

Federal Policy and Advocacy Update

LEGISLATIVE AND CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

On April 28, the Senate passed a motion to begin negotiations with the House to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the America Competes Act, bipartisan legislation intended to address supply chain shortages and boost America's global competitiveness. Congressional negotiators will need to determine if the final version of the bill will contain a provision proposed by the House that would extend Pell Grant eligibility to students attending short-term job-training programs. The conference negotiation process is expected to conclude sometime in July.

On April 28, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona testified before the House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education to answer questions about the administration's education priorities included within the President's FY 2023 Budget Request. In his remarks, Mr. Cardona stressed the importance of expanding the nation's workforce development programs and developing new career pathways that lead to high-quality employment. Specifically, he urged Congress to support the proposed Career-Connected High Schools Initiative, a \$200 million program that would provide competitive grants to support partnerships between local educational agencies, community colleges, and employers to develop work-based learning opportunities, dual enrollment pathways, and career-connected instruction across the last two years of high school and the first two years of postsecondary education.

ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

May 6 was the deadline for Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) grantees to submit their Annual Performance Reports to the U.S. Department of Education (USED). These reports encompass all HEERF related activities funded between January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 and are in addition to the requirements for institutions to publicly post HEERF quarterly reports on their website.

On May 2, USED issued a notice inviting applications for new awards for the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) program. CEVSS grants will be awarded to higher education institutions to develop and expand programs to support veteran student success by coordinating services to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students. Applications must be submitted on the Department's website by no later than June 16.

On April 26, USED announced that it had invited an additional cohort colleges and universities to participate in the third round of the Second Chance Pell Pilot program, an initiative that allows incarcerated students to access federal Pell Grants to pay for their college education. This expansion of the program, which began under the Obama Administration in 2015, will bring the total number of participating schools to 200. While no California Community College campuses are included in the most recent cohort of institutions, Chaffey College, Cuesta College, and Southwestern Community College District participated in earlier rounds of the program.

On April 6, USED issued a notice inviting applications for new awards for the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (DHSI) Program. DHSI grants enable institutions that serve a majority of Hispanic students to expand and enhance academic offerings, program quality, faculty quality, institutional stability, and increase completion of postsecondary degrees. The notice contains two competitive preference priorities: (1) Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs; and (2) Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success. Applications must be submitted on the Department's website by no later than June 6.

On April 5, USED issued a notice inviting applications for new awards for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) Program, which provides grants to eligible higher education institutions to improve and expand their capacity to serve Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students. The notice contains two competitive preference priorities: (1) Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs; and (2) Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success. Applications must be submitted on the Department's website no later than June 6.