



Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer Zoom Call January 10, 2023

Facilitator Elliot Regenstein (Foresight Law + Policy)

Please note that our next call is scheduled for February 7, 2023 at 3:00 PM ET

What Advocates Can Do Summary

On Preschool Development Grants:

- PDG is probably one of the items lawmakers are least educated about - particularly learning about why grants are so important and the differences between planning and implementation grants. Advocates can reach out to lawmakers to help them learn more about PDG grants and the impact in their communities.

On the Omnibus:

- Advocates may consider thanking their lawmakers on social media for the gains in early childhood funding through the omnibus package.
- Advocates may consider reaching out to new lawmakers and help them learn more about the impact and importance of early childhood funding in their communities.

On Omnibus Health Care Changes:

- Advocates can assist by getting to word out to those enrolled to respond to mail, update their addresses, and ensure redetermination is completed fairly.
- Advocates can also ask states for insights on how they plan to do their due diligence.

Welcome

- **Why we're here** - To connect state advocates with each other and engage with partners at the federal level. We are also focused on creating community among state advocates on federal issues.
- **A new approach to the agenda and what's on today's agenda** – Following the new model used the past few months, the StateFedConnect calls now includes feature an “Outside In” conversation (this month is Preschool Development Grants), a federal overview, a deeper dive into a “hot topic” (this month is the Omnibus), and a “what’s next” discussion (Implementing Omnibus Health Care Changes). We will then close with a high note -- something positive that happened in federal advocacy that felt like a win. Moving forward, we hope advocates volunteer to share those high notes, whether it's a new strategy that you feel good about or a step forward on a policy win. Please email your high notes to mableidinger@earlysuccess.org and/or Elliot.Regenstein@flpadvisors.com, and we'll reach out!

- **Office Hours** – A calendar invitation has been sent for **January 24 at 4pm ET**. This will be a short 30 minute drop in conversation about federal policy, state implementations, etc. Bring your questions as there is no set agenda.
- **Survey** – A survey will be coming soon to get insights on how we can ensure this community stays relevant and useful to you.

“Outside In” conversation: Preschool Development Grants
(Facilitated by: Elliot Regenstein)

Discussion Questions:

- **What is the conversation in your state about PDG?**
- **What policies are you hoping to advance through the next PDG? If you didn’t get a grant, are you hopeful that there will be other ways to advance the policies you put in your PDG application?**
- **What do you want to learn from your colleagues about implementation of the grant? And what supports from national partners do you anticipate needing during implementation of your grant?**

Some states have made announcements about their grant awards, while others have yet to announce it publicly. Some states have also been approved for no cost extensions as they have not yet spent their previous grant funding.

PDG grant awardees list can be found in the attached pdf (thanks to Elizabeth Byrum from NC for sharing it in the chat during our discussion).

Recent award announcements:

- [Massachusetts](#)
- [Oklahoma](#)
- [South Carolina](#)

Resources from existing PDG work:

- [North Carolina’s PDG activities](#)
- [Minnesota’s key learning and sustainability documents](#)
- [Michigan’s PDG funds should align with this collective action plan](#)

We had a lively conversation about PDG, with states sharing their plans.

South Carolina First Steps has funding to serve states in learning from their work building out common applications and single portals for easy access to determine eligibility and apply for early childhood programs. Plan to hear more about [SC’s First Five Portal](#) in an Alliance National Issues > State Action call later this spring! (Tentatively May 17th at 3pm ET)

What Advocates Can Do Now:

- PDG is probably one of the items lawmakers are least educated about - particularly learning about why grants are so important and the differences between planning and implementation grants. Advocates can reach out to lawmakers to help them learn more about PDG grants and the impact in their communities.

Resources:

- The National PDG TA Center published a [Summary of PDG B-5 Grantee's Coordinated Eligibility and Enrollment Activities and the Impact of COVID-19](#) (November 2021).
 - The Alliance [wrote a story](#) on the SC First Five portal.
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Federal Overview

(Reg Leichty, Foresight Law + Policy)

House

- After 15 rounds of votes, McCarthy won Speaker of the House.
- Most partisan policy issues during this congress will be hard-to-win battles both within the Republican Caucus as well as the entire House.
- Leadership roles confirmed thus far:
 - Virginia Foxx (R-NC) was approved to serve as Chair of the House Ed and Workforce Committee (previously the House Ed and Labor Committee), defeating Tim Walberg (R-MI) for this position. Bobby Scott (D-VA) will continue as the Ranking Member of the committee.
 - House Ways & Means committee chair will be Jason Smith (R-MO).
 - Kay Granger (R-TX) will lead the House Appropriations Committee.
 - Subcommittee chairs have not yet been announced.

