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President's Education Budget Signals Bold Changes for ESEA

Budget Proposes More Competition, Flexibility and Accountability

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President Obama's 2011 education budget signals a bold new direction for federal K-12 education policy with more competitive funding, more flexibility and a focus on the reforms likely to have the greatest impact on student success.

All told, the president's budget includes \$49.7 billion for the Department of Education's discretionary programs, an increase of \$3.5 billion over fiscal year 2010. The budget also includes \$173 billion in loans, grants, tax credits and work-study programs to help students go to college.

"This budget sends a very clear signal to the country that this president is serious about education," said Duncan. "There are some very innovative proposals in this budget that come from across America. We want to advance reform on a bipartisan basis."

The proposed budget includes a \$3 billion increase in competitive funding for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the largest increase ever requested for programs under the 1965 law. This includes \$1.35 billion to continue Race to the Top, \$500 million for the Investing in Innovation Fund, more money for school turnarounds, charters, school safety and programs around preparing, retaining, and rewarding effective teachers and leaders.

"Race to the Top taught us that competition and incentives drive reform," said Duncan. "So even as we continue funding important formula programs like Title I and IDEA, we are adding money to competitive programs that are changing the landscape of our education system."

The proposed budget also reflects the president's broader commitment to providing more flexibility, reducing red tape, and holding ourselves accountable for results. The budget consolidates 38 ESEA programs into 11 funding streams and eliminates six others that duplicate local or state programs or have not had a significant measurable impact, for a savings of \$122 million. The budget also eliminates 571 earmarks for a total savings of \$217 million.

The president's budget also notes that the administration will propose to replace the accountability system established in No Child Left Behind with a new system built around the goal of helping all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.

"As I traveled to 37 states on a Listening and Learning tour over the last year I heard many complaints about the current system of accountability," said Duncan. "We want to work together with legislators and stakeholders to develop a new Elementary and Secondary Education Act that will be smart, fair and useful for educators."

The proposed 2011 budget also incorporates savings from a proposal to end student lending subsidies to banks and shift billions in savings into higher education and early childhood. That proposal passed the House and awaits Senate approval.

Under the proposed 2011 budget, the maximum Pell Grant increases by \$160 to \$5,710 and would automatically rise by rate of inflation plus 1 percentage point annually over the next decade. It also includes the \$10.6 billion American Graduation Initiative to improve and modernize community colleges and a \$3.5 billion College Access and Completion Fund.

Finally, the budget would provide \$9.3 billion for competitive grants to states over the next 10 years to improve the quality of early learning programs and prepare students for success in kindergarten.

When a reformed ESEA is enacted, the president will send Congress a budget amendment that requests up to an additional \$1 billion for ESEA programs. The money will provide additional resources for low income students, including funding for awards to schools producing gains in student achievement, funding to improve the quality of assessments and additional funding for expanded learning time.

"The president has set a goal that America once again will lead the world in college completion," Duncan said. "To do that by the end of the decade, we need to improve the education at every level, from birth through the end of college. This

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Call with reporters
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Stakeholders briefing (video)

Remarks to school boards

budget puts us on a path toward success and meeting that goal."

Increases include:

- \$539 million for innovative teacher and leader reforms such as performance pay, bringing the total to \$950 million, and \$269 million for teacher and leader recruitment and preparation, bringing the total to \$405 million.
- \$354 million for school turnaround grants, bringing the total up to \$900 million.
- \$250 million for special education students, bringing the IDEA Grants to States total to \$11.755B
- \$210 million for Promise Neighborhoods, a new competitive grant program modeled on the Harlem Children's Zone that combines comprehensive social services with school improvements in order to transform whole neighborhoods.
- \$197 million for programs designed to promote a well-rounded education, supporting comprehensive literacy, STEM and other core subjects including history and arts.
- \$81 million for expanding educational options, including at total of \$365.5 million in funding for charter and other autonomous schools.
- \$50 million for English Language Learner Programs, bringing the total amount up to \$800 million.
- \$45 million for school safety and student health programs for a total of \$410 million under a new funding stream called Successful, Safe and Healthy Students.
- \$98 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- \$96.57 million for Hispanic Serving Institutions, and other Minority Serving institutions

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