



DAILY BRIEFING

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

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FSA Holds Virtual Training Conference, Cordray Provides Update on PSLF and Federal Student Loan Forgiveness

Today, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) kicked off its Virtual Training Conference. The conference opened with remarks from FSA Chief Operating Officer Richard Cordray that focused on recent changes made to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program, the Department's federal student loan forgiveness plan, and the newly revealed FAFSA [Free Application for Federal Student Aid] for the 2023-2024 award year. In his remarks, Mr. Cordray began by providing updates on the time limited PSLF waiver stating, "Over the past year, we have qualified more than 360,000 eligible borrowers for full forgiveness under the revitalized PSLF program. And more than 233,000 borrowers had \$14.9 billion in PSLF/TEPSLF/Waiver discharges processed through the end of Oct. 2022." He also addressed the President's loan forgiveness program stating, "the application process for debt relief was an

enormous success. Over the first two weeks, we obtained the necessary eligibility information from more than 26 million borrowers who do not need to do anything more to qualify for their debt relief." Tomorrow and Thursday, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona and Under Secretary James Kvaal will give remarks at the conference. For a list of current sessions and topics that will be covered at this week's conference, click [here](#). For live tweets from the FSA Training Conference, click [here](#).

House Republicans Begin Process of Selecting Committee Chairs for 118th Congress

Today, House Republicans began the process of holding elections for the House Republican Steering Committee, which is responsible for choosing chairs and committee assignments for the 118th Congress, including the leaders of the House Education and Labor Committee, House Appropriations Committee, and House Financial Services Committee. As previously discussed, current House Education and Labor Committee Ranking Member Virginia Foxx (R-NC) will need to secure a waiver from the committee in order to become chair due to an internal GOP rule that bars members from serving more than three consecutive terms as a ranking member or chair of a committee. No one has publicly challenged Ranking Member Foxx for the position of committee chair but, if her waiver is not approved, it leaves room for Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI), to assume the chair. Once the membership of the House Republican Steering Committee is set, they will hold interviews with all potential committee chairs and vote on the next chair – most likely in December.

Urban Institute Report Suggests Alternative to Gainful Employment Rule

Recently, the Urban Institute published a report entitled, [Tuition-to-Earnings Limits: An Alternative to the Gainful Employment Rule for Higher Education Accountability](#). The report suggests that federal policymakers adopt an alternative to draft regulations that the U.S. Department of Education has been developing to set a federal standard for gainful employment programs offered by career orientated college programs. Earlier this year, the Department released a discussion draft of its gainful employment rule that would require graduates of certificate programs at public and nonprofit colleges and most all programs at for-profit colleges to meet a debt-to- earnings test for the program to be eligible for federal student aid. This regulation purports to enforce a part of the Higher Education Act that requires all nondegree programs offered by public and private

nonprofit institutions and all nondegree and degree programs offered by private for-profit institutions to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation to participate in federal student loan and grant programs. The Urban Institute argues a tuition-to-earnings framework would be a more effective tool to determine whether a program meets the requirements of the law rather than the proposed gainful employment regulation. In the report, the organization explains that the tuition-to-earnings test is more accurate because it more directly measures what a program costs, is not affected by the share of students borrowing, and measures prices charged to all students regardless of the type or amount of federal aid they received.

U.S. Department of Education News

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

General News

[CNBC](#) reports on what borrowers need to know if the federal student loan repayment pause lasts until August 2023.

[Inside Higher Education](#) reports that college leaders are hoping that Congress will expand Pell Grants for short-term programs and enact the College Transparency Act in the lame-duck session that starts this week, though both measures will have a difficult time competing with other priorities.

[Forbes](#) examines four potential paths that the White House could use to work around federal student loan forgiveness losses in the courts.

[Inside Higher Education](#) and [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) report that leaders of 10 national higher education associations, led by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, have launched the Paying for College Transparency Initiative, which seeks to improve “clarify, accuracy, and consistency of student financial aid offers by producing a set of guiding principles and minimal standards to be used when developing aid offers.”

Education Reform Now released a third [report](#) on fairness in the college admissions system specifically focusing on transparency and accountability.

[**The Wall Street Journal**](#) examines how student loan debt - or not having student loan debt - is shaping people's lives.

[**The Hill**](#) reports that Congressional leaders met at the White House today to talk about reaching a bipartisan agreement on an Omnibus Appropriations package to wrap up work on the appropriations process for this year.

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