Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer Zoom Call, January 5, 2021

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

Next Call: The next call will be on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 4:00 ET (first Tuesday of the month at 4 ET). You will receive a reminder and zoom link in advance of the call.

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

January 5, 2021 Agenda:

- Special focus on Paid Family and Medical Leave: Presentation and Q and A by Carol Joyner and Sade Moonsammy of Family Values @ Work
- Federal Update (Danielle)
- General Q & A (all)

Presentation: Paid Family Leave: Opportunities at the Federal & State Levels

- We were joined by Carol Joyner and Sade Moonsammy of the Families Value @ Work. They discussed state and federal opportunities to promote paid family leave (slides attached). They discussed the federal opportunity through the FAMILY Act: https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/463/text introduced by Senator Gillibrand and Congresswoman DeLauro, but stressed that if passed, it should be seen as a floor, since state Paid Family Leave laws go further than the Family Act. The following states have passed legislation to create paid family and medical leave insurance programs: California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New York, Washington state, Washington DC, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Oregon. Colorado passed paid family leave as a ballot initiative.

- Ceil Zalkind shared ACNJ’s experience of joining the paid leave coalition in New Jersey, and how she came to see paid leave as a children’s issue. She provided an update on recent improvements made to New Jersey’s Paid Family Leave law.
• Jon Wilson discussed the role Kansas Action for Children has played in their state and federal advocacy for paid leave, and shared a policy brief they developed for advocates and legislators, highlighting equity issues, successful state models, and important research on the issue. He indicated that they started with a focus on state policy opportunity and have shifted to enhanced advocacy on federal Paid Leave opportunities with their Congressional delegation.

• During the discussion it was emphasized that state Paid Family Leave laws in the states that have passed them have been built upon existing temporary disability insurance systems. This is a policy change that does not require a state appropriation, but rather the mechanism for employees to pay into a fund that they can benefit from for reasons of caring for new biological or adopted child, care of a seriously ill family member or personal serious illness, and safe days (related to domestic abuse services).

Federal Update

Danielle Ewen provided the following Federal Update.

Federal Overview of Consolidated Appropriations Act:

• Act (full text: https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr133/BILLS-116hr133enr.pdf) was signed into law on December 27, 2020.
• The Act includes measure to address the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and all appropriations for FY 21.
• FY 21 Appropriations for Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations (Labor/HHS) highlights:
  o $73.54 billion for the U.S. Department of Education in FY2021, which is a $785 million increase over FY2020.
  o Title I increases by $227 million
  o Special Education Grants to states increases by $173 million
  o The maximum Pell Grant is increased by $150 for a total of award of $6,495
  o CCDBG is increased by $85 million
  o Head Start is increased by $135 million.

• Coronavirus relief measures:
  o $166 billion for Direct Payments to individuals and families:
    ▪ $600 for individuals making up to $75,000 per year and $1,200 for couples making up to $150,000 per year, and $600 for each qualifying child.
    ▪ Expands the direct payments to mixed-status households, providing payments retroactively to the CARES Act for certain immigrant families.
  o $120 billion for Unemployment Insurance:
    ▪ Provides an additional $300 per week to supplement state and federal unemployment benefits through March 14, 2021.
    ▪ Provides additional weeks of federally-funded benefits to workers who have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits.
Temporarily increases Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) monthly benefits by 15%. The bill also includes a temporary suspension of work requirements for SNAP-eligible college students while work-study programs may not be operating during the pandemic.

- $25 billion for Emergency Rental Assistance and includes an extension of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) rental eviction moratorium until Jan. 31, 2021.
- $325 billion for Small Business support.
  - Includes $284 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP, or sometimes being referred to as PPP2), which is extended through March 31, 2021.
    - PPP is tax deductible
    - Forgivable loans available up to $2 million
    - Loans available for up to 2.5 times average monthly payroll costs
    - Funds can be used for payroll, rent, covered mortgage interest, utilities, PPE, facility modifications for safety, and other safety costs, payments to suppliers and costs of software and accounting
    - Recipients of loans must spend at least 60 percent of the funds on payroll over the covered period
    - The law creates a simplified application process for loans at or below $150,000
    - Applicants must show a 25 percent decline in revenue over the same period from 2019.
  - $20 billion for EIDL
    - EIDL will no longer be deducted from PPP amount
  - $12 billion for businesses in low-income and minority communities

- $81.88 billion for an Education Stabilization Fund to provide relief to states, K-12 schools, and higher education institutions that have been significantly impacted by coronavirus. These funds are flexible and can be used for a variety of purposes, including to provide educational services to students and to support the on-going functionality of school districts and colleges and universities. The funds will remain available through September 30, 2022. Similar to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the education funding is split into three funds as follows:
  - Relief for outlying areas and the Bureau of Indian Education: $818.8 million
  - Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund: $4.05 billion
    - Similar to the CARES Act, states will receive funding based on their relative share of individuals aged 5-24 (60%) and their relative number of children eligible for Title I, ESEA (40%).
  - Includes a $2.75 billion set aside for services to private K-12 schools to be administered by public agencies. Funds may not be used to provide direct or indirect financial assistance to scholarship granting organizations or financial assistance to students or families.
    - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (Public K-12 schools): $54.3 billion
      - Similar to the CARES Act, states will receive funding based on their same proportion of funds received under Title I, Part A of ESEA.
• Title I funds can be used for supports to children from birth through the age of school entry.
• LEAs (including charter schools that are LEAs) will receive at least 90% of the funds allocated to states and will receive funds based on their Title I, Part A of ESEA allocation.

- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund: $22.7 billion
  • $20.2 billion to be distributed to all public and private non-profit institutions of higher education.
  • Institutions must provide at least the same amount of funding in emergency financial aid grants to students as was required to be provided under the CARES Act (CARES Act required that institutions use not less than 50% of their funds on financial aid grants for students). The relief bill does not clearly state who would be an eligible student to receive financial aid grants.
  • $680.9 million to be distributed to for-profit colleges to provide financial aid grants to students.
  • Includes a set-aside of an additional $1.7 billion for HBCUs, tribal colleges, and Minority-Serving Institutions

  - $250 million for Head Start providers to ensure they are able to continue to safely serve low-income children and families throughout the pandemic.

  - $10 billion in emergency funds for child care providers through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. (See attached for details.)
    - The Office of Child Care continues to update their FAQ on uses of CARES act funds, which should apply to these funds as well: [https://www.acf.hhs.gov faq/ccdf-frequently-asked-questions-response-covid-19](https://www.acf.hhs.gov faq/ccdf-frequently-asked-questions-response-covid-19)

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