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Addressing Critical Facilities Needs An Interview with Congressional Staff on the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act

July / August / September 2019

IMPACT

NAFIS is thrilled to announce that the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act was introduced this week in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill would provide a one-time infusion of funds into the Impact Aid Construction program to address the significant backlog of infrastructure needs at federally impacted school districts, allowing districts to address health and safety issues, modernize buildings and expand to meet capacity needs. Eligibility under this legislation is broader than for the regular Impact Aid Construction program, so some districts that don't currently receive construction funds can compete for grants.

We are particularly pleased that this bill was introduced with bipartisan support, as the need for the federal government to meet its obligations to school districts in communities where it holds land is not a partisan matter. **Representative TJ Cox (D-CA)** and **Representative Don Young (R-AK)** are leading the charge on this important issue.

To learn more about the cosponsors and why they are so excited to lead this legislation, NAFIS Policy & Advocacy Director Leslie Finnan interviewed their education staff. **Amanda Stayton** is a Legislative Aide for Representative Cox, a Democrat representing California's 21st District. She handles his education portfolio as well as health, family issues, economics, guns and many other areas. **Alex Ortiz** is the Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for Representative Don Young, a Republican representing Alaska (at large). He is responsible for leading Congressman Young's policy team to develop and advance the Congressman's overarching legislative objectives, and he assists



Rep. TJ Cox (D-CA)



Rep. Don Young (R-AK)

the Chief of Staff with office operations. He also handles education issues and Alaska Native and American Indian affairs.

Leslie Finnan (LF): Tell me about your district.

Amanda Stayton (AS): California's 21st Congressional District is the number one agriculture producing region in the state, fourth in the nation. While our district is helping feed the nation, it also faces serious challenges. We have the lowest educational attainment in the state, and access to healthcare is a challenge, especially among those in our rural communities.

Alex Ortiz (AO): Our district is the entire state of Alaska, as Congressman Young is an At-Large Representative. Geographically, Alaska is the largest state in the Union, two and a half times the size of Texas. The state is incredibly diverse in terms

Continued on page 4...

Closing Out the Fiscal Year

Just like at most of your school districts, the NAFIS Fiscal Year ended June 30. Although this time often involves scrambling to pay invoices and collect revenue receipts, it is also a time to reflect back on the last year and to plan for the year ahead.

NAFIS is closing the books financially sound with a growing and active membership. For the third year in a row, NAFIS membership has been above 400 school districts – 422, to be exact. Conference attendance continues to grow, with 367 attendees at the 2018 Fall Conference and 332 at the 2019 Spring Conference. More members are interacting with NAFIS on social media and spreading the #ImpactAid message to a broader audience.

Legislatively, we soundly defeated the Impact Aid voucher bill, increased funding for Impact Aid, crafted and introduced the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act, identified a new co-chair for the House Impact Aid Coalition and weighed in on a number of other policy issues, including U.S. Department of Education requests for comment. We overhauled the NAFIS website, held two national conferences (where we introduced a new conference app), conducted the Federal Relations Outreach meeting and led seven FISEF technical assistance workshops.

NAFIS also created new, and updated existing, Impact Aid resources for members to use in their communities and on the Hill. If you have not already, I encourage you to take a few minutes to review some of these materials, as we have heard from several NAFIS members that they have been helpful tools.

- [Impact Aid Overview Infographic](#)
- [Impact Aid Payments Overview \(formerly known as the Blue Book\)](#)
- [Impact Aid Payments Overview Infographic](#)
- [Is Your School District Eligible for Impact Aid Funding? Infographic](#)
- [The Basics of Impact Aid](#)
- [FAQ for Parents Completing the Parent-Pupil Survey](#)

All of the above was accomplished with the largest change in staff at NAFIS since I came on board four years ago, with our newest staff member starting just this week (see page 7 for more). The NAFIS staff are proud of our accomplishments and believe in our work to support federally impacted school districts.

We are motivated daily to help you provide the quality education your students need to reach their potential.

One of the most rewarding parts of our work is attending NAFIS subgroup meetings and visiting NAFIS member school districts (see page 13 to learn where we've been over the past fiscal year). This summer I was fortunate to visit several NAFIS member school districts in South Dakota in conjunction with my attendance at the Federal Lands Impacted Schools Association's Summer Meeting. Since I came on board in 2015, NAFIS staff have visited the following members:

- Browning School District #9 (MT)
- San Carlos Unified School District #20 (AZ)
- Tuba City Unified School District #15 (AZ)
- Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery Central School District (NY)
- Academy School District 20 (CO)



Goldmann with Wall School District 51-1 (SD) Superintendent Dan Baldwin on a recent site visit

- Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 (CO)
- Anadarko School District (OK)
- Darlington School District (OK)
- Tahlequah Public Schools (OK)
- Dupree School District 51-1 (SD)
- Eagle Butte School District 20-1 (SD)
- Timber Lake School District 20-3 (SD)
- Douglas School District 51-1 (SD)
- Wall School District 51-1 (SD)
- Oglala Lakota County School District 65-1 (SD)
- Central Kitsap School District (WA)
- Bremerton School District (WA)
- Grants-Cibola County School District (NM)
- Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (TN)
- San Diego Unified School District (CA)

In the coming year, NAFIS staff will continue to tour member school districts in con-

junction with our other travel. These visits strengthen our connections with members and allow us to see firsthand the variety and impact of the federal presence. Our visits also help us become better advocates on behalf of the Impact Aid program. Through these visits, I am struck by the diversity of our membership – and the bond that drives all of you: dedication to supporting the needs of students and providing a quality education for all who walk through your doors. While we can't promise to get to every one of our 400+ members, we will take every opportunity to visit as many of you as we can, and we will look to connect individually with others in different ways to learn the challenges you face, the successes you've had and how we can better support your work.

NAFIS staff are also looking forward to launching two new internal systems for the next membership year. We plan to roll out our new advocacy platform for the NAFIS Action Center. This new platform will have increased personalization functionality, which will allow us to collect and aggregate meetings and relationships NAFIS members and staff have with each Member of Congress. We expect that this new tool will allow us to more easily target Members of Congress and better understand the outreach that NAFIS members have with each Senator or Representative.