Senate

- The Senate swore in members earlier this month and adjourned until January 23rd.
 - Senate HELP Committee leadership will be Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA).
 - Senate Appropriations Committee leadership will be Patty Murray (D-WA) and Susan Collins (R-ME). Senators Murray & Collins issued a [joint statement](#) on their bipartisan commitment to funding the government.

Rep. McCarthy noted intentions to cap spending for FY24 at FY22 levels, which will create a battle throughout the year on the total spending levels that Congress will commit to.

Department of Education

- The Department of Education is continuing its higher education focus, including a newly proposed income-based repayment plan for federal student loans. This will also likely include teacher recruitment and other issues. We expect the department to work quite a bit on higher education even as it continues thinking about learning recovery as a whole.
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Hot Topic: The Omnibus

(Sarah Rubinfield, FFYF)

The chaos on the House side will likely be a recurring theme, but it underscores the importance of the hard-fought wins from the omnibus package signed at the close of 2022 which included:

- 30% increase for CCDBG (\$1.8 billion) – The House & Senate bills each had \$1 billion increases and the President's budget had originally requested \$1.4 billion, so the \$1.8 billion received is remarkable.

- Nearly \$12 billion for Head Start (an increase of \$960 million)
- \$25 million increase for PDG
- Jackie Walorski MIECHV funding -- which doubles the federal investment over five years, expanding to more families. It was reauthorized for another five years with base funding increasing by \$100 million for FY23 and then additional phased in increases with the matching component for the remaining funding. The bill also addresses tribal set asides by increasing them from 3% to 6%. Virtual visit options were also included.
- Total increase of \$2.8 billion above FY22 levels for core early childhood education programs

CLASP [released](#) state-by-state estimates for CCDBG increases which will be helpful so that lawmakers know what is at risk if Congress wants to move funding levels back down to FY22.

Other notable inclusions in the omnibus package:

- PUMP act
- Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (as discussed on the November 1, 2022 call)

Exclusions from the omnibus package:

- Child/Adult food programs and child nutrition
- Child Tax Credit

With so much uncertainty in the House, advocates will need to remain engaged to support bipartisan progress. One thing to consider is that new lawmakers are going to need things to take home that they are in support of, and we want child care to be part of that.

Discussion:

Those that received PDG planning grants, do we know what is next? Is there additional funding beyond the planning grant?

- It is important to educate lawmakers on the difference between the planning and implementation grants so that they understand the nuances and what it means on the ground. It is likely that PDG funding would be similar to FY23 levels, which is why that increase in the omnibus was so important.
- The funding in the omnibus is adequate depending on the ceiling chosen for the PDG grants (because each state awarded a three-year grant now has to fit into that total cost over the next three years), but there is a positive outlook if Congress doesn't make large cuts.

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- Advocates may consider thanking their lawmakers on social media for the gains in early childhood funding through the omnibus package.
- Advocates may consider reaching out to new lawmakers and help them learn more about the impact and importance of early childhood funding in their communities.

Resources:

- [FFYF's MIECHV Press release](#)
- [FFYF's Appropriations Press release](#)
- [Sharon Parrott's perspective on possible impact of the House Rules package on programs](#) (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities)

- CLASP released their [CCDBG FY 2023 State-by-State Appropriations Distribution Estimates and Increases](#).
- [The National Partnership for Women and Families: The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act](#)
- [The U.S. Breastfeeding Committee: The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections \(PUMP\) for Nursing Mothers Act](#)

What's next: Implementing Omnibus Health Care Changes (Elisabeth Burak, Center for Children and Families)

