# **Policy Update: June 2019**

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## **SRCD News Related to Child and Family Policy**

## New Child Evidence Brief on Caregiver Access to Health Insurance Coverage

SRCD has recently released a new *Child Evidence Brief* focused on the importance of parental health insurance in supporting children's healthy development. Introduced in 2018 as a pilot project, *Child Evidence Briefs* bring clear and succinct summaries of the scientific evidence to Congress regarding important child and family policy issues.

#### **Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow**

Amanda Gatewood, MPH, Ph.D., is a first year SRCD Executive Branch Fellow whose placement is in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Click here to read about her work this past year in collaboration with the Offices of Child Care and Head Start.

## **Legislative Branch Updates**

## FY20 Appropriations: Four Bill Spending Package Passes House

On June 18, the House of Representatives passed a \$985 billion spending package (H.R. 2740) that includes four fiscal year 2020 appropriations bills. The bills included are Labor-HHS-Education, Defense, State-Foreign Operations, and Energy-Water. The House approved this massive spending package along a party line vote of 226-203. The numbers included in this package for key agencies of relevance to SRCD members are the same as those approved by the House Appropriations Committee, which were covered in the May 2019 edition of Policy Update.

This spending package is unlikely to move much further, with CQ reporting that "without a major rewrite, the package stands little chance of becoming law." They noted that Senate leadership has expressed numerous concerns about the package and that "the Trump administration already has threatened a veto because of what it considers excessive spending and troublesome policy riders." Additionally, since a new bipartisan deal to raise the spending caps has not yet been worked out, this package, as passed by the House, would trigger sequestration at the end of this year.

#### **Dream Act Passes House, Faces Uncertain Future in Senate**

On June 4, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act, on a 237-187 vote. The vote was largely along party lines, although seven Republicans joined Democrats in voting "yes." The bill would provide legal status and a path to citizenship to individuals colloquially known as "dreamers," or undocumented individuals brought to the United States as children. The legislation would also provide legal status to those living in the U.S. under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) programs. The bill would allow individuals in these three groups to become legal

permanent residents upon meeting certain education, employment, or military service requirements. After gaining legal permanent resident status, they could then proceed through the naturalization process to become citizens of the United States. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration, where it is unlikely to see much progress. CQ reports that many Republicans say Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) will not bring the bill to the Senate floor for a vote. However, many outside groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, support the bill and are pressuring the Senate to take up the legislation.

## **House Subcommittee Hearing on Education-Related Response to Natural Disasters**

On June 5, the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing entitled "This is Not a Drill: Education-Related Response and Recovery in the Wake of Natural Disasters." Subcommittee Chair Gregorio Kilili Sablan (D-Northern Mariana Islands) opened the hearing by discussing the federal government's responsibility in responding to school communities that experience natural disasters and noting that schools face unique challenges on the road to recovery following a disaster. Subcommittee Ranking Member Rick Allen (R-GA) then offered opening remarks that emphasized the importance of Congress providing disaster aid to ensure the success and revitalization of schools destroyed by natural disasters.

Witnesses from the federal government and from school systems impacted by natural disasters in recent years then provided testimony. Witnesses discussed a wide range of issues, including: the formation of a new disaster recovery unit in the Department of Education; that schools destroyed in disasters need to be rebuilt in a sustainable and economically responsible manner so that they don't have to be rebuilt every time a disaster occurs; the need for reinforced concrete structures in areas that experience significant super typhoon and hurricane activity; FEMA's slow response following the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria in 2017; that schools in the U.S. Virgin Islands, including the only two high schools on the island of St. Croix, are at risk of losing their accreditation if long-awaited repairs are not completed immediately; that reopening schools quickly after a natural disaster is critical for both the impact that it has on student learning and the impact on security and safety; the importance of facilitating communication across all school systems in a state or territory; and the need for more mental health supports in schools, because the trauma of natural disasters is long-lasting for many students. Witnesses included: Frank Brogan, Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education; Glenn Muña, Commissioner, CNMI Public School System; Rosa Soto-Thomas, President, St. Croix Federation of Teachers AFT Local 1826; John Winn, Former Commissioner of Education, State of Florida; and Dr. Steve Herrington,

Superintendent of Schools, Sonoma County (CA) Schools. Click here to read witness testimony and **here** to view the full hearing.

