



# Public Education – The Federal Role: Support, Not Governance

## In keeping with the United States Constitution:

- ★ Authority for public education rests at the state level.
- ★ Local school boards must have final responsibility and freedom in the design and implementation of programs, assessment and evaluations.
- ★ The principle of separation of church and state must be maintained.

## Federal Involvement in Public Education prior to 2001:

- ★ Focused on overcoming inequities that state and local government lacked the resources to address:
- ★ Supplemented local revenues to mitigate the impact of poverty (ESEA).
- ★ Ensured access to education for students with disabilities (IDEA).

## Congress must end its overreach and return education to local control.

	CURRENT ISSUE	NEEDED CORRECTIONS
FUNDING	<p><b>Any federal legislation not fully funded should be in the form of a recommendation not a mandate.</b></p> <p>In NYS, the now permanent Tax Levy Cap and revenue structures for school districts, do not provide a mechanism to absorb costs associated with unfunded or under funded legislation.</p> <p>State and local income taxes (SALT) deductions will now be limited to \$10,000 and further restrict a community's ability to fund support for important programming utilized by our most vulnerable students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Funding needs to be provided to support implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I and Title II funds are critical as districts support students and staff through the transition to new standards and accountability measures.</li> <li>✓ IDEA funding needs to be increased; the current level of 15% or roughly \$1760/ student, is far short of the original appropriation of 40%.</li> <li>✓ Funding is also needed for students entering school as English language learners, who may or may not have interrupted learning due to traumatic experiences prior to arriving in NYS.</li> <li>✓ Charter schools continue to drain critical resources from public schools. If federal support for charters continues, regulations need to be implemented to ensure independence among all interested parties and greater transparency and accountability with regard to use of public funds.</li> </ul>
IDEA	<p><b>The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act needs to be reauthorized and bipartisan IDEA Full Funding Act (S.866 and H.R. 1878) needs to be passed. IDEA was last authorized in 2004.</b></p> <p>While student enrollment is declining locally, the percentage of students with recognized disabilities and complex needs in the overall population has increased significantly. IDEA currently protects the rights and invests in the potential of 500,00 students and preschoolers with disabilities in NYS.</p> <p>Full Funding is needed to meet these demands and allow Boards of Education to fulfill their obligation to provide programs that ensure success for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The federal government must begin to provide the level of dedicated funding for students with disabilities, commensurate with the vision and goals of IDEA.</li> <li>✓ Federal resources are needed to address staff shortages, rising instructional costs and the broad spectrum of supports for students and family engagement needed for students to be successful learners.</li> <li>✓ It is imperative that IDEA funding become a mandatory federal budget item. If not, the current requirements will force schools to cut programs that are not mandated but best serve all students.</li> <li>✓ Fix the "maintenance of effort" (MoE) provision to allow for reduced special education funding where districts can show that making efficiencies does not impact quality of services.</li> <li>✓ Requirements that will involve costly implementation need to be fully vetted with both resource and financial impacts determined, or these mandates should remain recommendations.</li> </ul>
HEA	<p><b>The Higher Education Act (HEA) needs to be passed.</b></p> <p>Nationally growing student populations, needs, and accountability combined with higher educator attrition levels and declining enrollments in teacher preparation programs are threatening to undermine the quality of the nation's schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Title II needs to be strengthened to assure educators receive the tools to be successful from their teacher preparation programs especially special education professionals who are in high demand nationally and face unique challenges in the workplace.</li> <li>✓ The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and TEACH Grant program need to be preserved. School districts rely on these programs to attract and retain effective teachers.</li> </ul>

**MCSBA OPPOSES any funding streams—such as vouchers, education tax credits, and charter schools—that divert funds and distract attention from public education.**