



TO: AASA Members
FROM: Noelle Ellerson Ng, Associate Executive Director
DATE: February 12, 2018
RE: AASA Response to President Trump’s Proposed FY19 Budget

In addition to the analysis below, AASA Executive Director Daniel A. Domenech released the following statement in response to the proposed budget for federal fiscal year 2019 (FY19): *“One year ago, in my response to the FY18 proposed budget, I reflected on my practice and belief as a school superintendent that our budget reflected our mission; that we funded what we supported and we supported what we funded. By that metric, President Trump’s proposed FY19 budget falls short of the simple willingness and ability to prioritize support for strengthening and supporting our nation’s public schools and the students they serve. With today’s FY19 budget proposal, as well as the infrastructure proposal details which lack an explicit role for public education, we continue to wonder not only if the administration supports our nation’s public schools, but also why their policy proposals remain so willing to make deep, damaging cuts and omissions. As we head to Nashville for AASA’s National Conference on Education, where we will highlight the continued great work and opportunity of our nation’s public schools, we will work with superintendents from across the county to explain why we #LovePublicEducation and to advocate for improved federal education policies that remain committed to equitable educational opportunity for all students.”*

Overview

Money talks, and how you allocate money talks louder in terms of highlighting priorities. And in terms of public education with federal fiscal year 2019 (FY19), President Trump’s budget continues his prioritization of private education and cuts in general, at the direct expense of public education and the 50 million students attending public schools.

The FY19 US Education Department (USED) budget is outlined around six framing themes:

- Providing better choices for more families to attend a high quality school
- Supporting high-quality special education services to children with disabilities
- Creating new and alternative pathways to successful careers for students
- Promoting innovation and reform around STEM education
- Implementing school-bases opioid abuse prevention strategies
- Making the Department more efficient while limiting the federal role in education.

Overall, the FY19 proposal for USED provides \$63.2 billion in discretionary funding, a cut of \$3.6 billion (5%) when compared to the 2017 enacted level. We are unable to provide comparison to the FY18 enacted level—though we are more than 1/3 of the way through the fiscal year—because Congress has yet to finalize the FY18 appropriations allocations. As such, comparisons within this document are made to the comparable FY17 level. The proposal eliminates streamlines or reduces 39 discretionary programs, including deep cuts to K12 programs, listed with their previous funding amount at the bottom of this document.

Outside of the deep cuts to K12 education, the president’s proposed FY19 budget does includes new money for K12, though those dollars are almost exclusively prioritized for investment in school choice and privatization programs. The proposed funding includes \$1.6 billion for school choice, including \$1 billion in funding to support

a new Opportunity Grants program to expand “existing private school choice programs to serve more low-income and at-risk students,” create new models, and support the portability of government funding to follow students to their whatever public school they choose to attend. The total also includes \$500 million for public charter schools (an increase of \$158 m) and \$98 million for magnet schools (level funding).

At the 30,000 foot level, the AASA response to the proposed FY19 budget is a reiteration of our commitment to equity in education, to the idea that all students deserve a robust high-quality education, and to the belief that our nation’s public schools are best positioned to achieve this unparalleled national priority. We subscribe to the idea that ‘When our students succeed, our nation succeeds’ and as such, believe that federal investment is critical to helping to level the playing field for our nation’s neediest students. The limited federal dollars, though a small share of overall education funding, yield a mighty impact when purposefully invested.

AASA outright opposes this administration’s unprecedented shift away from prioritizing investment in public education to prioritizing investment in private education. In our work to support education for all students, we are realistic about the importance of change and competition and choice. And it remains a simple fact that ‘parent choice’ isn’t parent choice until *every* parent has a choice. Today, the only system in the nation positioned to serve every parent and every community is the nation’s public education system, which is why federal education policy must be premised on strengthening and supporting public schools to ensure that every family not only has a public education choice, but a high quality public education choice. From there, AASA will engage in conversation about school choice so long as all entities participating in this market-driven, choice-focused discussion are competing on a level playing field, facing the same accountability, transparency and reporting requirements. Any ‘parent choice’ policy built on an uneven playing field isn’t about competition; it’s about privatization.

Key AASA Programs

Among all of the USED programs, whether slated for a funding increase, a funding cut, or level funding, a handful stick out as AASA priorities. Our response and analysis is as follows:

Programs for Disadvantaged Students: AASA remains committed to prioritizing investment in our nation’s public schools and ensuring that limited targeted dollars are drive via formula and targeted in an equitable manner to better serve our neediest students. As such, we remain staunchly opposed to the continued reliance on prioritization of privatization, opposed to the continued level/underfunding for both ESSA Title I and IDEA, and encourage Congress to reject these poor funding priorities.