#### House Subcommittee Hearing on Federal Support for Responsible Fatherhood

On June 11, the Subcommittee on Worker & Family Support of the House Ways & Means Committee held a hearing entitled, "Celebrating Fathers and Families: Federal Support for Responsible Fatherhood." Subcommittee Chairman Danny Davis (D-IL) opened the hearing by stating, "Research shows that a supportive and involved father strengthens a child's emotional, physical, intellectual and behavioral development even if the father does not live in the same household as the child." He then discussed the importance of well-designed fatherhood programs that have been shown to "increase parenting skills, improve relationships between parents and kids and between co-parents, and generate positive outcomes for fathers and their children." Subcommittee Ranking Member Jackie Walorski (R-IN) then gave her opening statement, emphasizing the important role that fathers play in building strong families. She noted, "We know intuitively and through research that when a father is around to provide emotional and financial support, child outcomes improve."

A panel of witnesses then discussed a number of topics, including: the importance of continued federal support for fatherhood programs through the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) initiatives and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF); the need for additional federal funding to evaluate the effectiveness of fatherhood programs, especially with the new requirement under the Family First Prevention Services Act that requires states to spend at least 50% of funds on programs well supported by evidence; the role fatherhood programs have played in helping incarcerated fathers improve family relationships, learn parenting skills, and to reduce recidivism rates; the limited reach of statewide fatherhood programs to tribal communities; and the need for government systems to reconceptualize the role of fathers as more than providing financial support, but also providing emotional support through the critical father and child relationship. Witnesses included: Nicolette Duffield, Assistant Warden of Programs, Sheridan Correctional Center; Halbert Sullivan, Founder and CEO, Fathers' Support Center; Ryan Howard, Executive Director, Owens Valley Career Development Center; William C. Bell, President and CEO, Casey Family Programs; and Samuel Gonzales, Participant, True Dads program. Click here to read witness testimony and here to view the full hearing.

#### **Congressional Briefing on Postsecondary Completion**

On June 4, the Mindset Scholars Network, EducationCounsel, and the Raikes Foundation hosted a briefing entitled "The Role of Student Experience in Postsecondary Completion." Executive Director of the Mindset Scholars Network, Lisa Quay, opened the briefing by centering the conversation on students' sense of belonging and stated, "numerous experimental studies show that students' experience of belonging has a causal link to college success—and negatively stereotyped and first-generation students are more likely to experience belonging concerns." She noted, "this research also shows that institutions shape experiences of belonging and they can take discrete actions to alleviate belonging concerns in ways that improve academic behavior and outcomes."

A panel of experts then discussed a variety of topics, including: the substantial research indicating the causal impact of a sense of belonging on executive functioning such as encoding, storing, and retrieving information—skills required for successful academic performance; the important link between identity and sense of belonging; the need to invest more federal funding in research to understand the links between students' experiences and postsecondary completion; and the opportunity to use the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to shift the federal government's requirements for institutions from being enrollment-based to completion-based, especially for low-income students, first generation students, and students of color. Panelists included: Mary Murphy, Professor of Psychology, Associate Vice Provost for Diversity & Inclusion, Indiana University; Claude Steele, Professor of Psychology, Stanford University; Greg Walton, Associate Professor of Psychology, Michael Forman University Fellow in Undergraduate Education, Stanford University; and Bethany Little, Principal, EducationCounsel. The discussion was moderated by Lisa Quay, Executive Director, Mindset Scholars Network.

#### **Congressional Briefing on Youth Homelessness**

On June 10, SchoolHouse Connection, in coordination with Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Representative Steve Stivers (R-OH), Representative Dave Loebsack (D-IA), and Representative Danny Davis (D-IL), hosted a congressional briefing entitled "Youth Voices: Homelessness, Hope, and the Road Ahead." The briefing was a moderated discussion among students from across the country who experienced homelessness in high school and/or throughout their childhoods. The panel included speakers from California, Florida, Indiana, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. The panelists had all graduated from high school, completed at least one year of college, and are currently participating in SchoolHouse Connection's Youth Leadership and Scholarship Program. Panelists discussed the challenges they had experienced as K-12 students, such as the social challenges

involved in frequently changing schools. They also discussed the challenges they are experiencing now as college students, including the difficulty of securing financial aid as homeless or formerly homeless students, the financial burden of housing and other required non-tuition expenses, and the struggle many of them face of having no family to turn to when challenges arise at college.

The panelists also discussed a number of other issues related to youth and family homelessness, including: the vulnerability that youth experience when staying in someone else's home; that many of them experienced homelessness both with their families and on their own at various points in their lives; that most of them also moved through various settings including shelters, motels, cars, campgrounds, and temporarily staying with friends or relatives; that school can be a retreat for homeless youth, so many of them spent a lot of time at school to stay away from the situations they were experiencing outside of school; and that homelessness looks different for everyone, with some of the panelists stating that other students at their high school never knew that they were homeless.

