

NASFAA's "Off the Cuff" Podcast - Episode 205 Transcript

OTC Inside the Beltway: Reconciliation, Vaccine Mandates, and More

Justin:

Hey everyone. Welcome to another edition of Off the Cuff. I'm Justin Draeger.

Karen:

And I'm Karen McCarthy from NASFAA's policy team.

Jon:

And I'm Jon Fansmith from American Council on Education.

Justin:

Hey, everyone. Welcome to Off the Cuff. As our new intro music just indicated we're switching up Off the Cuff, after five years. We've done a five-year run, had over 250,000, a quarter-million downloads. And after soliciting your feedback and retooling for the last two months, we're coming back, but in a slightly different way. I remember there's this adage that if it ain't broke, don't fix it. And I've never put much stock in adages. So we're fixing and retooling anyway, and we're going to be changing it up a little bit.

Justin:

So our episodes will be a little bit shorter, a little bit punchier whenever possible. We'll have a slightly different focus from week to week, from what's happening on Capitol Hill to the latest regulatory guidance, more interviews from members in the field, and touching base with some of our higher education and political reporters on what's going on in higher ed reporting. What's not changing is us getting information to you and the info you need to do your jobs. And to help you understand the context and nuances around financial aid. And to that end, let's jump into today's episode. You already heard our guests, Karen McCarthy and Jon Fansmith. Karen, let me start with you. First of all, before the podcast, I'd asked you to share your title, which you did not do because you're such a team player, but your new title is? Do you know your new title?

Karen:

Yeah. Vice president of Public Policy and Federal Relations.

Justin:

That's right.

Jon:

Yay.

Justin:

Congratulations, Karen.

Karen:

Thank you.

Justin:

This was announced in *Today's News* on Thursday morning, and we couldn't be more excited to have you leading up our policy and advocacy efforts. I think most of our members know the expertise you bring to the table. What they might not know is behind the scenes, a lot of times Karen has been working with congressional offices and a lot of people at the Department of Education and is relied on by a lot of folks in the government relations world for her expertise. I think Jon, it was Terry who was maybe called Karen once, his personal student financial aid genius bar, something to that effect.

Karen:

Oh yeah. I do remember that.

Jon:

Terry is effusive whenever your name comes up, Karen. So it is not hard to believe he would've said that or something 10 times as praiseworthy.

Karen:

Oh, that's nice.

Justin:

So we're really glad Karen, that you are in this position. Welcome and glad to have you here.

Karen:

Yes. Thank you so much. And I am really excited about this new opportunity to continue to serve NASFAA and all of our member schools. It's been great this morning. I've gotten some congratulatory emails, some blasts from the past from people who I didn't know, still read *Today's News*. So that has, it's been wonderful to hear from people I'm really looking forward to it.

Justin:

Great. Thank you, Karen. Let me turn to you, Jon. Thanks for joining us today Jon, from the American Council on Education, what do you do over there, Jon?

Jon:

I do a whole lot of things and thanks, first of all, for having me on, it's nice to be on a popular podcast as compared to my own podcast, which is one of the many things I do at ACE.

Justin:

Well, your podcast is like a murder mystery, right?

Jon:

It is, yeah.

Justin:

Okay.

Jon:

Right. We go over murders that have already been covered by other podcasts, which might be part of the problem with our appeal.

Justin:

The murder secondary podcast.

Jon:

We're mostly reading other podcasts about their problem solving, their crime solving. No. So at ACE, and for people are not familiar with ACE, the American Council in Education is the umbrella group for American higher ed. We represent about 1700 college and university presidents from every sector of higher ed. And we focus on federal policy advocacy before the federal government and bringing the higher education community to speak with one voice before the federal government. So the plus of that for ACE is we deal with everything that the federal government does in terms of touching a college or university. The downside of that is we deal with everything that the federal government does in terms of colleges and universities. So we're very busy all the time, but my particular focus, I focus on budget and appropriations, federal student aid, especially, both in terms of funding and policy and then a whole grab bag of other issues, teacher preparation, disability issues, privacy, security, technology, things like that. And other things as they arise, cause something always pops up.

Justin:

Well, we are very appreciative of ACE and all the work that they do. I've served on the ACE board of directors for a number of years. I've served on the Washington Higher Education Steering Committee for a number of years. And ACE in that convening umbrella role is pretty vital to making sure higher education's sort of all moving in the same direction whenever possible. Sometimes we're like totally unruly and ungovernable, but largely trying to move in the same direction. So Jon, let me ask you here, what is going on in Washington D.C.? Because I'm trying to wrap my head around simultaneously how Congress can be doing so much and so little at the same time.

