



BILL SUMMARY

EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

SETTING NEW PRIORITIES IN EDUCATION SPENDING ACT

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Despite tripling overall per pupil funding since 1964, national academic performance has not improved. Math and reading scores have largely remained flat, graduation rates have stagnated, and researchers have found serious shortcomings in many federally funded education programs. As the House Education and the Workforce Committee works to reform our nation's broken education system and restore fiscal responsibility in Washington, we must ensure taxpayer dollars are well spent.

The Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act will repeal the authorization for more than 40 wasteful education programs, reducing by half the number of federal education programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This bill will help balance the budget, restore fiscal discipline, and promote a more appropriate federal role in education.

The Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act will build on the important work begun in the Fiscal year 2011 budget agreement by permanently eliminating the following programs:

Programs defunded in the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution

- **Even Start Family Literacy Program:** Even Start offers grants to certain low-income family literacy projects. The program, which previously received \$66.5 million in FY 2008, 2009, and 2010, was not funded in the final FY 2011 budget agreement and was consolidated in the president's FY 2012 budget request. The program was also deemed ineffective by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) 2002 Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) evaluation, which found **"none [of the Department's studies] showed that Even Start children and parents showed greater educational gains than those not receiving Even Start services."**¹
- **Enhancing Education Through Technology (Ed-Tech):** Ed-Tech provides grants to State Educational Agencies (SEAs) to help elementary and secondary school students become "technologically literate." The program received \$267.5 million in FY 2008, \$269.9 million in FY 2009, and \$100 million in FY 2010. Funding for Ed-Tech was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement. OMB's 2005 PART

¹ Even Start Program Assessment. Office of Management and Budget, ExpectMore.gov. Found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10000186.2002.html>

evaluation determined the program **failed to provide data to “determine the program’s impact on improving student achievement.”**²

- **Striving Readers:** Striving Readers is another childhood literacy program. The program received \$35.3 million in both FY 2008 and 2009, and \$200 million in FY 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement. **The program has never been authorized but has been funded under an existing ESEA authority eliminated by the Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act.**
- **National Writing Project:** The National Writing Project funds programs to train teachers in teaching students how to write. The program received \$23.6 million in FY 2008, \$24.3 million in FY 2009, and \$25.6 million in FY 2010. Funding for the National Writing Project was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement because the program is duplicative of the existing ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) and Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) programs. The OMB’s 2004 PART evaluation determined the program is **“redundant of other federal and local efforts to improve writing instruction”** and that states already **“receive over \$3 billion annually in teacher training funding.”**³
- **Smaller Learning Communities (SLC):** SLC provides discretionary grants to school districts for use in public high schools with 1,000 or more students. SLCs include structures such as freshman academies, academies around career interests, student advisories, family advocate systems, and mentoring programs. The program received \$80.1 million in FY 2008, \$88 million in FY 2009, and \$88 million in FY 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement, and the president’s FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program. **The SLC program is duplicative of ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) and Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) programs.**
- **Improving Literacy Through School Libraries:** The Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program provides additional funding for technologically advanced school library media centers, materials, and media specialists. The program received \$19.1 million in FY 2008, 2009, and 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement. **This program is duplicative of the existing ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) and Institute of Museum and Library Sciences programs.**
- **Improve Mental Health of Children, Mental Health Integration in Schools:** Grants for Mental Health Integration in Schools provides grants to SEAs, school districts, and Indian tribes to increase student access to mental health care by developing programs that link school systems with mental health systems. The program received \$4.9 million in FY 2008 and \$5.9 million in both FY 2009 and 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement and consolidated in the president’s FY 2012 budget request. **The program overlaps with the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and is duplicative of several Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs.**

² Enhancing Education Through Technology Program Assessment. Office of Management and Budget, ExpectMore.gov. Found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10003305.2005.html>

³ National Writing Project Program Assessment. Office of Management and Budget, ExpectMore.gov. Found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10002110.2004.html>

