



AASA Federal Education Policy Update

Thursday, April 27, 2023

FY23 Omnibus

On December 23, Congress (finally) passed a full FY23 spending package. The bill included \$79.6 billion for the Department of Education, \$45 billion for K-12 (+2.4 billion from FY22). Highlights:

- **\$18.4 billion for Title I** (+850 million)
- **\$14.5 billion for IDEA** (+934 million)
- **\$2.19 billion for Title II** (+20 million)
- **\$1.6 billion for Impact Aid** (+61 million)
- **\$1.3 billion for Title IV** (+100 million)
- **\$1.43 billion for CTE** (+50 million)
- **\$215 million for REAP** (+20 million)
- **\$115 million for IDEA Personnel Prep** (+20 million)
- **\$70 million for Teacher Quality Partnerships** (+11 million)
- **\$15 million for Hawkins Center for Excellence** (+7 million)

FY23 Omnibus

The Public Health Emergency is Ending:

- Children who were on Medicaid at the start of the pandemic will need to re-verify their eligibility and re-enroll in the program over the next year.
- AASA and our partners have developed resources that explain how families can re-enroll their children and keep healthcare coverage via Medicaid. Access toolkit [here](#).

Pennsylvania will start to terminate coverage beginning in May.

School Nutrition: Expands and makes permanent the Summer EBT program and the ability for rural areas (as defined by USDA) to serve non-congregate meals. Implementation guidance [here](#).

President's Budget

Released on Thursday, March 9:

- \$90 billion for Dept. of Education (10% increase)
- Title I: \$20.5 billion (+2.2 billion)
- IDEA: \$16.8 billion (+2.1 billion)
- \$578 million to bring more counselors, psychologists and social workers into schools to address student mental health needs.
- \$368 million for community schools
- Addressing Teacher Shortage:
 - \$93 million for the Supporting Effective Educator Development grant program
 - \$132 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership grant program
 - \$30 million for Hawkins Centers of Excellence program
 - \$200 million for Teacher and School Leader Incentive Fund
 - \$40 million for the department's school leader recruitment and support program.

Looking Ahead: FY24



- **First hurdle: Debt Ceiling Debate**
- House Majority Proposal:
 - Return to FY22 spending levels for the next 10 years
 - Claw-back unspent ESSER funds
- Return to FY22 Funding Levels?
 - It would mean a total \$130 b spending cut
 - Possible reduction to ED by \$3.9b
 - \$2 billion reduction for Title I and IDEA
 - \$38 million in teacher retention funding

Leadership Changes in the 118th Congress

New HELP Committee Leaders

Bernie Sanders
(Chair, D-VT)
Bill Cassidy
(Ranking Member, R-LA)

New Senate Approps Leaders

Patty Murray (Chair, D-WA)
Susan Collins
(Ranking Member, R-ME)

Same House Ed & Workforce Leaders

Virginia Foxx
(Chair, R-NC)
Bobby Scott
(Ranking Member, D-VA)

Same House Approps Leaders

Kay Granger
(Chair, R-TX)
Rosa DeLauro
(Ranking Member, D-CT)

New House Speaker and Minority Leader

Kevin McCarthy
(R-CA) and
Hakeem Jeffries
(D-NY)

GOP Agenda in the House

Parents Bill of Rights Act – *Passed through the House on Friday, March 24*

- *Requires LEAs to:*
 - Post the curriculum for each grade level, and make available to parents a list of all instructional materials, teacher manuals, films, surveys, and books in the schools
 - Post their parent engagement plan
 - Notify parents of their rights
 - Allow parents the right to opt-out out of any educational technology platform, app, curricular option offered electronically
 - Obtain parental consent for any medical exam or screening (except in an emergency) which includes a mental health or substance use disorder screening but not a hearing, vision or scoliosis screening.

The floor vote included a proposed amendment to turn Title I into a voucher program. The amendment was voted down 113-311.

See how your member voted [here](#).

GOP Agenda in the House

Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act – Passed House on April 20

- Requires athletes to play on teams that align with their biological sex.

Raising Expectations with Child Opportunity Vouchers for Educational Recovery (RECOVER) Act

- Allows States and districts to direct unspent ARP on private school tuition, therapies for special education students and whatever else
- The funds are targeted to low-income families
- “77% of funding for ARP has not been spent yet.”

Oversight on:

- Student loan debt relief
- ESSER Spending
- Higher education accountability



Addressing Teacher Shortages

Loan Forgiveness for Educators Act: Sponsored by Senator Lujan (D-NM) and Congresswoman Leger-Fernandez (D-NM)

- Expands TLF Program to provide full forgiveness after 5 years of service, apply to ECE and administrators, pays monthly payments during the 5 years of service
- AASA endorsed

RAISE Act: Sponsored by Senator Booker (D-NJ) and Congressman Schiff (D-CA)

- Provides up to \$15,000 in a refundable tax credit to educators

Pay Teachers Act: Sponsored by Senator Sanders (I-VT)

- Requires states to set a minimum salary of \$60,000. Triples Title I and REAP, doubles Impact Aid and provides additional funding to federal teacher pipeline programs

American Teacher Act: Sponsored by Congresswoman Wilson (D-FL)

- Establishes a minimum salary of \$60,000 for teachers. Creates a grant program to help states cover the cost.

