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I. GRANT TIPS

Editor's Note: The following grant tip stories focus on the best ways to gear up to take advantage of FY 2011 funding. The majority of stories were published during the ongoing debate on FY 2011 funding.

Ways to Benefit From Workforce/Higher Ed Discussions

As the congressional August recess begins, *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney says higher education and workforce nonprofits should be reaching out to legislators and associations, because the momentum is behind these issues.

"These two intertwined issues are by far the two biggest issues being mentioned as the August recess begins," says Sweeney. "The White House is jumping on the bandwagon, offering its higher education, plan. And don't forget the House reconvened to provide \$10 billion in workforce security for public servants, and association after association keeps coming out with some kind of workforce effort."

On Aug. 9, President Obama highlighted his goal of dramatically boosting U.S. college graduation rates and made the case that his administration has already taken significant steps to help achieve that goal, administration officials said.

Specifically, the Obama administration has said it wants the United States to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, which would mean increasing the percentage of young adults in the United States who earn higher education degrees from 40% to 60%, he pointed out.

The new plan touts policy initiatives that the administration argues would make college more affordable, including strengthening Pell Grants, as well as creating programs that would make it easier for students to pay back loans after graduation.

The administration's plan would:

- Be funded by eliminating "middleman" banks from the loan process and providing loans directly to students, which would free up an additional \$60 billion for Pell Grants.
- Increase the education tax credit for middle-class families.
- Increase investment by \$2 billion to community colleges.

The House passed a workforce funding measure (HR 1586) on Aug. 9, which was signed into law by President Obama the next day. For more on the measure, please visit <http://www.grantsandfunding.net/fam/6941>.

As for associations, all of the big state associations, including the Nat'l Governors Association (NGA), Nat'l League of Cities, Nat'l Conference of State Legislatures and Nat'l Association Counties, have higher education or workforce initiatives underway.

In fact, NGA will focus on a new higher education initiative over the next year. As the new chairman of the Nat'l Governors Association (NGA), Gov. Joe Manchin (D-WV) has started the new effort--*Complete to Compete*--to focus on increasing the number of students in the United States who complete college degrees and certificates and improving the productivity of the country's higher education institutions. For more on the initiative, please visit <http://www.grantsandfunding.net/fam/6907>.

Sweeney says higher education and workforce nonprofits need to take advantage of this momentum, and participate in the ongoing dialogue.

"Nonprofits with winning higher education and jobs programs should be reaching out at all levels, contacting their state and federal congressional members and association," Sweeney says. "With a focus on these two issues, an increased flow of funding is almost guaranteed and being on top of the situation can aid fundraising."

Sweeney has the following outreach pointers.

- **Do Your Homework:** Prior to reaching out to legislators and associations, nonprofits should make sure they know as much as possible about the higher education/jobs initiatives. For instance, understand as much as possible about NGA's higher education program, including that the association's Center for Best Practices will be an integral part of the effort. In essence, know the lingo, gist of the initiative and the status prior to making contact, Sweeney says.
- **Forget E-mail:** Visits to congressional and association websites can provide the proper contact information. Nonprofits need to make sure that their first contact is conducted via the phone. There are just too many things that can go wrong with e-mail communications, Sweeney says.
- **Administrative Assistants/Congressional staffers can be Your Best Friends:** With outreach, nonprofits shouldn't get disheartened if they talk to administrative assistants or congressional staffers. In fact, they should strive for it. Many times becoming a friend of a well-placed administrative assistant is invaluable, because these individuals aren't under as strict of edicts as officials at an association or agency. As for speaking to congressional staffer, these are the people you want, because they are the decision-makers. As nonprofits reach out, they need to focus first on the people on the ground, Sweeney says.
- **Talking Points Are Important:** Prior to making contact, nonprofits need to jot down a few talking points that they want to achieve. This can help ensure all of the time isn't wasted on pleasantries, but on actual pertinent discussion, Sweeney says.

Insider's Tip: An edict of outreach is respecting the busy times for congressional members and associations. August is a perfect time for outreach, because congressional staffers are on down-time, thus so are many of the big state associations, too.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from readers. To contact him, please call him at 301/588-6380, ext. 175 or e-mail him at rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

New Education Dept. Website Aids Grantseekers

A new consolidated data website, offered by the Education Dept. (DoEd), makes it easier for grantseekers to extract information they need when applying for some of the 216 discretionary grants competitions that the department offers annually.

ED Data Express users will be able to access data collected by several of DoEd's program offices, the Nat'l Center for Education Statistics and College Board. Data include results of state tests and the Nat'l Assessment of Educational Progress, graduation rates and school accountability information. The website provides budget figures and demographics, too.

On the site, users can quickly find information they need and view it in several different ways. The site provides tools that allow users to search and explore the data, create customized reports and view state profiles with charts, tables and key data points. Users also can download their customized reports for further analysis.

Insider's Tip: Grantseekers can pull down state-level data that can be used to enhance their submissions.

Info: For the site, please visit <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov>.

Proper Contact Can Build Lasting Relationships

At a recent fundraising event, Patricia Pasqual, director of the Foundation Center, provides *FAM* with some pointers on communicating with foundations to ensure fundraising success.

"Foundations are individual organizations and all act differently," Pasqual says. "I always tell grant seekers if you know one foundation, you only know one foundation. They are all different, and you need to research the best way to reach out to them"

Pasqual says nonprofits should view foundation communications as a three-phase process: (1) before submission; (2) while pending; and (3) after the decision.

Prior to these phases, nonprofits need to prepare a prospect document that includes an A list and a B list. On the A list are those foundations that fund in the nonprofit's area and that the nonprofit has an "in" with, such as a board member who knows the executive director of the foundation. On the B list are those foundations that will take some cultivation. With these foundations, it's not totally clear that they fund in the nonprofit's area and there are no readily apparent connections.

Pasqual recommends first looking at a foundation's limitations as nonprofits begin looking for private funding opportunities. This will save precious time not going after funding opportunities that should have been taken off the list from the beginning, she says.

Before Submission

After pinpointing the best private grant opportunities, nonprofits should visit the foundation's website or grant solicitation to determine the preferred way for first contact.

As for making the initial contact, Pasqual says nonprofit shouldn't solely rely on board members to get them in the door. She suggests nonprofit staffers should be keeping files on prior contacts that can aid funding efforts. The file should include clips on donors, such as a new CEO or grant awards, and contact information for donors or potential grant allies they have met at various functions.

Pasqual says foundations are increasingly becoming more reliant on letters of intent for initial contact. She says the Regional Association of Washington Grantmakers has a great letter of intent template on its website at: www.washingtongrantmakers.org.

For those nonprofits that will use intermediaries for first contact via phone, Pasqual says nonprofits should check to make sure the person is telling the truth about the connection and is liked by the foundation. Pasqual says intermediaries are a great way to get in the door for those foundations that don't accept unsolicited proposals.

Either the intermediary or the CEO of the nonprofit should make the initial call. The goal is to introduce the organization, make the connection to the funder's interests and get a reaction.

Pasqual says nonprofits should do their homework prior to the call. This can be accomplished through developing talking points including a brief synopsis on the nonprofit followed by a project description that includes the following:

1. Outcomes (This is real important in the current economy, Pasqual says. A nonprofit should focus on the impact a project is or will have).
2. Who will benefit? (Don't talk about the organization as a whole, but about the number of clients who will benefit, Pasqual says).
3. Budget (Don't be afraid to talk numbers, Pasqual says).
4. Leadership details.

Pasqual says nonprofits shouldn't be disheartened if they don't get a meeting or an invitation to submit a proposal. If a foundation says it is not a good time for the foundation, then the nonprofit should thank them for their time and ask if they can come back later, Pasqual says.

She says this worked for her recently in seeking funding for the Foundation Center. In May 2009, a funder told her it was not a good time for its grant making due to the stock market situation. Pasqual asked if she could call back at the end of the year. When she did, the foundation's fortunes had turned around due to the rebound on Wall Street, and she received funding.

While Pending

After a nonprofit has submitted an application, Pasqual says follow-up calls are acceptable for several reasons including:

- Making sure the proposal was received.
- Checking on the foundation's review process.
- Offering to answer any questions about the submission.
- Requesting a meeting.
- Updating the foundation about any leadership changes.
- Updating financial information.
- Providing insights on additional supporters of the project.

Pasqual says this call can be conducted by an office assistant and should be brief to respect the funder's time.

Pasqual says during this phase, nonprofits may get requests for site visits. She says this means the nonprofit has made it past the first hurdle, and the funder wants to build greater knowledge about the organization and put a face to the name of its leaders.

When scheduling these visits, Pasqual suggests nonprofits:

1. Schedule the site visit during a busy time for them so the funder can see them in action.
2. Get insights from funder on what they want to see.
3. Prepare an agenda for the meeting to ensure you are answering the questions.
4. Do not out talk the foundation officials when they visit.
5. Send a thank-you letter
6. Send follow-up materials if requested.