NAFIS is also working with our financial institution to launch an ACH online payment option for membership dues. Many NAFIS members have indicated a preference for paying dues online, rather than printing and mailing paper checks. We have heard your voices and are hoping to launch this new service shortly.

Although there are new faces on the NAFIS staff, be assured you continue to have a stellar team in Washington, DC, that is laser-focused on increasing funding for Impact Aid, protecting the program from outside attacks and strengthening both the Impact Aid program and the NAFIS Family. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance.

I look forward to working and partnering with you throughout the 2019-2020 NAFIS Membership year. I hope you have time this summer to vacation, relax and enjoy those quiet hallways. ~

Payments Update

Fiscal Year 2018

- Final Section 7002 payments are being released in July 2019.
- Final Section 7003 payments were released in April 2019.
- Final Section 7007(a) formula construction payments were released in May 2019.

Fiscal Year 2019

- Section 7002 foundation payments have been released to 200 eligible applicants.
- Section 7003 interim payments have been released at 89% of LOT and \$1,050 per student unit for children with disabilities. There will be no further increases in these payments until final payments are released in 2020. Of the 40 applicants for Heavily Impacted Payments under Section 7003(b)(2), 25 are eligible and have been paid; one applicant remains under review.

FY 2020 Application Reviews

Last January, 1,085 applications for Section 7003 assistance were submitted. Most of these are near readiness for payment. Over 280 of these applications were selected for monitoring review. Many of these reviews are complete, with reports sent to applicants as they are completed. Only 40 reviews remain in progress. Applicants have 60 days from receipt of the report to resubmit documentation to address deficiencies noted in the review.

Section 7002 applications submitted last January are also being reviewed. Foundation payments will be released after October.

Technical Assistance Webinars

Recordings of previous technical assistance webinars conducted by the Department, when available, are posted on the Impact Aid Program website, www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid/webex.html. If you were unable to participate in a webinar and need assistance, please contact your state analyst.



DEPARTMENT WATCH

Discretionary Construction Program

The application deadline for the competitive Impact Aid Discretionary Construction Grant Program was in June. Nineteen applications are eligible for consideration and will be reviewed and scored by peer reviewers. Approximately \$17 million is available for these grants. Awards will be announced in early 2020.

Impact Aid Grant System (IAGS)

This summer is the final development push to finish the new IAGS, which will replace our legacy Impact Aid System. Impact Aid staff members will be testing the new system in August and September to identify bugs and processing problems. The new IAGS is planned to "Go Live" for internal Impact Aid staff in October 2019 and for applicant school districts in November, in time for the FY 2021 applications.

There will be no application and payment processing during August and September to allow all data to be copied from the legacy Impact Aid System to the IAGS. This will delay preparation of FY 2020 initial payments, which typically begin to be released in October. **If your school district will need an early payment released in October, please send an email to Impact.Aid@ed.gov.**

Electronic Data Collection Pilot

Both Fort Leavenworth Schools and Vail School District successfully piloted electronic data collection for FY 2019 and are now approved to use electronic data collection to count their federally connected children. For FY 2020, five more LEAs are piloting electronic data collection systems, and we are reviewing their results. For FY 2021, we've received five LEA pilot proposals.

If you would like to join these LEAs in pioneering an electronic data collection, contact the Impact Aid Program before you launch your project. Applicants that attempt an electronic data collection without coordinating the effort in advance assume a risk that the survey results will not be approvable to support the application.

Reminders

Keep ED Updated on Staff Changes: Don't let summertime staff changes keep your school district from getting the Impact Aid information you need. If your school district has new staff, please notify the Department of Education of a new Impact Aid contact person by sending an email to Impact.Aid@ed.gov.

Keep Up Your DUNS Registration in SAM: To receive funds from any federal program, a school district must have its DUNS number registered in the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM registration must be updated annually. Visit sam.gov to learn more and to log in to your account.

Stay in the Loop with ED: Subscribe to the Department's e-mail listserv for information and tips on Impact Aid at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/impactaid>. Click on the link in the box labeled "Subscribe Now." E-mail any questions regarding Impact Aid to Impact.Aid@ed.gov, or call (202) 260-3858. ~

Check NAFIS Out on Social Media



Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/nafisschools>

Twitter: [@NAFISschools](https://twitter.com/NAFISschools)

Critical Facilities Needs, cont...

...from page 1

of cultures, communities, climate and landscapes – from the rainforests in Southeast Alaska to the tundra north of the Arctic Circle. Many of our communities are not connected by a road system and are extremely rural and remote. Alaskans take pride in our independent spirit and “can do” attitude.

LF: Why is your boss excited to sponsor the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act?

AS: Ensuring that students have a safe and cultivating environment to learn in is a top priority for Congressman Cox. He believes education is not just about tests and curriculum, it’s about helping the whole child achieve their potential.

AO: As a former public school teacher, the Congressman knows how critical school facilities are in supporting the education of our young people. For many school districts, years of budget shortfalls have resulted in overcrowded classrooms, unsafe learning environments and buildings that aren’t equipped with modern resources. Congressman Young is excited to sponsor this bill because it is a practical, bipartisan approach to addressing these challenges.

“**As a former public school teacher, the Congressman knows how critical school facilities are in supporting the education of our young children.**”
- Alex Ortiz, Deputy Chief of Staff & Legislative Director, Rep. Don Young (R-AK)

LF: What has your boss heard from federally impacted school districts about their infrastructure needs?

AS: Federally impacted school districts are in desperate need of maintenance, repair and, for some, building an entirely new facility. There is a significant backlog of school construction needs, and those delays stop our schools from providing the education our kids deserve.

AO: Congressman Young has heard from our federally impacted districts that there are maintenance backlogs and significant construction needs in their schools.

LF: What else has your boss heard from federally impacted school districts – about Impact Aid, challenges they face or successes they’ve had?

“**There is a significant backlog of school construction needs, and those delays stop our schools from providing the education our kids deserve.**”

- Amanda Stayton, Legislative Aide, Rep. TJ Cox (D-CA)

AS: Central Union Elementary School in California’s 21st Congressional District has some very exciting projects underway. Their success using Impact Aid funds is encouraging and will change the lives of those students. Seeing their success, we are excited to be introducing the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act so other federally impacted schools and children can reap the same benefits.