- In early 2020, The Families First Act provided coverage protection for everyone on Medicaid. States are provided with additional federal funding for not dis-enrolling anyone enrolled in Medicaid during the public health emergency.
- It has been announced that this requirement for continuous coverage will end on March 31, 2023, and states need to start unwinding Medicaid enrollment and begin redetermining eligibility. Concerns are that kids might be kicked off of the program, but there are a number of guardrails in place (including financial penalties up to \$100,000 per day) for states that don't make a good effort to ensure appropriate procedures are followed (including reporting data).
- The omnibus also mandates that, starting in January 2024, each state has to have 12-month continuous eligibility for all children in Medicaid and CHIP. Therefore, if you enroll on January 1, you have a full year of coverage unless you move out of state. This is a huge and important change to ensure kids don't go off and on insurance. CHIP funding was extended for two years as well. There were also tweaks to Medicaid that include mental health, mostly for juveniles in the justice system.
- The omnibus provided investments outside of Medicaid that help with the infrastructure for pregnant women and workforce. The Into the Light Act includes a mental health hotline for PCPs for pregnant women.

Discussion:

With regard to maternal health, if you are not monitoring the unwinding but are concerned about the impact on families and kids, your state likely has a Medicaid advisory committee that may be aware of the unwinding. Even just asking some key questions (using materials from CCF) will ensure they know people are paying attention and focused on families and kids. It is also important to remind providers that there will be bumps in the near term for them as the unwinding continues.

If you have questions, feel free to email Elisabeth.burak@georgetown.edu or Maggie.clark@georgetown.edu.

What Advocates Can Do Now:

- Advocates can assist by getting to word out to those enrolled to respond to mail, update their addresses, and ensure redetermination is completed fairly.
- Advocates can also ask states for insights on how they plan to do their due diligence.

Resources:

- Unwinding 101 webinar next Thursday, January 19th at 1pm ET – Register [here](#).
- [Information on Medicaid state advisory committees](#)
- [Investments in Year-End 2022 Omnibus Bill](#)

- [Medicaid coverage protections unwinding guardrails requirements](#)
- [Medicaid Unwinding](#)
- [CCF's unwinding resource center](#)
- [States currently with and without 12 months continuous eligibility \(CE\)](#)
- [Medicaid and CHIP provisions in the Omnibus explainer](#)

End on a High Note

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn

Minnesota has a \$17.5 billion surplus, and the governor has a goal to end child poverty and make Minnesota the “[best state in the country for kids](#).” Five billion of the surplus is ongoing, and lawmakers are focused on childcare and paid family leave as possible investments.

Additional Resources

Omnibus Bill Resources

- [FFYF's Appropriations Press release](#)
- [FFYF's FY23 Final Funding Levels for Key Early Learning Programs](#)
- Georgetown's Center for Children and Families: [Permanent Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Option, Maternal Health Infrastructure Investments in 2022 Year-End Omnibus Bill](#)
- Georgetown's Center for Children and Families: [Congress Includes Medicaid, CHIP Mental Health Provisions in End of Year Funding Bill](#)
- Georgetown's Center for Children and Families: [Stabilized funding for Puerto Rico and the Territories](#)
- [Sharon Parrott's perspective on possible impact of the House Rules package on programs](#)

Medicaid and CHIP Resources

- Georgetown's Center for Children and Families resources:
 - [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023: Medicaid and CHIP Provisions Explained](#)
 - [Medicaid continuous coverage requirement unwinding, FMAP phase-down, transparency and accountability requirements and non-compliance penalties](#)
 - [Medicaid Unwinding](#)
 - [Information on Medicaid state advisory committees](#)
 - [States currently with and without 12 months continuous eligibility \(CE\)](#)
 - [Medicaid and CHIP provisions in the Omnibus explainer](#)

CCDBG Funding Resources

- CLASP released their [CCDBG FY 2023 State-by-State Appropriations Distribution Estimates and Increases](#).

Head Start / Child Care / Early Learning Resources

- [FFYF's Moving Early Learning and Care Forward: Federal Legislative Proposals from Lawmakers on Both Sides of the Aisle](#)

Common Portal for Coordinated Eligibility and Enrollment

- The National PDG TA Center published a [Summary of PDG B-5 Grantee's Coordinated Eligibility and Enrollment Activities and the Impact of COVID-19](#) (November 2021).
- The Alliance [wrote a story](#) on the SC First Five portal.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Resources

- A Better Balance: [The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act: What You Should Know](#)
- [The National Partnership for Women and Families: The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act](#)

PUMP Act Resources

- [The U.S. Breastfeeding Committee: The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections \(PUMP\) for Nursing Mothers Act](#)

MICHEV Resources

- [FFYF's MIECHV Press release](#)