After the Decision

Nonprofits should be proactive if the answer to a submission is no, Pasqual says. They should contact the funder to express their appreciation for being considered and find out why they weren't funded and the possibility for future funding.

"Keep the funder informed of your work, if appropriate," Pasqual says. "Don't take off. Send newsletters and invite foundation staffers to non-fundraising events like awards ceremonies to show your accomplishments.

When the answer is yes, Pasqual reminds nonprofits to not be complacent. The first step should be to send a thank-you letter, and then to clarify expectations. The goal throughout the life cycle of the grant should be to nurture the partnership through being effective, reliable and responsive, she says.

This can be accomplished through:

- Submitting reports on time.
- Sending progress reports and program highlights.
- Inviting foundation staff to events.
- Communicating both good and bad news.

Info: For more on the Foundation Center, please visit www.foundationcenter.org.

Resolution Document Can Provide Crucial Insights

Nonprofits can get a foothold with their local governments by taking advantage of a new strategy adopted by U.S. mayors that lays out funding priorities over the next year, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) releases a document on the adopted resolutions at its 78th Annual Meeting. The resolutions are listed by USCM committees, which include: children; community development/housing; criminal/social justice; energy; environment; jobs/education/workforce; metro economies; arts/culture; and transportation.

"These resolutions are the overall game plans for city and town governments," says Sweeney, who has years of grant management and legislative planning experience. "Nonprofits and local agencies need to make sure they study this document, which should aid outreach to mayoral offices. There are groundbreaking initiatives being created through these resolutions and nonprofits and local agencies need to make sure they are involved in the process."

For example, a new USCM resolution seeks to get on the White House bandwagon to ensure coordination of funding to achieve success. The Children/Health & Human Services Committee resolution seeks to create a national comprehensive youth development strategy to ensure the delivery of a full range of services, including coordination of youth programs and funding.

The resolution provides insights on what they want to occur to achieve success. This includes:

- Establishment of a Federal Youth Development Council.
- Passage of legislation like the Federal Youth Coordination Act (HR 2653), which would create the White House Office on National Youth Policy.

"These resolutions provide a wealth of information on the current problem as viewed by mayors, as well as next steps and pertinent legislation that must be passed to achieve those steps," Sweeney says. "Studying the document and then reaching out to your local mayor can aid fundraising and strengthen partnerships. You look like you are in the know, which should bode well for name recognition and involvement at local government level--two major plusses for nonprofits."

Sweeney says the resolutions pushing for increased funding are especially important to nonprofits. Funding resolutions and their location in the document are as follows:

- Support for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund, pages 8-9. (For more on the program, please visit <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/programs/tanf/index.html>).
- Increased funding for the Volunteer Generation Fund in FY 2011, page 12 (For more on the program, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/325f5t7>).
- Increased funding and coordination among the Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs, page 26. (For more on the programs, please visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/>, CDBG and <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/programs/home/>, HOME).
- Recommended improvement to the \$4 billion Neighborhood Stabilization Fund, page 31. (For more on the program, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/yh86uaq>).
- Support for Regional Innovation Clusters to strengthen competitiveness and productivity of regional economies, pages 38-39. (For more on the clusters, please visit <http://www.energy.gov/hubs/eric.htm>).
- Increased funding and recommended improvements for COPS Hiring Grants, page 51. (For more on COPS grants, please visit <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=46>.)
- Support for full and dedicated funding of the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grants, pages 78-79. (For more on the funding program, please visit <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/eecbg.html>).

"Understanding just where the mayors are headed with this funding and the ability to talk about specific bills will get you in the funding discussion door," says Sweeney.

"Nonprofits should make sure they thoroughly understand resolutions that pertain to their efforts then reach out to their local governments to provide assistance."

Insider's Tip: This document could not have been released at a more advantageous time. Mayors are busy promoting their agenda to Congress, which is in the midst of the FY 2011 budget and war supplemental/Wall Street funding legislation debate. Nonprofits and

local agencies should study the document and try to be as active a partner as possible in this debate.

Info: For a copy of the resolution document, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/2v8vdjc>.

New Website Promises to Provide Winning Applications

A new Education Dept. (DoEd) website will aid grants seekers by providing more information about the wealth of discretionary grant applications received each year by the agency.

The website, www.Data.ed.gov, is part of the Obama Administration's Open Government Initiative and is intended to improve access to DoEd data for teachers, practitioners, researchers and the public. The department plans to make the grant-making process more transparent to the public through this website by providing substantial amounts of easily accessible data about applications, applicants and their partners.

The first competitive grant program featured on the website is the \$643 million Investing in Innovation Fund (i3), which received nearly 1,700 applications last month. DoEd is to issue the awards by July 12. DoEd expects to make up to 205 awards in this competition.

The public can now view detailed information on all i3 applicants, as well as run customized reports and summary analysis on subsets of applicants. The i3 applicant data reflects the information that the department received from applicants; it has not been reviewed for eligibility or otherwise modified by the department. Because this is a pilot effort, the department welcomes feedback on the site.

The site allows grant seekers to download a list of all applicants in a spreadsheet. Also, the website has posted a cluster of applications that it says is a representative sample of those who have applied for the grants. The cluster provides a great deal more detail than the listing on the downloadable spreadsheet.

For example, the cluster posting shows that the Mobile Area Education Foundation in Mobile, AL requested \$5 million in i3 funding to transform the Continuous Learning Center, an alternative school for special education students.

Savvy grants seekers understand that reading other applications can better hone their application to make it a winner. Although the site doesn't have the winner's posted, staffers tell us that once the competition closes, the winning applications will be provided on the site, which could be a great resource for prospective applicants.

Insider's Tip: In addition to this grant seeking tool, potential DoEd applicants shouldn't forget about the agency's Funding Forecast located at: <http://ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>.

Info: For more on i3, please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/index.html>.

Anti-Incumbent Sentiment Requires Creativity

With anti-incumbent sentiment deterring the FY 2011 appropriations process, congressional Hill insiders are becoming more and more convinced that no appropriations measures will pass by the end of this fiscal year--meaning advocates must think outside the box.

Insiders tell *FAM* that advocates should be preparing for a continuing resolution to keep the government operational from the beginning of the new fiscal year on Oct. 1 until at least after the November elections.

They don't think it is time for advocates to start panicking, however, pointing out that continuing resolutions can contain provisions to increase funding for certain programs. Those out there promoting issues popular to the Democrats, including education and children and youth programs, should do OK, they tell us.

What's the hold-up?

Staffers tell *FAM* that the Senate isn't the problem, because its budget committee passed a budget resolution in late April. The resolution allows the 12 Senate appropriations committees to get to work by setting totals for the 12 appropriations subcommittees. For more on the Senate resolution, please visit <http://budget.senate.gov/democratic/>.

Staffers say the House is the choke-point in this scenario, pointing out that everyone is up for reelection in November. Thus, nobody wants to put their stamp of approval on a resolution that increases the already monumental federal deficit.

House Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt (D-SC) is uncertain about his resolution. With none of the House Republicans supporting the resolution, Spratt is working to obtain assurances from the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dogs. Absent that, the House is expected to forgo a formal resolution and simply set sums for the appropriations subcommittees to start work on their FY 2011 Appropriations bills, staffers say.

Insider's Tip: House Appropriations Committee Chairman Dave Obey (D-WI) is still holding hearings that will help devise funding totals once the FY 2011 totals are set. The Senate Appropriations Committee is doing the same and is expected to begin to deliver FY 2011 measures in earnest after the FY 2010 supplemental is passed. For more on the appropriations committees, please visit <http://appropriations.house.gov/> and <http://appropriations.senate.gov/>.

Research Is Crucial to Federal Funding Success

In federal grant seeking, research should never be shortchanged, because it can help keep nonprofits ahead of the pack, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management expertise, says nonprofits should always be visiting the program pages for funding initiatives important to them, and conducting Google searches on the funding efforts.

Another good place to look for advanced insights on federal funding programs are the federal agency funding forecast sites, which used to be just available for the Education Dept, but seem to be popping up for all agencies.

A word to the wise is to never assume what's on the program page is 100% accurate. A quick call to the program official generally always produces updated information.

For instance, Sweeney recently was conducting research to provide advanced notice to *FAM* readers on funding programs at the Health Resources & Services Admin (HRSA).

He visited the funding forecast page for the Health & Human Services Dept., which listed several HRSA programs.

"This site has been around awhile, but HHS staffers have only recently started to use it," says Sweeney. "The forecast information said it had been updated on Dec. 29, but it was obvious the updates were haphazard so calls to staffers are a must."

Sweeney called a program official for one of the listed programs to test the waters and see how up-to-date the information was. When the staffer called back, Sweeney asked if the information he gained from visiting the forecast was correct, without mentioning where he obtained it.

The program official was unaware this type of information was available on the Internet, asking Sweeney, "Where did you get this information?"

