

CCSESA State and Federal Legislative Committee

February 15, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: County Superintendents

FROM: Bob Canavan

SUBJECT: **February Washington Update**

Budget Overview

Funding for education and other domestic programs are center stage as part of two major events in Washington this week. The first is the release of the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2012. The second is House action on HR 1 a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund government agencies and programs including education for the remaining seven months of the current fiscal year. The current CR expires March 4 and a new CR to fund government agencies through the remainder of the Fiscal Year is going to the House floor this week. The CR the House will consider includes \$100 billion in cuts to domestic programs including education.

Continuing Resolution: Current Year Budget Cuts for Title I and IDEA

Following the lead of Budget Committee Chairman Ryan (R-WI) and Appropriations Committee Chairman Rogers (R-KY), the House leadership originally proposed \$37 million in domestic program cuts for the Continuing Resolution. Education programs such as Title I and IDEA were not affected too deeply in the original package. But, freshmen in the House Republican caucus refused to accept the CR proposed by the Appropriations Committee and instead insisted that the package achieve the \$100 billion cut pledged by the Republican caucus during the 2010 political campaigns.

The result is a Continuing Resolution package reducing the budget by \$100 billion below the President's 2011 budget. Cuts contained in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education section of the CR total \$17.5 billion, or nearly 11% less than last year's funding level and more than \$36 billion, or 22%, less than the President's FY 2011 request.

These reductions in the House CR include the termination of more than 70 programs under the jurisdiction of the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations subcommittee including 56 education programs. Striving Readers, Even Start, Education Technology State Grants, State Grants for Incarcerated Youth, and Tech Prep State Grants are among the programs eliminated. Overall, Education programs are reduced by \$4.899 billion. Funding for Title I is reduced by \$554 million and IDEA Funding is reduced by \$694 million. The Pell Grant discretionary funded maximum award is reduced from \$4,860 to \$4,015. Head Start is reduced by \$1.083 billion.

The House will debate and vote on the CR this week. More than 400 amendments have been filed to add and delete proposed cuts. The debate will be intense as freshmen Republicans push for even more cuts and Democrats oppose the extent of the reductions in many domestic

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programs including education. The Senate is expected to oppose many of the cuts included in the House Continuing Resolution. This sets the stage for a budget show down between House budget cutters, the Senate, and the Administration later this month when the current CR actually expires. The next Continuing Resolution must be passed for government agencies to continue operating beyond March 4. The final funding levels for all education programs including Title I and IDEA will be decided in the final CR negotiations.

President Obama's 2012 Department of Education Budget Recommendations

The President's budget for Fiscal Year 2012 was released on Monday, February 14. Usually the President's budget is center stage, but the debate and the looming budget cuts in the 2011 CR are stealing some of the attention from the President's budget recommendations.

The President's budget requests \$77.4 billion for the Department of Education. K-12 education funding is one of the few domestic program areas to receive additional funding in the Administration's over-all budget. The Department of Education budget document states "To support the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Administration proposes to focus increased funding on reform-oriented competitive initiatives, consolidate dozens of programs, and reduce funding for grants that do not demand results."

Education Reform: The Administration Budget reform initiatives call for \$900 million for a new K-12 Race to the Top to bring RTT to school districts focusing on cost effective reforms that improve student achievement in an era of tight budgets. Another initiative is the \$350 million for An Early Learning Challenge Fund for States to improve the quality of early childhood programs. Investing in Innovation (i3), which began as an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to improve student outcomes program is proposed for funding at \$300 million if authorized as part of ESEA.

ESEA, Title I, and IDEA: The budget recommendations include an increase of 6.9 % for ESEA programs including a modest increase of \$300 million for Title I. The budget proposes to consolidate 38 ESEA programs into 11. IDEA state grants are slated for a \$250 million increase which would put IDEA funding even further behind the program's authorization levels.

Other Education Programs funding levels include:

- Impact Aid current level at \$1.138 billion
- Rural Education current level at \$134 million
- Migrant Education current level at \$394 million
- English Learner Education current level at \$750 million
- Magnet Schools at \$110 million (\$10 million increase)
- Adult Education at \$635 million (\$7 million increase)
- State Grants for Incarcerated Individuals current level at \$17.2 million
- Career and Technical Education \$1 billion (reduction of \$265 million)

The President's budget is a starting point for Fiscal Year 2012. But decisions about increases or decreases in the 2012 budget cannot move forward until Congress and the Administration resolve Fiscal Year 2011. The outcome of the debate over the 2011 Continuing Resolution will

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have a great impact on the development of the 2012 Congressional budget and the appropriations that follow.

ESEA

The House Education and the Workforce Committee held its first hearing of the 112th Congress opening up discussions about the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Committee Chair John Kline (R-MN) gave the impression at the hearing that the Committee will be considering decreased funding levels for ESEA programs. Chairman Kline said “Since 1980, federal spending on education has increased by 425 percent yet student achievement has failed to improve. Clearly, the current system isn’t working. It is time we stopped measuring our commitment to education by the dollars we spend.”

The Administration’s Budget for the Department of Education is signaling the Administration’s interest in a reformed ESEA focused on raising standards, encouraging innovation and rewarding success, while allowing States and districts more flexibility to invest resources where they have the greatest impact. The Administration sees ESEA as an opportunity to work with Congress to restructure K-12 funding to focus resources on the Nation’s most critical education goals. The Department of Education budget descriptions say the Department is encouraging States to adopt standards that prepare all students for college and a career; to support dramatic improvements in the quality of assessments; and to recognize schools and teachers for helping students make important gains. Another Administration ESEA initiative to recruit, prepare, reward, and retain teachers will also be part of the ESEA reauthorization discussion.

The Education and the Workforce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee are expected to take up ESEA, NCLB, and the Administration’s ESEA and Race to the Top recommendations this spring.

CCSESA will focus on issues such as student achievement, assessment, teacher and professional development for all staff, academic oversight, assistance and intervention resulting from federally mandated interventions in low achieving schools as Congress and the Administration begin work on ESEA/NCLB/RTT.