

From: POLITICO Pro Education <politicoemail@politicopro.com>

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Subject: Morning Education, Sponsored by AccessLex Institute: How will Trump's \$200 million STEM investment work? — A look at student performance on the new SAT — Perkins Loan advocates rally support ahead of Saturday deadline

To: <avance@fpf.org>

By Michael Stratford | 09/26/2017 06:01 AM EDT

With help from Caitlin Emma and Mel Leonor

HOW WILL TRUMP'S \$200 MILLION STEM INVESTMENT WORK? The Trump administration on Monday told Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to spend at least \$200 million in existing grant funds per year on the promotion of high-quality STEM education and, in particular, computer science education. But to be clear, DeVos won't repurpose existing funds to create a new grant program. Rather, STEM education will be a "priority" for the Education Department in doling out funds through existing discretionary grant programs.

— **DeVos' agency is expected to announce those [priorities](#) soon, according to the Trump administration's [Unified Agenda](#).** It's a typical move by a presidential administration to advance policy goals. For example, during the Obama administration, former Education Secretary John B. King Jr. put forward a priority to increase socioeconomic diversity in schools. As a result, school districts applying for federal grants would get points for proposing projects that sought to tackle segregation or concentrated poverty.

— **It appears the Trump administration is seeking to do the same with STEM,** according to the [memorandum](#) signed by the president on Monday. That memorandum also instructs DeVos to look at what "administrative actions" she can take to "add or increase focus on computer science in existing K-12 and postsecondary programs." That could look like "guidance documents and other technical assistance that could support high quality computer science education," the memo says. [Caitlin Emma and Ian Kullgren have more.](#)

— **The Trump administration's focus on STEM and computer science comes despite a proposed \$9 billion cut to the Education Department,** which would've hit programs that states could use to support those efforts. The president's proposed cuts were disappointing, said Cameron Wilson, COO of the nonprofit Code.org. But the organization welcomes the president's focus on coding, Wilson said in an interview. Ideally, the \$200 million in existing funds will be used across grant programs to help prepare computer science teachers and reach a diverse population of students, he said.

— **"If you think about where we started four years ago, we certainly couldn't get governors to pay attention to this issue," Wilson said.** But states are increasingly investing in computer science education, he noted. For example, more states in recent years have created standards for teaching computer science and are allowing computer science to count toward high school graduation. [More.](#)

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A LOOK AT STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON THE NEW SAT: Much-awaited data on the performance of 2017 graduates on the redesigned SAT was released this morning by the College Board, which reports that 46 percent of high school graduates who took the test met the nonprofit's new college-readiness benchmarks. The mean score for students who took both the reading and math portions of the exam was 1,060 out of a maximum score of 1,600 — a performance baseline the nonprofit will use to start tracking the progress of student performance. The College Board's new college-readiness benchmark represents a 75 percent likelihood that a student will earn at least a C grade in a first-semester course in a subject related to the SAT section — like algebra and calculus for the math section, or history and literature for the reading section.

— **For the first time in years,** the College Board declined to release data to compare performance on the SAT from one year to the next. College Board President and CEO David Coleman said that because few students took the new SAT last year, the nonprofit doesn't have two "significant cohorts" to compare test performance. The results released Tuesday will set a new baseline that will allow comparisons to resume in 2018. "We will, by next year, fully answer questions of comparison and I look forward to that," Coleman said.

— **But a look at [concordance tables](#)** released by the College Board in May of last year to compare scores from the old version of the SAT and the redesigned version show that a score of 1,060 on the new SAT is the equivalent of a 980 in the previous version. Last year's mean combined score for students who took the reading and math portions was [1,002](#). Still,

Cyndie Schmeiser, a senior adviser at the College Board, said the nonprofit is staying away from publicizing such comparisons, to minimize confusion. "It's a new test, new scale, new norms," Schmeiser said. "We are doing our best to try to disengage the old SAT and its performance from the new, so we can start a new baseline."