AO: Some of our federally impacted school districts also rely on the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program, which provides funding to communities that have lost timber revenue because of federal action. Congressman Young fights to protect the program and maintain appropriations for SRS. He’s also recently heard from some of our districts about their successes in leveraging partnerships with businesses and non-profits within our communities.

LF: How does your boss engage with schools in his district?

AS: The Congressman is involved in the Library of Congress’s Surplus Books Program. Every week, books are selected from the Library of Congress and shipped to schools, hospitals and libraries. This is especially critical for students of all ages in our district, especially those from smaller towns that may have fewer resources. Congressman Cox has also participated in Read Across America, visiting local schools and reading books to children.

AO: The Congressman meets regularly with educators, education professionals, superintendents and parents from around the state. Throughout

Legislative Update

Infrastructure

NAFIS is thrilled to announce the introduction of the bipartisan Impact Aid Infrastructure Act in the US House of Representatives. The bill, introduced this week by Representatives TJ Cox (D-CA) and Don Young (R-AK), would provide a one-time infusion of funds into the Impact Aid Construction program to address the significant backlog of school construction needs at federally impacted school districts.

We know your school districts need adequate resources to address health and safety issues and modernize school buildings. NAFIS has identified more than \$4.2 billion in pressing school facility needs in a survey of 218 federally impacted school districts. The annual Impact Aid Construction appropriation falls far short of addressing the significant backlog of these needs. This legislation would help many districts address these critical issues, expanding the eligibility pool of school districts from the regular Construction program given the significant resources authorized under this legislation.

Having this bill introduced with bipartisan support was a priority for NAFIS, and we hope to maintain a bipartisan balance as additional cosponsors sign on. Look out for action alerts from us for your chance to share your support with your Representative and encourage them to sign on. It's also a great time to reach out to your Senators,

as we are hoping to introduce the same bill in the Senate this Congress.

Appropriations

The US House of Representatives has been busy passing FY 2020 appropriations bills this summer. In June, the full House voted on a funding package that includes the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. The bill includes a \$52 million increase to Impact Aid – \$50 million to Basic Support and \$2 million to Federal Property. NAFIS fully supports this increase, which is identical to the NAFIS request and talking points for the 2019 Spring Conference.

Despite the House action, Congress must still reach a deal to raise the budget caps, as a two-year agreement to do so reached in 2017 will expire at the end of this fiscal year (September 30). The amount of funding in the overall House bill requires a significant increase to the Non-Defense Discretionary (NDD) Cap. If the budget cap is not raised or is only raised slightly, this funding recommendation could be the high-water mark in the appropriations process.

Absent a new deal, NDD funding will face a \$55 billion (9 percent) cut. The Senate has announced it will not act on appropriations bills until a budget deal is finalized. President Trump floated the idea of using FY 2019 funding levels for FY 2020, which would be above the sequester deal but

would still likely lead to cuts because of increased needs in other parts of the Federal budget. Senate Republicans have rebuked this plan, as they are committed to increasing Defense spending. We are hopeful that this posturing will lead to a compromise to substantively increase NDD caps and allow for a robust increase to Impact Aid.

Vouchers

The fight over vouchers from last Congress returned. A revised bill was introduced in the House and Senate to create military student vouchers. This new bill does not include specific language that Impact Aid would fund the new voucher program. However, as written, the voucher would be a new line item in Title VII – Impact Aid. Senator Sasse (R-NE) attempted to introduce the bill as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act. After the proposal was blocked, he put forward a military student voucher pilot program that would be run by the Secretary of Defense and establish vouchers at one military installation for five years. Once again, NAFIS worked alongside MISA and the National Family Military Association to oppose both of these initiatives.

The Senate passed its version of the NDAA without either provision. The House is expected to do the same. Thank you to everyone who weighed in this year and last to ensure that these policies, which threaten the Impact Aid program, were defeated. ~

...from page 4

the year school groups come to DC, and he makes a point of visiting with each one. He also likes to have his boots on the ground and often visits schools to speak with students and see facilities firsthand.

LF: What are some of your boss's other education priorities?

AS: We know education is a pipeline, and Congressman Cox believes in connecting children to ideas and programs that they might not otherwise get exposure to, such as STEM programs at local schools and internships and apprenticeships with local small businesses. Additionally, he wants to ensure students are provided the support they need to succeed, including financial aid programs and assistance applying to the two-year colleges, technical schools or four-year universities that will help them achieve their career goals. Students in the Central Valley deserve great opportunities as well as the tools and skills to build a career, and Congressman Cox is dedicated to using his office to help them.

AO: A big priority for Congressman Young is supporting the educational success of Alaska Native and American Indian students. He worked closely on Title VI of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which provides grants for increasing academic achievement of Native students. He has also worked on legislation, including his Summer Meals Act, to combat child hunger and provide a nutritional foundation for kids to learn.

Please join us in thanking **Representative Cox** and **Representative Young** for their leadership on this issue, and congressional staffers Amanda Stayton and Alex Ortiz for taking the time to share their thoughts with us. Stay tuned for opportunities to get engaged and encourage your Representative to join Representatives Cox and Young in supporting this issue by signing on to cosponsor the legislation. ~

John Draper to Keynote NAFIS Fall Conference

Register Today for the Nation's Largest Gathering of Impact Aid Professionals

NAFIS is pleased to announce our 2019 Fall Conference Keynote Speaker: **Dr. John Draper**. He will discuss the crucial conversations that can help change the perception of a school in its community. Formerly the CEO of the Educational Research Service in Washington, DC, Dr. Draper is a renowned national speaker working with the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), a membership organization dedicated to helping educational leaders build community support for schools and school districts. Dr. Draper has initiated conversations among school leaders across the country on engaging staff in active support of public schools.



