

# Federal Policy Update

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Presented by:  
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# Overview

- The Federal Context
- IDEA Full Funding
- Ed Tech
- Safer Communities Act
- ARP and School Construction/HVAC
- Infrastructure/Electric School Buses
- School Nutrition
- PSLF/Teacher Shortages
- Capitol Hill Tips



# Federal Context

**It's a midterm election year. Everything can be a political football.**

- There is SO. MUCH. GOING. ON.
  - School meal waivers
  - Uvalde School/Gun Safety Package
  - Title IX Regulations
  - SCOTUS: Kennedy and Carson
  - SCOTUS: Dobbs and nomination

**So much of what we need done depends on how other—seemingly completely unrelated—things shake out:**

- What can be done before elections?
- Congressional maps
- January 6 Committee
- COVID Fatigue

**While still being real about what you're facing:**

- COVID Response and Recovery
- Staff burnout and shortages
- Decreased level of support for public education
- All the wonders of your state legislatures!

# IDEA Full Funding

- IDEA remains critically underfunded
- Congress made an important and bold investment through ARP, increasing IDEA by \$2.5 b to \$15.5 b (15.5%).
- FY22 funding failed to maintain that level (federal share dropped back down to just over 13%)
- FY23 requests are ambitious, but unlikely
- Ask your members of Congress to support IDEA Full Funding Act (S 3213 /HR 5984)
- Submit your IDEA invoice!!!

IDEA Federal Shortfall Per Pupil, By State

	Actual Appropriation	Full Funding Estimate	Funding Gap/Cost Shift	# school age students served under IDEA, Part B: 2020-21	State Shortfall Per Pupil
Alabama	197,300,000	489,500,000	292,200,000	91,312	3,200.02
Alaska	40,400,000	103,900,000	63,500,000	17,760	3,575.45
Arizona	228,000,000	675,500,000	449,500,000	136,277	3,298.43
Arkansas	121,500,000	373,400,000	251,800,000	66,544	3,783.96
California	1,327,800,000	3,301,100,000	1,973,300,000	711,071	2,775.11
Colorado	176,600,000	493,600,000	317,000,000	98,705	3,211.59
Connecticut	144,500,000	339,300,000	194,800,000	78,393	2,484.92
Delaware	39,400,000	99,000,000	59,600,000	22,588	2,638.57
District of Columbia	21,100,000	82,300,000	61,200,000	13,766	4,445.74
Florida	702,300,000	2,453,600,000	1,751,400,000	388,593	4,507.03
Georgia	381,000,000	1,139,500,000	758,400,000	213,272	3,556.02
Hawaii	43,200,000	138,300,000	95,100,000	18,029	5,274.83
Idaho	62,500,000	183,800,000	121,400,000	33,164	3,660.60
Illinois	549,800,000	1,495,500,000	945,800,000	268,467	3,522.97
Indiana	281,100,000	901,100,000	620,000,000	168,399	3,681.73
Iowa	132,800,000	419,600,000	286,800,000	65,010	4,411.63
Kansas	115,900,000	338,900,000	223,000,000	68,488	3,256.04
Kentucky	171,700,000	593,400,000	421,800,000	95,554	4,414.26
Louisiana	204,800,000	559,400,000	354,600,000	78,200	4,534.53
Maine	59,500,000	186,200,000	126,700,000	31,989	3,960.74
Maryland	217,400,000	568,100,000	350,700,000	100,861	3,477.06
Massachusetts	308,700,000	815,400,000	506,700,000	164,975	3,071.37
Michigan	433,800,000	1,065,000,000	631,100,000	181,390	3,479.24
Minnesota	206,100,000	667,000,000	460,800,000	132,571	3,475.87
Mississippi	130,100,000	347,600,000	217,500,000	63,248	3,438.84
Missouri	247,000,000	743,600,000	496,600,000	115,909	4,284.40
Montana	41,200,000	108,900,000	67,700,000	18,286	3,702.29
Nebraska	81,200,000	297,500,000	216,300,000	47,861	4,519.34
Nevada	86,000,000	300,900,000	215,000,000	58,170	3,696.06
New Hampshire	51,600,000	143,800,000	92,200,000	27,060	3,407.24
New Jersey	393,100,000	1,214,900,000	821,800,000	223,903	3,670.34
New Mexico	99,000,000	257,400,000	158,400,000	50,311	3,148.42
New York	824,900,000	2,033,000,000	1,208,200,000	492,106	2,455.16
North Carolina	372,500,000	1,114,000,000	741,500,000	183,570	4,039.33
North Dakota	34,000,000	99,200,000	65,200,000	14,768	4,414.95
Ohio	474,300,000	1,270,800,000	796,500,000	251,970	3,161.09
Oklahoma	161,900,000	586,400,000	424,500,000	110,423	3,844.31
Oregon	136,500,000	413,200,000	276,700,000	79,782	3,468.20
Pennsylvania	462,900,000	1,440,200,000	977,200,000	308,760	3,164.92
Rhode Island	47,600,000	129,900,000	82,400,000	21,865	3,788.58
South Carolina	192,300,000	609,000,000	416,700,000	101,365	4,110.89
South Dakota	39,000,000	112,900,000	73,900,000	19,879	3,717.49
Tennessee	258,300,000	687,500,000	429,200,000	116,789	3,675.00
Texas	1,126,400,000	3,136,800,000	2,010,500,000	575,438	3,493.86
Utah	127,300,000	365,200,000	237,900,000	78,739	3,021.37
Vermont	32,800,000	67,600,000	34,800,000	13,793	2,523.02
Virginia	308,800,000	953,700,000	644,900,000	163,459	3,945.33
Washington	241,300,000	728,300,000	487,000,000	137,052	3,553.40
West Virginia	82,600,000	261,700,000	179,100,000	42,753	4,189.18
Wisconsin	226,100,000	636,700,000	410,600,000	112,196	3,659.67
Wyoming	34,400,000	83,500,000	49,100,000	13,195	3,721.11
<b>Average:</b>					<b>3,637.09</b>

