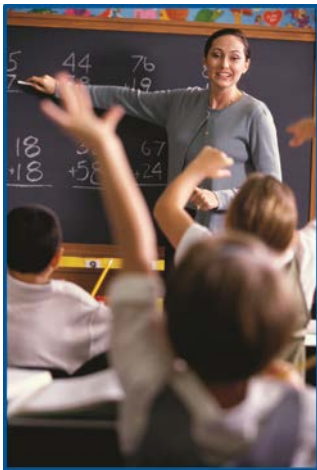


EDUCATION IN THE PRESIDENT'S FY2013 BUDGET



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For additional
information contact:

Roberto Viramontes
Vice President,
Education Policy
robertov@firstfocus.net
202.657.0670

www.firstfocus.net

On February 13, President Obama presented his \$3.8 trillion FY 2013 budget request to Congress, outlining his spending priorities for the coming year. Similar to the plan the Administration released in September, the budget focuses on reducing the federal deficit, proposing \$4 trillion in deficit-reduction measures with an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings from across-the-board cuts to federal programs. Overall funding for the Department of Education provides \$69.8 billion in discretionary spending, which is 2.5 percent (or \$1.7 billion) above the 2012 appropriation. In addition, the budget request also calls for over \$60 billion in mandatory spending for new investments in teacher preparation, preventing teacher layoffs and modernizing school facilities.

The President's commitment to K-12 education is reflected in selective increases with some of the key competitive grant initiatives, such as Race to the Top. However, the budget request also freezes funding for a number of key programs that would benefit specific student subgroups such as homeless students, English Learners and youth transitioning out of the justice system. Furthermore, major formula-grant programs aimed at supporting our most disadvantaged students would also see stagnant funding, such as Title I and special education. Lastly, this is the third year that the Obama administration has pushed for a consolidation plan, thus folding key programs for family literacy and parent engagement into larger pots of money.

The proposals in the President's FY 2013 budget most significant for K-12 education programs are below:

NOTABLE PROGRAM INCREASES

Race to the Top

The President's request calls for \$850 million, an increase of \$301 million from the 2012 appropriation. With an increase of 55 percent, it would continue supporting comprehensive State and local reforms designed to close achievement gaps and produce significant improvements in student achievement and high school graduation rates. The request also includes funding for the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge.

Promise Neighborhoods

The President's Request calls for \$100 million, an increase of \$40.1 million from the 2012 appropriation. This would continue sustaining competitive grants that support the development and implementation of comprehensive neighborhood projects that include a continuum of family and community services and ambitious education reforms designed to combat the adverse effects of poverty and improve education and life outcomes. By continuing to help meet the needs of the whole child, First Focus applauds the president's commitment to comprehensive supports for children, youth and families.

Successful Safe and Healthy Students

The President's Request calls for \$195.9 million for a new competitive grant program under the Administration's ESEA reauthorization proposal, to implement strategies designed to improve the physical and mental health of students; reduce or prevent drug use, alcohol use, bullying and harassment; and report better information on school climate and student safety. Funding for this new program is drawn from the consolidation of existing programs, such as elementary and school counseling, physical education program and alcohol abuse reduction program. First

Focus has always been supportive of programs that build schools that are safe, healthy and engaging accompanied by integrated services. However, we remain concerned that this is achieved at the cost of other critical social-emotional supports for students.

NEW PROGRAMS

School Modernization

Additional funding through the American Jobs Act calls for \$30 billion to provide assistance for the modernization, renovation, and repair of school buildings in public school districts in order to support improved educational outcomes.

College Pathways & Accelerated Learning

The President's Request calls for \$81.3 million which serves as a new program under the Administration's ESEA reauthorization proposal designed to increase graduation rates and preparation for college matriculation via Advanced Placement course and dual enrollment programs (early college high schools) in high-poverty middle and high schools. First Focus applauds the creation of programs that enable students to earn college credits while they are in high school, reduce dropout rates, and keep students engaged.

