Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer Zoom Call, December 1, 2020

Facilitators: Elizabeth Burke Bryant (Rhode Island KIDS COUNT) and Danielle Ewen (EducationCounsel)

Next Call: The next call will be on Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 4:00 ET (first Tuesday of the month at 4 ET). You will receive a reminder and zoom link from the Alliance.

“Ask Me Anything” Call-In: Every other Tuesday at 1:00 ET – January call schedule will be forthcoming (Ask Danielle for call-in info)

December 1, 2020 Agenda:

- Federal overview (Danielle Ewen)
- Peer to Peer discussion (all)
- #SaveChildCare Wednesday Actions

The end of the notes includes a roundup of all the resources shared during the call and found throughout the notes.

Federal Overview

Overview of President-Elect Biden Caregiving Plan

- Provide all 3- and 4-year-olds access to free, high-quality pre-kindergarten.
- Offer low-income and middle-class families an up to $8,000 tax credit to help pay for child care.
- Provide access to affordable, high-quality child care on a sliding scale for low-income and middle-class families who would prefer this option over the tax credit for young children. For young children ages 0-5, Biden will adopt the child care program envisioned in Senator Murray and Congressman Bobby Scott’s bipartisan Child Care for Working Families Act. He will:
  - Save families money by helping them with child care costs. Biden will partner with states to provide sliding scale subsidies so that the cost of child care for low-income and middle-class families will be based on what they can afford.
  - Invest in quality child care standards and a well-trained and well-compensated child care workforce.
Expand access to care that works for working parents.

- build on the Obama-Biden Administration’s efforts to ensure Early Head Start is an option for families that will benefit from comprehensive family support and child development resources, including through doubling Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.

- Ensure families with school-aged children have expanded access to after-school, weekend, and summer care.

- Invest in child care and other wraparound services at community colleges, so parents don’t have to choose between their own education and their children.

- Make sure more military children have access to the quality child care Department of Defense provides.

- Build safe child care facilities by accelerating the construction and renovation of safe and developmentally appropriate child care facilities in communities and in workplaces, so parents do not have to search in vain for a suitable child care option.

- Reward caregivers and educators with the benefits and protections they deserve. Biden will maintain and grow a diverse, talented care and education workforce by providing increased pay and benefits, and access to collective bargaining, training and education, and career ladders. He will ensure these workers receive:
  - Increased pay.
  - Benefits they have earned.
  - Stronger legal protections and the choice to join a union and collectively bargain.
  - Training and career ladders.

Agency Review Teams—Key Staff for Early Childhood

- **US Department of Education**
  - Roberto Rodriguez (Currently at TeachPlus, formerly with Obama Domestic Policy Council)

- **US Department of Health and Human Services**
  - Robert Gordon (Currently at Michigan Department of Human Services)
  - Sharon Parrott (Currently at the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities)

- **Office of Management and Budget**
  - Martha Coven (Yale University, formerly of OMB)

Congressional Update

- **Virus relief package**
  - Bipartisan proposal of $908 billion that includes $10 billion for child care, $300/week in extended pandemic unemployment, funds for state and local governments, and liability protections
  - Endorsed by President-elect Biden as bridge to new Congress
  - Senator Schumer and Speaker Pelosi see as foundation for ongoing discussions
  - Timing, outcome unclear

- **2021 Appropriations**
  - Current continuing resolution expires on December 11, 2020
  - Congress likely to pass a short term extension to finish work
  - Seem to have general agreement to pass all bills and avoid a government shutdown or extended continuing resolution
  - Likely flat funding or small increases for core early childhood programs
Resources

- CLASP/NWLC estimate of costs of maintaining child care industry ($9.6 billion/month)
- Office of Child Care Updated FAQ (allowable uses of CCDBG funds within CARES Act)
- Hunt Institute data on CARES Act funds/policy changes to address Covid-19
- Overview of President-Elect Biden Caregiving Plan
- Overview of bipartisan coronavirus relief package
- Vaccine prioritization resources

