NCHER DAILY BRIEFING

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NCHER Annual Conference: Register Today, See You in Savannah, GA!

NCHER will hold its Annual Conference on June 6-8, 2022, at The DeSoto in Savannah, GA. The conference, which is open and designed for everyone across the higher education finance industry, will provide attendees with ample opportunities to network, learn, and take information back home that they can use in their current jobs – from hearing about the current trends and hot topics to exploring new and potential business opportunities. The NCHER Program Committee is currently working on a draft program agenda that will be released in the next week or so; in the meantime, register today and take advantage of the Early Bird registration rate. Also, be sure to make your hotel reservations online or by calling (800) 239-5118. When calling the hotel, be sure to mention the NCHER 2022 Annual Conference in order to guarantee a room rate of $182 per room, per night.

We look forward to seeing you for our first in-person conference since 2020 – in Savannah, Georgia!

Department of Education Announces New Requirements Where Private Companies Will Be Responsible for Costs of Closure and Fraud

Today, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid **announced** that it will update the requirements of Program Participation Agreements (PPAs) to specify that any organization or entity with at least a 50 percent interest in a non-public college will join that school's leadership in signing an institution of higher education's Program Participation Agreement (PPA). In a **press release**, the Department said that the new policy will ensure companies that own institutions are held responsible for funds owed to the federal government, including liabilities arising from closed school loan discharges and borrower defense to repayment claims. This will ensure that, even if a school closes, the Department can recover funds from entities that had a direct or indirect ownership interest in the school instead of leaving the bill to taxpayers. These new procedures will protect taxpayers, students, and borrowers through incentivizing better performance by the schools and allowing the Department to recover liabilities from corporate owners. "If a company owns, controls, or profits from a college, it should also be on the hook if the institution fails students," Under Secretary of Education James Kvaal said. "Today's steps will ensure taxpayers aren't held liable for colleges that fail their students or close their doors, especially without the opportunity for students to finish their courses of study." The additional signature on the PPA will be required in cases where the institution has not met financial responsibility requirements, where the school is provisionally certified to participate in federal financial aid programs, and for schools with significant liabilities for borrower defense to repayment, or other findings, among other circumstances. This approach will also apply when a group of related owners together hold at least a 50 percent interest. Private colleges will be required to obtain the additional signature(s) when their PPAs are recertified or when undergoing a change in ownership. The new policy will go into effect on July 1, 2022. For more coverage, see this article from ***The New York Times***.

U.S. Department of Education News

For today's *Federal Register*, click **here**.

General News

Inside Higher Ed reports a new analysis by the California Policy Lab and the Student Loan Law Initiative shows that the federal student loan payment pause has improved the credit standing for most of the 26 million affected borrowers who have had their payments paused since March 2020. The analysis also projects what may happen if the pause expires in May, including that at least 7.8 million borrowers are at high risk of struggling to repay their loans.

Forbes publishes an article saying that, while Members of Congress are calling for the enactment of billions of dollars in broad student loan forgiveness and the White House is signaling the potential for executive action in that direction, the nation's Governors continue to offer an alternative vision for education and labor policy reforms that will eliminate the need to rack up debt in order to qualify for well-paying jobs.

The Chronicle of Higher Education reports that many student-facing administrators are considering leaving higher education, thanks to a fraught political climate, limited resources, and a rapidly expanding set of responsibilities that are causing exhaustion and burnout. Colleges urgently need to take steps to keep them around, according to a new report from the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.

CBS News reports that former U.S. Secretary of Education John King has a bold proposal for speeding the nation's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and putting millions of people on a better path to achieve financial security: forgive all $1.7 trillion Americans still owe on their student loans.

KARE 11 News reports on how salaries stack up at different education levels. The article says that a college degree means a higher salary, but it also often means student loan debt. According to the Education Data Initiative, the average student loan debt for a four-year bachelor's degree is $28,000. A report from the same research team found 52 percent of students who had taken on loan debt did not feel it was worth it.

WOKV News reports that Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law a new requirement for Florida high school students to take a half-credit financial literacy course for graduation.

Inside Higher Ed reports that almost all learning experiences, whether inside or outside of the classroom, were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new survey from SoftExam in partnership with the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Labs, group work, and class discussions were among the worst learning experiences of the pandemic.

An online version of this Daily Briefing is available to view and print from the **Daily Briefing Section** of the **NCHER e-Library**.

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