



Federal Update – November 8, 2007

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- Review of Pre-K Legislation in the 110th Congress
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Review of Pre-K Legislation in the 110th Congress

- Pre-K Grant Legislation

H.R. 3289, Pre-K Act (Rep. Mazie Hirono, D-HI): Rep. Hirono's bill would authorize grants to states to help them improve the quality of their pre-k programs. The House Education and Labor Committee is finalizing language of an amendment to include the bill in the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Committee Chairman George Miller (D-CA) and 39 Representatives have co-sponsored the bill. A mark-up date has not been determined for NCLB. Rep. Hirono could ask that the bill move independently of NCLB if the reauthorization is delayed for too long.

S. 1823, Ready to Learn Act (Sens. Hillary Clinton, D-NY, and Kit Bond, R-MO): Ready to Learn would provide grants to states to support pre-k program quality and expand enrollment, beginning with four year olds. The bill is intended to be included in the Senate reauthorization of NCLB, which is currently the subject of difficult negotiations among members of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee. Including the Hirono and Clinton-Bond bills in each chamber's version of NCLB will improve the chances that a pre-k grant program will be approved by the conference committee and included in the final reauthorization.

S. 1375/H.R. 2859, Prepare All Kids Act (Sen. Robert Casey, D-PA, and Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-NY): Sen. Casey's bill, which was introduced in the House by Rep. Maloney, would authorize \$23 billion over five years to provide grants to states to establish, expand, or improve the quality of their pre-k programs. Unlike the Clinton and Hirono bills, the Casey-Maloney grant program would operate under the Department of Health and Human Services and is not associated with any larger legislative vehicle such as NCLB. The bill has been referred to the education committees of the two houses and has not received a markup date.

S. 152, Early Education Act of 2007 (Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-CA): Sen. Boxer's bill provides funding for a demonstration program to expand access and quality for pre-k in up to 10 states. The bill was referred to the Senate HELP Committee on January 4.

S. 1573/H.R. 2616, Early Childhood Investment Act of 2007 (Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-CT, Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-CT): Sen. Dodd and Rep. DeLauro's legislation provides federal grants to create partnerships between local education agencies and non-profits in order to improve the quality of early childhood education programs. Both bills have been referred to their respective committees in the House and Senate and are candidates for inclusion in NCLB.

H.R. 4060, Universal Prekindergarten Act (Rep. Dennis Kucinich, D-OH): Introduced on November 1, Rep. Kucinich's bill updates his proposal from the 109th Congress to help states that have already implemented high-quality pre-k programs expand those programs to enroll all three, four, and five year olds who are too young for kindergarten.

- Support for Pre-K Teachers

H.R. 2669, College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (Rep. George Miller, D-CA): President Bush signed the College Cost Reduction and Access Act into law on September 27. The law includes extensive changes to federal student loan programs and a special section that forgives the balance of student loans for pre-k teachers after teaching for 10 years in high-need school districts. According to the Department of Education, two committees will be established to review the law and write regulations. The Department will provide an opportunity for public comment. [Click here to access a copy of H.R. 2669](#), and [click here for more information on the regulation-drafting process](#).

S. 1642, Higher Education Amendments of 2007 (Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-MA): The Senate passed its reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 on July 24. The bill reduces Federal Perkins loan liability by 15 percent for pre-k teachers who work in high-poverty areas, authorizes federal funding to support partnerships between higher education institutions and pre-k programs for professional development, and approves federal funds for state task forces that will improve professional development and career opportunities for early childhood educators. Pre-K Now is working with members of the House Education and Labor Committee to include similar provisions in the House's reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and to create additional incentives for students to become pre-k teachers.

H.R. 2655, Early Childhood Educator Loan Forgiveness Act of 2007 (Rep. Mazie Hirono, D-HI): Rep. Hirono's bill provides for up to \$5,000 in student loan relief for pre-k and child care teachers who work in the profession for at least five years. The bill was referred to the House Education and Labor Committee on July 24. The main elements of the bill may be included in the House's reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

- Measuring the Impact of Pre-K and Providing for Military Families

S. 2014, To Provide for Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-OH): Sen. Brown's proposal to authorize federal support for longitudinal data systems to measure student growth from pre-k through college would give states the means to identify effective educational practices, including investments in pre-k. The bill was referred to the HELP Committee and may be considered as a new component of NCLB.

Unnumbered Amendment (Rep. Phil Hare, D-IL): Rep. Hare is working toward a proposal to enable Title I funding to be used to ensure that military connected students have access to education from pre-k through grade 12. The bill has not yet been introduced and may be considered as an amendment to NCLB.

Conference Agreement on Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations

Conferees on the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for FY08 met on November 1 to resolve the differences between the House and Senate spending measures. Below is a breakdown of the final budget authority granted to the departments of Education and Health and Human Services for specific programs:

	President's Budget	House	Senate	Conference
Department of Education (Total)	\$56.2 B	\$65.6 B	\$63.6 B	\$60.7 B
NCLB Title I (Education of the Disadvantaged)	\$16.689 B	\$15.969 B	\$15.867 B	\$15.930 B
Child Care and Development Block Grant	\$2.06 B	\$2.14 B	\$2.06 B	\$2.09 B
Head Start	\$6.78 B	\$6.96 B	\$7.088 B	\$7.042 B

Head Start received a long-awaited funding increase that fell short of the Senate's allocation of \$200 million in new funds but exceeded the House's more modest increase to provide \$154 million in new budget authority. Title I of NCLB, the second-largest funding stream in the Department of Education behind Pell Grants, received a smaller increase than the president's request, but still exceeded its budget authority under the 2007 continuing resolution by over \$1.2 billion.

House and Senate conferees reached a compromise over the funding level for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The House committee designated a \$75 million increase for CCDBG, whereas the Senate committee conformed to the president's budget request and flat-funded the program for 2008. The final compromise produces a \$ 32.5 million increase for CCDBG.

President Bush has vowed to veto the Labor-HHS-Education spending package over \$10 billion in increased discretionary spending for education programs. Democratic leaders in the House intended to submit the bill as a joint spending package with the annual Military Construction and Veterans

Administration appropriations legislation, hoping the president would refrain from vetoing both spending measures. The Senate split the package into two separate bills and will likely submit the Labor-HHS-Education bill to the White House in the next few days. In spite of Democratic efforts to lure Republican votes by restoring cuts to abstinence education and other programs popular with the GOP, the House failed to approve the original joint spending package by a veto-proof majority, making it likely that a veto will be sustained in the House. If Congress does not pass an FY08 spending bill, the Department of Education will operate under a continuing resolution, which would extend the department's current budget authority into next year.

Higher Education Act Moves Ahead of NCLB Reauthorization

Faced with difficult negotiations in the House and Senate, Democratic leaders in both houses are signaling that NCLB reauthorization could be pushed back well into 2008. In the House, the Education and Labor Committee will turn to work on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act ahead of schedule, hoping to make progress on a relatively benign drafting process while letting tempers cool over NCLB.