Jon:

You're not leaving me a lot to talk with because that's kind of the point, right? There is a lot happening that's accomplishing nothing, which is maybe not surprising for Congress. That's in some ways been the pattern recently. As we record this, we have averted the financial collapse of the global economy for a couple months. So that's a positive, right? Yeah. My retirement plan is happy for that news. The bigger thing I think from the higher ed perspective is we are still muddling through on reconciliation. That's what I'm spending most of my time on. That process is incredibly active with no clear resolution at this point. And then there's other things, things outside my expertise, vaccine mandates, the federal government's role in enforcing and supporting those across the country, and all the usual congressional stuff about budget and appropriations and the funding process, and policy issues and, regulations in the Department of Education, announcements by the department on PSLF. I mean, there's a lot of things happening.

Justin:

So let me, we've talked a lot over the years about budget and appropriations and how much actually student aid legislation has just passed that way because it's usually the only one of the only trains leaving the congressional station. So budget reconciliation, we started at around, what? \$3.5 trillion. And where are we now? Is it shrinking by the day? It seems like we don't have a final number yet. What's up?

Jon:

So first of all, we started depending on who you ask, at \$10 trillion then we went to \$6 trillion. There seemed to be an agreement at \$3.5 trillion, which sent the house writing a bill at \$3.5 trillion. And now we're, depending on you ask, either \$2 trillion, which is what Senator Manchin has supposedly agreed to come up to. Or \$2.5 to \$2.9 trillion, which is where the house progressives want to put the reconciliation bill at. So less than three and a half, they're coming down, he's coming up a little bit, but where it'll actually wind up. Nobody knows. They're still trying to figure that out.

Justin:

So the entire friction right now about this final number, and then you sort of back out of that, right? With what policy proposals you can fit into this. This friction is all on the democratic side. I assume because Republicans are what completely shut out of this.

Jon:

They're shut out. They want to be shut out. The Democrats would love to have your Republican vote in favor of this package. It will not happen. So, this is an intra-party dispute. It's an intra-party dispute between their two respective wings, the moderates, and the progressives. And the progressives, I talked about a \$10 trillion bill, that's what the progressives wanted initially. They wanted the green new deal, massive climate change spending, massive spending on early childhood education and childcare. Across the board, the presidents build back better agenda. They wanted it all in there. Moderates who predominantly are coming from seats that may be swing seats where the next election may see them vulnerable want to be a little bit more fiscally restraining. They may be concerned about where some of this money's going, how it's going to be framed in campaign ads against them. So they want to rein that in a little bit, be a little bit more focused with what they're doing. It's purely within the democratic party though.

Justin:

So, where's the president coming down. Is he siding with the moderates or the progressives? Where's he put his finger on the scales?

Jon:

In my opinion, he's doing a really good job because you can't say he's putting his finger on one side or the other. He would clearly... What president wouldn't, like to see everything they want push forward. And that would be on the progressive end of this scale. That said, he's been very actively involved trying to bring the moderates up and trying to bring the progressives down. I think when you look at where things stand, what's become increasingly clear over the last two weeks is the Democrats moved right up to the brink of this falling apart.

Jon:

And they realized that, both sides realized, we have to do something. Something is better than nothing. Nothing is a huge failure and a huge failure a year out from an election in which the margins in both the house and the Senate are so incredibly tight is a very bad look to get. Also lots of expectations that Republicans will recapture the house. Maybe recapture the Senate in next elections. Historically, that would be the pattern. This maybe their last opportunity to do something like this. You might not get it for another four years. You might not get to do it with the Biden administration. So there's some urgency that I think came through that people said, 'I have my preferences, but I'd rather get a half of all than nothing at all.'

Justin:

It's weird because we're sort of used to this game of chicken between Republicans and Democrats.

Jon:

Right.

Justin:

You're not always used to the game of chicken between Democrats and Democrats. So what of this, wherever it is \$2 trillion, \$2.5 trillion, \$2.9 trillion, wherever we land. How much of that is higher ed?