Sweeney then told her about the forecast. She was more than happy to tell him that due to the prolonged FY 2010 funding process, the grant solicitation was delayed by two months and the deadline had been moved to accommodate.

"Federal agencies are huge and chaotic," Sweeney says. "Nonprofits that do their homework and can call program officials with specific questions are better received. These individuals are harried. Those who can provide some insights for them should have a very influential friend for life."

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from *FAM* readers. To reach him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175, or e-mail rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Nonprofits Have Unique Opportunity with New Programs

As nonprofits get a handle on the FY 2011 funding for their favorite programs, *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney reminds them not to forget the unique opportunity they have to shape the direction of new programs funded by the omnibus.

"As the funding for the new programs is sent to the various federal agencies to dole out, nonprofits have a great opportunity to have their views considered as program officials begin devising regulations," says Sweeney, who has years of grants management experience. "Formal committees and other in-house experts will meet to begin devising these new federal programs, and nonprofits need to be part of this process."

Sweeney suggests nonprofits contact the officials for the new efforts as soon as program websites are created that contain the information.

"Websites for new programs tend to go up quickly, so daily Google searches for a pertinent program or visits to the overall federal agency website should produce results," Sweeney says.

The program officials should be able to provide insights on how the funding process is going to unfold for the new programs.

"These individuals should be more than happy to provide insights, and nonprofits should offer their full assistance in ensuring the program is executed properly," Sweeney says. "Nonprofits shouldn't be shy about asking about being on a board that may be created to craft and oversee the program or setting up a meeting or conference call with the program official to get additional information."

Sweeney says nonprofits should keep the following issues in mind when trying to get involved in the grant regulation/guidance process;

Each program is different: Nonprofits shouldn't figure if one program has its yearly guidance reworked via committee, that every program at that particular agency does the same. Nonprofits should make contact with pertinent program officials and get concrete guidance on this process.

National reach speaks volumes: Nonprofits shouldn't assume they will be directly tapped to be part of the committee or grant/guidance team. Most, if not all, nonprofits have an affiliation with a national association or other type of group. Nonprofits should reach out to these groups prior to contacting program officials about getting them involved in the process. Nonprofits may have greater clout with program officials if they reference affiliation in the call. Many times, the national group may push the nonprofit as the best representative to be on a grant guidance/regulation committee.

The ground floor is best: Nonprofits can get the most impact from becoming part of a grant guidance/regulation effort for a new program. True collaboration occurs at the start

of a program, because everyone goes into the process on equal footing. In existing processes, the guidance and regulation are more set in stone, with just annual tweaks.

Courtesy counts: When contacting program officials, timing is of the essence. Nonprofits should make sure they try to arrange a meeting or conference during the down-time for the grant program. For instance, if a program has a January deadline, the best time to arrange a meeting is in the summer because staffers aren't as harried. In this scenario, summer would be the down-time when staffers have gone through the award process and haven't quite started gearing up for the next round of funding, which would generally begin in earnest in September. They should have some spare time during this down period, Sweeney says.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from *FAM* readers. To contact him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175 or e-mail rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

A Call/Write Strategy Produces Funding Results

Nonprofits should adopt a call and write attitude when reaching out to program and foundation officials for personal grant guidance, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

"In a perfect world, nonprofits would be able to just e-mail a contact for information on a particular program, and receive a prompt reply back," says Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management experience. "The reality is that e-mail correspondence alone is still a dicey way to get questions answered about particular programs."

Sweeney says the only way to ensure guidance from program officials is to use phone and e-mail. Sweeney suggests nonprofits initially phone the contact and if the official doesn't answer, which is the most likely result, leave a message saying an e-mail will follow.

This method: (1) shows courtesy, because the nonprofit is giving the official the choice of how to respond to a query; (2) lets the official know that an e-mail is on its way, so be on the lookout for it; and (3) opens up the window for a follow-up call to make sure the official received the correspondence.

For good measure, nonprofits should mention during the message that they know the official is busy. "Officials remember congeniality and courtesy, and nothing helps smooth the way to continuous correspondence than right off the bat recognizing the pressure the official must be under," Sweeney says.

Nonprofits shouldn't make the mistake of only e-mailing officials, because odds are it won't produce results, Sweeney says. Reasons an e-mail only strategy is ineffective include: (1) an e-mail listed on a program site may be outdated or misspelled; (2) the correspondence may go directly to the official's spam folder; (3) e-mails aren't immediate like phone calls, so an official may put off or forget he or she received it.

Nothing beats the immediacy of a phone call. Sure, some agencies or foundations prefer not to receive them, but for those that do, nonprofits should take advantage.

E-mail only doesn't lead to 'Top' information

As an example, Sweeney says the call and write strategy worked for one of his clients recently. The client was seeking information on the \$4.35 million Race to the Top program at the Education Dept.

As Sweeney suggested, they called and wrote the agency, which helped them successfully get advanced details on the program. The client made an initial call to the Race to the Top official, but he didn't answer. The client provided a brief synopsis of questions and let him know an e-mail was coming his way.

The client sent the e-mail, but didn't receive an immediate response. The client kept calling the official, however, and eventually reached him and had the questions answered.

"It's a good thing the client didn't rely solely on e-mail, because an e-mail response from the official didn't come until after the formal Race to the Top grant guidance was released," Sweeney says. "The response e-mail didn't even address the client's questions, but merely said the solicitation had been released."

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from *FAM* readers. To contact him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175, or e-mail him at rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Partnerships Crucial to Sharing in Funding Wealth

The big-ticket funding from the Recovery Act (PL 111-5) is flowing to states, and nonprofits can participate in the wealth, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

Sweeney, who has years of grant submission/management and legislative planning experience, says nonprofits mistakenly think that if funding is going to states, then they can't participate or, if they can, it will be too time consuming.

In actuality, nonprofits can lay the groundwork for participation by taking an hour or two a few times a month to focus on outreach to potential partners or enhancement of existing collaborative efforts.

Ways to success

Below are some tips for nonprofits beginning or enhancing their outreach to improve Recovery Act funding chances.

Keep informed about rulemaking and grant solicitation activity: Nonprofits should take the time to read all proposed and final rulemaking and the grant solicitation. The Race to the Top example shows nonprofits can gain crucial insights from these

documents. A thing to remember is that Recovery Act funding is sparking overwhelming interest from everyone, which is translating into thousands of comments, instead of just a handful. The Recovery Act proposed rules are tending to look much different than the final rule.

Call program contacts: Nonprofits should take the time to call or e-mail a contact for additional information. These individuals generally can clarify remaining questions. For instance, the Race to the Top solicitation is vague about what comprehensive services should be offered to students. The contact should be able to shed some light on the subject.

Develop a list of talking points: Before reaching out about partnership opportunities, nonprofits should be able to express why they should be involved, says Sweeney. Nonprofit staffers should get together after studying a particular funding opportunity to devise a list of talking points. The overall thrust of the list should be: What the nonprofit brings to the table and how those skills can strengthen the partnership.

Assess current partnerships: Nonprofits already may have an 'in' to a Recovery Act collaborative effort. They just need to make sure they don't step on any toes. If a nonprofit has a close relationship with local school district officials and is seeking to get involved with Race to the Top planning, it should reach out to these individuals first. These officials can provide insights on the current state of planning, if any. When reaching out, nonprofits should have assessed if any of their existing legislative or business partners also would enhance the planning process. A nonprofit that can offer its assistance as well as suggest other partners should be looked upon favorably by the current planners, says Sweeney.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from subscribers. To reach him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175, or e-mail rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Outreach to National Groups Improves Chances

Nonprofits can improve their funding chances by nurturing strong relationships with influential national legislative organizations, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management expertise, says many times nonprofits overlook this avenue to promote their worthwhile projects.

"Organizations such as the Nat'l Governors Assn. (NGA), Nat'l League of Cities and Nat'l Conference of State Legislatures can be great vehicles to get the word out about a worthwhile project via their websites or through forming relationships with staffers, who can be a wealth of information," Sweeney says. "Nonprofits should do a bit of research beforehand to begin the process."

Prior to making contact, nonprofits should bookmark the pages of these types of organizations to see what types of efforts they are focusing on at a particular time, Sweeney says. This can save time, because nonprofits likely should wait if they don't see their type of program highlighted.

If nonprofits don't find their programs on the site, they should spend time building support for the program at the local and state levels because officials set the agendas for the national level.

For instance, Sweeney recently worked with a national nonprofit that focuses on school building safety. In an attempt to get the word out, the foundation's leader contacted the Center for Best Practices at the NGA. A staffer there expressed interest about the program, but said school safety issues weren't on the radar of governors.

As a result, the nonprofit is focusing on building individual state support, by working with individual governors. Currently, a governor is promoting the program, and that should eventually lead to broader support by the NGA.

A visit to the center's portion of the NGA website can dictate what types of programs are on governors' radar at any given time. The site, located at <http://tinyurl.com/y47v72>, offers this information on the homepage, as well as through a weekly e-mail newsletter.