- **Improve Mental Health of Children, Foundations for Learning:** The Foundations for Learning program makes competitive grants to school districts, local councils, community-based organizations, and other public and nonprofit entities for “children’s development and school readiness.” The program received \$1 million in FY 2009 and 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement, and consolidated in the president’s FY 2012 budget request. **The program overlaps with the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and is duplicative of several Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs.**
- **Close Up Fellowship Program:** The Close Up Fellowship program, which is administered by a private foundation, provides financial aid for low-income students, their teachers, and recent immigrants to come to Washington, DC. The program received \$1.9 million in FY 2008, 2009, and 2010. The Close Up Fellowship program was not funded in the final FY 2011 budget agreement or the president’s FY 2012 budget request. **The program is an earmark because it is awarded noncompetitively to a single entity. It does not serve a federal role and should only be supported by private funds.**
- **Advanced Credentialing:** The Advanced Credentialing program is operated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and provides funding for professional development. The program received \$9.6 million in FY 2008 and \$10.6 million in both FY 2009 and 2010. The Advanced Credentialing program funding was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement as well as the president’s FY 2012 budget request. **The program is an earmark for NBPTS and is duplicative of the ESEA Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) program and the Teacher Incentive Fund.**
- **Reading is Fundamental (RIF):** The Reading is Fundamental program is another childhood literacy program funded by a combination of federal and private dollars. The program received \$24.6 million in FY 2008 and \$24.8 million in FY 2009 and 2010. Funding for RIF was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement. **This program is an earmark for a private entity, and is duplicative of the ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) program.**
- **Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Whaling Partners:** The Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Their Historic Whaling and Trading Partners program earmarks funds for certain entities in Massachusetts, Alaska, and Hawaii that support projects and education programs to increase understanding of cultural diversity. The program received \$8.7 million in FY 2008, 2009, and 2010. **The Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Whaling Partners program was not funded in the final FY 2011 budget agreement or the president’s FY 2012 budget request because it does not serve a federal purpose.**
- **Women’s Educational Equity:** The Women’s Educational Equity program promotes education equity for women and girls. The program received \$1.8 million in FY 2008 and \$2.4 million in both FY 2009 and 2010. Funding for the program was eliminated in the final FY 2011 budget agreement and the president’s FY 2012 budget request. **Research has shown this program is no longer necessary; a March 17, 2010 article in Education Week noted the traditional achievement gap between boys and girls in math has closed, with the “percentages of both genders scoring ‘proficient’ or higher [being] roughly the same.”** On the other hand,

that same article observes that “male students in every state where data were available lag behind females in reading.”

- **Javits Gifted and Talented:** The Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education program provides grants for elementary and secondary schools to “meet the needs of gifted and talented students.” The program received \$7.5 million in FY 2008, 2009, and 2010. **Because of the program’s extremely limited impact, it was not funded in the final FY 2011 budget agreement and was consolidated in the president’s FY 2012 budget request.**

Programs consolidated or eliminated in President Obama’s FY 2012 Budget

- **School Leadership:** The School Leadership program provides grants to recruit, train, and mentor principals for “high-need” school districts. The program received \$14.5 million in FY 2008, \$19.2 million in FY 2009, and \$29.2 million in both FY 2010 and 2011. The president’s FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program. **The School Leadership program is duplicative of the ESEA Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) program and the Teacher Incentive Fund.**
- **Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse:** The Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse program provides funding for alcohol abuse prevention programs. The program received \$33.3 million in FY 2009 and \$32.7 million in FY 2010. The Department of Education’s FY 2011 spending plan dramatically cuts the program, providing only \$6.9 million, and the president’s FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program. **The program is duplicative of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.**
- **Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program:** The Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program provides funding to school districts to establish or expand elementary and secondary school counseling programs. The program received \$52 million in FY 2009 and \$55 million in FY 2010. The Department of Education’s FY 2011 spending plan reduces funding to \$52.4 million and the president’s FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program. **The program is duplicative of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.**
- **Teaching American History:** The Teaching American History Grant program provides competitive grants to elementary and secondary schools that teach American history as a separate academic subject. The program received \$117.9 million in FY 2008 and \$118.9 million in FY 2009 and 2010. The Department of Education’s FY 2011 funding plan provides only \$45.9 million, and the president’s FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program. **OMB’s 2004 PART evaluation found no demonstrated results from the program and determined it was duplicative of the ESEA Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) program.**