— **College Board data shows that 70 percent of Asian students and 59 percent of white students met the nonprofit's college-readiness benchmarks. But fewer than 1 in 3 Hispanic students, and just 1 in 5 black students met those benchmarks.** Among students whose first language is not English, 44 percent met the benchmarks. Among those who used a fee waiver to take the SAT, that number is 27 percent. Out of about 1.8 million students who took the SAT, 1.7 million opted for the redesigned version. The 1.8 million represents a modest increase over last year's 1.68 million participation rate and is the largest cohort in SAT history. Still, more graduating seniors are taking the ACT. The organization reported earlier this year that [2.03 million](#) graduates took its exam, 39 percent of whom met its college-readiness benchmarks. More from Mel Leonor [here](#).

PERKINS LOAN ADVOCATES RALLY SUPPORT AHEAD OF DEADLINE: A bipartisan group of House lawmakers will announce this morning that more than half of the House of Representatives, 219 lawmakers, has signed on as cosponsors to legislation to reauthorize the federal Perkins Loan program. The program, under which more than 315,000 students received low-interest loans in the past fiscal year, is set to expire on Saturday unless Congress acts.

— **Reps. [Mark Pocan](#) (D-Wis.) and [Elise Stefanik](#) (R-N.Y.) called on House leaders to hold a vote on their bill, [H.R. 2482 \(115\)](#), which would extend the life of the federal loan program for two years.** They said that 186 Democrats and 33 Republicans are now backing the bill, including GOP Conference Chairwoman [Cathy McMorris Rodgers](#) and House Minority Whip [Steny Hoyer](#).

— **Advocates of the program still face an uphill climb to get Congress to enact a reauthorization.** House Education Chairwoman [Virginia Foxx](#) hasn't backed the measure, and a committee spokesman confirmed to Morning Education that there are no plans to take up the issue this week. Supporters of the program have introduced companion legislation in the Senate, but Senate HELP Chairman [Lamar Alexander](#) has previously indicated that he'd like to see the program end as part of an effort to simplify and streamline the array of federal student loan programs.

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HAPPENING TODAY: HIGHER EDUCATION DEREGULATION HEARING: The Trump administration is holding the first of two hearings to solicit public feedback on which federal higher education regulations and requirements it should roll back or change. Education Department officials will hold a daylong hearing today at the Miller Campus of Salt Lake Community College in Sandy, Utah. They are interested in hearing public comments focused specifically on identifying higher education regulations and guidance "that may be appropriate for repeal, replacement or modification," according to an official [notice](#) of the meeting. A second hearing will be held on Oct. 4 at the department's Washington D.C. headquarters.

HOUSE TO CONSIDER HOME VISITING REAUTHORIZATION TODAY: The House is scheduled to vote today on the reauthorization of a federal home visiting program aimed at assisting low-income families with young children. The program, known as the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program, expires at the end of the month. The House Rules Committee on Monday night [voted](#) to combine [H.R. 2824 \(115\)](#), legislation to reauthorize the program, with [H.R. 2792 \(115\)](#), a bill that would [prohibit](#) Supplemental Security Income payments to people with an outstanding arrest warrant for a felony or for violating a condition of probation or parole.

— **That bill, called the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act or CUFF Act,** would fund the reauthorization of the home visiting program — but the pay-for has been opposed by Democrats and a number of home visiting advocacy groups. "The CUFF Act may sound positive, but in effect, it would deny many children, adolescents and young adults Supplemental Security Income benefits, which help cover the cost of care for mental and physical disabilities," Fernando Stein, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [said this month](#). "At a time when so many children and families are facing adversity, eroding federal funding for one vital program serving those communities to fund another is not a workable solution." The Congressional Budget Office [estimates](#) that reauthorizing the home visiting program would cost about \$2 billion through 2027.

HOMESCHOOLING BOOM LEVELS OFF: About 3.3 percent of all K-12 students in the U.S. were homeschooled in 2016, roughly the same share as was homeschooled in 2012, according to [new data](#) from the National Center for Education Statistics. The stall follows a boom recorded between 1999 and 2012, during which the share of students who were homeschooled jumped from 1.7 percent to 3.4 percent. Parents surveyed by NCES in 2016 most frequently cited concerns about school environment, such as safety, drugs or negative peer pressure, as one reason to homeschool. Thirty-four percent cited this as the most important reason to homeschool their children, while 17 percent of parents cited dissatisfaction with academic offerings and 16 percent reported the desire to provide a religious instruction as the most important reason to homeschool.

