delayed until the BBB Act and FY22 spending bills are addressed. (Maybe March?)
  - FY23 federal spending → district funding for SY 2023-2024
Federal Agency Update: Dept. of Transportation

Addressing the School Bus Driver Shortages

- **In November 2021**, DOT provided the flexibility to allow 3rd parties to administer the skills and knowledge tests for CDL.

- **In January 2022**, DOT and USED announced that states will have the option to waive the “under the hood” CDL test requirements; this waiver expires March 31, 2022.

- **Advocating for additional solutions:**
  - Delaying the start date for DOT’s Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) regs in February 2022;
  - Creating an entry-level CDL in school transportation;
  - Enacting a one-year exemption to the social security earning limitation for retirees to incentivize retired drivers to fill vacancies
Federal Agency Update: USED Data Collection

- USED has a number of fiscal data collections set to happen concurrently:
  - Maintenance of Equity Collection AND ESSER Data Collection
  - In late December, USED did announce revisions to the MoEquity provision and data collection, as well as the ESSER data template. They are improvements, but making something less bad doesn’t make it good.

- Related resources:
  - Updated MOEquity FAQs
  - Proposed MOEquity Requirement (to be published in the Federal Register)
  - ESSER/GEER Use of Funds FAQs Supplement

Related to fiscal data collection is defining student poverty:
  - Updated fact sheet – Released January 12, 2022
Federal Agency Update: Civil Rights

CRDC
• Back-to-back collections
• 47.5% increase in data collection from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022

Office of Special Education Programs
• FAPE Guidance – Updated Feb 15 2022

Coming soon:
• Discipline guidance
• Joint Action on Medicaid in Schools
• Title IX Regulations
American Rescue Plan

Funding for LEAs (Districts) = $110 billion

How does this compare to other federal COVID-relief funding?

- Annual federal Title/IDEA funds per-pupil = $640/student
- + March 2020 CARES Act = +$250/student
- + December 2020 CRRSAA/“CARES 2” = +$1,100/student
- + March 2021 ARP = +$2,400/student

For comparison, the ARP is roughly 10x CARES or 2.2x CRRSAA

ARP is being credited for its work to reduce child poverty by half.
Spending ARP:

• AASA’s second survey on ARP- why?

• Not much has changed since July. Top 3 immediate spending priorities remain: expanding summer learning (76%), adding additional specialist staff (66%), and, investing in high-quality instructional materials (58%).

• 82% said they would use this money over the next three years to expand whole child supports, including social, emotional, mental, and physical health and development
  - Urban districts are three times more likely to use ARP funds to build a diverse teacher preparation pathway to address shortage than suburban or rural districts
  - Rural districts were far less likely than suburban and urban districts to indicate they would be investing in social-emotional learning practices and/or trauma-informed schools.
  - Rural and suburban districts are more likely to indicate they would be spending more money on compensating staff to add learning time as well as spend ARP funds to provide high intensity tutoring
ARP and Construction

- 55% said they would spend a portion of their ARP funding on renovating and updating school facilities.
- 50% said they needed an extension beyond 2024 to obligate funds for HVAC upgrades and other school construction related projects related to the pandemic; a doubling of the response rate from July.
- 46% would spend more on HVAC/construction if they had more time.

ACTION ALERT! Help us get this extension.
Head Start Vaccine Mandate

Requires all staff, contractors and volunteers whose activities involve contact with or providing direct services to children, families, and volunteers working in classrooms or directly with children to be vaccinated.

Went into effect on January 31, 2022.

Temporarily blocked by Federal Court Judge on January 1. Injunction applies to all 24 states involved in the case: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Wyoming and West Virginia.

Some districts in Michigan also granted temporary stay on Jan. 31. Additional challenge expected in Virginia.
School Nutrition

New Transitional Nutrition Standards for Milk, Sodium, and Whole Grains for School Years 22-23 and 23-24

• Allows flavored, low-fat milk (1 percent fat) for students in grades K through 12 and for sale as a competitive beverage.

• At least 80 percent of the weekly grains in the school lunch and breakfast menus must be whole grain-rich.

• Establishes Sodium Target 1 as the sodium limit for school lunch and breakfast in SY2022-2023. For SY2023-2024, schools must meet Sodium Target 1A which requires a 10% reduction in sodium for school lunch only.
COVID-19 School Meal Waivers for SY21–22 (FRAC Resource: Summary of USDA Nationwide Waivers)

All schools allowed to operate National School Lunch Program’s (NSLP’s) Seamless Summer Option (SSO) thru SY21–22.
• Meals served during SY21–22 will receive the higher Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) reimbursement rate. (Expires 6/30/22)

Non-Congregate Feeding, Meal Service Time, Parental/Guardian Pick Up, and Specific Meal Pattern Flexibilities allowed for the SSO, NSLP, School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). (Expires 6/30/22)
• These flexibilities are no longer allowed for the SFSP. (Expired 9/30/21).

CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program Area Eligibility (Expires 6/30/22)
• Allows schools/afterschool care centers to service at-risk afterschool meals and snacks to students regardless of location. Note: The Area Eligibility Waiver for SFSP is no longer allowed. (Expired 9/30/21)

Monitoring Requirements for School Food Authorities (SFAs) and State Agencies for SBP, NSLP, and SSO; and for Sponsors and State Agencies for CACFP
• Waives for SFAs, state agencies, and CACFP sponsors the requirement that monitoring must be conducted on-site. SFAs and state agencies should continue monitoring activities remotely. (Expires 30 days after the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency).

Addressing Supply Chain Disruptions:
Fiscal Action Flexibility for Meal Pattern Violations for SBP, NSLP, and SSO only. (Expires 6/30/22)
• Waives the requirement that fiscal action be applied for missing food components or repeated violations involving milk types and vegetable subgroups in the event of supply chain disruptions.
School Nutrition

USDA Distributes $1.5 Billion To Strengthen School Meal Programs Amidst Supply Chain Disruptions

Supply Chain Assistance Funds—$1 billion to states for cash payments to school districts to use to purchase food for their school meal programs. Can be used to purchase unprocessed and minimally processed domestic food such as fresh fruit, milk, cheese, frozen vegetables and ground meat. Each state will allocate the funds to schools based on student enrollment, with a minimum amount per district to ensure that small schools aren’t left behind.

USDA Foods Purchases—About $300 million in purchases of USDA foods, 100% domestically grown and produced food products, for states to distribute to schools to offset the impact of disruptions to their normal supply chains. States will be able to order these additional foods within the coming weeks, with deliveries to occur as soon as possible.

Local Foods for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program--$200 million to states for food assistance purchases of domestic local foods for distribution to schools. This program aims to strengthen and expand local and regional markets with an emphasis on purchasing from historically underserved producers and processors.
School Nutrition

Child Nutrition Reauthorization
- Last reauthorized in 2010 through the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act
- House Democrats aiming for markup mid to late March

AASA CNR Priorities:
- Expand Community Eligibility Program by lowering threshold from 40% to 25% and increasing the ISP multiplier from 1.6 to 1.9
- Oppose any effort to block grant the federal school meal programs
- Preserve existing nutritional flexibilities around enriched whole grains, sodium and flavored milk
Public Service Loan Forgiveness

Provides full forgiveness on federal student loan debt to individuals employed full-time in public service jobs after 10 years or 120 qualifying payments.

• Eligible participants include any person employed full time at a government entity, including schools. *All full-time public school staff qualify for the program.*

U.S. ED has issued a limited waiver that will count all prior payments on any federal loan towards PSLF. **This waiver is in effect until October 31, 2022.** Borrowers will need to consolidate, if necessary, and submit a PSLF form before the waiver ends to have previously ineligible payments counted.

Resources on how to apply for PSLF [here](#).
TEACH Grant Program

Teacher Education Assistance College and Higher Education Grant Program

- Provides up to $4,000/year for undergraduate and graduate students training to be teachers. A student may receive up to $16,000 in TEACH Grants for undergraduate and up to $8,000 for a TEACH eligible master’s degree program.

- Eligibility: Students must score in the top 25th percentile on college admissions tests, maintain at least a cumulative 3.25 GPA, and attend a school that participates in TEACH.

- Participants agree to teach full time for at least four years in a high-need field or at a low-income school or ESA – within 8 years of graduating. This 8 years is known as the “service obligation window” (SOW). If participant fails to meet their obligation, grants are converted into loans.

- The Consider Teachers Act - signed into law on Oct. 13, 2021 - made technical changes to improve the program and reduce unfair conversions that were common complaints about the program.
AASA Advocacy, at your fingertips.

Keep up to date with the most impactful changes coming from Capitol Hill. The AASA Advocacy app offers a curated selection of the most relevant news for school administrators. It empowers school leaders to stay informed, and helps shape the future of educational policy.
NEW!

EDUCATION FINANCE COHORT

REGISTER BY MARCH 4
aasa.org/EduFinance
Newsletters & More!

Legislative Corps
Tara puts together a weekly round-up of education-related legislative and regulatory actions right to your inbox, every week.

Leading Edge Blog
You can check out our Leading Edge Blog on aasa.org/Policy-and-Advocacy/ for the latest in AASA Advocacy news.

Connect on Twitter
Follow the team at @AASAdvocacy for live updates and more!
Advocacy Conference- July 2022

Join us in July for our Advocacy Conference
July 12 - 14 in Washington, DC!
More Policy!

We don’t always hit on the topics you want to hear about. Here are a few others we’d be happy to take questions on:

• Maintenance of Equity
• E-Rate/Homework Gap
• Medicaid in Schools
• Poverty Indicator at the Federal Level
• Student Data & Privacy/Cybersecurity
• SCOTUS: Upcoming education cases?
• Vouchers/Privatization
• Rural Education
  • REAP & Secure/Rural Schools
  • Title I Funding Formula