Dr. John Draper, NAFIS Fall Conference Keynote Speaker

In addition to high-profile speakers like Dr. Draper, the NAFIS Fall Conference will allow attendees to engage in important advocacy work, participate in breakout sessions on timely topics, get the latest updates on Impact Aid and connect with – and learn from – other members of the NAFIS Family. In addition, you will have the chance to meet with U.S. Department of Education staff to ask questions specific to your district's application and funding. Department staff will also explain key changes coming to the Impact Aid application this fall with the transition to the new Impact Aid Grant System (IAGS). **Register today!**

Department staff will also explain key changes coming to the Impact Aid application this fall with the transition to the new Impact Aid Grant System (IAGS). **Register today!**



NAFIS FALL CONFERENCE PROGRAM (TENTATIVE AGENDA)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2019

8:30AM – 3:30PM	Registration Area & Social Media Station Open
8:30AM – 5:30PM	Internet Café Open
9:00AM – 10:15AM	Conference Orientation & The Basics of Impact Aid
10:15AM – 10:45AM	Policy & Advocacy 101
10:45AM – 11:45AM	Subgroup Meeting - Mid-to-Low-LOT Schools (MTLLS)
10:45AM – 12:00PM	Subgroup Meeting - Federal Lands Impacted Schools Association (FLISA)
12:00PM – 12:45PM	Lunch on Your Own
12:00PM – 12:45PM	State Chair Working Lunch (Invitation Only)
1:00PM – 4:15PM	First General Session - Keynote Speaker John Draper - Legislative Update
4:30PM – 5:15PM	New to NAFIS Welcome
4:30PM – 5:15PM	School Board Members Session
5:30PM – 6:30PM	Meet and Greet Reception

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2019

7:45AM – 3:30PM	Registration Area Open
7:45AM – 5:00PM	Internet Café & Social Media Station Open
7:45AM – 9:45AM	Subgroup Meeting - Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) – Breakfast (Members Only)
7:45AM – 9:45AM	Subgroup Meeting - National Indian Impacted Schools Association (NIISA) – Breakfast (Members Only)
8:30AM – 9:45AM	Subgroup Meeting - Federal Lands Impacted Schools Association (FLISA)
10:00AM – 11:00AM	Breakout Sessions, Part I - TBD
11:15AM – 12:15PM	Breakout Sessions, Part II - TBD
12:30PM – 2:00PM	Luncheon
2:30PM – 4:30PM	Second General Session - Speaker - U.S. Department of Education Impact Aid Program Office Update
3:30PM – 5:00PM	Department of Education One-on-One Sessions
4:30PM – 5:15PM	State Meetings (as requested by State Chair) - AZ, CA, MT, NM, OK, TX, WA

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2019

9:00AM – 4:00PM	Capitol Hill Day - Pre-Scheduled Visits
12:00PM – 1:30PM	State Events - Texas (TAFIS) and California (CAFIS) Lunches (Invitation Only)
4:00PM – 5:00PM	Hill Day Debrief
7:00PM – 10:00PM	Ending Reception

NAFIS Welcomes Megan Makarewicz as Policy & Advocacy Assistant

NAFIS is pleased to announce that Megan Makarewicz has joined our team as our new Policy & Advocacy Assistant. This is a new position that will allow us to strengthen our presence on Capitol Hill and provide additional services and benefits to our members.

In this role, Makarewicz will support all facets of the organization. She will report on congressional and federal agency activities, manage the NAFIS Action Network, research Impact Aid payment issues, support the organization's digital presence and assist with conference and FISEF workshop preparation and execution. Her first day at NAFIS was July 8.

Makarewicz recently graduated from the University of Michigan, where she majored in political science and minored in history. There, she also served on the advisory board of the student organization associated with Michigan Women's Volleyball and as Section Leader for Maize Rage, organizing events and meetings for the student cheering section for Michigan Men's Basketball.

She has experience on Capitol Hill, interning last summer in the office of Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI). In that capacity, Makarewicz attended hearings and briefings, conducted research



Megan Makarewicz

and wrote memos summarizing legislation, in addition to administrative tasks. She has also served as a Guest Services Associate at the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation.

Please join us in welcoming Megan to NAFIS! ~

Membership Corner



Lynn Watkins

We launched both the 2019 NAFIS Fall Conference registration and the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill reservation websites on June 17. NAFIS staff are eagerly preparing an engaging conference as you make your plans to come to Washington, DC. We're looking forward to you registering soon, and be aware – rooms at the Hyatt are going like hotcakes, so please make haste!

Remember, registering for the conference is a two-step process: 1) Make your hotel reservations at the **Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill** (note: there is a required one-night deposit due 14 days after booking. On August 27, this deposit becomes non-refundable), and 2) Register to attend the conference using **our online platform**. Please note, there is a \$100 per person onsite fee applied to any attendee who is not pre-registered, so avoid that now by registering early! Should you be unable to register online with a credit card, please contact me via email at lynn@nafisdc.org, and I will manually register you. There is a one-time \$25 fee for doing so.

On another note, membership invoices for the 2019-2020 membership year were mailed in mid-May. We are looking forward to a very successful year, and we hope to see your district renew its membership. Please double check that your district's invoice was received and also ensure remittance is in process. If you need another copy of your invoice sent to you, let me know at lynn@nafisdc.org or 202-624-3612.

NAFIS Calendar

July 25-26, 2019
FISEF Two-Day Workshop
Los Alamitos, CA

August 8-9, 2019
FISEF Two-Day Workshop
Fort Bragg, NC

August 26-27, 2019
FISEF Two-Day Workshop
Albuquerque, NM

September 21, 2019
FISEF One-Day Workshop
Washington, DC

September 22-24, 2019
NAFIS Fall Conference
Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill
Washington, DC

October 14-15, 2019
FISEF Two-Day Workshop
Phoenix, AZ

Subgroup Summer Meetings

Summer is a busy time for the NAFIS subgroups, as they convene annual and board meetings to address issues of interest specific to their impact. Here's a quick round-up of what is going on this summer.

FLISA Summer Meeting

FLISA held its summer meeting in Custer, SD, at the Crazy Horse Memorial on Saturday, June 22. NAFIS Executive Director **Hilary Goldmann** attended and addressed the group on various Impact Aid matters. The FLISA summer and winter meetings are held in various locations across the country allowing members who cannot travel to Washington, DC, for the NAFIS conferences to become involved in the business of FLISA. It is therefore especially appreciated when Goldmann can attend one of these meetings and reach out to not only those who are able to travel to DC, but to those who cannot make that trip.

FLISA Executive Board President **Craig Hutcheson** updated the group on the search for a new director in light of current Executive Director **Tom Madden's** pending retirement. The Executive Board will interview for this position during the NAFIS Fall Conference and plans to make a recommendation by the winter FLISA meeting.

