

TO: AASA Members  
FROM: AASA Advocacy Team  
DATE: March 9, 2022  
RE: FY22 Omnibus Overview

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Federal fiscal year 2022 (FY22) started October 1, 2021 and runs through September 30, 2022. Federal FY22 education dollars will be in schools for the 2022-23 school year. Congress did not complete its annual appropriations work on time and exercised a series of continuing resolutions (CRs) to buy more time to complete their funding work. The current CR runs out March 11, 2022, and all signs point toward Congressional intent to pass a comprehensive appropriations bill and finalize funding for FY22. This memo is a summary of the FY22 process and an overview of education-related provisions in the omnibus.

The final FY22 numbers are drastically different than the numbers advanced by both the House and Senate appropriations committee, as well as the President, in their respective FY22 work. The final package represents a negotiation between Democrats and Republicans and is decidedly muted, relative to the initial bills, as it relates to education funding. AASA strongly supported the initial bills, which included a doubling of Title I, a \$2.5 billion increase to IDEA, and extension of critical school nutrition waivers through the 2022-23 school year, among other investments.

FY22 Education Funding Overview: The final FY22 LHHS appropriations bill includes \$220.8 b in base non-defense discretionary funding. Despite the bold, proposed investments in Title I and in K-12 education programs by President Biden, Congress only chose to increase investments in a few select programs. Specific to education, the bill allocates \$42.6 billion, an increase of \$2 billion compared to the prior year, for K-12, which is the largest overall investment in K-12 programs in a decade.

- Title I is funded at \$17.5 b (\$1 b increase over FY21, but below the \$20 b increase proposed by the President and the House, and the \$16.5 b increase in the Senate). The increased Title I funding would be allocated across all four funding formulae: \$6.4 b for Basic; \$1.36 b for Concentrated; \$4.86 b for Targeted; and \$4.86 b for EFIG).
- IDEA is funded at \$13.6 b (\$406 m increase over FY21, but \$2 b below current ARP levels, \$2.5 b below the levels proposed by the President, Senate and House). IDEA federal funding share would fall from 15.5% to approx. 13.6% of the authorized 40%.
- Title II Part A (Educator Professional Development) is funded at \$2.2 b (\$27 m increase over FY21).
- Title IV Part A is funded at \$1.28 b (increase of \$60 m over FY21).
- Title IV Part B (21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers) is funded at \$1.29 b (\$30 m increase over FY21).
- Community Schools is funded at \$75 m (increase of \$45 m over FY21).
- Mental Health includes \$111 m for mental health professionals in schools via Title IV-F School Safety National Activities): \$55 m for Mental Health Services Professional Demonstration Grants (increase of \$45 m over FY21) and \$56 m for School-Based Mental Health Services Grants (increase of \$45 m over FY21).
- Rural Education Achievement Program is funded at \$195 m (\$7.16 m increase over FY21).
- McKinney Vento Homeless Children and Youth is funded at \$114 m (\$7.5 m increase over FY21).
- English Language Acquisition is funded at \$831.4 m (\$34 m increase over FY21).
- Career and Technical Education is funded at \$1.38 b (\$45 m increase over FY21).
- Head Start is funded at \$11.037 b (\$289 m increase over FY21).
- Impact Aid is funded at \$1.557 b (\$56 m increase over FY21).
- Educator Pipeline Programs are funded at \$162.1 million (\$20 m more than FY21, but \$270 m less than the President's proposal). This includes \$8 million for Hawkins Centers of Excellence; \$59.1 m for Teacher Quality Partnership Program; and \$95 m for IDEA-D-PP.

- School Nutrition waivers are not extended. What will this mean for schools?
  - Summer Food Service Reimbursement Rate Waivers: Ending this means school meal programs will receive substantially less reimbursements while the cost of food, labor and supplies continue to increase.
  - Meal Pattern Waivers: Ending this waiver means school programs will once again face significant challenges in getting the food they need to meet meal pattern requirements, including sodium, whole-grain, milk variety, vegetable subgroups, and planned menus for age/grade spans. A [November 2021 survey](#) from the School Nutrition Association found that more than 96% of school meal programs cited challenges with suppliers not carrying sufficient menu items needed to meet nutrition standards, such as whole-grain, low-sodium and low-fat options.
  - Congregate Setting Waivers: Ending this waiver means schools will no longer be able to provide meals to students outside of school, even if schools close or a student must quarantine due to COVID-19. Meal programs will no longer have the regulatory flexibility they need to serve all their students safely and quickly adapt operations.
  - Seamless Summer Option Waiver: Ending this waiver means schools will now have to gather Free and Reduced Priced Lunch applications for the first time in two years, a significant administrative burden, rife with social stigma.
- Food and Nutrition Service (USDA) is funded at \$26.883 b (\$1.7 b over FY21, \$4 m below the requested level). This includes \$26.778 b for child nutrition programs; \$30 m for school breakfast program equipment grants; \$45 m for Summer EBT demonstration grants; \$6 m for School Breakfast Expansion Grants; \$12 m for Farm to School; and \$2 m for Child Nutrition Training.

#### **AASA Response:**

The FY22 omnibus bill as it relates to education is, at best, a mixed bag. We commend Democratic leaders for going to bat for the increases that were realized; it is clear they heard the message from the field and pushed for prioritizing education funding. At the same time, the bill misses the mark on what could have been, especially in the context of what had been proposed across the administration, House, and Senate.

We are deeply troubled by the lack of an extension for the school nutrition waivers, a seeming failure to acknowledge that student hunger needs will continue into the 2022-23 school year, and a willingness to undo all the good that has been done--all the students that have been fed--under this initially bipartisan proposal. Complicating the meals piece even further, the end of these commonsense flexibilities comes at the exact time that schools are seeing increased prices and supply chain issues.

Specific to the IDEA funding level, this is a cut in comparison to current ARP levels. This omnibus was the first time in my career at AASA that Congress had a true opportunity to redirect itself forward on the IDEA glidepath. We applaud them for the small increases included in today's bill, while also holding them accountable for once again leaving IDEA severely underfunded. The proposed level puts schools on an IDEA funding cliff and all but ensures that ARP IDEA dollars will go to one time expenditures instead of sustainable quality investments. We did this once under ARRA, and we had reasonable hope that Congress would prioritize this ARP funding level, given both the chronic underfunding of IDEA and the lessons learned from ARRA.

This significant shift away from proposed funding levels for K12 education is the second time in less than a year that the nation's public schools were cut as part of broader negotiations. Last fall, K12 schools saw the proposed infrastructure funding for schools pushed out of the Build Back Better negotiations. Today's bill shows, once again, the disconnect between education funding proposals and education funding realities. What we fund is what we value, and AASA urges Congress to do better when it comes to truly and meaningfully funding education. Our nation's public school system leaders expected better, and our nation's schools and students deserved more. At the end of the day, though, our nation's public school system can and will make this work, ensuring that school doors remain open and ready to educate all who walk through.

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