A current search of the homepage would dictate that K-12 teacher improvement, high school dropout, childhood obesity and flu prevention efforts are current focuses. A look at the recent newsletter supports this assumption, and offers additional focuses on health IT and green technology programs.

A practice of perusing other legislative sites in the same manner should uncover focuses for the particular organizations.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from readers. To contact him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175, or e-mail rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Evergreen Folder Eases Submission Process

With the FY 2010 grant solicitation process getting underway, nonprofits should make sure they have updated or created a folder of evergreen information to ease the submission process, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management experience, says the folder should include all the information that generally is included in all grant applications.

"By keeping the information in a folder, means you won't be running around at the last minute putting all this information together," Sweeney says. "With the tight federal funding deadlines, the need for this folder is more important than ever. The focus should

be on fine-tuning the narrative to make it the best possible sales pitch for your program, not focusing on minute details that could have easily been handled beforehand."

Sweeney suggests a nonprofit's folder include:

- The DUNS Number.
- Employee Identification Number.
- 501 (c)(3) Confirmation Letter.
- Banking Account Information.
- List of Board Members and Contact Information.
- List of Staff and Contact Information.
- Biographies for Staff and Board Members.
- List of Donors.
- List of Confirmed Partners.
- Form 990.
- Information on service area.
- Mission statement/brief synopsis of program.

A few paragraphs on what makes the nonprofit unique (This aids the narrative writing process).

Sweeney suggests those who maintain evergreen information folders make sure to update them. For instance, a nonprofit may have changed its name over the year. In this case, they will need to make sure the DUNS number matches with the new name. Also, the current economic situation may have dictated a banking change, so nonprofits need to make sure the information in the folder is accurate, Sweeney says.

The folder can serve for nonprofit and state purposes as well. This will require some additional information, including state and local contact information, Sweeney says.

Insider's tip: *FAM* readers have a leg up in the federal funding process. In addition to receiving advanced notice on upcoming solicitations, readers can use *FAM*'s Grant Deadline Calendar. In fact, Sweeney suggests book marking the calendar's Web address to keep track of deadlines. The tool allows readers to research when solicitations for particular programs were released last year. The solicitation process doesn't deviate much from year-to-year, so readers can start their applications based on last year's process, Sweeney says. To access the calendar, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/y8emjwx>.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from readers. To contact him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175 or e-mail rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Nonprofits Should Be in Perpetual Grant-Prep Mode

Nonprofits can benefit from the current down time for federal grants by honing their grant preparation and submission methods, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney.

A good rule of thumb is to start the grant preparation process about three to four months prior to a deadline, says Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management expertise.

"Now is the time that nonprofits should be in preparation mode," says Sweeney. "They should be making sure their grant preparation and submission team is still in tact. This should be an assessment time. Who has gained a new skill or training to enhance the grant making process? Are there new partnerships that could enhance funding chances? These types of assessments should be occurring, while preparing for the next submission."

Here are some grant preparation hints Sweeney suggests:

Create a schedule: The schedule should include participation from all staff members, so everyone feels included in the effort. The schedule should be built around a submission date at least one week prior to the deadline. It is always a good idea to build some cushion into the schedule to allow for mishaps or delays, which inevitably occur. Since most of the FY 2010 deadlines haven't been released, nonprofits should base their schedules on last year's process. Grant solicitations don't tend to change much from year to year, Sweeney says.

Something else to keep in mind is that those who submit grant applications in the early part of the grant cycle are perceived as lightweights. They are perceived as not taking time to put together a quality application, but have slapped something together and submitted it. Nonprofits need to make sure they use the allotted time to fine-tune their message.

Create a list of duties: Everyone on a nonprofit's staff should know exactly what their tasks will be for the grant submission. This should include potential due dates as dictated by the schedule.

"A good idea is to have everyone contribute to the narrative, so it doesn't seem stagnated from one voice," Sweeney says. "Getting buy-in from all staffers means there are no surprises once the grant is funded. Everyone will be familiar with the grant submission."

Designate one or two people on staff to oversee the project: These people should be in charge of ensuring the schedule is followed, sending e-mail reminders and checking on status of staffer tasks. They can offer assistance, too. One of these individuals can be the narrative compiler and editor, Sweeney says.

Have regular status meetings: The schedule must include regular status/brainstorming meetings to ensure everyone is making progress, and the latest data/research is included in the application.

A fresh pair of eyes: Prior to submission, nonprofits need to make sure they have someone take a look at their submissions that hasn't seen the application, but is familiar with the program or issue.

"This is crucial, because those working closely with the project may be suffering from 'not being able to see the forest for the trees,'" Sweeney says. "They may be so focused on the big picture of what the program will do that they forget little picture items like including a sentence or two on the mission of the nonprofit. The new eyes should uncover these types of situations and ensure the strongest possible submission."

Know the online submission process: Most, if not all, federal funding opportunities are requiring online grant submissions. This means don't get too fancy with the grant narrative. When devising the narrative, don't include charts or fancy formatting (not even italic, bullets, numbering or quotation marks), because they will be stripped when the nonprofit cuts and pastes the narrative into the online portal, Sweeney says.

"Make sure after you cut and paste into the online portal that you make sure the spacing is okay," Sweeney says. "That is one thing you can do to help the presentation of the narrative. Also, try to map out the entire application prior to beginning to post it online. Do not try to make changes or write directly in the online document, because if you don't save regularly you will lose all of your work."

Make sure the grant is submitted properly: Believe it or not, sometimes nonprofits work overtime on a grant proposal, only to drop the ball at submission time. In one recent scenario, Sweeney says a group he was working with was waiting for a decision on a year-two funding application, which was as near to guaranteed as a nonprofit can get with federal funding. After researching the submission for them, he uncovered that the person who was supposed to submit the grant for them in the previous year, had never pushed the send button.

"It was an online application and the status listed 100% completed, which I guess the person assumed meant the grant was submitted, but it wasn't," Sweeney says. "All the person had to do was push the send button, which would have changed the status to a Submitted and provided a date. For this reason, I always make sure I submit a grant at least a few days prior to deadline and although I have a successfully submitted e-mail and a submission number, I still give the program officials a call the next day to make sure the grant was submitted."

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from *FAM* readers. To contact him, please call 301/588-6380, ext. 175 or e-mail, rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Nonprofits Can Help Guide Grant Decisions

During these slow times for federal grants, nonprofits shouldn't be standing on the sidelines waiting for grant solicitations to be released, says *FAM* editor and veteran grants specialist Ray Sweeney.

"This year especially, nonprofits should be making calls to program officials for insights on their important programs," says Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and

management expertise. "With the FY 2011 funding process still very much up in the air, program officials have more time to answer questions and discuss issues."

Ways to ensure successful contact

Sweeney suggests the following when contacting federal program officials.

Go to the source: Nonprofits shouldn't spend tons of time trying to pinpoint just the right person, Sweeney says. They should visit the program's website and try to locate a contact name. If one isn't readily apparent on the program website, locate the previous year's grant guidance, which should list a contact person. Nonprofits shouldn't worry if the contact is out-of-date or that the person may have changed with the administration, because the information is a year old. Odds are the phone number will either lead to the correct contact via a message or directly speaking with the person, Sweeney says. Nonprofits should be aware that program contacts aren't dictated by administration changes. These individuals are full-time federal employees, with job security, which is why they can provide insights without repercussions, Sweeney says.

Develop a message: Nonprofits should be prepared for a discussion on the program prior to making a call to a program official. Yes, they may simply talk to a program contact that sends them to another source or they just may get voice mail. Regardless, they should make the call ready for a discussion, armed with some knowledge of the program and what they want out of the call, including:

- Program particulars.
- Funding history.
- Controversial aspects of the program that may be reconsidered.
- Appropriateness of nonprofit's effort to program's goals.
- Personal insights on strengths and weaknesses of programs.
- Expectations from the call.
- Involvement expectations.

Think big: When contacting program officials, nonprofits shouldn't just be thinking about an update on the program. They should be ready to offer assistance, rather through helping guide the grant guidance formulation through participation on committees or volunteering as a grant evaluator. Being on the grant guidance committee for the program or serving as a grant evaluator can really help nonprofits get on the radar of program officials, Sweeney says. Nonprofits shouldn't hesitate about asking about ways for them to get intimately involved in a funding program.

Keep in regular contact: Nonprofits shouldn't think of contact with program officials as a one-time deal. They should keep in regular contact and form a rapport with the program officials, Sweeney says.

Info: Sweeney wants to hear from *FAM* subscribers about grant seeking issues. Contact him at 301/588-6380, ext. 175 or rsweeney@cdpublications.com with questions or other concerns.

Calls to Officials during Slow Times Are Crucial

Federal grant solicitations tend to dwindle in the latter part of a year, but *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney says nonprofits shouldn't become complacent.

Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management experience, recommends nonprofits use the slow federal grant time to get up-to-date on the funding process for FY 2010.

Solicitations are dwindling now through the end of December because the FY 2010 funds are depleted and the FY 2011 funding process is just getting underway in many cases, Sweeney says.