Jon:

So right now, if it's \$3.5 trillion, it's \$111 billion. And the bulk of that is free community college plan, the America's College Promise plan, which also incorporates, and this doesn't get talked about a lot, but it's actually a big component, a tuition subsidy for two years of tuition support at HBCUs, tribal colleges and universities, minority serving institutions. Actually sort of flip sides of the same coin, but the free community college gets mostly attention. There's also \$9 billion for completion grants, a \$500 increase to the Pell Grant, substantially less than what the Biden administration asked for. They'd ask for \$1,475. So just about a third of what they'd ask for, and then there's other money in there. There's money to support research and development infrastructure at minority serving institutions, money to provide institutional support to those institutions as well. A few other things in there, there's workforce programs, there's some teacher preparation programs. It's a pretty expansive bill with lots of items in it, but the big number is \$111 billion. That's the total of higher education specific funding.

Justin:

So do you think we should read into this in terms of where the Democrats priority is? If the bulk of the funding is going to free community college with basically a similar provision at HBCU or at minority serving institutions, and a much smaller Pell Grant than the president asked, does that mean that they're favoring that proposal over Pell?

Jon:

So you could read it that way, I think that's a fair interpretation. I think a lot of this is frustrating to explain to people because it's driven less by policy and more by numbers. The president had a set of requests on education that would've been about. I forget what it was \$860 billion, \$880 billion, something like that, maybe \$900 billion actually, now that I think about, and the committees of jurisdiction had \$780 billion spent, they couldn't spend at the levels he wanted. And so then when you look, things had to be adjusted. Well to do a free community college program there's a certain bottom

line amount you have to spend, right? If you're going to do it for X number of years, it costs X amount of money.

Jon:

Pell Grants, you could spend \$1475, like the president wanted, you could spend a hundred, they're an increase, but it's scalable. It can ride up and down. And as all of these priorities, and I talked about the education ones, but there's other education ones, K-12 school construction, things like that. There's climate change, all those priorities sort of fight with each other within the bill, things get scaled, they slide, they move. So I think to say within the higher education space, free community college is a bigger priority. It certainly is getting more money than Pell is.

Justin:

So here's my follow up question. If the overall amount that we're going to spend on this bill shrinks, let's assume it's coming down from where the house land.

Jon:

Yeah.

Justin:

And we're saying that the priority appeared to be at least, given a world of limited resources, appeared to be for free community college. What gets trimmed? Is it Pell, is it free community college in some way? Where's the trimming happen?

Jon:

It's a good question. I think my best guess answer would be it's less about the what and more about the how, we're already seeing these proposals about how do you take what's in the bill, not just in education, but I'll talk about the education components, and reduce their overall cost. How do you give everything a haircut? And that's the debate right now. Do you do a lot of things not as well as you'd like to? Or a few things as well as you'd like to? The reality of that is, you would say as a public policy person, do certain things right, right? Fund them to the level that they will be successful.

Jon:

The political reality is those things are on there because members have voiced support for them. The administration has voice support for it. The reason the funding level shift is because there's this distribution of support where they're trying to account for all the interests needed to get it over the finish line. And when you have a three vote margin, essentially for a vote in the house, in a zero vote margin in the Senate, you can't afford to alienate somebody by cutting out what they want. So I think probably what you'll see is they'll look at that haircut approach.

Justin:

Yeah.

Jon:

They'll do things like free community college is paid for, for five years. Maybe they make it means tested and maybe they make it for three years. There's a belief also among a lot of Democrats that if you do

something, you put it into place, it's very popular in three years, even with a Republican Congress say that's in place, they're going to face so much political pressure to extend it that you're essentially sort of cheating by getting the money you would've paid for and out years back and putting the political problem on somebody else.

Justin:

Yeah. And sticking to, we've talked before in this podcast about what's in the free community college, but sticking to the politics for a minute, two questions. Well, one observation and a question for you. This reminds me a bit of Obamacare, which is you put it into place and then besides it being popular, then it becomes a rallying cry for another election in the future. If you time it just right, Democrats can rally around. Republicans are trying to cut this benefit. My question to you is, ACE represents 1700 different colleges, all different sectors. You represent the presidents, the presidential voice on those campuses. What's the reaction from four year schools on the way that this bill is divided up?

Jon:

That's a terribly unfair question to bring me onto your podcast. I actually saw you smiling as you asked that. Free college generally is one of those issues at ACE gives us the most headaches, right? Because there's no free college proposal, at least that has been introduced that doesn't produce pretty significant winners and pretty significant losers, right? When you go to free community college, even as a microcosm of this issue, you've now eliminated four year institutions as you pointed out from eligibility for that. At the same time, you have these pressures downward on the Pell Grant funding. I think there is some understandable frustration on four year institution's part that what they saw as an expansive administration agenda around free college, around doubling Pell Grants when it's being put into reality. And again, we talked, maybe the last chance for these things to be implemented, is so much further reduced from what they had hoped for.