## **Congressional Briefing on School Violence**

On June 12, the American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare, National Academy of Education, and American Educational Research Association, in conjunction with the Congressional Social Work Caucus and the office of Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA), hosted a briefing entitled "The Impact of Weapons and Violence on Schools and Surrounding Communities." Panelists discussed a range of issues, including: that the science of trauma has developed significantly since school shootings started happening; that PTSD symptoms are seen in many children exposed to school or community violence; that suicide is often not discussed as a type of school or community violence, even though over half of all firearm violence in the U.S. is suicide; that social and emotional skills need to be a key part of education for all ages, including for all adults who work in schools; and that the allocation of resources following school violence does not always make sense because decisionmakers don't always talk to those affected when making decisions on how to respond.

The speakers also discussed a range of needs that should be addressed moving forward to prevent and respond to school and community violence. These included: the need for security professionals who work in schools to have training in child development; the need for schools, communities, law enforcement, and mental health providers to work together when providing both prevention and response services; the need for the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative at the National Institutes of Justice (NIJ) to be funded again,

as it was funding a lot of important prevention work across many states; and the need to take a step back and not only talk about guns but rather talk about weapons being brought to schools in general. Panelists included: Dr. Sean Joe, Professor of Social Work, Washington University in St. Louis; Dr. Dorothy Espelage, Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Florida; Dr. Marlene Wong, Professor of Clinical Social Work, University of Southern California; Dr. Ron Avi Astor, Marjorie Crump Endowed Professor of Social Welfare, University of California, Los Angeles; Lauren Hogg, Student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School; and Pia Valenzuela Escudero, Executive Director, Division of Student Health & Human Service, Los Angeles Unified School District. An archived livestream of the event is available here.

## **Executive Branch Updates**

#### **National Advisory Child Health and Human Development Council Meeting**

The National Advisory Child Health and Human Development Council met on June 11 to advise the Director of the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The Director of NICHD, Dr. Diana Bianchi, opened the meeting with the director's report, which provided updates on a range of issues, including fiscal year 2020 appropriations and recent NICHD initiatives. Regarding FY20 appropriations, Dr. Bianchi testified at the NIH appropriations hearing in April alongside NIH director Dr. Francis Collins and four other institute directors. She noted that during the hearing, members of Congress asked many important questions related to areas in which NICHD has a research interest, including maternal mortality, newborn screening, postpartum depression, and pediatric research. Dr. Bianchi discussed the strong bipartisan support that was expressed for NIH, illustrated by a \$2 billion increase in funding for NIH and a \$80 million increase in funding for NICHD proposed in the FY20 House Appropriations Bill.

Dr. Bianchi then highlighted the work happening in four major NICHD initiatives. She first discussed NICHD's increasing focus on maternal mortality, including sponsoring a series of meetings aimed at updating the research agenda on maternal mortality, which have so far included a community engagement forum and a workshop on future research directions. Dr. Bianchi then provided an update on the Task Force on Research Specific to Pregnant and Lactating Women (PRGLAC), noting that they are now in phase two of PRGLAC, which is focused on implementing the 15 recommendations issued by the task force in September 2018. Finally, Dr. Bianchi provided updates on the trans-NIH INCLUDE Project, focused on Down syndrome, and the Data and Specimen Hub (DASH), a resource for researchers to store and access data and associated biospecimens from NICHD-supported studies.

The second half of the meeting was largely dedicated to an update on the NICHD strategic planning process, including a presentation on stakeholder feedback and a discussion among council members about the revised mission and vision statements. Dr. Bianchi noted that NICHD received 924 responses to the Request for Information released earlier this year, and that a summary of responses is available online. She also detailed some of the revisions currently being made to the strategic plan's themes and priorities, based on stakeholder feedback. Specifically regarding child development issues, Dr. Bianchi noted that revisions are being made to more clearly articulate continued support for studying typical and atypical child development, including adding language that directly addresses social and environmental factors in the development of children and adolescents. Additionally, she emphasized that the revised strategic plan will provide a stronger emphasis on the impact of and treatments for exposure to violence, stress, and trauma. The final version of the NICHD strategic plan is expected to be released in September 2019. Updates were also provided by the Division of Extramural Research, and a presentation was given on endometriosis. The meeting agenda, additional resources, and selected presentations from the meeting are available here, and a webcast of the event is available here.