The best way for a nonprofit to get up-to-speed on its funding programs is to pick up the phone and call the program manager.

"Calling the program manager should always be the first step," Sweeney says. "This time of year is good, because they are more likely to be available for discussion. These discussions are crucial in getting a sense how grants will be run under the Obama Administration."

For example, Sweeney contacted the program official for the Advanced Placement (AP) Test Program (CFDA Number: 84.330B) at the Education Dept. in early September. The program provides grants to states to enable them to pay AP test fees for low-income students.

In FY 2009, the grant solicitation process began in January, with a deadline in the spring. Through the call to the program official, Sweeney uncovered that the grant solicitation would be moved up to September this fiscal year "to better align with the start of the new school year." The FY 2010 deadline is several months ahead of schedule, with grants due Nov. 10.

Sweeney also learned the call that the Obama Administration's Education Dept (DoEd) doesn't seem as worried about updating DoEd's Funding Forecast as previous administrations have been. The AP program official didn't even know who is responsible for updating the site. He directed Sweeney to the program website, which included the program guidance. Under previous administrations, DoEd's forecast was crucial. The forecast provided the grant guidance, and the program page may or may not have had a link to the guidance.

"This is a new administration and with a new White House occupant, come new rules," Sweeney says. "It seems from the calls I have made that each agency is setting its own method, which focuses more and more on posting grant guidance on the program's particular section on the larger agency site. This isn't a given, though, and calls to officials can clear up the situation up and provide other insights."

Info: Sweeney, 301/588-6380, ext. 175; for more the AP program, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/y9ypzm4>; for DoEd's Funding Forecast, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/94no7>.

Preparation, Outreach Can Aid Nonprofit Efforts

Nonprofits have a unique opportunity to have their voices heard as Congress begins focusing solely on FY 2011 appropriations, *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney says.

Sweeney, who has years of grant management expertise, recommends nonprofits keep informed over the next few months about the appropriations process and make contact with congressional officials about funding proposals they like and dislike. In addition, they should begin preparing for the FY 2010 grant solicitations, because although the process isn't finalized, program officials are moving forward.

Sweeney suggests nonprofits do the following:

Make sure to bookmark the appropriations status page at

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app11.html>: Nonprofits should click on the bill number links in the first column for specific information, such as the latest reports on the bills and list of conferees. These reports are important because they provide funding totals and priorities. Nonprofits definitely should know if their representative or one of their senators is a conferee, because that will give them a stronger voice.

Craft a FY 2011 funding message: After taking a look at the funding status of their programs, nonprofits should decide on their final push message. Nonprofits should pinpoint the item that is most important to them but also has the best chance of passage.

Contact congressional members about particular funding areas of support or objection: Once again, nonprofits that have local conferees definitely should take advantage of the situation. Contacting all representatives and senators, however, can't hurt and can start or enhance a relationship with congressional staffers. For contact information, please visit www.house.gov and http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm.

Start gearing up for the FY 2011 grant season by using *FAM*'s Grants Deadline Calendar and contacting program officials: *FAM*'s calendar is a one-of-a-kind tool that can help nonprofits gauge when grant guidance will be released. Sweeney points out that a top nonprofit complaint is that they don't have enough lead time to craft applications. In general, federal agencies allot just a bit over a month from solicitation release to deadline. *FAM*'s calendar, which is updated regularly and allows subscribers to visit previous months, can provide additional time. For instance, a nonprofit can take a look back at November 2009 or December 2009 to see what federal grants solicitations were announced. Most likely these same grants will be released around the same time this year. Nonprofits that use the calendar will not only get a sense of the release date, but

will also have a link to the previous year's grant guidance, which can be used to begin crafting an FY 2010 submission. Sweeney suggests nonprofits bookmark the calendar's home page (<http://tinyurl.com/y8emjwx>) and make a point of visiting it regularly.

Nonprofits need to make sure they are keeping contact with program officials about the FY 2010 solicitations, too. For those who don't have program contact information, a simple Google search should uncover the program's home page, which should have the information. For those utilizing the grant calendar, the information should be available on the previous year's grant guidance.

Info: For more on the CR, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/yetj6yq>.

Grants Calendar Is a Crucial Tool

FAM readers should make sure they are taking advantage of a key feature of the online service—the Grant Deadline Calendar, says Editor Ray Sweeney, who has years of grant writing and management experience. "This is a one-of-a-kind tool that allows nonprofits to keep abreast of federal, private and corporate funding opportunities and deadlines," says Sweeney. "The calendar is updated on a daily basis, so nonprofits' staffers need to make sure they are visiting the feature regularly."

Nonprofits need approximately 4-6 weeks to prepare grant applications, and the grants calendar can help ensure enough time to prepare quality submissions. For instance, 4-6 weeks from now is the end of October. A visit to the calendar indicates that 11 opportunities have deadlines during the final week of October.

Deadlines are for a variety of issues and concerns, including arts and culture, community, health care, literacy and youth efforts.

Insider's Tip: For the easiest way to visit the site often, Sweeney suggests nonprofits bookmark the main Grant Deadline Calendar webpage. The address is <http://grantsandfunding.net/fam/index.php?mod=grantcal>.

Info: For questions about the Grant Deadline Calendar or other *FAM* issues, please contact Sweeney at 301/588-6380, ext. 175, or at rsweeney@cdpublications.com.

Education Dept. Offers Wealth of Application Tools

The Education Dept. (DoEd) is following the Health & Human Services Dept.'s lead and offering FY 2011 grant seekers a list of resources as it begins to release solicitations.

DoEd provides a wealth of grant resources in an effort to limit the need for time-consuming technical assistance conference calls. Most DoEd offices will provide

information similar to its Office of Safe & Drug-Free Schools, which provides all of its assistance through the Grant Application Technical Assistance Resource website (www.ed.gov/admins/grants/apply/techassist/index.html). Information is categorized as follows:

- Commonly Used Definitions in Grant Application Packages.
- Completing Forms for a Discretionary Grant.
- Frequently Asked Questions on Discretionary Grants.
- Grant Writing Tips.
- Organizing Your Grant Application.
- Publications & Resources.
- Sample Budget Narratives.

For the *FAM* story on the HHS funding tips, please visit www.grantsandfunding.net/fam/5944.

Insider's Tip: DoEd is providing well-organized resources here, which grantseekers should make sure to use. Under the grant tips, it offers a suggestion that you don't hear too often, which is to check your budget numbers for consistency. This is a very good tip. Many times, the budget is the last thing completed, but grantees have already filled in an estimated amount in the narrative or elsewhere in the application. Applicants must remember to check these few references to ensure consistency. Overlooking this little step can be devastating, says *FAM* Editor Ray Sweeney, who has years of grant submission and management experience.

Info: DoEd provides a funding forecast website, with the latest on funding solicitations. To view the site, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>.

FY 2011 Will Be Guided by New FOIA Guidance

(Effective: July 14) The Education Dept. (DoEd) offers the revised guidance for its Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, which are a common way for nonprofits to get their hands on winning grant applications at the agency. During the rulemaking process, DoEd removed a proposed general section, because it did not add any requirements or clarification to the department's FOIA process. Agency officials tell *FAM* the section was unnecessary and potentially confusing, because those submitting FOIA requests should focus on the entire document--not a synopsis.

Insider's Tip: DoEd officials say the final FOIA regulations comprehensively describe how DoEd processes FOIA requests, thus it should streamline the process for nonprofits.

Info: Angela Arrington, 202/401-8365; for the Federal Register notice on the new regulations, please visit <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-14127.htm>.

II. FY 2011 Funding: Where It May Be Heading

Editor's Note: Clues about the direction of FY 2011 are becoming uncovered daily by CD Publications staff. The following stories highlight some of the most pertinent information uncovered in the past weeks.

Obama Higher Ed Initiative Would Provide Billions

A new White house plan would increase college graduation rates by funneling \$2 billion to help community colleges serve poor and needy high school students who otherwise would be ineligible for a college education.

In Texas on Aug. 9, President Obama outlines his goals to boost the country's college graduation rates. Specifically, he wants the United States to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, which would mean increasing the percentage of young adults in the United States who earn higher education degrees 60%. Currently, the United States ranks 12 among 36 developed nations.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who helped Obama unveil the higher education, said the administration plans to fund the initiative by eliminating "middleman" banks from the loan process and provide loans directly to students. That move would free \$60 billion to pay for more Pell Grants, he said. Duncan cited efforts to increase the money available to low-income students for college financial aid, make it easier for them to apply and more affordable for them to pay the loans back, including forgiving student loan debt after 20 years of payments. If students pursue a job as a teacher or another public service position, the debt will be forgiven after 10 years of public service, he said.

Insiders' Tip: The White House already has taken various steps to increase college graduation rates. For the latest updates on higher education initiatives, nonprofits should bookmark the website for the Office of Postsecondary Education at the Education Dept. at: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/index.html>.