— **The survey also measured the involvement of parents in their children's school.** Sixty-two percent of students had parents who said they received notes from their child's school specifically about their child, while 42 percent of students had

parents who said they had been contacted by their child's school by telephone. Eighty-nine percent of parents reported that they have attended at least one parent-teacher organization event — the most common way for parents with children in the third through the 12th grade to participate in their child's school.

— **NCES also released data Tuesday on the participation of children age 5 and younger in early childhood education programs.** About 60 percent of these children were enrolled in a regularly scheduled program that they attended at least once a week, according to parents surveyed by NCES. Fifty-nine percent attended a daycare center, preschool or prekindergarten program, while 41 percent were cared for by a relative and 22 percent were cared for in the private home of a non-relative. Parents who reported having difficulty finding child care most frequently cited the cost as the primary obstacle, followed by a lack of open slots.

REPORT ROLL CALL

— Gallup and Strada Education Network are out with a new report analyzing who or what Americans rely on when choosing their college major. Read it [here](#).

— FutureEd, the education think tank housed by Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy, will release a report this morning that shows 36 states and D.C. will look at chronic absenteeism in some way in their plans under the Every Student Succeeds Act. FutureEd will release the report during an event at 10 a.m. ET. [Watch live](#).

— A [new study](#) in the Economics of Education Review suggests that California charter school students do better on tests when their charter schools unionize.

— The Education Commission of the States, a nonprofit, is out with a [new report](#) on how states are reaching the 31 million U.S. adults who have some college education, but no degree.

— The Future of Privacy Forum, a think tank focused on data privacy, is out with a [new guide](#) for school administrators and education technology service providers on law enforcement access to student records.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

— **Kami Spicklemire** is joining the communications team at the Education Trust this week. She was previously a campaign manager at the Center for American Progress.

CALENDAR

— 12 p.m. Attorney General Jeff Sessions delivers remarks regarding free speech on college campuses. Georgetown University Law Center, [600 New Jersey Avenue NW](#), Hart Auditorium, Washington, D.C.

SYLLABUS

— Maryland prosecutors are investigating former Baltimore County school superintendent Dallas Dance: [The Baltimore Sun](#).

— Connecticut Supreme Court to hear landmark public schools funding case: [The Associated Press](#).

— U.S. appeals court says that University of Cincinnati should not have suspended a student accused of sexual assault: [The Associated Press](#).

— Colleges move to close gender gap in science: [The Wall Street Journal](#).

— Georgetown Law students and faculty plan to protest Attorney General Jeff Sessions' speech: [The Washington Post](#).

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Graduate and professional students go on to become lawyers, doctors, social workers and other client-serving professionals—critical jobs that require additional education after college. Policies that enable more people to go to law school, for example, will have an impact that reaches beyond individual law students—it will affect each client that these lawyers serve. Law school graduates fill high-need roles to ensure people from all walks of life are not denied access to adequate legal representation. Without the right federal policies in place, this same scenario can be applied to various fields across our economy.

That's why AccessLex Institute will **#MakeTheCase** that policies which provide improved access, increased affordability and better value to all students are the right policies for America.

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Trump directs \$200 million to tech education for women and minorities [Back](#)

By Ian Kullgren and Caitlin Emma | 09/25/2017 06:18 PM EDT

President Donald Trump on Monday directed at least \$200 million a year to technology education grants for women and minorities.

The president signed a memo instructing Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to prioritize STEM through existing competitive grant programs that will encourage women and minorities to participate in coding and other computer-based careers — though senior administration officials offered few specifics on how they would fulfill that goal.

"We need to create pathways for all our citizens to get jobs," Trump said at an Oval Office signing ceremony, surrounded by children. "When you get out of school, you're gonna get great jobs."

Senior administration officials said they would leave crucial specifics — such as who will receive the federal funds — up to DeVos. One official emphasized they would focus on programs that start children on this path at a young age.

The grants won't require congressional approval or new appropriations, White House officials said, because they will rely on existing Education Department funds.

The announcement comes amid a national discussion about gender equality in Silicon Valley, sparked by allegations of sexism at Uber, Google and other startups. Administration officials suggested the timing is not coincidental.

"Women are not equally participating in certain lucrative industries and fields, and we're looking to change the equation by designing these education programs to encourage gender and racial diversity," one senior official said. "It is clearly an enormous problem."