## **OBSSR and COSSA Seek Submissions of Social Science Accomplishments**

The Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) within NIH is compiling an updated behavioral and social sciences research accomplishments resource that showcases the importance of behavioral and social sciences to health. OBSSR is requesting behavioral and social science researchers to submit key accomplishments of health-related behavioral and social sciences research to an online platform. Researchers can also add to and vote on existing submissions using this platform. Submissions are not limited to research funded by NIH. OBSSR welcomes both recent accomplishments and those that demonstrate the long-term impact of behavioral and social sciences. All submissions are due by July 31, 2019. Click here to read the full blog post by OBSSR Director Bill Riley for further information. Click here to read the submission guidelines and to submit.

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit organization that advocates for the sustained use of and support for behavioral and social science research in federal policies. To better illustrate the critical impact of the behavioral and social sciences, COSSA has launched a new submission page to collect behavioral and social science success stories that COSSA can use in their advocacy work. Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis. Click here for the submission page and for further information.

## **Federal Reports**

#### Reports

## New Reports and Briefs from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

- (1) *Brief from the MSHS Study 2017: Overview of the Study* This brief provides an overview of the background, methods, and research questions of the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) 2017 study.
- (2) *Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Study 2017: Data Tables* This report provides information on the background, design, methodology, and measures for the MSHS Study and includes detailed descriptive statistics on MSHS children, families, classrooms, centers, and programs.
- (3) Household Composition of Families Eligible for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS): Findings from the 2012-2016 National Agricultural Workers Survey This brief describes the household composition of migrant and seasonally laboring families who are eligible for MSHS.
- (4) Language, Literacy, and Educational Backgrounds of Parents from MSHS-Eligible Households: Findings from the 2012-2016 National Agricultural Workers Survey This brief describes the language, literacy, and educational backgrounds of MSHS-eligible families.
- (5) *IDEAS from the Field: A Case Study of the Healthy Visions Program* This brief describes a case study of Healthy Visions, a Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grantee, in Cincinnati, OH.
- (6) Findings from the Health Careers for All Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Health Careers for All program, a program in King County, WA that aims to help low-income adults access and complete occupational training that can lead to increased employment and higher earnings.

- (7) Findings from the Instituto del Progreso Latino, Carreras en Salud Program Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Carreras en Salud (Careers in Health) program, a program in Chicago, IL that aims to help low-income, low-skilled adults access and complete occupational training that can lead to increased employment and higher earnings.
- (8) Findings from the Pathways to Healthcare Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Pathways to Healthcare program, a program in Tucson, AZ that aims to help low-income, low-skilled adults access and complete occupational training that can lead to increased employment and higher earnings.
- (9) Findings from the Patient Care Pathway Program at Madison Area Technical College Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Patient Care Pathway program, a program in Madison, WI that aims to help low-skilled adults remediate their basic skills so that they can quickly access occupational training in the growing healthcare sector.
- (10) Findings from the San Diego County Bridge to Employment in the Healthcare Industry Program Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Bridge to Employment in the Healthcare Industry program, a program in San Diego County, CA that aims to help low-income, low-skilled adults access and complete occupational training that can lead to increased employment and higher earnings.
- (11) Findings from the Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA), a program in Lower Rio Grande Valley, TX that aims to meet the needs of low-income students and local employers for skilled workers.
- (12) Findings from the Workforce Training Academy Connect Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Workforce Training Academy Connect (WTA Connect) program, a program in Des Moines, IA that aims to help low-income, low-skilled adults access and complete occupational training that can lead to increased employment and higher earnings.
- (13) Findings from the Year Up Implementation and Early Impacts Report This brief summarizes findings of the implementation and early impacts study of Year Up, a national sectoral training program for young adults

- (14) Findings from Washington State's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) Program Implementation and Early Impact Report This brief summarizes the implementation and early impacts of the Washington State Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program, a program that aims to increase access to and completion of college-level occupational training in a variety of in-demand occupational areas.
- (15) *Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) 2.0: Year Three Annual Report (2017–18)* This report summarizes the status of the HPOG 2.0 Program participants' activities, outcomes, and characteristics from the start of the program through the end of Year 3.
- (16) *Child Care Subsidy Stability Literature Review* This literature review provides a synthesis of research on child care subsidy stability published in the last five years.
- (17) Child Maltreatment Incidence Data Linkages: Project Overview This report provides an overview of the Child Maltreatment Incidence Data Linkages project which aims to examine the feasibility of leveraging administrative data linkages to better understand child maltreatment incidence and related risk and protective factors.
- (18) Supporting the Fatherhood Journey: Findings from the Parents and Children Together Evaluation (PACT) This online report describes the four Responsible Fatherhood (RF) programs in the Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation, their services, and their impacts on fathers.
- (19) *GOALS Summary Report* This **report** summarizes the major tasks conducted under the Goal-Oriented Adult Learning in Self-Sufficiency (GOALS) project and the resulting products.
- (20) A Theoretical and Stakeholder-Informed Assessment Framework for the National Domestic Violence Hotline This brief describes the efforts of the National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) Services Assessment Framework based on Theory (SAF-T) project to develop a theoretical framework to explain how The Hotline empowers and supports contactors by phone, text, or chat.