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# INVOICE

Please remit payment for Unpaid Federal Share of IDEA funding.

<b>District/School /Classroom:</b>						
<b>State:</b> Alabama						
<b>State Level Shortfall</b>	<b># of Special Education Students in State</b>	<b>State Per Student Shortfall</b>	<b># of Special Education Students in LEA</b>	<b>LEA IDEA Shortfall</b>		<b>Outstanding Federal Share of IDEA Funding</b>
292,200,000	91,312	3200.02		0		\$0.00
<b>Balance Due:</b>						<b>\$0.00</b>

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

# School Connectivity/Education Technology

- 24-hour learners need 24-hour access
- E-Rate remains the 4th largest stream of funding in the nation's schools
- Congress finally addressed Homework Gap in ARP via Emergency Connectivity Fund.
- Talk about the importance of the E-Rate program, what it means for your district, and how much you accomplish with the program in its current format and at its current funding level.
- ECF is out of money. Congress must find a way in the short term to satisfy the remaining \$1.3 billion in demand. In the long term, Congress needs to make ECF a permanent program with the same type of regular and stable support enjoyed by E-Rate and other universal service programs.

# Safer Communities Act (Response to Uvalde)

- In addition to the gun violence prevention pieces, there are significant legislative K12 funding and policy wins in this law.
- Language requiring CMS to issue guidance on an updated school-based Medicaid program reimbursement system that includes taking steps to dramatically reduce the administrative burden on small and rural districts and the creation of a new TA center for districts to utilize to insure they are billing expansively for healthcare services they provide to students.
- Increased funding for the STOP School Violence Act grant program, Project AWARE, and \$2 billion in new funding for districts to hire mental health professionals and build a pipeline of mental health personnel.

# ARP and School Construction

- January AASA survey found 50% of districts unsure of whether HVAC/construction work will be finished by Sept 2024
- Huge advocacy push to provide flexibility
- On May 13th, AASA received a letter from ED clarifying that they would provide some “late liquidation” flexibility to districts for HVAC/construction and other contracted services
- Waiting on official guidance to spell out the process. Late liquidation would also apply to ESSER I and ESSER II funding.
- Concern that process won’t be flexible enough to allow LEAs to rely on it.

# Infrastructure & Electric School Buses

- **White House Biden-Harris Action Plan for Building Better School Infrastructure ([Funding Toolkit](#))**
  - Leverages investments from the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (IIJA) and other federal funding. The IIJA provides \$550 billion in new spending over 5 years.
- **DOE Grants for Energy Efficiency Improvements & Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities**—\$500 million over 5 years to help schools carry out any facility improvement, repair, renovation, or installation project that:
  - Results in a direct reduction in school energy costs;
  - Leads to an improvement in teacher/student health (e.g., IAQ);
  - Involves the installation of renewable energy technologies or alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure on school grounds; or involves the purchase/lease of alternative fuel school vehicles.
- **EPA Clean School Bus Program**—\$5 billion over 5 years; 1<sup>st</sup> round of funding = \$500 million rebate program to help schools replace old bus fleets w/ clean and zero-emission vehicles.
  - Must operate fully or in part on alternative fuels, e.g., electric, liquified natural gas, compressed natural gas, hydrogen, propane, or biofuels. Rebates are for bus replacements & infrastructure only.
  - Application window now open until August 2022. EPA is prioritizing high-need, tribal, rural/remote districts.