Jon:

Right? So there is some reluctance about that. Again, I think there's probably some desire to see Pell increase at the expense of free community college or other proposals. That said even within the community college community, the proposal that's out there, America's College Promise is not without critics and advocates. The way they do it's a very hard program to design, is a test case for free college generally. It's identifying all the problems you would see if you tried to do this, it requires states to participate, require states to put up a lot of money to participate.

Jon:

It's not clear, especially with only a five year window to get it implemented and funded, that it'll work in a great way. That said it's a transformational investment in American higher education. The first on the federal government is actually reaching out and paying directly for the tuition of students directly to the institution. So, there's a lot still to be determined. I think for your schools, probably, the overall sense is disappointment, maybe a little frustration, but we at ACE, rising tide lifts all boats, we're trying to make sure that everybody on the same page for the greatest possible good coming out of this.

Justin:

I think that's a great answer and displays some of your political adeptness Jon. So, well done. Let me shift the conversation for just a moment, because you mentioned something earlier in the expansive portfolio of issues the ACE has to work on. The issue of vaccine mandates. So this is kind of raged across

the country. There are some states that are engaged in lawsuits with institutions who want them or don't want them. So the Biden administration released basically an announcement, I don't know, a couple weeks ago, basically saying that they're going to require all contractors, federal employees, and contractors to be vaccinated. And one of the questions that came out of that was, well institutions have contracts with the department. They have research grant contracts. They have a PPA that every president has signed that I don't know how you see that as anything other than a contract, any idea where this might land and how this might impact schools?

Jon:

Yeah, well, no, to be totally candid.

Justin:

Okay.

Jon:

And I should say, ACE has just put out, as of this week, an issue brief on this very subject. I will say it's available on our website. One of the things that I say, I don't know, it's really hard to say, right? The executive order actually said, not just federal contractors above \$250,000, but if you have a contract like instrument, which is not a contract, right? You talked about the PPA, is the PPA contract? Is it a contract like instrument? How do you define these things and what gets captured? Does student aid, which institutions in many ways are a pass through to the students, is your student aid volume count as your contract as an institution with the government? These things are not necessarily... Well, no, there's more guidance forthcoming. OSHA will set up their standards.

Jon:

Some of these things will change the environment. It's difficult. And I think the other thing you started by talking about, this is raging across the country. It's very politicized. A vaccine mandate in Massachusetts looks very different than the vaccine mandate in Florida or Arizona does. And if you are an institution, particularly public institution, in one of those states where the legislature and the leadership is strongly opposed to vaccine mandate, in some ways, this is pushing you in a very uncomfortable direction where you're looking at the federal government versus your state government and trying to navigate a course between them. I have great sympathy for those presidents. We are doing what we can to give them advice. I'm sure they're consulting with their general counsels and their student financial aid advisors, and everyone else on campus to see where their position, but it's difficult. We're going to learn more, but it's not clear that the answers will be as clear and direct and easy for an institution to implement as we go.

Justin:

Okay. Two questions for you on that. One is, do you agree that the Biden administration is looking for the most expansive reach that they have? So if there's a question about PPA... Research grants probably touch what? Like one out of four schools? PPA touches nine out of 10. I would think they would try to be as expansive as possible. That's my first assumption. The second is wherever this lands, I also assume there'll be some sort of legal action on one side or the other. Challenging, I don't know if it'll be on the college side, but somewhere along the line, I expect that one OSHA comes out with their guidance there might be a legal protest somewhere in that pipeline.

Jon:

I think we've already seen states that have announced that they will, as soon as that's in place, but I think both your assumptions are absolutely correct. The Biden administration wants shots in arms. They're not being opaque about that. They're not being coy about that. They're very frustrated by the fact that... We don't see the vaccine nation rates in large parts of this country that we should. And that as Delta is surging again, and we're heading towards colder weather, you have reason to be concerned. That is absolutely what they're trying. This is why they're doing it. Right? They want to force people to do this. So, and just like you said, as the federal government, whenever the federal government tries to force people to do things, there is an inevitable pushback, both in the courts and in other places that we will undoubtedly see given how charged this is.

Justin:

Yep. Other news this week breaking, Karen, the department released an announcement yesterday on public service loan forgiveness. You want to catch us up?