Programs not recently funded

- **Mentoring Program:** Mentoring grants support school-based mentoring programs for certain children living in rural, high-crime, or troubled home environments. The program has not received funding since FY 2009, when it received \$47 million. **OMB’s 2006 PART evaluation found no evidence of success, reporting that**

the program is “duplicative of other, non-federal mentoring programs... [already] serving approximately 90,000 students.”⁴

- **Comprehensive School Reform:** The Comprehensive School Reform program provides formula grants for use in schools identified as needing improvement. **The program has not been funded since FY 2008, when it received \$1.6 million.**
- **Ready to Teach Grant Program:** The Ready to Teach Grant Program supports online professional development for certain teachers and the development of educational video programming. The program received \$10.7 million in both FY 2008 and 2009. The program also received an appropriation of \$10.7 million in FY 2010, but those funds were rescinded as an offset for the Education Jobs Fund (Edujobs). **The program was not funded in the final FY 2011 budget agreement or the president’s FY 2012 budget request. It is duplicative of the ESEA Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) program and the Teacher Incentive Fund.**
- **Community Technology Centers:** The Community Technology Centers program was designed to provide residents of economically distressed urban and rural communities with increased access to information technology. **The program has not been funded since FY 2005, when it received \$5 million.**
- **Bilingual and Emergency Immigrant Education Program:** The Bilingual and Emergency Immigrant Education program provides funding to school districts that experience unexpectedly large increases in student population due to immigration. **The program has not been funded since FY 2001.**
- **Star Schools:** The Star Schools program provides grants to support distance education projects. **The program has not been funded since FY 2007, when it received \$11.5 million.**
- **Early Reading First:** The Early Reading First program provides funding for early childhood centers that focus on basic language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills. **The program received \$112.5 million in both FY 2008 and 2009, but has since not received funding.**
- **Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, State Grants:** The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program funds certain drug-abuse and violence-prevention activities. **The program has not received funding since FY 2009, when it received \$294.8 million. The program is duplicative of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.**
- **Character Education:** The Partnerships in Character Education program provides grants for poorly defined programs that educate students on “elements of character” such as caring, justice, forgiveness, and “any other elements deemed appropriate.” The program received \$11.9 million in FY 2009, but has since not received funding. **The Character Education program is duplicative of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.**
- **Early Childhood Educator Professional Development:** The Early Childhood Educator Professional Development program offers grants to higher education

⁴ Mentoring Program Assessment. Office of Management and Budget, ExpectMore.gov. Found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10003328.2006.html>

institutions that provide professional development for early childhood educators who work with low-income families. **The program, which has not received funding since FY 2007, is duplicative of the ESEA Title II teacher training programs.**

Programs never funded

- **Healthy, High-Performance Schools:** The Healthy, High-Performance Schools program awards grants to schools for reducing energy use, meeting federal and state health and safety codes, and supporting "healthful, energy efficient, and environmentally sound practices." **The Healthy, High-Performance Schools program has never been funded.**
- **Combating Domestic Violence:** The Combating Domestic Violence program awards grants to school districts for educating teachers, staff, and students on domestic violence issues. **The program has never been funded.**
- **Improving Language Instruction Educational Programs:** The Improving Language Instruction Educational Programs are designed to help limited English proficient students meet the same standards for academic achievement that all children are expected to meet. **The programs have never been funded.**
- **Teacher Mobility:** The National Panel on Teacher Mobility studies strategies for increasing mobility and employment opportunities for teachers. The panel members do not receive compensation for serving on the panel, but are allowed travel expenses. **The program has never been funded.**
- **Additional Assistance for LEAs Impacted by Federal Property Acquisition:** The program provides additional assistance for eligible LEAs already receiving Impact Aid. In order to qualify for this additional assistance, the LEA must be responsible for children residing within a military installation. **The program has never been funded and is duplicative of Impact Aid, which provides funds to school districts impacted by the presence of federal land.**