Info: For more on the White House higher education initiative, please visit www.whitehouse.gov/blog.

Sec. 8, Homeless Program Funding Increases Predicted

The Senate and House are progressing with their appropriations measures (S 3644, HR 5850) to fund the Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and Transportation (DOT) Depts. in FY 2011.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its measure by a 17-12 vote in late July, while the full House approved its legislation by a 251-167 margin on July 29.

FAM has researched the two bills and finds the following programs have excellent chances for funding increases in the next fiscal year.

Community Development Block Grant (HUD): The House wants to increase the account by nearly \$128 million in FY 2011 to \$4.38 billion. The Senate would maintain funding at \$3.99 billion. The White House request is \$4.36 billion.

Sec. 8 (HUD): Both the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Project-Based Rental Assistance accounts should see increases in FY 2011. The House has approved \$19.4 billion or \$1.2 billion above this year for tenant-based rental assistance. The Senate version would provide \$19.5 billion for the account. Both are a bit below the presidential request.

Homeless Assistance Grants (HUD): The House measure would provide \$2.2 billion for these endeavors in FY 2011, \$335 million more than this fiscal year and \$145 million more than the presidential request. The Senate would provide the presidential request of a little more than \$2 billion.

Housing for the Elderly (HUD): The House and Senate are likeminded on this account, providing \$825 million. The sum is \$551 million above the administration request.

Housing for the Disabled (HUD): The House would provide \$300 million for the program, while the Senate would provide \$200 million. The White House isn't as enamored by this effort, asking for \$90 million in FY 2011.

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HUD): The House would provide the most at \$350 million, while the Senate and administration would offer \$340 million. The account is funded at \$335 million this year.

Passenger Rail Grant Program (HUD): The House would provide \$1.4 million for this account, \$400 million more than the Senate measure and the White House request.

Insider's Tip: The August recess is a perfect time for nonprofits and agencies to reach out to legislators to improve chances for funding increases for their favorite programs. *FAM's* legwork for the above programs will aid nonprofit efforts during the month, and help them sound "in-the-know" when reaching out to legislators. Remember, legislative staffers should have more time during August to talk to nonprofits, a slow time on Capitol Hill. For legislator contact information, please visit http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm (Senators) and <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml> (House).

For those seeking in-depth insights on legislative outreach and federal fundraising, CD Publications will be holding an audio conference on Aug. 26 at 2 p.m. EST, called

Getting the Jump on FY 2011 Federal Funding. For more information, please visit <http://www.cdpublications.com/store/192>.

Info: For more on the two funding bills, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/29ag8uv> (House) and <http://tinyurl.com/38wb686> (Senate).

Education Dept. Offers Proposed Priorities for FY 2011

(Comment Deadline: Sept. 7) The Education Dept. (DoEd) starts making preparations for the FY 2011 discretionary grant season, offering 13 funding priorities.

DoEd officials tell *FAM* that the priorities may be used for any appropriate discretionary grant program in FY 2011 and future years. Officials tell us that this action is being taken to focus federal funding on expanding the number of programs and projects that support activities in areas of greatest educational need.

The 13 priorities are listed under three categories: (1) Advancing Key Cradle-to-Career Educational Reforms; (2) Building Capacity for Systemic Continuous Improvement; and (3) Addressing Needs of Student Subgroups.

Advancing Key Cradle-to-Career Educational Reforms

The Advancing Key Cradle-to-Career Educational Reforms category has the following five proposed priorities.

Proposed Priority 1--Improving Early Learning Outcomes: These projects would be designed to improve school readiness and success for high-need children from birth through third grade through a focus on one or more of the following priority areas: (1) physical well-being and motor development; (2) social-emotional development; (3) Language and literacy development; (4) cognition and general knowledge, including early numeracy and early scientific development; and (5) approaches toward learning.

Proposed Priority 2--Implementing Internationally Benchmarked, College-and Career-Ready Elementary and Secondary Academic Standards: Priority would be given to projects that are designed to support the implementation of internationally benchmarked, college- and career-ready academic standards held in common by multiple states. Projects would fall into one or more of the following priority areas: (1) the development or implementation of assessments aligned with those standards; (2) the development or implementation of instructional materials aligned with those standards; (3) The development or implementation of professional development or preparation programs aligned with those standards; and (4) strategies that translate the standards into classroom practice.

Proposed Priority 3--Improving the Effectiveness and Distribution of Effective Teachers or Principals: These Projects would be designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:(1) increasing the number or percentage of effective and highly effective teachers or principals or reducing the number or percentage of teachers or principals who are ineffective, particularly in high-poverty schools; and (2) increasing the retention and equitable distribution of effective and highly effective teachers or principals.

Proposed Priority 4--Turning Around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools: Grantees would have to address one or more of the following priority areas:(1) improving student achievement in persistently lowest-achieving schools; (2) increasing graduation rates and college enrollment rates for students in persistently lowest-achieving schools; and (3) providing services to students enrolled in persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Proposed Priority 5--Increasing Postsecondary Success: Priority would be given to projects addressing one or more of the following priority areas:

1. Increasing the rates at which high-need students are academically prepared for and enroll in college or other postsecondary education and training.
2. Increasing the rates at which high-need students persist in and complete college or other postsecondary education and training.
3. Increasing the rates at which high-need students enroll in and complete high-quality secondary or postsecondary career and technical courses or programs of study designed to lead to a degree, credential or certificate.
4. Increasing the number of individuals who return to the educational system to obtain a high school diploma, to obtain needed basic skills enhancement, or to enter, persist in, and complete college or rigorous postsecondary career or technical training leading to a degree, credential or certificate.
5. Increasing the rates at which high-need students enroll in and complete graduate programs.

Addressing Needs of Student Subgroups

The Addressing Needs of Student Subgroups category has four proposed priorities.

Proposed Priority 6--Improving Achievement and High School Graduation Rates of Rural and High-Need Students: DoEd would provide funding priority to projects that address one or more of the following priority areas: (1) accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates for students in rural communities; (2) accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates for high-need students; and (3) accelerating learning and helping to improve high school graduation rates and college enrollment in high-poverty schools.

Proposed Priority 7--Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education: This priority would seek projects addressing at least

one of the following: (1) providing students with increased access to rigorous and engaging courses of study in STEM; (2) increasing the number of students prepared for advanced postsecondary or graduate study and careers in STEM, with a specific focus on an increase in the proportion of students so prepared who are from groups traditionally under-represented in STEM careers, including minorities, individuals with disabilities and women; (3) increasing the opportunities for high-quality preparation of, or professional development for, teachers of STEM subjects.

Proposed Priority 8--Promoting Diversity: These projects would be designed to promote student diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity or avoid racial isolation.

Proposed Priority 9--Support for Military Families: Under this priority, projects addressing the needs of military-connected students would receive preference.

Building Capacity for Systemic Continuous Improvement

The Building Capacity for Systemic Continuous Improvement category has the following four priorities.

Proposed Priority 10--Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making: Priority would be given to projects designed to collect, analyze and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements. Grantees would focus on one of the following priority areas:

- Improving instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings.
- Improving instructional practices, policies and student outcomes in elementary and secondary schools.
- Improving postsecondary student outcomes relating to enrollment, persistence, and completion and leading to career success.
- Providing reliable and comprehensive information on the implementation of Department of Education programs, and participant outcomes in these programs, especially by developing strategies with appropriate state agencies to use data from State longitudinal data systems or by obtaining data from reliable third-party sources.

Proposed Priority 11--Building Evidence of Effectiveness: Under this priority, DoEd would want to hear from applicants proposing evaluation plans t likely to produce valid and reliable evidence in one or more of the following priority areas: (1) improving project design and implementation or designing more effective future projects to improve outcomes; and (2) identifying and improving practices, strategies and policies that may contribute to improving outcomes.

Proposed Priority 12--Supporting Programs, Practices, or Strategies for which there is Strong or Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness: These projects would be supported

by strong or moderate evidence and thus would receive more points than a project that is supported by moderate evidence.

Proposed Priority 13--Improving Productivity: These projects would significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money or other resources. Projects would include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and use of open educational resources.

Insider's Tip: At a recent DoEd conference, officials tell *FAM* that the agency really wants to hear from potential applicants about these priorities to ensure they are moving "in the right direction" to improve academic institutions. This is a down-time for DoEd with most, if not all, of its FY 2010 solicitations released, and preparations for FY 2011 just getting underway.

Info: Margo Anderson, 202/205-3010; e-mail, Margo.Anderson@ed.gov; for the *Federal Register* notice on the proposed priorities, please visit <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-19296.htm>.

Labor, Health, Ed Programs Should See Increases

As congressional appropriations committees work hard on FY 2011 appropriations prior to the August recess, *FAM* is sensing that numerous programs at the Labor (DOL), Health & Human Services (HHS) and Education (DoEd) Depts. will receive increases next year.