# School Nutrition—Before KKFA

- **Since March 2020, Congress gave USDA nationwide waiver authority to grant meal program flexibilities during COVID-19.** Authority was extended several times and set to expire on June 30, absent any additional action by Congress. In case the USDA waivers weren't extended, the agency took action within its normal scope of authority offering states a chance to opt into waivers for:
  - SFSP & SSO: Non-Congregate and Parental/Guardian Pick Up (Expire 9/30/22)
  - NSLP & SBP: Non-Congregate, Parental/Guardian Pick Up, Meal Service Times, Offer v. Serve (Expire 6/30/23)
  - Other administrative, reporting, and special program requirements ([see the full checklist](#)).
- **USDA finalized a transitional meal pattern standard rule for SYs 22-23 & 23-24 to help programs go back to normal order.** Effective July 1, 2022 for NSLP, SBP, CACFP, and Special Milk Program:
  - Milk: Schools may offer 1% (low-fat) flavored and unflavored milk in addition to nonfat flavored/unflavored milk.
  - Sodium: Sodium limits for school lunch and breakfast will remain at the same level they currently are, or "Target 1" for SY 22-23.
    - For SY 23-24, only sodium for school lunches must be reduced (by 10%) to meet a transitional "Target 1A" level. (School breakfast sodium levels will remain at Target 1).
  - Whole Grains: At least 80% of the grains served in school lunch and breakfast per week must be "whole-grain rich" (i.e., defined as containing at least 50% whole grains)

# School Nutrition—After KKFA

- **Keep Kids Fed Act (KKFA)—Became Law on June 25.**
- **Grants USDA \*limited\* extension of nationwide meal waiver authority due to COVID-19.**
  - SFSP & SSO waivers are only allowed to continue for the summer (May-Sept).
    - Waivers [107](#), [108](#), [109](#) re: area eligibility and higher SFSP reimbursement rates for SSO (6/30/22) & [111](#), [112](#), [113](#) re: non-congregate feeding, parent/guardian pick up, and meal service times (7/6/22).
    - NOTE: States must opt into these waivers, so check with your agency!
  - Authorizes USDA to issue other no-cost waivers for all programs through June 2023.
    - This includes meal pattern waivers for all programs through June 2023. However, USDA doesn't plan to grant this; wants schools to transition to healthier standards. USDA recognizes supply chain issues but has other relief in mind. (Waiver [110](#) not requiring states to fiscally penalize districts for failing to meet pattern requirements & [an extra \\$943 million](#) in Commodity Credit Corporation funding to address supply issues.)
  - FYI: For SY22-23 schools cannot do SSO outside of summer, continue universal meals outside of CEP, or receive higher SFSP rates for meals. Schools must start collecting household meal applications again.
- **Temporary increase in meal reimbursements for SY22-23 only.**
  - This is in addition to the annual adjustment for inflation (7.4%). NSLP (40 cents), SBP (15 cents), CACFP (10 cents); applies to all free, reduced, paid meals.
- **Long-Term CNR priorities:** More program flexibility, reasonable meal standards, & expand CEP.

# Public Service Loan Forgiveness

Provides full forgiveness on federal student loan debt to individuals employed full-time in public service jobs after 10 years or 120 qualifying payments.

- Eligible participants include any person employed full time at a government entity, including schools. *All full-time public school staff qualify for the program.*

U.S. ED has issued a limited waiver that will count all prior payments on any federal loan towards PSLF. **This waiver is in effect until October 31, 2022.** Borrowers will need to consolidate, if necessary, and submit a PSLF form before the waiver ends to have previously ineligible payments counted. More resources [here](#).

AASA developed a [template email](#) for district leaders to send to their staff outlining the changes and how to take advantage of them.

# Loan Forgiveness for Educators Act

- Sponsored by Senator Ben Lujan (D-NM), endorsed by AASA
- Changes the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program
  - Provides full forgiveness after five years of service
  - Pays borrowers' monthly payments until they reach the five-year mark
  - Expands program to include K-12 school leaders and early educators

Eligible participants must work in a high-need school—which serves more than 30% of students from low-income families.

# Preparing for Your Meetings with Members of Congress



# Meeting Logistics

- In person or virtual- the flow is the same.
- When you have meetings, they may be with your member of Congress, but they may just be with their education staffer and that's not a bad thing because....
- The education staffer often knows more about our issues than the member, but assume you may know more than anyone you meet with!
- Regardless of who meets with you, start to build a relationship.

# Meeting Tips

- Plan what you're going to say in advance. Rely on our talking points to guide you.
- Be sure to share information about your district, schools, and the great work being done. With public schools under attack, success stories are essential.
- Storytelling is the MOST effective advocacy technique
- Be honest about how a policy is or would affect your schools
- If you have questions, be sure to ask. Let them share their knowledge with you, too.
- Don't pretend to know the answer. It's a good excuse to follow-up.

# This is the End: Time for Them to Talk

- “Are there any education issues you’re working on that I could help you with?”
- “What are your/his/her top priorities in the K12 space right now?”

And then.....

- “I really appreciate your time and the funding that your boss supported. It WILL make a difference in my district.”
- “Thank you. I will follow up with you in a few weeks to continue discussing XYZ.”

# It's Marathon, Not a Sprint

- Endurance is the key to advocacy success
- Follow up after the meeting and thank them for meeting with you and follow up with materials (if relevant)
- Reach out often – not just when you need something
- 5 minutes a week is all it takes to send an email and check in about a policy issue you care about
- Invite your member of Congress to your district – have the photo op with your kids and school

# Questions? Contact Us!

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