In preparation for the next Impact Aid reauthorization, Madden engaged the group in a comprehensive review of how the current law and funding formula evolved from 1990 to present day. This review laid the foundation for a lengthy discussion on the efficacy of the current formula. As these discussions continue during future meetings, focus will be on the two main aspects of the funding formula: the Foundation Payment and the per acre method of determining what the U.S. Department of Education refers to as the Maximum Payment for each eligible school district.

FLISA is in the fifth year of its Advocacy Action Plan – the long-range, comprehensive plan

which has guided the organization for the past five years and produced several accomplishments of its various goals. It is time for FLISA to begin planning the next iteration of this plan. The process will begin at the upcoming winter meeting in January and coincide with the naming of a new executive director. ~

MISA Summer Meeting

The MISA summer meeting took place Sunday, June 23-Tuesday, June 25 in San Diego, CA. The host district was Coronado School District.

The meeting began Sunday evening with a reception and dinner at the Westin San Diego. **Kyle Fairbairn**, MISA Executive Director, welcomed attendees and introduced representatives from Naval Base Coronado. Monday's tour of Naval Base Coronado began as the group boarded buses with our hosts, **Kelly Frisch** and **Amiee Gillig**, School Liaison Officers. Each group enjoyed a ride on an Assault Craft Unit, tour of a Beachmaster Unit One, tour of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron and a demonstration by the K-9 Unit. At the end of the tour, attendees enjoyed a lunch on the base and briefing by **Captain Timothy Slentz**.

Tuesday morning, **Keith Mispagel**, MISA Executive Board President, welcomed participants and began the "MISA Members Only" portion of the day. Fairbairn then led the group in a review of the 2018 Position Paper. Changes were suggested and discussed by members. A final copy of the 2019 Position Paper will be emailed to all members.

Other guests attending the meeting joined the group following that discussion. Mispagel and Fairbairn asked **Chick Feldmayer**, retiring MISA Consultant, to join them to receive an award for his years of dedication to MISA. Feldmayer encouraged members to keep the discussion of Impact Aid alive by staying in touch with representatives and staffers in DC.

The following speakers presented:

- **Karl Mueller**, Coronado School District Superintendent, spoke about an initiative to build purposeful community connections in Coronado schools.
- **Kelly Frisch**, Regional Navy SLO, gave an update on services provided by Navy school liaison officers.
- **Hilary Goldmann & Leslie Finnan**, NAFIS, provided the latest on requests in special education funding, Impact Aid appropriations, a voucher initiative and the Impact Aid Infrastructure Act.

- **Meg Sauve & Maureen Haney**, Tutor.com, provided an update on their visits around the nation and the increase in usage by MISA districts following visits.
- **Eric Hill**, U.S. Department of Education, provided an update on payments and electronic survey pilots.
- **Eileen Huck**, NMFA, spoke on some of the latest initiatives at NMFA - scholarships for military spouses, wounded member support and food services.
- **Jerrod Wheeler**, Knob Noster School District Superintendent, told the group about the most recent Association of Defense Contractors meeting he attended. ADC has increased its interest in school issues.
- **Cherise Imai**, MIC3 Executive Director, updated attendees on the training sessions presented as a joint effort of MISA and MIC3.
- **Amy Kunz & Cherry Okahara**, Hawaii Department of Education, explained the expansion of their transition programs to include services such as health care on site, a Military Culture Course, a Best Practices Conference and an Impact Aid Conference.
- **Kyle Fairbairn**, MISA Executive Director, updated the group on construction funding, the Coalition for Military Student Services, the Heritage Foundation's attempt to go after DoD funding for vouchers and the latest on special education funding.
- **Mark Gillman**, MISA Consultant, discussed the latest on DoD Impact Aid funding, including special education funding and construction funding.
- **LaJolla Playhouse** presented an excerpt from the play *Home of the Brave*, written from interviews with students who have transitioned as a result of being a military dependent. ~

NIISA Summer Board Meeting

The NIISA Board of Directors will travel to Juneau, AK, July 26-30 for their summer board meeting. The meeting dates will coincide with the Alaska administrators association conference. Working with association administration, the NIISA board will reach out to districts receiving Impact Aid to increase involvement in the Impact Aid program and membership in NIISA.

The Board agenda includes: Review of the Equalization provision in law; Update on NIISA (NAFIS) efforts in school facility construction; (b)(2) – original intent and historical view of changes; 2019 Annual Conference; Board committee assignments; FY 2019 budget review and recommendation for FY 2020 draft budget; Nominations for two-year terms to NIISA Board of Directors; Strategic plan review; Preschool Impact Aid funding; other. ~



MISA Participants

Increasing Your Impact Aid Parent-Pupil Survey Response Rate

Applying for Impact Aid can be complex and time consuming. One common frustration for 7003 districts: getting parent-pupil surveys returned.

Last year, NAFIS surveyed our members on how they count federally impacted students, as well as challenges they face in doing so and successful strategies they've developed to overcome them. Nearly 100 respondents shared their experiences, answering key questions with insights that can help your district increase its response rate as you plan for the upcoming application cycle.

How should I pick my school district's survey date?

Our members report that October is the most common month for school districts to distribute their surveys. The second most common month is September. These months usually coincide with the highest student enrollment and state count dates. Factors that districts use in choosing these dates include:

- **Historical enrollment data.** For one school district, “Local research indicates that the end of the first month is when there are most students enrolled in the system.”
- **Alignment with an official state pupil count.** As one member says, “We use the state count date because we are already pulling the data for the state that we also need for Impact Aid.”
- **Known student mobility,** such as troop movements. For one respondent, “Population fluctuates frequently. October begins to stabilize. We have always picked a date in the middle of the week after Columbus Day with the hope of reaching the greatest number of families.”
- **Proximity to parent-teacher conferences.** Many districts use parent-teacher conferences to ensure high return rates, like a member who shared that “We choose a date near parent-teacher conferences in order to maximize personal contact with parents, as they can fill [the survey] out on-site.”

How do I make sure that surveys are returned?

