



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>Any federal legislation not fully funded should be in the form of a recommendation not a mandate.</p> <p>In NYS, the Tax Cap and revenue structures for school districts do not provide a mechanism to absorb costs associated with unfunded or under funded legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Funding needs to be provided to support the transition to the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I funds are critical as districts support students through the transition to new standards and accountability measures. ✓ IDEA funding needs to be increased; the current level of 16% is far short of the intended target of 40%. ✓ Charter schools continue to drain critical resources from public schools and should not be federally funded.
IDEA	<p>The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act needs to be reauthorized.</p> <p>While the total number of students with disabilities has decreased with declining enrollment, the number of students with autism, or other health impairments has increased significantly. Another population of students impacting districts significantly are those entering school as English language learners and/or have interrupted learning due to transitions. Both of these student classifications have needs and requirements that greatly exceed the amount that schools receive under IDEA.</p> <p>Boards of Education recognize and support the goal of helping all students succeed and are willing to provide the necessary programs to make that happen.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In order to maintain programs that support all students, 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. ✓ 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. Compliance should not rest on the number of dollars used but how they are best used to serve students. ✓ Requirements that will involve costly implementation need to be fully vetted with both resource and financial impacts determined, or these mandates should remain recommendations.
ICNIAA	<p>The Improving Child Nutrition Integrity and Access Act (ICNIAA) is still too rigid.</p> <p>ICNIAA, formerly known as HHFKA, has noble intentions and schools support those intentions. However, timelines and targeted goals for the program are still too rigid. Introduction of new foods into children’s diets takes time and considerable effort.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ While participation levels have begun to recover since more costly low sodium, whole grain lunches were introduced, they have not yet returned to pre-HHKFA levels. ✓ Additional time is also needed to make fresh fruit and vegetable offerings more palatable to students. Required portions have increased waste instead of achieving a significant gain in consumption. ✓ More resources and local flexibility must be afforded to school districts to prevent diversion of general funds from instruction to sustain school lunch programs.

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