- *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title I:* While Title I is level funded, we remain committed to advocating for increased funding for the cornerstone program for the premier federal K12 education bill and express our deep disappointment with a failure to adequately invest in the program, especially when there are new dollars proposed for a school choice/privatization budget item, dollars that otherwise could and should be directed to federal formula programs that serve all students in all districts.
- *Individuals with Disabilities with Education Program:* IDEA receives a nominal overall funding allocation. Even with this slight increase, it still translates into a cut at the per pupil level. As the federal program designed to level the playing field for students with disabilities, Congress created an ambitious policy and committed to providing 40% of the additional cost associated with educating students with disabilities. To date, the closest Congress has come to this goal through the annual appropriations process was 18% in 2005, and the proposed level for FY19 is below that, in the high 15% or low 16% range (final calculation forthcoming). The bottom line is the same: the proposed budget remains reliant on a continued encroachment on state and local dollars to cover the shortfall created by the unfunded mandate. AASA applauds the nominal increase but urges Congress to double down on its commitment to realize its 1975 commitment.

Programs Supporting Teaching in Public Schools, Including Well-Rounded Education and After School

Programming: The success of our nation rests with the success of our students, which is facilitated and grown by our nation's teachers. As such, AASA is opposed to the budget's deep cuts to K12 programs that support teaching in public schools.

- *ESSA Title II:* This program support effective instruction state grants and class size reduction. AASA is opposed to the elimination of the program. (FY17 funding level: \$2.0 billion)
- *21st Century Learning Centers:* This supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children. AASA opposes its proposed elimination. (FY17 funding level: \$1.2 billion)
- *ESSA Title IV:* First authorized as a flexible block grant program under ESSA, the program authorizes activities in three broad, critical areas: well-rounded education, supporting safe/healthy students, and education technology. The program was first funded in FY17, meaning it is in its first year of implementation. AASA is opposed to the proposed elimination of the program, given both the programs newness and overwhelmingly bipartisan support when authorized by Congress. (FY17 funding level: \$400 million)
- *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grants:* As a program designed to improve pay structures, reward effective teachers and principals and provide greater professional opportunities to educators in high poverty schools, this program plays a critical role in supporting individuals and educators interested in advancing an education career. Given the important role of teachers in our schools and the increasingly severe nature of the nation's teacher shortage crisis, AASA is opposed to elimination of this program and instead encourages USED and the Congress to work on federal policies that acknowledge and support the important work of teachers and the important need of ensuring that all students have access to highly effective educators. (FY17 funding level: \$200 million)
- *Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants:* Designed to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills — including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing — for students from birth through grade 12, this program helps build a foundation of literacy skills that students rely upon throughout their educational career. AASA opposes the elimination. (FY17 funding level: \$190 million)

Programs Supporting Career and Technical Education

- *Perkins Career and Technical Education Program:* Perkins plays a critical role in providing students with training and learning in the K12 setting that prepares them for post-K12 educational opportunity and work. CTE and the Perkins program can play a leading role in the president's job creation agenda, and AASA applauds the proposed increase of \$5 million. AASA supports additional funding, but acknowledges that the FY19 proposal is a significant improvement over the president's proposed cuts in FY18.

Programs Supporting Rural Education:

- *Rural Education Achievement Program:* As the only program dedicated to supporting rural schools within ESSA, REAP helps rural school districts carry out activities to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. In an otherwise pretty dismal FY19 budget, the reality is that level funding of a program is a win. AASA appreciates the administration's willingness to protect and preserve REAP.
- *Impact Aid:* The overall proposal for FY19 includes the elimination of the Impact Aid payment for federal property funding. This repeats the proposal from FY18. We would be remiss if we did not call out the fact that the administration's baseline proposal for Impact Aid in FY19 was complete elimination. The money to restore all but the federal property program came not from the administration, but from Congress' budget deal to raise the caps. We are disappointed that when it comes to Impact Aid, this administration seems to consider either complete elimination or conversion to a voucher program as the only policy options, both of which would decimate school districts affected by federal activities. AASA is a strong supporter of the Impact Aid program and remains vehemently opposed to any effort to eliminate Impact Aid or to convert it to a voucher program.

- *Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Communities (Forest Counties) Program*: The SRS program provides assistance to rural counties and school districts affected by the decline in revenue from timber harvests on federal lands. SRS expired at the end of FY 2015 and the proposed budget extends its lack of funding. The continued expiration will create dramatic budgetary shortfalls if Congress fails to renew this long-standing federal obligation to county governments. AASA is opposed to the proposed zero funding for SRS.

Programs Supporting the Total Child: AASA remains committed to the idea that a child is more than a test score. Through AASA's [Total Child campaign](#), we work to support school system leaders in their efforts to ensure all children have support for all their needs so that schools can have a real chance of helping every student master required education concepts and skills. As written on the campaign's landing page, "Focusing federal dollars where they are needed most — on schools serving children of poverty — significantly increases the chances that those dollars will help to close the achievement gap", and this is a simple metric that the proposed FY19 budget fails to attain.

