

Trump's Education Budget 'Falls Far Short,' Education Groups Say

By Corey Mitchell on March 16, 2017

The Council of the Great City Schools—which represents 70 of the nation's largest urban public school systems—has panned President Donald Trump's proposed budget, arguing that the spending plan lacks the clarity and funding schools need to implement the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

Trump's proposed budget seeks to cut the Education Department's roughly \$68 billion budget by \$9 billion, a 13 percent drop.

Michael Casserly, the executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, panned the budget, arguing that it will hamstring preparation for the coming school year because there is no clarity about funding to help schools carry out the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the latest iteration of the K-12 education law.

"The bipartisan enthusiasm over the enactment of ESSA 15 months ago was not built on an expectation that federal education funding would be reduced," Casserly said in a prepared statement. "Urban school districts across the country are working hard to make the new law a success and are willing to be held accountable for its results. But the new administration and Congress need to do their parts ... to ensure that the promise of ESSA is made real."

The proposal would set spending levels for federal fiscal 2018, which generally would affect the 2018-19 school year. The spending plan must still face congressional scrutiny—and it could take months for House and Senate lawmakers to decide what parts of the plan to accept or reject.

"A strong and productive nation requires a significant investment in its public schools and public school students, and this new funding proposal falls far short of that goal," Casserly said.

As reported by my colleagues at [Education Week's Politics K-12 blog](#), Trump's proposal would strip funding for two programs that are near and dear to the hearts of school leaders in many urban districts: the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants, or Title II, which helps states and districts train and hire teachers, and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which finances after-school and extended-learning programs.

An outline of [Trump's budget proposal](#) from the federal Office of Management and Budget said there was little evidence that the programs were effective.

"Taxpayers deserve to know their dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively," Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos said in a prepared statement. "This budget is the first step in investing in education programs that work, and maintaining our Department's focus on supporting states and school districts in providing an equal opportunity for a quality education to all students."

The National Association of Secondary School Principals were also among the other groups criticizing the proposal, noting the effort to scrap the \$2 billion-plus in Title II funds as the most eminent threat to schools.

"As states are ramping up their school improvement plans under ESSA, the president is ramping down support for the very professionals committed to educating our nation's students, 80 percent of whom are in public schools," the association's executive director, JoAnn Bartoletti, said in a prepared statement.

"The president's strategy is clear: Starve our public schools, blame educators for not delivering, and fund alternatives under the guise of 'choice.' Students and communities will suffer as a result."

The Politics K-12 team has wrapped up other reaction to President Trump's budget proposal. You can [read more here](#).

Here's a look at Casserly's statement:

[Council of the Great City Schools' Statement on Education Budget](#)