PROGRAMS THAT ARE FROZEN FUNDED

Title I, Part A, College and Career Ready Students Program

The President's Request calls for \$14.5 billion, thus freezing the funding level from the 2012 appropriation. This would replace Title I grants to schools districts but would continue to help ensure that 21 million students in high-poverty schools meet State academic standards. The request also supports a reauthorization proposal that reframes State accountability systems to target interventions to the lowest performing schools while giving them the latitude on how to best improve student achievement. Given that child poverty has risen to 22% based on 2010 census figures, we expected the Administration to elevate funding for a foundation program was specifically created to level the playing field for students in poverty.

Neglected and Delinquent Children & Youth Education (ESEA I-D)

The President's Request calls for \$100 million, thus freezing the funding level from the 2012 appropriation. This program provides formula grants to States that support education services for neglected and delinquent children and youth in local and State-run institutions, community day programs, and in correctional facilities. While the request would assist an estimated 109,000 students to re-enter and complete school, neglected students should not be forgotten as we forge ahead toward the President's goal of having the most college graduates in the world by 2020.

Homeless Children & Youth Education

The President's Request calls for \$65.2 million, thus freezing the funding level from the 2012 appropriation. This program provides formula grants to States, for services that help homeless students enroll, in, attend, and succeed in school. In addition, to academic instruction, the program helps ensure access for these children to preschool programs, special education, and gifted and talented programs. According to a 2010 report by The National Center on Family Homelessness, there are 1.6 million children homeless in a year, which translates to more than 30,000 children each week and more than 4,400 each day. Despite the increasing need, President Obama's 2013 budget request would freeze funding for a second consecutive year, therefore being unable to meet this educational challenge within our schools.

English Learner Education

The President's Request calls for \$732.1 million, thus freezing the funding level from the 2012 appropriation. Currently authorized under Title III of ESEA, this program awards formula grants to States based on each State's share of the Nation's English Learners (ELs) and recent immigrant students. The funding helps States design and implement statewide activities (professional development of educators, improved accountability) to meet the educational needs of English Learners. Given that achievement gaps still persist between EL and non-EL students, flat funding for the second consecutive year fails to adequately meet the need of the rapidly growing EL population.

NOTABLE FUNDING DECREASES

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program

Has seen its funding entirely eliminated under the President's request for FY 2013 (the 2012 appropriation was \$160 million). Funding would have been utilized for discretionary grants to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills which includes pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing — for students from birth through grade 12, including English Learners and students with disabilities. First Focus advocates for restoring funding in order to create and implement State literacy plans that target interventions to students reading below grade level.

High School Graduation Initiative (ESEA I-H)

Has seen its funding entirely eliminated under the President's request for FY 2013 (the 2012 appropriation was \$49 million). Discretionary grants would have been awarded to State educational agencies (SEAs) and school districts to implement effective, sustainable, and coordinated dropout prevention and re-entry programs in high schools with annual dropout rates that exceed their state average. Funds also may be used to support activities at middle schools that feed into high schools that have dropout rates that exceed the State average annual rate. Because First Focus focuses greatly on dropout prevention beginning at the middle school level as well as dropout recovery, we advocate for the restoration of funding for this program under the final appropriation for FY 2013.

Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grants

Has seen its funding entirely eliminated under the President's request FY 2013 (the 2012 appropriation was \$42.8 million). TQP Grants seek to improve the quality of new teachers by creating partnerships among Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), high-need school districts, and/or high-need early childhood education (ECE) program. The TQP Grants Program also support school leadership programs to train superintendents, principals, ECE program directors, and other school leaders in high-need or rural school districts. Even though the President's request furthers some policies to elevate the teaching profession, we urgently need to continue creating comprehensive pathways toward the teaching career where we can recruit, prepare and retain highly qualified and effective teachers in high-need areas. Frozen funding to the TQP grants would strike a blow to such efforts.

CONSOLIDATED PROGRAMS

While the president's request expands certain programs, 38 existing education programs were consolidated under the proposal. The consolidation results in eleven new larger programs, however, First Focus remains concerned that consolidation will diminish targeted attention in the following areas: Family literacy (programs such as Even Start and Reading is Fundamental) as well as parent engagement (Parent Information Resource Centers).