

INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR K-12 EDUCATION



COSSBA Requests

- Significant increases in Title I funding to allow schools to quickly address and overcome the Achievement Gap and disparities exacerbated by COVID-19.
- Increases in Title IV funding to help solve the additional student health challenges schools are addressing, especially those in mental health.

Issue History

Education is the foundation for ensuring a strong, safe, and prosperous nation. Study after study highlight that high quality public education produces students who are healthier, wealthier, and more engaged citizens. However, in order to achieve these outcomes, our public schools need adequate and robust resources to overcome the current challenges that have emerged after the COVID-19 pandemic. Federal funding for public education, especially for IDEA, ESEA Title I, Title II, and Title IV Part A, makes up a large portion of the necessary resources our schools need for success.

The Nation's Report Card for 2023 demonstrated that our students have suffered academically since the pandemic. Scores have dramatically regressed to those achieved in the 1990s. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) each year examines achievement in reading and math for 4th and 8th grade students. Last year's results highlight that COVID had a huge impact on learning, especially for students of color. While generous and flexible COVID funding has helped to initially address this challenge, this is a systemic issue that will last for many years, even decades, if schools are not adequately funded early enough to build sustainable solutions for now and into the future.

Another significant challenge facing school districts is the health and well-being of students. The isolation during the pandemic and nature of online learning has detrimentally impacted many students. Students' social skills, self-confidence, and mental health have suffered. And they face increased rates of anxiety and depression. Our schools and our educators must address these challenges. Demand for school psychologists and other wrap-around supports has skyrocketed. While schools strive to provide the best education to students, we know that students also need to be in a good state of health to learn and succeed. Hunger, homelessness, depression, anxiety, and other issues impact student performance. More and more each day, our schools are being called on to address these issues. In the past, the role of the school was to educate, however, over the years that role has evolved to address student need in a broader context. As we move past the pandemic, the demand and need for those supports has greatly expanded. Our schools and our educators are ready to meet these challenges and are uniquely suited to help but require additional resources to be successful.

Unfortunately, annual federal funding for education has not kept pace with inflation and recent proposals to significantly cut investments move our schools in the wrong direction.