Districts most commonly use a mass letter or email to communicate with parents about the survey forms. Other tips include:

- Provide postage paid envelopes for survey return
- Create a step-by-step video of how to fill out the survey
- Incentivize with classroom pizza parties and breakfasts
- Offer time at parent-teacher conferences dedicated to completing the survey form
- *(For military-connected districts)* Collaborate with bases' military liaisons or hire a military advocate (if possible)

Where do I start?

The Impact Aid application process can be overwhelming. We asked our seasoned members their advice for someone new to the process. Here are some of their ideas:

- “Create a calendar of what needs to be done, as early as July.”
- “Communicate!”
- “Pay attention to detail and be organized!”
- “Start early—create a timeline that has you filing the application well before the deadline.”
- “Ask for help! Find a mentor in another district and ask a lot of questions.”
- *(For military-connected districts)* “Get assistance from the military liaison and Garrison Commander about sending a communication from him or her to parents on the installation. Ensure that installation leadership understands the importance of this task and seek joint support in reporting information.” ~

Revised June 2013

SAMPLE		Impact Aid Program Survey Form		SAMPLE	
The survey date is _____					
All boxes must be filled in with complete information if applicable					
STUDENT INFORMATION					
Student's Last Name	First Name	ML	Date of Birth	Grade	School Name
Address			City	State	Zip code
<input type="checkbox"/> Is this property in a federal property, enter the name of the property. <input type="checkbox"/> Is the above form with complete and accurate information					
PARENT/GUARDIAN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION: CIVILIAN					
Enter information in this section regarding the parent/guardian if 1) neither parent/guardian with whom the student resided was an active duty in the Department of Defense (Title 38 USC and 2) either parent/guardian with whom the student resided was employed on federal property, or 3) either the parent/guardian reported to work on federal property on the survey date. Enter the parent/guardian's name as it appears on the employer's payroll record.					
Parent/Guardian's Last Name	First Name and ML	Name of Federal Government Employer			
Address of Parent/Guardian's Employer			City	State	Zip code
Name of federal property					
Address of federal property			City	State	Zip code
Fill in the above boxes with complete and accurate information					
PARENT/GUARDIAN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION: UNIFORMED SERVICES					
Enter information in this section regarding the parent/guardian if either parent was an active duty in the Department of Defense of the United States on the survey date.					
Parent/Guardian's Last Name	First Name and ML	Branch of Service		Rank	
Fill in the above boxes with complete and accurate information					
PARENT/GUARDIAN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION: FOREIGN MILITARY					
Enter information in this section regarding the parent/guardian if either parent was both an active-duty foreign government official and a foreign military officer on the survey date.					
Parent/Guardian's Last Name	First Name and ML	Branch of Service		Rank	
Name of Foreign Government					
Fill in the above boxes with complete and accurate information					
This information is the basis for payment to your school district of federal funds under the Impact Aid Program (Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), and may be provided to the U.S. Department of Education if your school district's application for payment is denied. This form must be signed and dated by your school district to ensure funds based on this information.					
* By signing this form, I am certifying that all typed and written information on this form is accurate and complete as of the survey date.					
→Signature of Parent/Guardian				→Date	

Sample Parent-Pupil Survey, available on the U.S. Department of Education website

Members Share Their Thoughts on NAFIS

One hundred percent of those responding to the 2019 NAFIS Member Survey would recommend NAFIS membership to other school districts. Nearly 90% report that NAFIS has substantially or moderately improved their knowledge of the Impact Aid program, with 92.42% saying the same of their ability to advocate for Impact Aid.

With this survey, which was conducted in late May and early June 2019, NAFIS staff aimed to learn what members value about the organization and how we can better support them. With more than double the number of respondents from 2018, we appreciate those who took the time to share their thoughts to help us improve.

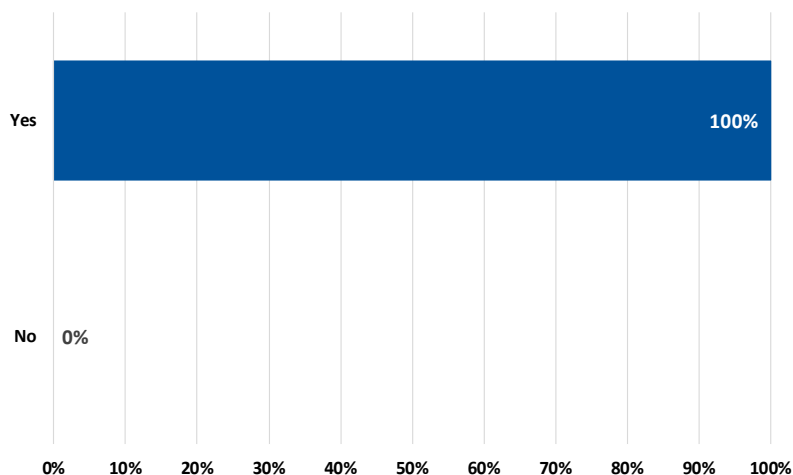
This year, respondents consider the most valuable benefit of NAFIS membership to be our contacts with the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies. Also seen as particularly important benefits: NAFIS contacts with congressional staff; having a full-time DC-based staff following and advocating for Impact Aid; and being part of a unified Impact Aid association.

We are pleased that respondents are satisfied with the responsiveness of staff (over 95% rate it “good” or “excellent”), as well as the knowledge staff demonstrates (93.94%). They are also satisfied with the frequency and length of NAFIS communications (with over 90% hoping to see the “same” for each in the future).

Respondents also identified areas where NAFIS can provide additional services to members. More than 20% would like increased coverage of reports and congressional briefings on topics like teacher recruitment and retention, equity, school safety and IDEA in NAFIS communications. And more than 20% would like more opportunities to get to know other members of the NAFIS Family.

The survey’s multiple-choice questions allow us to aggregate percentages like those shared above. But also of significant interest to us at NAFIS are the comments and suggestions that emerged in the free-response section, some of which are easily actionable. For example, one respondent asked for “a column that tells us about a different NAFIS family member each issue,” and another “would like to hear how school districts use their Impact Aid dollars.” Be on the lookout as we address those ideas in future communications.

Would You Recommend NAFIS Membership?



It was gratifying to learn respondents appreciate the efforts of staff and the services we provide, and the survey reminded us not all members interact with NAFIS the same way. For example, one respondent noted, “The weekly newsletter is valuable since it gives us up-to-date information. Due to budget constraints we have been unable to attend the conference the last five years, so we rely on the newsletter for information.”