- *Medicaid*: In 2017, AASA led a national effort to oppose policy changes that would result in funding cuts to Medicaid, given its significant and critical role in helping schools prepare children—particularly those with disabilities—to be ready for school. Our report, [Cutting Medicaid: A Prescription to Hurt the Neediest Kids](#) detailed the important role of Medicaid services and reimbursement in both helping schools prepare children for schools and to comply with federal law. The proposed changes proved widely unpopular and garnered bipartisan opposition. As such, AASA remains opposed to the proposed cuts to Medicaid and is disappointed to see the president's budget double down on a policy strategy that would jeopardize healthcare access for children in school and undermine the special education services they receive
- *Opioid Abuse Prevention*: The president's FY19 budget proposal provides \$43 million to help school districts implement school-based opioid abuse prevention strategies. However well intention, the priority seems disingenuous, especially given the president's declared national crisis relating to opioid addiction and the fact that the proposed allocation is below the \$68 million program it replaces.
- *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*: SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and plays an important complementary role to the school nutrition program in working to address child hunger. The proposed FY19 budget would reduce the SNAP budget by \$213 billion over ten years, cutting the program by over 30%, and significantly cutting its ability to serve the needy. AASA is opposed to the slated cuts and other programmatic restructuring.

Analysis continues on the next page.

FY19 Budget Chart (Select Programs)

Dollars listed in billions

Program Name	2017 Final Level	2019 Budget Request	Change +/- 2017	% Change vs 2017
ESSA Title I	15.386	15.46	0.074	0.50%
Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants	0.19	0	-0.19	-100%
Innovative Approaches to Literacy	0.027	0	-0.027	-100%
Migrant Education	0.375	0.375	0	0%
Neglected/Delinquent	0.048	0.048	0	0%
Impact Aid	1.329	1.26	-0.069	-5.20%
ESSA Title II	2.044	0	-2.044	-100%
21st Century Community Learning Centers	1.192	0	-1.192	-100%
State Assessment	0.369	0.369	0	0%
Education for Homeless Children	0.077	0.077	0	0%
Native Hawaiian Education	0.033	0	-0.033	-100%
Alaska Native Education	0.032	0	-0.032	100%
Rural Education	0.176	0.176	0	0%
Comprehensive Centers	0.051	0	-0.051	-100%
ESSA Title IV	0.4	0	-0.4	-100%
School Safety National Issues	0.068	0.043	-0.025	-36.80%
Promise Neighborhoods	0.073	0	-0.073	-100%
Full Service Community Schools	0.01	0	-0.01	-100%
Opportunity Grants	0	1	1	100%
Education Innovation and Research	0.1	0.18	0.08	80%
Teacher and School Leader incentive Grants	0.2	0	-0.2	-100%
Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED)	0.065	0	-0.065	-100%
School Leader Recruitment and Support	0.015	0	-0.015	-100%
Charter School Grants	0.342	0.5	0.158	46.10%
Magnet Schools Assistance	0.098	0.098	0	0%
English Language Acquisition	0.737	0.737	0	0%
Special Education Grants to States	11.94	12.003	0.063	0.50%
Perkins Career & Technical Education	1.117	1.118	0.001	0.10%
Outside of USED				
Head Start (incl Early Head Start)	9.253	9.275	0.022	0.20%
Child Care Development Block Grant	2.856	3.006	0.15	5.30%

Eliminated Programs (lists budget authority in millions)

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers (\$1,191.7)
- Alaska Native Education (32.5)
- American History and Civics Education (3.5)
- Arts in Education (27.0)
- Comprehensive Centers (50.0)
- Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants (190.0)
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (733.1)
- Full-Service Community Schools (10.0)
- Gaining Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (339.8)
- Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (28.0)
- Impact Aid Payments for Federal Property (68.8)
- Innovative Approaches to Literacy (27.0)
- International Education and Foreign Language Studies Domestic Programs (65.1)
- International Education and Foreign Language Studies Overseas Program (7.1)
- Javits Gifted and Talented (12.0)
- Native Hawaiian Education (33.4)
- Promise Neighborhoods (73.3)
- Ready to Learn Programming (25.7)
- Regional Educational Laboratories (54.4)
- School Leader Recruitment and Support (14.5)
- Special Olympics Education Programs (12.6)
- Statewide longitudinal Systems (32.3)
- Strengthening Institution (86.5)
- Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (400.0)
- Supported Employment State Grants (27.5)
- Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED)
- Supporting Effective Instruction States Grants (2,005.8)
- Teacher Quality Partnerships (43.1)
- Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grants (200.0)
 - TOTAL: \$5,909.7

Resources

- The President's FY19 budget proposal can be accessed [here](#).
- The Department of Education budget materials are online [here](#).
- The Department of Health and Human Services' Budget in Brief is available online [here](#).
- The Department of Labor budget materials are online [here](#).

"Don't tell me what you value, show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value." Vice President Joe Biden

Questions? Email Noelle Ellerson Ng (nellerson@aasa.org)