Federal Overview

- Continuing Resolution
- Negotiations on Coronavirus Relief Packages
- #SaveChildCare Wednesday Actions

Continuing Resolution

- Government shutdown avoided until December 11: The Senate adopted a continuing resolution (CR) to extend federal funding until December 11. The CR was adopted on a largely bipartisan 84-10 vote. President Donald Trump signed the bill shortly after its passage. A notice from the White House is here. A statement by Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Patrick Leahy (D-VT) is here. A statement by House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) is here.
- Head Start Designation Renewal System – The CR allows the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary to extend for not more than two years the designation of a Head Start agency if the Secretary lacks information necessary to make a determination. This applies to Head Start agencies where the HHS Secretary is required to make a decision regarding renewal before December 31, 2020. This language may have been included due to the Head Start Designation Renewal System recently revising its conditions for Head Start agencies and due to challenges with collecting information as a result of the coronavirus (e.g. staff may not be on site, visits to monitor programs may not be possible, etc.)
- Maintains Funding for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Mandatory Child Care Funding to States – The CR maintains funding for TANF and mandatory child care funding to states. According to the Appropriations Committee summary, the extension “will allow HHS to make first-quarter payments to states.”
- P-EBT – According to CLASP (https://www.clasp.org/blog/p-ebt-extended-states-must-act-fight-child-hunger) “P-EBT—created as a temporary measure in March—was set to expire on September 30, 2020. Thankfully Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) last week that funded the federal government beginning October 1 and extended multiple provisions to help address food insecurity, childhood nutrition, and school meals, including P-EBT. The CR expands P-EBT to provide meals for students participating in hybrid school models (online and in person) and young children in child care facilities who were previously not eligible. The CR also extends WIC administration waivers, child nutrition waivers, and existing SNAP administrative flexibilities that, for example, extend certification periods, simplify recording procedures, and adjust interview requirements.”
Coronavirus Relief Negotiations

• On Tuesday, October 7, President Trump said that he has instructed his top aides to stop negotiating with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) on future coronavirus stimulus legislation until after the November election. The following day, the President suggested he would be open to discussions of an airline bailout, extension of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for small businesses (extending use of CARES funds) and a new $1,200 stimulus payment for families. ([https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-covid-relief-bill-stimulus-checks-paycheck-protection-program-airlines/](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-covid-relief-bill-stimulus-checks-paycheck-protection-program-airlines/), [https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2020/10/07/trump-congress-stimulus-checks/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2020/10/07/trump-congress-stimulus-checks/))

  - Early Childhood Education:
    - $50 billion for Child Care Stabilization Grants (Child Care is Essential Act)
    - $7 billion for CCDBG to provide immediate assistance to child care providers
    - $1.7 billion for Head Start
  - Elementary, Secondary, and Postsecondary Education:
    - $208 billion for a State Fiscal Stabilization Fund
    - $175 billion for K-12
    - $27 billion for public IHE support
    - $4 billion for governors
    - $2 billion for BIE and TCUs
    - $5 billion for K-12 emergency facilities aid to support school building updates (e.g. ventilation systems)
    - $11.9 billion for higher ed
    - $3.5 billion for HBCUs and MSIs
    - $7 billion for private, not-for-profit IHEs
    - $1.4 billion for other institutions
    - $32 million for NAEP assessment
    - $7 million for USED OIG
  - Other Programs:
    - $12 billion to close the homework gap
    - $3 billion for supporting emergency home connectivity
    - $10 billion SNAP
    - $400 million for WIC
    - $450 million for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
    - $4 billion for Tenant Based Rental Assistance
    - $2 billion for Public Housing Operating Fund
    - $5 billion for HUD Homeless Assistance Grants
    - $750 million for Project Based Rental Assistance
    - $4.5 billion for Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)