Programs that are duplicative or inappropriate for the federal government

- **Native Hawaiian Education:** The Native Hawaiian Education program provides grants to Native Hawaiian organizations and agencies to develop education programs for native Hawaiian students. The program received \$33.3 million in FY 2009 and \$34.3 million in both FY 2010 and 2011. **The Native Hawaiian Education program is duplicative of ESEA Title I, which targets funds to disadvantaged students to increase academic achievement.**
- **Alaska Native Education Equity:** The Alaska Native Education Equity program provides funding to Alaska Native nonprofits and other organizations to develop education programs for Alaska Native students. The program received \$33.3 million in FY 2009, 2010, and 2011. **The Alaska Native Education Equity program is duplicative of ESEA Title I, which targets funds to disadvantaged students to increase academic achievement.**
- **Foreign Language Assistance Program:** The Foreign Language Assistance program provides grants for foreign language instruction. The program received \$19 million in FY 2009, \$15.7 million in FY 2010, and \$26.9 million in FY 2011. **The Foreign Language Assistance program has too narrow a purpose, and the activities funded under the program can already be supported under the ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) program.**

- **Physical Education:** The Carol M. White Physical Education Program provides grants to school districts and community-based organizations to initiate or expand physical education programs. The program received \$78 million in FY 2009 and \$79 million in both FY 2010 and FY 2011. **Not only is supporting physical education an inappropriate federal role, this program is duplicative of Center for Disease Control programs and other federal physical fitness initiatives.**
- **Arts in Education:** The Arts in Education program funds professional development for arts teachers in high-poverty schools; replication of arts programs across school districts; and provides noncompetitive awards to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The program received \$38.1 million in FY 2009, \$40 million in FY 2010, and \$27.4 million in FY 2011. **The Arts in Education program contains partially earmarked funds, does not serve a federal role, and is duplicative of ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) and Title II (Teacher Quality State Grants) programs.**
- **High School Graduation Initiative (Dropout Prevention):** The High School Graduation Initiative provides grants to help schools increase high school graduation rates. The program did not receive funding in FY 2008 or 2009, but received \$50 million in FY 2010 and \$48.9 million in FY 2011. **The High School Graduation Initiative is duplicative of the ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) program.**
- **Special Education Teacher Training:** The Special Education Teacher Training program helps the University of Northern Colorado train special education teachers. The program received \$100,000 in FY 2010. **The Special Education Teacher Training program is an earmark to the University of Northern Colorado.**
- **Ready to Learn Television:** Ready to Learn Television provides funding for the development of educational television. The program received \$23.8 million in FY 2008, \$25.4 million in FY 2009, \$27.3 million in FY 2010, and \$27.2 million in FY 2011. OMB's 2004 PART evaluation reported that **"program outreach activities have not had substantial effects on student outcomes and parent/caregiver behaviors."**⁵
- **Excellence in Economic Education:** The Excellence in Economic Education program supports limited teaching of economic and financial literacy to kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The program received \$1.4 million in FY 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. The funding is awarded in a limited competition to a single national nonprofit – the Council for Economic Education – that then administers the grant. Furthermore, the Excellence in Economic Education program does not serve a federal role and is duplicative of the ESEA Title I (Aid for the Disadvantaged) program. **The president's FY 2012 budget request consolidates the program, demonstrating bipartisan consensus that the program is too small to have a meaningful impact on student educational achievement.**

⁵ Ready to Learn Television. Office of Management and Budget, ExpectMore.gov. Found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10002116.2004.html>