



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 and assessments 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 and McKinney-Vento).
- Ensured access to education for students with disabilities (IDEA).

	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 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> <p>Districts appreciated the much-needed federal stimulus funding, but the one-time infusion of money came with constraints on use and length of availability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Funding needs to be provided to support implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I and Title II funds are critical as districts support students and staff through the implementation of new standards and accountability measures. ✓ ESEA Title II funding needs to be increased to prepare and retain teachers with skill sets capable of meeting the instructional needs of all students and the necessary technology to close the digital divide. ✓ Funding is also needed for students entering school as English language learners, who may or may not have interrupted learning due to traumatic experiences endured prior to arriving in NYS. ✓ Charter schools continue to drain critical resources from public schools. If federal support for charters continues, regulations need to be implemented to ensure greater transparency and accountability for use of public funds. Community Schools remain the preferred model because of their academic gains and student success despite being underfunded.
IDEA	<p>The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act needs to be reauthorized and fully funded.</p> <p>IDEA currently protects the rights and invests in the potential of 500,00 students and preschoolers with disabilities in NYS. The percentage of students with recognized disabilities and complex needs in the overall population has increased significantly and services to students have been further complicated by issues related to the COVID- 19 pandemic.</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"> ✓ The federal government must begin to provide the level of dedicated funding for students with disabilities, commensurate with the vision and goals of IDEA. ✓ 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. ✓ 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.
DEI	<p>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion(DEI)</p> <p>Our Districts have been working to implement the NYSED Framework for Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education. National and local efforts incorrectly aligned this work with Critical Race Theory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MCSBA supports the National School Board’s recommendation to appointment a special Presidential Task Force on public school equity. ✓ The federal budget should provide funding for districts to promote and implement professional learning programs and practices needed for culturally responsive, equitable education. ✓ The US Department of Education should provide visible support for DEI as a priority for our public schools and nation as well as counter misinformation designed to hinder its acceptance.

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