The Senate appropriations committee approved its DOL-HHS-DoEd version (*as yet unnumbered*) on July 29, while the full House appropriations committee is expected to consider its measure (*as yet unnumbered*) prior to the recess.

While nothing is set in stone at this point, *FAM's* monitoring of the situation finds the following programs should see more funding in FY 2011.

Training & Employment Services (DOL): The House is more generous than the Senate with this account, seeking \$4.2 billion in FY 2011, which is \$276 million above the White House's request. The Senate measure would provide \$3.8 billion for this account.

Child Care & Development Block Grant (HHS): At this point, both chambers would provide a significant increase over the \$2.1 billion this fiscal year. The Senate would provide \$3.1 billion, while the House would set funding at \$2.8 billion. The White House is seeking \$2.9 billion in FY 2011.

Head Start (HHS): This account is expected to receive a major boost, with both chambers meeting or nearly meeting the White House request of \$8.2 billion in FY 2011. The account received \$7.2 billion this year. The Senate would provide \$8.2 billion, while the House would set the sum at \$8.1 billion in FY 2011.

Title I (DoEd): Both chambers would increase funding for this effort above the presidential request of nearly \$14.5 billion, which is the FY 2010 total, as well.

The congressional measures would provide \$14.9 billion for this account, which provides grants to school districts educating the nation's disadvantaged populations.

Student Aid (DoEd): The White House wants to increase funding for these programs from \$19.2 billion this year to \$24.9 billion in FY 2011.

The House likes the idea, while the Senate would only provide a slight bump to \$19.5 billion in FY 2011.

Race to the Top (DoEd): The White House wants \$1.35 billion to continue this Recovery Act (PL 111-5) program, one of its signature education reform programs. The House and Senate are amenable to keeping the program going through yearly appropriations, but think the 'ask' is too high.

The House would provide \$800 million for the program, while the Senate would allot \$675 million.

Investing in Innovation (DoEd): The White House wants to make this signature education reform program permanent through yearly appropriations funding, just like Race to the Top. The administration seeks \$500 million in FY 2011. The House would provide \$400 million, while the Senate bill would dictate \$250 million.

Corp. for Nat'l & Community Service: Funding for this stand-alone agency focusing on improving the nation's volunteer efforts should increase in FY 2011.

The White House wants to up the account from \$1.15 this fiscal year to \$1.4 million in FY 2011. Congress is likeminded, with the Senate bill meeting the sum, while the House would offer a little more than \$1.3 billion.

Insider's Tip: The August recess is a perfect time for nonprofits and agencies to reach out to legislators to improve chances for funding increases for their favorite programs. *FAM's* legwork for the above programs will aid nonprofit efforts during the month, and help them sound "in-the-know" when reaching out to legislators.

Remember, legislative staffers should have more time during August to talk to nonprofits, a slow time on Capitol Hill.

For legislator contact information, please visit http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm (Senators) and <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml> (House).

Info: For more on the congressional measures, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/37yltrz> (Senate) and <http://tinyurl.com/2uu6ja7> (House).

Governors Association to Focus on Higher Education

As the new chairman of the Nat'l Governors Association (NGA), Gov. Joe Manchin (D-WV) offers a higher education initiative as the focus of his one-year tenure.

Complete to Compete will focus on increasing the number of students in the United States who complete college degrees and certificates and improving the productivity of the country's higher education institutions.

Manchin says he chose the initiative, because "The nation has fallen from first to twelfth in the world in the number of students who complete degrees," and projections indicate that the current generation of students will have lower educational attainment than their parents.

Manchin says the initiative will focus on bringing together governors, higher education executive officers, campus leaders and corporate CEOs to devise ways to make marked improvements in college completion.

Additionally, *Complete to Compete* aims to:

- Create a set of common higher education completion and productivity measures that governors and higher education leaders can utilize to monitor state progress and compare performance to other states and between institutions.
- Develop a series of best practices and a list of policy actions governors can take to achieve increased college completion.
- Provide support to states to design policies and programs that increase college completion and improve higher education productivity and serve as models for other states around the country.
- Hold a learning institute for governors' senior advisors in education, workforce and economic development focusing on successful state strategies to graduate more students and meet workforce demands.

Insider's Tip: Education organizations, especially higher education institutions, should make sure they are part of these discussions over the next year, because the efforts will be closely watched by the White House and Education Dept. A report, *Complete to Compete: Common College Completion Metrics*, offers additional details on the focus of the effort. It will be followed in the coming weeks by a technical guide for states, which will be available on the NGA website at: <http://www.nga.gov>.

Senate, House Likeminded on FY 2011 Funding Totals

With appropriations committees finally getting down to business on FY 2011 funding measures, *FAM* is starting to get a sense of potential funding totals for nutrition programs next year.

Both the House and Senate agriculture funding measures (*both bills as yet unnumbered*) await consideration by their respective appropriations committees. The funding levels are similar in both bills for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

Both measures would provide \$68 billion in SNAP funding, a 17% increase over this fiscal year and just over the administration's request.

The Senate measure would increase funding for WIC in FY 2011. The current legislation would fund the account at \$7.252 billion, with an additional \$125 million coming from a contingency fund. The House, on the other, would maintain current year funding by funding the account at \$7.1 billion and using the contingency fund to make up the difference. Both sums are below the White House request of \$7.6 billion.

As for the School Lunch Program, the House measure would be more generous, meeting the White House's request of \$19 billion. The Senate would provide nearly \$18.2 billion. Both sums would include a \$1 billion reserve fund to support reauthorization of child nutrition programs.

Insider's Tip: The Agriculture funding measure is among the least controversial. With neither chamber deviating that much in these accounts, nutrition nonprofits can start making plans on FY 2011 programs based on these numbers.

Info: For more on the funding bills, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/25ovgx4> (House) and <http://tinyurl.com/2dguzmd> (Senate).

HIV/AIDS Funding Strategy Focuses on Collaboration

Much like its does with other pressing domestic issues like homelessness, the White House unveils plans to improve HIV/AIDS funding programs through improving federal agency collaboration.

"While agencies already undertake many actions to address HIV/AIDS, successful implementation of the strategy will require new levels of coordination, collaboration and accountability," President Obama says in announcing the Nat'l HIV/AIDS Strategy and Federal Implementation Plan. "This will require the federal government to work in new ways across agency lines, as well as in enhanced and innovative partnerships with state, tribal, and local governments." The strategy and implementation plan identify specific actions to be taken by federal agencies. A cornerstone of the effort will be a new council to oversee the federal agency coordination effort. The new council will be much like the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), with all pertinent agencies that deal with HIV/AIDS funding involved.

The council will be led by the White House Office of Nat'l AIDS Policy (ONAP), with the following involved as lead agencies: Health & Human Services Dept.; Justice Dept.; Labor Dept.; Housing & Urban Development Dept.; Veterans Affairs Dept.; and Social Security Admin.

The agencies involved in the council will be busy over the next few months. By mid-December, the head of each lead agency must submit a report to the ONAP and the Office of Management & Budget on the agency's operational plans for implementing the strategy. The plans will:

- Assign responsibilities to agency officials.
- Designate reporting structures for actions identified in the implementation plan.
- Include steps to strengthen coordination in planning, budgeting for, and evaluating domestic HIV/AIDS programs within and across agencies.
- Provide steps to streamline grantee reporting requirements and funding announcements related to HIV/AIDS programs and activities.

Insider's Tip: Nonprofits, colleges/universities and state and local agencies should make sure they are part of this dialogue. Obama says federal agencies working together is not enough, pointing out that success will only be achieved through commitment of all parts of society, including businesses, faith communities, philanthropic organizations, scientific and medical communities and educational institutions. A good first step to get involved is to contact ONAP by phone at 202/456-4533 or by e-mail at: AIDSpolicy@who.eop.gov. For more on federal HIV/AIDS funding programs and amounts at the various agencies, please visit <http://www.kff.org/hivaids/upload/7029-06.pdf>.

Info: For more on the White House strategy, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/2v52afy>; for more on ONAP, please visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/onap>; for more on USICH, please visit <http://www.usich.gov/>.

Governors Report: More Community College Funding

A new report, offered by the Nat'l Governors Association's Center for Best Practices, calls for state officials to increase funding for and to improve partnerships with community colleges to better meet the nation's workforce needs

A Sharper Focus on Technical Workers: How to Educate & Train for a Global Economy offers ways for states to partner with industry and community colleges to provide opportunities for workers to build their skills and ensure America's future economic security and prosperity.

The report outlines actions governors can take to shape a new future for job training in a way that will nurture the largest and fastest-growing industries.

Actions include:

- Championing the importance of technical education and technical work to economic competitiveness and worker prosperity.
- Focusing first on the industrial sectors with the greatest economic impact.
- Using state spending to encourage community colleges to engage in collaboration and innovation.
- Developing multi-state partnerships focused on providing consistent, high-quality, industry-valued training.
- Requiring comprehensive outcome data.