Karen:

Yeah. There's quite a lot of news on PSLF these days. There's the announcement that came out from the administration and PSLF is also going through negotiated rulemaking this week, which I think we'll talk about in a minute. And I think it's mostly because there are different moving parts. There are statutory limitations on PSLF and then there are also regulatory things. So the department can more directly influence what's going on over on the regulatory side. On the statutory side, the department is basically using its emergency authority that's given to it under the pandemic to waive some of the statutory requirements around PSLF. And some of the mainly, I would say, some of the main reasons why such a high percentage of applicants have been denied since the program opened up to applications. So I think one of the biggest ones there is counting a lot more payments towards the 120 minimum payments to get the forgiveness.

Karen:

So FEL payments can still count. The borrower does still need to consolidate into DL, but in the past, any FFEL payments were out the door. And that counter of the 120 payments reset once a consolidated loan was originated. And so now you can consolidate, and your FFEL payments that you made prior to consolidation will still count. They will also count any payments that are made in an otherwise ineligible repayment plan. So there were lots of people who, "Oh, I didn't know. I was supposed to be in an income driven repayment plan. And I paid for six years under this other one." So all of those will now be eligible. It is temporary for right now through October 2022. So for any borrowers who are out there, they have until then say to consolidate their loans and get those payments counted. The department will also be going back to borrowers who had applied and been denied. And they will be either fixing any mistakes that may have been made, just straight out errors, or they will also be counting some of the payments that were ineligible and they were denied because of that reason.

Karen:

They were very careful to say that review will take months on their end, because there are so many borrowers that they need to go back and look. So it won't be immediate, but they will be doing it. And their press release yesterday said that there are like half a million borrowers who will get new payments counted. So they'll be further along towards their 120 payments than they were prior. And that there are about 22,000 borrowers who once the department does this review, will immediately be eligible for

forgiveness. So they were denied and they have enough payments in there that once the department does its review, they will hit that 120 payment and they will get that forgiveness at that time. So it's really, really huge. It is temporary for now through next October. And I know that we, and a lot of other people have been pushing for them to make some of these changes permanent, but for right now, this is what we have, which is really great progress.

Justin:

Yeah. We just sent up a letter to weeks ago on PSLF and specifically talking about counting FFEL payments as part of public service loan, forgiveness, eligible payments. Couple observations here, though. One is when the department says, it'll take months, I assume that means it'll take months and months and months, and probably pushing into the October '22 deadline. And so I am sort of curious, I know it seems absurd to even bring this up, but an extension for the temporary waiver, there's also a question for me about... What you brought up earlier, Karen, was there's a statutory sort of construction around this and a regulatory construction. And representative Virginia Foxx, the ranking member on the House Education Committee, pushed back pretty hard yesterday that the department was exceeding its authority called for a congressional hearing about it.

Justin:

I don't know that, that's likely to happen, but pushed back on this, the department was exceeding its legislative, or its regulatory authority, by go getting into statute. But this whole pandemic has sort of, I know they're relying on the Heroes Act to sort of do all these things, but this whole pandemic to me is sort of brought top of mind how squishy this line really is. And a lot of times what the department says is legal or not comes down to political will.

Karen:

I know.

Justin:

It's just... Go for it and then see who challenges it to some extent. If nobody challenges it, is it legal?

Karen:

Yeah. And in the past we were always very careful when we made requests like, "Do we think the department can do this? I think this is statutory. We shouldn't ask the department to do this. This is Congress." And now I kind of feel like we never really know. So go ahead and ask anyway.

Justin:

Yeah. We used to always try to tell the members like, "Well, that's statutory." Anymore I don't think it matters, if I've learned anything to the pandemic is the secretary can do anything they want. So, they can suspend loan payments, they can change terms and conditions, they can offer waivers. I guess I'm just saying, why not make they're temporary waivers with a timeline? But I guess my question is they are making permanent changes to these loans. These loans will be permanently changed through this waiver. This is not a temporary provision. It's a temporary window to make a permanent change to a half million borrowers loans.

Karen:

Right. And there's no justification, why next October? I think they just came up with it.

Justin:

Well, that's my point is that I'm just sort of like, "This is no longer a question of what's legal. It's a question of political will." All right, Jon, do you disagree?

Jon:

No, I think even to add to that point, how exactly is this related to the pandemic? You're using your emergency power suggests it's not entirely, especially if you're projecting out past the point where lots of people thought maybe the pandemic would be over or at least the national emergency part of it would be over.

Karen:

Jon, I wondered that, but I was like, "I'm not going to say that out loud."