Federal Agency Updates



Title IX Regulations

- On April 6, Dept. of Education released proposed Title IX athletics guidance.
 - Prohibits categorical bans on transgender students participating in sports
 - Adds caveat: “in some instances, particularly in competitive high school and college athletic environments, some schools may adopt policies that limit transgender students’ participation”
- *Final Title IX rule expected this summer.*



Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

- Provides full forgiveness on federal student loan debt to individuals employed full-time in public service jobs (including all public school staff) after 10 years or 120 qualifying payments.

Permanent changes to improve the program will go into effect July 2023:

- Simplifying the application and improving communication to borrowers.
- Allow borrowers to receive credit toward PSLF on payments that are made late, in installments or in a lump sum. Prior rules only counted a payment as eligible if it was made in full within 15 days of its due date
- Periods of deference or forbearance for cancer treatment, military service, economic hardship and time served in AmeriCorps and the National Guard will be counted toward PSLF.
- Borrowers will receive some credit for past payments when they consolidate older loans into federal Direct Loans in order to qualify for the program. Borrowers previously lost all progress toward forgiveness when they consolidated

These changes followed a temporary waiver that expired on Oct. 31 that loosened the requirements on the program. As a result of the waiver, 360,000 borrowers in public service received full forgiveness.

Better FAFSA, Better Future

New FAFSA form-redesigned and simplified available Dec. 2023 for 2024-25 applications.

Includes Student Aid Index – new way to determine eligibility

ED released a [Roadmap](#) to lay out when resources will be available to ease the transition, including:

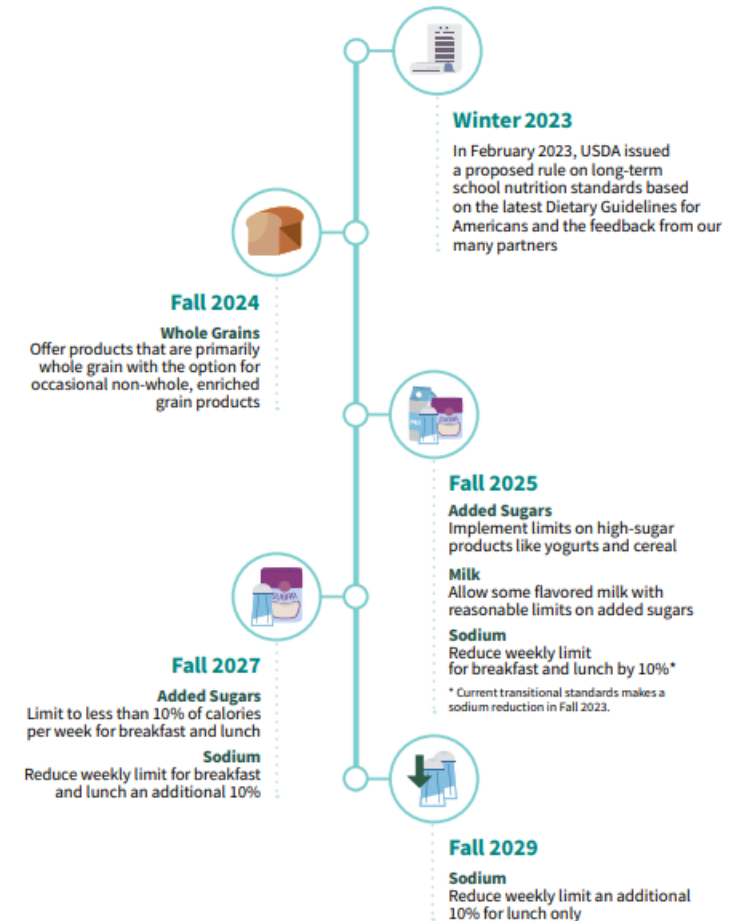
- Trainings for counselors and financial aid administrators
- Financial aid estimator and preview tools
- Fact sheets

Federal Agency: USDA

- Proposed updates to nutrition standards released on Feb. 3
- Comment period ends on April 10.
- Implementation begins SY24-25 with full implementation by SY29-30.
- For the first time ever, includes limits on added sugars in addition to changes for whole grains, milk and sodium.
- Read AASA full summary [here](#).

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR UPDATING THE SCHOOL MEAL STANDARDS

USDA is proposing science-based updates to the school meal standards to make them even more nourishing for kids, yet feasible for our school meal partners. We're building in plenty of time for planning and implementation to ensure school nutrition professionals, state agencies, the school food industry, families, and all our school meal partners have the best chance for long-term success. We welcome your feedback on this approach through [public comments](#).



Federal Agency: USDA

- USDA released a proposed rule to lower the eligibility threshold from 40 to 25.
- This change will not take place until next school year.
- USDA cannot change the multiplier – only Congress has that authority.



Federal Agency: USDA

Healthy Meal Incentives Grant Program for Small and Rural Districts

Up to \$150,000 and technical assistance to improve the nutritional quality of their school meals.

Small: Less than 5,000 students

Rural: Locale code of 41, 42, or 43

Information on how to apply [here](#).

**DEADLINE TO
APPLY:
MAY 26!**

What's Next?

ED:

- Proposed regulations on 504
- School discipline guidance
- New data collection on school finance data
- ESSER Data Collection – Round 2
- Civil Rights Data Collections

Center for Medicaid & Medicare:

- Claiming guide for school-based Medicaid

Environmental Protection Agency:

- Proposed regulation on testing for lead/copper in schools – would not go into effect until October 2024

AASA Advocacy & Governance

Questions?

Tara Thomas, Policy Analyst
Twitter: @TaraEThomas1
tthomas@aasa.org