Insider's Tip: The report is based on lessons learned from the Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC)--a partnership of 30 community colleges and 34 auto-related plants in 12 states. The partnership worked to identify and implement wide-ranging improvements in technical education for workers in advanced automotive manufacturing environments. For more on AMTEC, please visit <http://www.autoworkforce.org/>.

Info: For a copy of the report, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/29e8z8h>.

Plan Provides Direction for FY 2011 Homeless Funding

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) unveils the first comprehensive strategy to prevent and end homelessness--providing insights for nonprofits as they prepare for the Continuum of Care (CoC) funding opportunity later this summer.

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness is USICH's plan to put the nation on a path to end veterans and chronic homelessness by 2015 and homelessness among children, family and youth by 2020, says USICH Executive Director Barbara Poppe.

The influential plan is the roadmap for the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) to handle CoC funding from this year forward. USICH's membership is made up of most of the Obama Administration's secretaries, and is chaired by HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan.

This year, \$1.68 billion will be available for CoC endeavors, with HUD officials telling *FAM* that the solicitation for the grants won't be released until July 1 at the earliest.

CoC is a set of the following three competitively awarded programs created to address the problems of homelessness in a comprehensive manner with other federal agencies:

1. **Supportive Housing Program (SHP)** helps develop housing and related supportive services for people moving from homelessness to independent living.

2. **Shelter Plus Care** provides rental assistance that, when combined with social services, provides supportive housing for homeless people with disabilities and their families.
3. **Single Room Occupancy (SRO)** provides Sec. 8 rental assistance for moderate rehabilitation of buildings with SRO units— single-room dwellings, designed for the use of an individual, that often do not contain food preparation or sanitary facilities.

Plan aids CoC grant-seekers

FAM Editor Ray Sweeney, a long-time grants management expert, says the USICH plan provides a wealth of insights into what HUD will be looking to fund in the upcoming CoC solicitation.

Partnerships: The plan focuses on the need to build strong partnerships among housing, health, education and human service programs to prevent and end homelessness. Homeless nonprofits should be nurturing these types of partnerships in preparation for the upcoming solicitation, Sweeney says.

"Just as USICH is a conglomeration of most of the federal agencies, nonprofits should make sure they mirror the council," Sweeney says. "Homeless nonprofits should make sure they are reaching out to workforce, education, nutrition groups and organizations and veterans groups. Don't cross anybody of the list that can help ensure homeless receive all they need to keep off the streets."

Nonprofit assistance: The plan spells out the need to increase leadership, collaboration and civic engagement to address homelessness. USICH says this can be accomplished by:

- Providing and promoting collaborative leadership at all levels of government.
- Strengthening the capacity of public and private organizations by increasing knowledge about collaboration and successful interventions to prevent and end homelessness.

The administration wants nonprofits to properly understand what it means by partnerships and capacity. This means nonprofits should expect plenty of technical assistance once the CoC solicitation is released to aid the understanding process, Sweeney says.

Employment and healthcare: HUD will really want to see strong partnerships among homeless, employment and healthcare programs, Sweeney says. The USICH plan focuses on increasing economic security, expanding meaningful and sustainable employment and improving access to mainstream programs and services to reduce financial vulnerability to homelessness. A healthcare priority likely will be improving discharge planning for people who have frequent contact with hospitals and criminal justice systems.

New overall goals: As nonprofits prep for the upcoming solicitation, they should change the way they think about homeless programs, Sweeney says. The USICH plan calls for a complete retooling of the homeless response system. Essentially, nonprofits need to focus on transforming homeless services to crisis response systems that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.

The HEARTH Act, enacted by Congress in May 2009 mandated that the USICH produce the plan to end homelessness to Congress and the president.

Insider's Tip: Sweeney suggests nonprofits not wait until the CoC grant solicitation is released. Those with questions on where HUD is heading with CoC funding have several avenues to explore for additional information. They can reach out to USICH with questions via telephone at 202/708-4663 or e-mail at usich@usich.gov. Nonprofits can gain additional insights from the CoC website too at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/coc/>.

Info: For more on USICH, please visit <http://www.usich.gov/>; for a copy of the report, please visit http://www.usich.gov/PDF/OpeningDoors_2010_FSPPreventEndHomeless.pdf.

Agency Seeks Comments on Impact Aid Revisions

(Comment Deadline: Sept. 13) The Office of Elementary & Secondary Education (OESE) at the Education Dept. (DoEd) seeks comments on its plans to amend the regulations for its Impact Aid Discretionary Construction Grant Program.

Through this program, OESE provides competitive grants to certain eligible local educational agencies (LEAs), which are currently receiving Impact Aid formula funds, for emergency repairs and modernization of school facilities.

DoEd officials tell *FAM* that the proposed amendments would level the playing field for the program by limiting applications. Under current law, an LEA may submit multiple applications for multiple educational facilities in a fiscal year. The proposed regulations would limit an LEA to submitting one application for one facility per competition.

Insider's Tip: Last year, these funds of approximately \$17.5 million were doled out via formula to states. The White House and Democratic leaders want to return to doling out these funds competitively in FY 2011. The Senate is seeking an increase to \$18.5 million for the account in its education appropriations bill (S 3686). The House hasn't made its FY 2011 funding wishes known for the program.

Info: Kristen Walls-Rivas, 202/260-1357; e-mail, Kristen.Walls-Rivas@ed.gov; for the *Federal Register* notice on the funding opportunity, please visit

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-20065.htm>; for more on Impact Aid funding programs, please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid/index.html>.

Guidance Sought on \$10B Teacher Jobs Package

Wasting no time, the Education Dept. (DoEd) is seeking emergency clearance for applications that states would use to get a share of the \$26 billion jobs aid package just signed by President Obama this week. DoEd wants streamlined clearance for the applications so that states can receive the money ahead of any potential job cuts in the upcoming school year, according to an Aug. 12 *Federal Register* notice. The grants will be distributed to states on a formula basis, but governors need to submit an eligible application to get the money.

Specifically, the law, HR 1586, directs DoEd to award each state its total amount to receive within 45 days after the date of enactment, if the governor submits an approvable application within 30 days after the date of enactment. The clock started running on Aug. 10. DoEd is seeking immediate approval for the distribution of the funds, but will continue to accept comments during the period the money is being made available. Approval of the application process is pending.

The bill will provide \$10 billion in aid to states and school districts to avert educator layoffs and hire new staff members. The measure also provides \$16 billion in Medicaid funding to states. That has an indirect benefit for schools, because states would likely have had to make additional cuts --including to education -- if the money for Medicaid had not been forthcoming. HR 1586 would save more than 140,000 teachers' jobs and tens of thousands of first responders' jobs,

Lawmakers moved quickly to approve the package, with the Senate acting last week and the House returning for a rare one-day session this week. It passed the House by a 247 - 161 margin, largely along party lines.

Info: For more on the funding, please visit <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-20049.htm>.

III. LINKS

FEDERAL AGENCY LINKS

Agriculture Dept: <http://tinyurl.com/ygl7qbc>

- **Agriculture Dept (Rural Development):**
www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/news.htm

Department of Education

- **Budget News:** www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/news.html
- **Funding Forecast:** www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html
- **Adult Literacy State Grants:** www.ed.gov/programs/adultedbasic/index.html

Department of Health and Human Services

- **Administration for Children and Families (ACF):**
www.acf.hhs.gov/acf_news.html
- **Administration on Aging:**
www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/For_The_Press/pr/index.aspx
- **Funding Forecast (ACF):** www.acf.hhs.gov/grants
- **Funding Forecast (HHS):** <https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/hhsgrantsforecast>
- **Health Resources and Services Administration:** <http://newsroom.hrsa.gov>
- **Indian Health Service:** www.ihs.gov/publicaffairs/PressReleases/index.cfm

Department of Housing and Urban Development: www.hud.gov/news/index.cfm

Department of Interior: www.doi.gov/news.html

Department of Justice: www.usdoj.gov/03press/03_1_1.html

- **Community Oriented Policing Services COPS:**
www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=1972
- **Office on Violence Against Women:** www.ovw.usdoj.gov/pressreleases.htm

Labor Dept: www.dol.gov/dol/media/main.htm

Omnibus: www.rules.house.gov/announcement_details.aspx?NewsID=4520 (conference report) or www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget10/10action.pdf.

Social Innovation Fund: www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica/innovation.asp

State Dept: www.state.gov/issuesandpress

Department of Veterans' Affairs: <http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/index.cfm>

ASSOCIATION LINKS

National Governors Association: www.nga.org

National Conference of State Legislatures: www.ncsl.org

National League of Cities: www.ncl.org

U.S. Conference of Mayors: www.usmayors.org

National Association of Counties: www.naco.org

National Education Association: www.nea.org

Families USA: www.familiesusa.org

National Association of Community Health Center: www.nachc.org

Child Welfare League: www.cwla.org

National Low-Income Housing Coalition: www.nlihc.org

American Association of School Administrators: www.aasa.org.

Rural Assistance Center: www.raconline.org