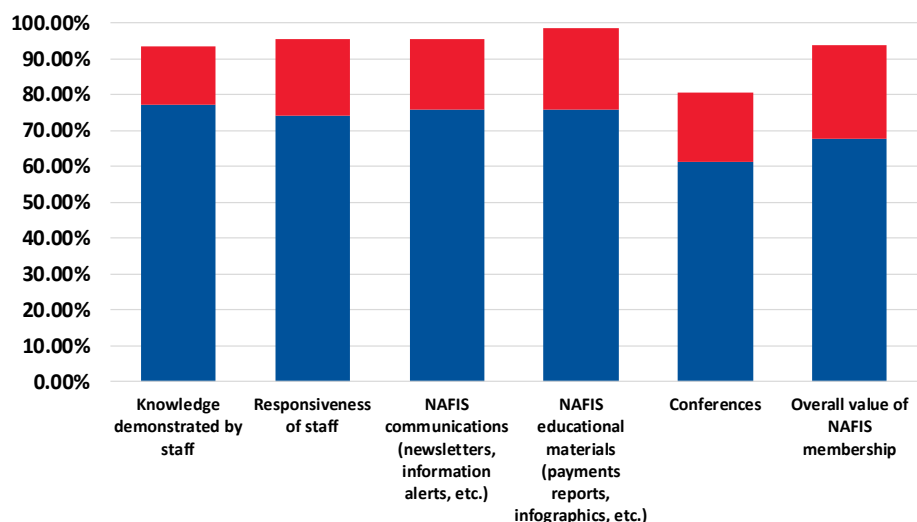
While the multiple-choice questions indicate that most respondents are happy with the conferences (89.23% rate them as an “important” or “very important” member benefit, and over 80% rate them as “good” or “excellent”), ideas for making them even better emerged in the free-response, including refreshing some of the activities; securing vendor and partner relationships; and providing more interactive sessions.

Staff are pondering a respondent’s comment that they “would like to see more personal relationships being built between the NAFIS staff and school district members.” We are considering additional opportunities to make site visits or have one-on-one conversations with members, possibly in conjunction with the FISEF workshops we hold across the country or as part of a new strategy to feature individual NAFIS members in our communications efforts.

One additional finding of note: 59% of respondents have been engaged with NAFIS 10 years or longer, with an additional 22% engaged 5-9 years, which speaks to the stability and expertise of the NAFIS membership. But only one person with 0-1 years of engagement completed the survey. This is the first year we asked about length of respondent engagement, so we don’t know whether this proportion is representative of the NAFIS membership or if it indicates NAFIS must improve efforts to reach newer members, or both. As a first step in addressing this finding, NAFIS has developed a New Member Welcome Packet for school districts new to NAFIS membership in FY2020.

Thanks again to those who completed the member survey. We will continue to consider the results as we move forward with organizational planning, using them to develop new resources and strategies to meet the needs the survey identifies. Also, know that you do not need to wait for the annual survey to share your thoughts and ideas with staff. Please reach out any time with suggestions on how we can improve or questions we can answer. ~

NAFIS Member Satisfaction



Reflecting on a NAFIS Internship

Editor's Note: During the spring semester, interns Catherine Gregory and Sofia Padrón were an integral part of the NAFIS team. We wish them the best as they take on new challenges this summer and head into their senior year of college this fall. Below, see their reflections on their time at NAFIS.

A Springboard for New Adventures

My NAFIS internship began in the way that I assume it did for many other interns starting out for the first time in DC: nervous and largely unsure of what I was walking into. Now that I am coming to the end of my time at NAFIS, I feel substantially more confident in myself and my ability to thrive in the competitive DC work environment.

One of the goals that I set for myself with my supervisor, Hilary, on my first day in the office was to use this experience to find an internship for the summer. A common pattern that I find when setting goals for myself is that I reach one and then get lazy in the pursuit of the next. I started this internship scared that my past tendencies would creep back in, with this internship marking the beginning and end of my professional development until graduating college next spring. I am extremely proud to say that I not only met my goal but exceeded it. Not only will I be starting an internship as the Government Relations Intern for the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities (another member organization in DC) this summer, I have a job lined up for next fall and spring semesters working as the Finance Intern for Democracy for America, a federal political action committee based in Burlington, Vermont.

I credit the resources and support given to me by the entire NAFIS staff for these accomplishments (especially given the fact that Leslie was the one to introduce me to my future supervisor for my summer internship). Throughout the past four months I have been given opportunities to help in planning the 2019 NAFIS Spring Conference and Federal Relations Outreach meeting; attend mark-ups, hearings and briefings on the Hill; and – most importantly – feel like a valued team member in the NAFIS



Sofia Padrón, to left, and Catherine Gregory

organization. I also learned that I love working in Excel, and I hope to pursue a certification program in it this summer.

The importance of Impact Aid and the work that NAFIS does has become increasingly clear to me throughout my time here. Advocating for equitable education for all is something I am extremely passionate about. While I am not yet confident in what I would like to dedicate my career to, the advocacy work on the Hill that I experienced through my time with NAFIS has helped me solidify my short-term goals of graduating from college and returning to work in a representative's DC office as a legislative assistant.

I am incredibly grateful to NAFIS staff – Hilary, Leslie, Anne and Lynn – for giving me the best possible introduction to working in DC. This internship was everything I had hoped for and more. Thank you so much.
- Catherine Gregory ~

Articulating a Passion

“So what organization are you with?”

“I’m an intern at the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools!”

They look at me with a blank stare, which I take as an invitation to explain Impact Aid and why it’s so important.

The response is always the same: “I had no idea that was even an issue!”

I’ve probably had this conversation about a thousand times since getting this wonderful internship, and I must admit I’m going to miss it. I myself did not know what Impact Aid was until I applied for this internship, and I have loved getting to know and serve this niche community. Through perfecting my two-sentence summary of Impact Aid; hearing Leslie explain policy proposals to Hill staffers; and meeting people who really benefit from Impact Aid at the Spring Conference, I’ve discovered my passion for education policy and advocacy.

