

EDUCATION IN THE PRESIDENT'S FY 2016 BUDGET

February 2015

On February 2, 2015, President Obama released his Fiscal Year 2016 (FY 2015) budget request, outlining his spending priorities for the coming year. By offering funding levels above federal budget caps in place as a result of sequestration, the budget shines a light on the challenges Congress faces if the caps remain in place. Choosing to allow funding levels above the federal budget caps allows room to invest significantly in children, and the President's budget does just that. This fact sheet takes a more detailed look at proposals in the budget that impact K-12 education.

The President's commitment to education is reflected in an investment in education that is 5.4 percent higher than the FY 2015 appropriation level. This increase includes increases in several important K-12 initiatives and a \$1.3 billion investment in state-federal partnerships to expand access to pre-Kindergarten (more information about the administration's early childhood education plan is available at www.firstfocus.org). The budget request signals a desire to invest in key programs that benefit specific student subgroups such as homeless students and English Learners. In a shift from previous years, major formula grants aimed at supporting our most disadvantaged students, such as Title I, see funding increases in the Administration's budget. Lastly, the Obama administration has again pushed for a consolidation plan that folds key programs, including those for family literacy and teacher recruitment and training into larger, less targeted pots of money. Significant K-12 education proposals in the President's FY 2016 budget are below:

Notable Funding Increases and New Initiatives

- **Title I, Part A, College and Career Ready Students Program:** The President requests \$15.4 billion, an increase of \$1 billion over the FY 2015 appropriation. Title I Part A is the largest federal education funding stream, and it helps ensure that 21 million students in high-poverty schools meet state academic standards. With nearly 1 in 5 children living in poverty, this funding increase is important to help mitigate the negative impact of child poverty.
- **Homeless Children & Youth Education:** The President requests \$71.5 million, a \$6.5 million increase from the FY 2015 appropriation level. This initiative provides formula grants to states for services that help homeless students enroll, 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 the Department of Education, 1.3 million students were homeless in the 2012-2013 school year, an 8 percent increase over the previous year. President Obama's FY 2016 budget request increases funding in an effort to meet this growing challenge within our schools.
- **English Learner Education:** The President requests \$773.4 million, increasing the funding level \$36 million from FY 2015 appropriation. Currently authorized under Title III of ESEA, this program awards formula grants to States based on each state's share of English Learners (ELs) and recent immigrant students. The funding helps states design and implement statewide activities (such as professional development of educators and improved accountability) to meet the educational needs of English Learners.

Given that achievement gaps still persist between EL and non-EL students, increasing funding for this important initiative is an important response to benefit a large and growing population of students.

- **Native Student Education:** All three funding streams dedicated to improving educational opportunities for native populations receive increases over FY 2015 appropriations, including **Indian Student Education** (\$173.9 million, an increase of \$50 million), **Native Hawaiian Student Education** (\$33.4 million, an increase of \$1 million), and **Alaska Native Student Education** (\$32.5 million, an increase of \$1 million).

Frozen Funded Initiatives

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers:** The President's budget flat funds this initiative at \$1.2 billion, the same funding level as FY 2015. This funding stream is the only source of federal funding for before- and after-school programs and for summer learning initiatives. States receive this funding through a formula based on how much Title I funding it received, and rely on this source of funds for important out-of-school activities for students from low-income families. These programs include academic enrichment, drug and violence prevention, counseling, and art, music and technology and are important for students to succeed in school. They are particularly important for students who experience instability at home or who live in impoverished or high-crime areas. The federal government should invest more heavily in these types of activities that raise academic achievement.
- **Full Service Community Schools:** The Administration's budget request includes \$10 million for this competitive grant program that allows schools to implement the full service community schools model. This model allows schools to implement a coordinated and integrated set of comprehensive academic, social, and health services that respond to the needs of its students, their families, and community members. There is great demand from across the country for these grants; an increase in funding would increase their availability and allow schools to better meet all the needs of their students.
- **Neglected and Delinquent Children & Youth Education (ESEA I-D):** The President requests \$47.6 million, level funding from FY2015 appropriation. This initiative 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 98,000 students to re-enter and complete school, these students face a number of challenges that their peers do not, and the federal government should prioritize these students to help them overcome these challenges.

Notable Funding Decreases and Consolidations

- **Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grants:** This initiative's funding is entirely eliminated under the President's FY2016 request (the FY2015 appropriation was \$40.6 million). TQP Grants seek to improve the quality of new teachers by creating partnerships among institutions of higher education, high-need school districts, and/or high-need early childhood education (ECE) programs. 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. We need to continue creating comprehensive pathways to the teaching career where we can recruit, prepare, and retain highly qualified and effective teachers in high-need areas. Defunding TQP grants would strike a blow to these efforts.

The important increases above are only possible because the administration budget funds the government above the budget caps set by sequestration. Congress will begin the budget process working within these caps. Without legislative action to undo sequestration and remove the budget caps, the significant and necessary investments outlined above are impossible, and a majority of K-12 education funding will likely remain frozen at FY 2015 levels if they are not cut.

Every child deserves the opportunity to grow-up health, happy, and well educated. First Focus urges Congress to fully invest in the initiatives that serve as lifelines to our nation's children, many of which are at risk because of our fiscal situation. Deficit-reduction cannot and should not be at the expense of our children's well-being, especially those who face the most challenges both inside and outside the classroom. Our nation's future depends on it.