Trump seemed to say that the amount is still inadequate, telling the students that although \$200 million might seem like "big bucks," it is actually "peanuts, peanuts."

First daughter Ivanka Trump will travel to Detroit on Tuesday, where leaders of several businesses — including Quicken Loans and General Motors — are expected to announce private investments aimed at the same goal.

"It is vital that our students become fluent in coding and computer science, with early exposure to both," Ivanka Trump said in a phone call with reporters prior to the signing ceremony.

The new grant program comes after Ivanka Trump reportedly sought input from Silicon Valley this summer on STEM instruction. She talked to Apple CEO Tim Cook and Laurene Powell Jobs, the widow of Steve Jobs, who chairs the board of XQ: The Super School Project, an effort aimed at "rethinking" high school.

In July, the president announced that he was donating his salary for the second quarter of the year to the Department of Education. The \$100,000 donation from Trump will be used to help fund a camp for students to explore science and math careers. But the announcement was met with anger by some education advocates, who found the charitable donation insulting while Trump was also seeking a \$9 billion cut to the agency in his budget request.

DeVos and Ivanka Trump also [teamed up](#) in July for a STEM-focused reading event at the National Museum of American History. They took turns reading "Rosie Revere, Engineer" by Andrea Beaty to a group of D.C.-area girls with the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club. "You are the next generation," Trump told the girls, encouraging them to grow up to be inventors, engineers and coders.

The STEM push from the White House is nothing new. It was a [key priority](#) for the Obama administration, with former President Barack Obama pledging in 2011 to preparing 100,000 new math and science teachers by 2021 and securing more than \$1 billion in private investments to improve STEM education.

The Obama administration also focused on STEM in some of its signature competitive grant programs, like [Race to the Top](#), which awarded states hundreds of millions of dollars for their efforts to turn around low-performing schools and improve STEM education.

Other grant programs housed under the Education Department have a STEM focus, like the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program, which has awarded colleges and universities hundreds of thousands of dollars to "increase the flow of

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[Back](#)

SAT results show 46 percent of high school graduates ready for college [Back](#)

By Mel Leonor | 09/26/2017 06:00 AM EDT

Forty-six percent of 2017 high school graduates who took the redesigned SAT met the College Board's college-readiness benchmarks, according to [data released by the nonprofit](#) Tuesday.

It's the first glimpse at student performance on the redesigned SAT, which the College Board rolled out in March of last year with a new scoring scale and redesigned college-readiness standards. The mean score for students who took both the reading and math portions of the exam was 1,060 out of a maximum score of 1,600.

The College Board's [college-readiness benchmark](#) represents a 75 percent likelihood that a student will earn at least a C grade in a first-semester course in a subject related to the SAT section — like algebra and calculus for the math section, or history and literature for the reading section.

For the first time in years, the College Board declined to release data to compare performance on the SAT from one year to the next. College Board President and CEO David Coleman said that because few students took the new SAT last year, the nonprofit doesn't have two "significant cohorts" to compare test performance. The results released Tuesday will set a new baseline that will allow comparisons to resume in 2018.

"We will, by next year, fully answer questions of comparison and I look forward to that," Coleman said.

The new SAT is meant to be more reflective of what students are actually learning in the classroom, according to the College Board. The new test, for example, does away with obscure vocabulary questions and focuses more on contextual understanding, placing greater emphasis on skills "that research has identified as most important for college and career readiness and success."

A look at [concordance tables](#) released by the College Board in May of last year to compare scores from the old version of the SAT and the redesigned version show that a score of 1,060 on the new SAT is the equivalent of a 980 in the previous version. Last year's mean combined score for students who took the reading and math portions was [1,002](#).

But Cyndie Schmeiser, a senior adviser at the College Board, said the nonprofit is staying away from publicizing such comparisons, in an effort to minimize confusion.

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Out of about 1.8 million students who took the SAT, 1.7 million opted for the redesigned version. The 1.8 million represents a modest increase over last year's 1.68 million participation rate and is the largest cohort in SAT history.

Still, more graduating seniors are taking the ACT. The organization reported earlier this year that [2.03 million](#) graduates took its exam, 39 percent of whom met its college-readiness benchmarks.

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