(21) Stakeholder Engagement and Participatory Approach to Develop an Assessment Framework for the National Domestic Violence Hotline This brief describes the National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) Services Assessment Framework based on Theory (SAF-T) project's use of a participatory approach to engage a range of stakeholders throughout the process of developing a theoretical framework to explain how The Hotline empowers and supports contactors by phone, text, or chat.

#### New Report from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

- (1) Supporting Employment Among Lower-Income Mothers: The Role of Paid Family Leave This brief describes findings from a qualitative study of lower-income mothers and the role of state paid family leave (PFL) programs in supporting mothers' return to employment.
- (2) Supporting Employment Among Lower-Income Mothers: Attachment to Work After Childbirth This brief describes findings from a qualitative study of lower-income mothers and explores the reasons mothers returned to work after childbirth (or did not), why they returned to their pre-birth employers, and factors that eased (or challenged) the transition back to work.

### **New Reports and Briefs from the Institute of Education Sciences**

Several new reports are available from the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Department of Education:

- (1) Characteristics of Private Schools in the United States: Results From the 2017-18 Private School Universe Survey This First Look Report provides selected findings from the 2017-18 Private School Universe Survey (PSS) regarding private schools that were in operation during the 2017-18 school year.
- (2) Technology Use in Instruction and Teacher Perceptions of School Support for Technology Use in Iowa High Schools This report describes the findings from a descriptive research study on the extent to which teachers are using technology to support the development of 21st century skills and on teacher perceptions and school supports related to technology integration.

- (3) *IPEDS Completions Brochure* This **brochure** informs data users about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and describes the different award levels that are collected, the fields of study collected, as well as related terminology.
- (4) *IPEDS Admissions Brochure* This **brochure** informs data users about the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and describes the data related to the number of students who applied to a school, were admitted, and eventually enrolled.
- (5) *U.S. Highlighted Results From the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) of Teachers and Principals in Lower Secondary Schools (Grades 7–9)* This web report provides key comparative information about teachers and principals in the United States and 48 other education systems that participated in the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018.
- (6) Student and School Characteristics Associated with Academic Performance and English Language Proficiency Among English Learner Students in Grades 3–8 in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District This report describes findings from a study that examined means and percentages of students, school characteristics and student achievement of English learner students in grades 3-8.
- (7) Professional Learning Community: Improving Mathematical Problem Solving for Students in Grades 4 Through 8 Facilitator's Guide This facilitators' guide is a set of professional development materials designed to supplement the What Works Clearinghouse practice guide, Improving Mathematical Problem Solving in Grades 4 Through 8.
- (8) Algebra I Coursetaking and Postsecondary Enrollment This Data Point uses data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 to examine the association between the timing of Algebra I coursetaking and enrollment in postsecondary education.
- (9) Going Back to College: Undergraduates Who Already Held a Postsecondary Credential This Data Point presents the percentage of undergraduates who already held a postsecondary certificate or degree while enrolled in 2015-16 and examines the current field of study among those who held a bachelor's or higher degree.

(10) *The Condition of Education 2019* This annual report summarizes important developments and trends in education using the latest available data.

## **Federal Funding Opportunities**

This month's FFO highlights eight different Institute of Education Sciences funding opportunities. In awarding these grants, the Institute of Education Sciences (Institute) intends to provide national leadership in expanding knowledge and understanding of (1) developmental and school readiness outcomes for infants and toddlers with or at risk for a disability, (2) education outcomes for all learners from early childhood education through postsecondary and adult education, and (3) employment and wage outcomes when relevant (such as for those engaged in career and technical, postsecondary, or adult education. The Institute's National Center for Education Research (NCER) will hold a total of five competitions. The Institute's National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) will hold a total of three competitions. The application package will be available on July 11, 2019. For all but one competition, completed applications are due by August 29, 2019. CFDA 84.305C Education Research and Development Centers has a deadline of September 26, 2019. Click here to learn about these and other funding opportunities.