Jon:

I mean, I'm happy they're doing it. ACE is very supportive of their actions.

Justin:

All right, Karen, you mentioned negotiated rule making. Negotiators are virtually in town right now discussing all sorts of issues. I don't think we want to go through a rundown of all those. Can you just sort of tell us briefly, where are we in the negotiated rule making process? This is round one. What does that mean?

Karen:

Yeah. There are three rounds. There are one week long sessions. We are at the tail end of the first week. And this first week... Well, actually I was going to say the first week is really kind of the drudgery of seeing how... What we say is how the sausage gets made. But then I was thinking, I was like, "Well, sessions two and three can be like that too. There's also drudgery there." But in this first week, there's a lot of brainstorming, talking about issues. There's sometimes agreement on concepts, but just basically a lot of airing of positions and kind of, they call them temperature checks over in that world. Like, "What are you feeling? You're lukewarm about something or you approve something?" And then, in the next session, which will be a month from now, is when the department will come to the table, ideally, hopefully with red line regulatory language. So that's really where they dive into more of the wordsmithing and less of the conceptual talk. So right now they're more kind of at the high level.

Justin:

And yeah, ACE and NASFAA, jointly submitted some negotiators, several of which were picked up at the negotiating table as either primary negotiators or alternates. If I'm going to stick with your analogy, Karen, I'd say the first session is like setting up the sausage making equipment. It's sort of who can make the sausage, so it's a debate about who can be at the table, which we saw. There was a debate about whether a certain student could come or borrower from a for-profit school who felt that they had been wronged, could be at the table. They ultimately weren't accepted. I keep hearing a narrative that there aren't borrowers at the table. There are in fact student representatives at the table. And if I count up,

there are more student and consumer groups at the table than I think I've ever seen at a negotiated room making table, actually.

Karen:

Yeah. In the past, there has always been a student seat and the Department of ED received some pressure, I think from student advocates, consumer advocates, that they needed to have more representation of the student voice, especially given that there are multiple institutional seats. So they felt like their balance wasn't there. So this time around, there's a slot for dependent students and independent students. And there's also a student borrower slot. I believe that the student borrower slot is, the people sitting in that slot represent student borrowers. They may or may not be student borrowers themselves, but they are not actual students, but those are the slots to speak up on the students behalf.

Justin:

All right. Well, we will continue to watch this very closely, a big thank you to our negotiator. All right, thanks very much, Karen. Owen, do you want to just briefly catch us up. What else is going on in the news in higher education?

Owen:

Thanks Justin. Lots of news on the student loan servicers front with the spade of servicers in recent months announcing they wouldn't seek to renew their contracts with the Department of Education, left the agency trying to secure new servicers for as many as 16 million borrowers, just as student loan payments are set to resume in January after a lengthy pause. This week, the Office of Federal Student Aid said some groups of borrowers who are under the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, which operates as FedLoan Servicing will soon be transferred to a new student loan servicer, MOHELA. FSA also said it has begun transferring borrowers service by Granite State to Edfinancial and all transfers are expected to be completed before the end of the year. Borrowers should check to make sure the contact information on their accounts is up to date as FSA will be sending notices on these transitions.

Owen:

The first week of negotiated rule making is almost complete. And NASFAA has you covered with full recaps of each day, which we will link. And finally, with the '22-'23 FAFSA form being released earlier this month, it's come with some glitches, Federal Student Aid notified aid administrators to be on the lookout for incorrect adjusted gross incomes of \$1 appearing on the form due to the IRS non-filer portal and unemployment benefits made non-taxable by the American Rescue Plan. Aid administrators are encouraged to work with impacted applicants and to use professional judgment when necessary to adjust the applicant's AGI as appropriate. All that and more can be found in NASFAA's daily newsletter and on our social media feeds. We'll also link our coverage in the show notes of this week's episode.

Justin:

All right. Thanks very much, Owen. Thanks everybody for listening. Coming back to hear Off the Cuff. Remember to subscribe, remember to tell a friend we'll be back again next week. Jon, thanks very much for joining us this week.

Jon:

Thank you for that. As especially your first guest in the new format. Let's hope I don't tank it for you.

Justin:

Yeah. If we invite you back, that's a good sign. If you don't hear from us again, it was nothing personal.

Jon:

Especially if you don't hear from you at all concerning how closely we work together. That's a real sign.

Justin:

Yeah. That's true. All right, everybody take care. Be well. We'll see you again next week.