Good Monday Morning. At the conclusion of this message you will find the Federal Advocacy & Public Policy Update for June 7, 2021. Please let me know if you have any questions about the information contained in this week's update.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of public education in the Commonwealth.

Best,

J.T.

Federal Advocacy & Public Policy Update

June 7, 2021

Congressional Update

Infrastructure Negotiations Continue with No Clear Resolution

Since the release of President Biden's full fiscal year (FY) 2022 budget request last week, attention has returned back to the most hotly debated issue over the past few months—investments in the nation's infrastructure. Earlier in the year, President Biden released two interrelated infrastructure proposals, totaling nearly $4 trillion, and known respectively as the American Jobs and Families Plans. These proposals outline the President's ambitious vision for infrastructure investments, including $100 billion for the construction and upgrading of K-12 school facilities.

Following the release of these proposals, President Biden and Democratic Congressional leaders have sought to garner Congressional Republicans' support for this priority. Negotiations over a potential infrastructure package have largely been spearheaded by President Biden who has engaged a revolving cast of Senators whose support will be needed to pass this proposal via the regular legislative process. However, both sides continue to remain far apart on key issues including the appropriate size of the investment, what should (or should not) be included within an infrastructure package, and how to pay for these proposals.

These differences, however, have yet to be overcome. Both sides remain about $750 billion apart in their respective visions for an infrastructure package and, equally as important, remain bitterly divided over how to pay for the proposal. As these talks continue without resolution, the likelihood that Congressional Democrats make use of budget reconciliation—a legislative mechanism that would allow lawmakers to pass legislation by a simple majority in the Senate—increases substantially. Using budget reconciliation would allow Congressional Democrats to advance a version of President Biden's infrastructure proposals without Republican support. However, all

50 members of the Democratic majority in the Senate would need to agree on such an approach. This week, President Biden continued one-on-one negotiations with Senator Capito (R-WV) who has been representing Senate Republicans in some of these negotiations. These talks have, at least so far, have not resolved any of these key differences between the two parties.

As these efforts continue, NSBA's advocacy team will continue to impress upon lawmakers the substantial infrastructure needs of the K-12 community.

Next Week: House Education Subcommittee to hold Child Nutrition Hearing

Next Thursday, June 10, the House Education and Labor's Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services will hold a hearing titled, "Ending Child Hunger: Priorities for Child Nutrition Reauthorization." Lawmakers are expected to explore issues related to childhood nutrition programs as they consider making updates to these programs in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Witnesses have not yet been announced. The hearing will be livestreamed here.

Administration Update

USED Publishes Report on Student Home Connectivity

Earlier this week, the U.S. Department of Education's (USED) Office of Education Technology published a new report titled, "Keeping Students Connected and Learning: Strategies for Deploying School District Wireless Networks as a Sustainable Solution to Connect Students at Home." The report examines strategies school districts can consider when deploying off-campus wireless networks to ensure more students have access to the internet. The brief explores six district's experiences in undertaking this work and provides several best practice recommendations for school districts to consider. A related webinar exploring the findings of this brief will be held next week. Registration information for the event can be found here.

USED Seeks Information on School Discipline

Earlier today, June 4, the U.S. Department of Education's (USED) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued a request for information, seeking written input from the public on the administration of school discipline in K-12 schools. This information is intended to inform OCR's future efforts to provide policy guidance and technical assistance to help schools improve school climate and safety while ensuring equitable access to education programs and activities. This request comes in the context of earlier OCR data collections showing persistent disparities in the use of exclusionary discipline among students of color. More information on the request can be found here.

New Legislation

H.R.3661 To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to require silent alarms in elementary schools and secondary schools, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Rep.

Gottheimer, Josh [D-NJ-5]

H.R.3636 To amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to clarify that the term "child with a disability" includes a child who needs special education and related services due to a health impairment resulting from Lyme disease or another tick-borne disease. Sponsor: Rep. Smith, Christopher H. [R-NJ-4]

H.R.3615 To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to monitor compliance with the requirements of the American Rescue Plan relating to the uses of funds for child care. Sponsor: Rep. Miller-Meeks, Mariannette [R-IA-2]

H.R.3602 To authorize the Secretary of Education to carry out a program to increase access to prekindergarten through grade 12 computer science education. Sponsor: Rep. Lee, Barbara [D-CA-13]

H.R.3572 To increase the recruitment and retention of school-based mental health services providers by low-income local educational agencies. Sponsor: Rep. Chu, Judy [D-CA-27]