• Senate Republicans have highlighted that the $1 trillion HEALS package focuses on “kids, jobs, and health care.” According to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), the HEALS package is, “a tailored and targeted draft that will cut right to the heart of three distinct crises facing our country -- getting kids back in school, getting workers back to work, and winning the healthcare fight against the virus.”
• The HEALS package would provide a total of $15 billion to support families and child care providers. Specifically, funding includes:
  o $5 billion through the Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG), including for continued payments and assistance to child care providers in the case of decreased enrollment or closures related to the coronavirus and to ensure child care providers are able to remain open or reopen as appropriate and applicable.
  o $10 billion for Back to Work Child Care Grants, which would provide nine months of financial assistance to child care providers aimed at stabilizing the child care industry. Funding could be used to help child care providers reopen and maintain safe operations with grants being provided based on need and fixed costs incurred due to the coronavirus.
  o The HEALS package does not provide funding specifically for state and local fiscal relief. The Republican approach would instead modify the provisions of the CARES Act to provide flexibilities to state and local governments around the use of previously awarded funding. Specifically, the HEALS package would extend the timeline over which CARES Act funding could be used to cover expenditures and expand the allowable use of funds to cover revenue shortfalls.

#SaveChildCare Wednesday Actions

• Possible resources, depending on your context:
  o https://www.ffyf.org/why-it-matters/political-demand/polling/
  o ChildCareRelief Campaign Fact Sheet

Electoral Strategies

• Liz DiLauro from Zero to Three shared information about the Think Babies Campaign and their Watch Party for the Vice Presidential Debate on October 7 (/https://www.thinkbabies.org/elections2020/). The campaign has identified four ways to “show up for babies” during the election:
  o Participate in Watch Parties
  o Use the Think Babies Election Toolkit to educate candidates and amplify infant-toddler issues in your community. (https://www.thinkbabies.org/elections2020/elections2020_toolkit/)
  o Use social media to amplify the Think Babies agenda using #ThinkBabies and #WeCareDebate as well as traditional media (sample op-ed: https://www.thinkbabies.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Think-Babies-in-2020-Sample-Letter-to-the-Editor.docx)
- GEEARS in Georgia has developed voter guide mailers that are being sent out to child care providers, stakeholders, and other supporters and encourages others to use the template: http://geears.org/wp-content/uploads/GEEARS-Voter-Guide-Postcard.pdf

- Julia Jackels from Groundwork Ohio shared their work on state and local elections, including a voter guide (https://2d94f3a3-3d74-4931-8fd2-5e91fb54da89.filesusr.com/ugd/a395ee_8fdeafcf165b430b8bc9e03a9718427a.pdf), information from a recent poll showing support for early childhood, and other resources (https://www.groundworkohio.org/vote)

- Additional voter guides:
  - Every Child Matters: https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3607-voting-for-kids
  - GEEARS: https://geears.org/2020-voter-guide/
  - DC Kids Count: https://dckidscount.org/
  - Colorado Kids: https://www.coloradokids.org/c4k/#whoarethechildren
  - The Alliance for Early Success has also developed the attached set of questions that can be asked during state and local debates or on candidate questionnaires: Sample 2020 Electoral Questions

### Additional Information

- Danielle Ewen hosts office hours on Tuesdays at 1:00 Eastern to discuss the latest federal news. Contact her for more information: Danielle.ewen@educationcounsel.com
- The Alliance for Early Success is collecting state stories (see, for example: https://earlysuccess.org/proposed-pre-k-budget-cuts-in-georgia-defeated-through-strategic-advocacy/).
- Several states asked for information about child care closure data and how to discuss with policymakers.
  - NAEYC: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/blog/raise_tuition_or_close.naeyc.pdf
  - Maryland: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wG9ZXuZh01Vkl9J2Cqrvd5UolCYZGtYqvNA9uMA-U/edit?usp=sharing

The Alliance for Early Success does not endorse or advocate for specific legislation or candidates.