Being able to articulate this passion is incredibly helpful going forward. From the moment you apply to college, people constantly ask what you plan to do when you graduate. For an English major with a vague interest in education and no knowledge of jobs that actually exist in the field,

this is a very stressful question. Thanks to NAFIS, I finally have an answer. After graduating from the University of Florida next Spring, I’ll be on the first flight back to DC because, as Leslie likes to say, I’ve “drunk the DC Kool-Aid.” I hope to continue advocating for public schools by working either on the Hill or in a nonprofit like NAFIS.

This isn’t to say that working with Congress isn’t frustrating or stressful. It absolutely is. However, in these hyper-partisan times, NAFIS has given me hope that both sides of the aisle can still come together when it matters. My own family isn’t immune to partisan disagreements, but working at a bipartisan organization has shown me that I can champion a cause I believe in and make my parents proud. It truly is the best of both worlds! NAFIS has also shown me what fighting the good fight really looks like (hint: it’s a lot of one-pagers and Excel spreadsheets). Most importantly, NAFIS has taught me that I want to stay in this education community for many years to come.

Thank you NAFIS members for believing in advocacy and creating this wonderful community. Thank you Hilary, Anne, Lynn, Leslie and Catherine for making NAFIS such an amazing place to work. Your support, your kindness and your passion for education have all had an incredible impact on my life (pun intended), and I can’t wait to come back and visit.
- Sofia Padrón ~

New Impact Aid Eligibility Overview

One of the most common questions asked of NAFIS is, “Is my school district eligible for Impact Aid?” We now have a resource to help answer the question. Our latest infographic puts information about Impact Aid Section 7002 and 7003 eligibility in one place. This document will be helpful to NAFIS as we work to recruit new members and raise awareness about the importance of Impact Aid across the country. We also encourage you to share it with representatives of school districts that you think might be eligible for Impact Aid but that are currently not applying. Access the document online at <https://www.nafisdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Impact-Aid-Funding-Eligibility-Flyer.pdf>.

IS YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT ELIGIBLE FOR IMPACT AID FUNDING?

Impact Aid reimburses school districts for revenue lost due to the presence of nontaxable federal property (such as military installations, Indian lands, federal low-income housing, and national parks).

WHAT TYPE OF IMPACT AID FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Approximately 1,300 federally impacted school districts receive Impact Aid funding in the form of **Basic Support payments** (Section 7003), **Federal Property payments** (Section 7002), or **both**.

SECTION 7002 FEDERAL PROPERTY



Section 7002 reimburses school districts that have lost significant local revenue due to **federal ownership of land within school district boundaries**.

Eligible federal property includes (but is not limited to):

- National parks and grasslands
- National laboratories
- Army Corps of Engineers projects
- Military testing grounds
- Environmental waste sites

To be eligible, the property must meet ALL FOUR of the following criteria:

- 01** Acquired by the federal government after 1938;
- 02** Was 10% or more of the assessed value of taxable property in the district;
- 03** Not exchanged for other federal property; and,
- 04** Revenue from federal activities on the property do not substantially compensate the school district.

SECTION 7003 BASIC SUPPORT



Section 7003 compensates school districts for **educating students whose parents or legal guardians reside and/or work on federal property**.

To be eligible, the school district must EITHER:

- A.** Educate at least **400** federally connected students in average daily attendance (ADA); **OR,**
- B.** Federally connected students represent at least **three percent** of the school district's ADA.

Federally connected students are those who:

- Reside on federal property with a parent who is
 - employed on federal property
 - on active duty in the uniformed services
- Reside on Indian lands
- Reside in federal low-income housing (not Section 8)
- Have a parent who
 - is on active duty in the uniformed services but does not reside on federal property
 - either resides on federal property or works on federal property (note: these students are only counted for Impact Aid if there are either 1,000 in or 10% of the school district's ADA)

Property must be verified by the U.S. Department of Education as federally owned.

THINK YOUR SCHOOL MIGHT BE ELIGIBLE?

Contact the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) to learn more about Impact Aid.

☎ 202-624-5455

✉ info@nafisdc.org

Where Have We Been?

NAFIS staff are dedicated to connecting with our members and learning more about how you support students, keep them safe and prepare them for the future, as well as what you need to have even greater success in these efforts. And we know that to do this well, we must travel beyond our office in Washington, DC - though we enjoy hosting members whenever they are in the nation's capital.

Over the 2018-2019 membership year, NAFIS staff traveled across the country to strengthen, protect and build support for the Impact Aid program. Staff were in:

- **Boston, Massachusetts**, for the 2018 NAFIS Summer Board Meeting (July 2018)
- **Great Falls, Montana**, for a FISEF technical assistance workshop (July 2018)
- **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**, to present and exhibit with the Oklahoma Association Serving Impacted Schools (OASIS) at the Oklahoma Schools Boards Association annual conference, traveling to **Anadarko School District** for a site visit in conjunction with the trip (August 2018)
- **Flagstaff, Arizona**, for a FISEF workshop (October 2018)
- **Pierre, South Dakota**, to present at an Impacted Schools of South Dakota (ISSD) meeting and conduct a FISEF workshop (October 2018)
- **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (again!)**, for a FISEF workshop (November 2018)
- **Las Vegas, Nevada**, to participate in the National Indian Impacted Schools Association (NIISA) annual conference and conduct a FISEF workshop (December 2018)
- **New Orleans, Louisiana**, for the 2019 NAFIS Winter Board Meeting (January 2019)
- **Montgomery, Alabama**, to present a session on Impact Aid at an event organized by Maxwell Air Force Base (April 2019)
- **Ocean City, Maryland**, to present a breakout session at the Association of School Business Officials of Maryland & DC annual conference (May 2019)
- **Custer, South Dakota**, to participate in the Federal Lands Impacted Schools Association (FLISA) summer meeting, touring **Douglas School District, Wall School District** and **Oglala Lakota County School District** while in the state (June 2019)
- **San Diego, California**, to participate in the Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA) summer meeting and meet with representatives of **San Diego Unified School District**
- **Tulsa, Oklahoma**, to attend an Impact Aid workshop presented by the U.S. Department of Education, present at the Oklahoma Schools Advisory Council annual conference and conduct a site visit at **Tahlequah Public Schools**

We look forward to connecting with additional NAFIS members and continuing to spread the word on the importance of Impact Aid in the coming year.



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