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NCHER Daily Briefing Takes Publishing Break for the Legislative and Leadership Conference, Resumes Next Thursday

The NCHER Daily Briefing will be on a publishing break next Monday, February 6, through Wednesday, February 8, for the NCHER Legislative and Leadership Conference. We will resume our regular publishing schedule on Thursday, February 9, 2023. We hope to see you at the conference!

Legislative and Leadership Conference: Final Program Agenda Released, Still Time to Register!

The NCHER Legislative and Leadership Conference, which will be held on February 6-8, 2023 at the Westin Washington, DC City Center, is just a few days away! This popular conference will be the first opportunity to hear about federal and state developments impacting the higher education finance industry and to meet with the House and Senate Education Committee leadership, Biden Administration officials, and your Congressional delegation on your organization's advocacy priorities. [So Register Today!](#)

The NCHER Board of Directors and staff have been hard at work and recently released the final program agenda geared toward providing important and timely sessions on the political and policy environment in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the Biden Administration. This is a 'can't-miss' event for the NCHER membership!

The final program agenda includes:

- An important session with government relations experts who will provide a federal update on recent developments impacting the higher education finance industry and the outlook as we begin 2023.
- House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx will speak about her priorities for higher education, including ideas to improve federal and private student loan programs and college access and success initiatives.
- U.S. Department of Education Deputy Under Secretary Ben Miller will speak about the agency's policies and priorities, including reforms to the federal student loan program.
- A Congressional staff panel where House and Senate staff will discuss the priorities of the Democratic and Republican leadership in the 118th Congress and whether there are consensus areas for enactment of improvements to federal and private student aid programs.
- A timely session from college and university leaders that will provide perspectives on a range of topics such as learner access, affordability, accountability, student outcomes, and value measures.
- Engaging sessions reviewing recent research and reports on postsecondary education enrollment, examining state policy impacting higher education finance, and how the higher education financing industry is managing Board and staff

through the current period of ongoing uncertainty and change as a result of the federal student loan forgiveness program, Fresh Start, and new proposed income-driven repayment plan.

- Multiple opportunities to meet with your Congressional delegation on Capitol Hill, and a bootcamp session to review NCHER's Advocacy Priorities for the 2023 in advance of Congressional and agency visits.

[So Register Today!](#) Once you're doing registering, be sure that you make your hotel reservations at the Westin. NCHER has secured a room rate of \$199 per room, per night. You can call the hotel at 202-429-1700 or click [here](#) to make online reservations.

We look forward to seeing you in-person in Washington, DC!

House Education and the Workforce Committee Announces First Hearing on "American Education in Crisis"

House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) [announced](#) that the committee will hold its first hearing titled, "American Education in Crisis," which will discuss the state of K-12 and postsecondary education. The hearing will be held at 10:15a.m., on Wednesday, February 8, 2023. "Our education system should work for students—not the other way around," said Chairwoman Foxx. "Our K-12 education system should promote education freedom, protect parental rights, and provide concrete solutions to address learning loss. Sadly, it's not just our K-12 system that is failing families. Colleges and universities aren't being held accountable for poor outcomes, staggeringly high prices, and failing to prepare students for the workforce. One-party Democrat rule exacerbated each of these problems, but Republicans are ready to get to work." The meeting will be held in 2175 Rayburn House Office Building and live-streamed on the committee's YouTube page.

Department of Education Report Shows How COVID-19 Relief Funds Spent By Universities

Earlier this week, the U.S. Department of Education released a new [report](#) that showed how colleges and universities spent \$39 billion in Federal COVID-19 relief funds in 2021. In a [statement](#), the Department said that an estimated 18 million students had received direct financial aid since the start of 2021 from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), including 6 million community college students, 450,000 students at

Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 8 million students at Minority Serving Institutions, and 24,000 students at Tribal Colleges and Universities. The report said that about 75 percent of schools stated the funding allowed them to keep the cost of college at pre-pandemic levels, and 94 percent of community colleges and 90 percent of institutions overall reported that HEERF funds assisted them in keeping students enrolled who were at risk of dropping out by providing financial support. The report also found that colleges and universities spent more than \$21.5 billion for institutional needs, \$13 billion of which was used by colleges to reimburse themselves for lost revenue from the pandemic. Most of the lost revenue was due to enrollment declines and lost room and board.

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center Report Says Undergraduate Freshman Enrollment Begins to Stabilize

Today, the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center released a new report titled, [Current Term Enrollment Estimates](#) that found two and four-year institutions of higher education saw a significant boost in freshman enrollment for the fall 2022 semester. The report found that, while college enrollment remains well below pre-pandemic levels (down about 1.23 million undergraduates and 1.11 million total enrollment), the enrollment rates from fall 2022 show enrollment has begun to stabilize. Freshman enrollment is up 4.3 percent (+97,000 students) from the previous fall and community colleges, which have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic, saw freshman enrollment increases of 6.1 percent (+42,000 students) over fall 2019. “There are a lot of recent high school graduates I think we can assume – not to mention older students – who might have been just putting off entering college during the pandemic,” Research Center Executive Director Doug Shapiro said. “I really feel like this is the sign of some partial return to the patterns that we have seen in new students entering college.” The report found that there was a 39,000-student drop in graduate enrollment after two years of strong growth, which researchers say, “suggests that the pandemic-led influxes of post-baccalaureate enrollment has ended.”

U.S. Department of Education News

For today's *Federal Register*, click [here](#).

The following announcements were posted to the Federal Student Aid's Knowledge Center Website:

- ([GENERAL-23-06](#)) [Volume 1 – Student Eligibility \[2023-2024 Federal Student Aid Handbook\]](#)
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General News

[CNBC](#) provides further coverage of the brief filed by the six states challenging the U.S. Department of Education’s federal student loan forgiveness program with the U.S. Supreme Court.

[Higher Ed Dive](#) reports that state support for higher education is set to jump 6.6 percent in 2023 before inflation.

[Roll Call](#) reports that President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) made no promises on raising the nation’s debt limit following yesterday’s meeting. Related, [The Hill](#) reports on recent comments from Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) that House and Senate Democratic leaders are united with the President against negotiating over the debt limit.

[Ed Week](#) interviews Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Bernie Sanders (I-VT) on his K-12 education priorities.

[The Hill](#) reports that White House National Economic Council Director Brian Deese is slated to leave his post in the coming days.

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