



A Union of Professionals

A recent poll by Hart Research Associates found broad and strong opposition to Trump administration proposals to cut federal funding for the professional development of teachers, and there is a similar rejection of proposed cuts in funding to reduce class sizes.

Nationally, 71 percent say it is unacceptable to “eliminate the funding that public schools—especially high-poverty schools—use to provide teachers with training and professional development to improve their instruction.” Similarly, 69 percent say the Trump budget’s elimination of funding that public schools use to reduce class sizes is unacceptable.

The opposition to these cuts is shared by voters in all types of communities, with very large majorities of urban, suburban, small-town and rural voters deeming both kinds of cuts (to professional development and to class-size reduction) to be unacceptable. Across these various communities, 67 percent of voters believe these types of investments in public schools should be a priority, compared with 14 percent who support funding for vouchers and charter schools to promote school choice.

Across America, harsh Title II cuts jeopardize programs and strategies proven to foster student success, including:

- Reading support
- Teacher mentoring
- Intervention and assistance for at-risk kids
- Professional development
- Targeted teaching strategies for English language learners
- Reduction of class sizes
- Lesson planning time

President Trump’s 2018 budget proposal:

Cruel to kids, catastrophic for schools

An AFT backgrounder on state-specific impacts of Title II cuts



President Trump’s 2018 budget proposal is manifestly cruel to kids. It is catastrophic to the public schools our most vulnerable and at-risk students attend—and a windfall for those who want to profit off of kids. This disastrous budget helps the forces of privatization and corporatization that seek to make education a commodity, rather than a great equalizer and an anchor of democracy.

The cuts this administration is proposing are the biggest cuts to the education budget we can recall, even during times of great fiscal stress. The proposal would ax \$9 billion from the Department of Education, or 13.5 percent of its budget—funds that provide critical resources and programs for students across the country. Of particular concern is the elimination of all Title II funding, which currently provides \$2.1 billion under the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act for professional development and class-size reduction.

The Department of Education released a report last year that found

that 77 percent of school districts use their Title II money to pay for professional development and hire teachers to reduce class sizes.

The proposed cuts also take aim at the heart of the Every Student Succeeds Act (the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which was signed by President Obama on Dec. 10, 2015). ESSA requires multiple new accountability measures and has a strong focus on turning around struggling schools. States are now finalizing their plans for ESSA compliance. They are relying on Title II funds to reduce class sizes and invest in job-embedded professional learning and leadership opportunities for educators as well as other evidence-based strategies, such as support for beginning teachers, that will improve teaching and learning. States need the resources provided by Title II to implement their plans.

What will be lost under these cuts? Successful programs to lower class sizes and provide professional development and other support for educators.

The Trump administration's massive education cuts:

How children will pay the price

California

ABC Unified School District uses its Title II funds to train 627 K-12 teachers and administrators. The funding also allows for professional development for 382 teachers and administrators. The Los

Angeles Unified School District uses \$6,834,351 to hire teachers to reduce class sizes.

Delaware

In Claymont, AFT Local 762's school district uses Title II funds to hire "classroom reduction aides." After Sept. 30, when classes have begun, these paraprofessionals are hired to help lower class sizes. In a typical year, the district employs an average of 10 classroom reduction aides, which translates to roughly 10 classes and a few hundred affected students.

Florida

Escambia County uses a large portion of Title II funding to run a peer mentoring and assistance program called START (Successful Teachers Assisting Rising Teachers) for first-year and struggling teachers. Consulting teachers observe, coach and make recommendations to beginning teachers about their classroom practices. They also provide workshops on professional practices during the year. At midyear and again at the end of the year, the consulting teachers present their novice teachers to a review board made up of other teachers and district staff.

Illinois

Illinois uses Title II funding to fund teachers' access to evaluator prequalification training through the statewide system of Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers. This training allows teachers to serve as peer evaluators and to be better

informed about the skills effective evaluators should be practicing during performance evaluation.

New Mexico

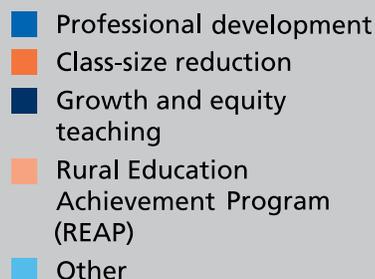
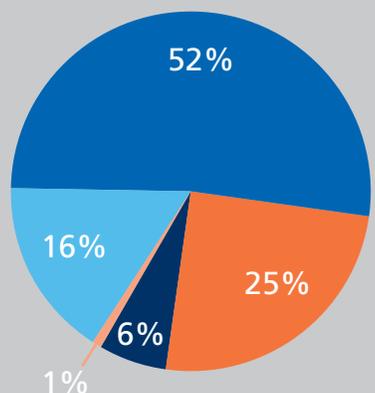
New Mexico relies on Title II funding to provide professional development to more than 1,500 educators and to fund teaching positions. Albuquerque alone would lose \$4 million in Title II money, a cut that would raise class sizes by eliminating more than 86 teaching jobs.

New York

New York uses its Title II funds for a variety of investments in educational success. New York City uses the majority of its allocation for class-size reduction. Title II funds are used for recruiting and hiring highly qualified teachers to reduce class sizes, particularly in the early grades. Most districts work to keep the class sizes below 20-25 students per teacher, especially in the K-3 grades. Some districts have clauses in their labor agreements with teachers' unions that limit class size, with the limit almost always set at fewer than 24. Many districts, instead of creating a totally new section of a grade, have a "floating class-size reduction teacher," who can go into different classrooms and work with a group of children who need some extra support in a critical subject.

Larger school systems use Title II money for recruiting teachers of color and teachers who speak more than one language. Rochester recruits from Puerto Rico to gain more individuals of col-

Where Title II dollars went in the 2015-16 school year:
Funding smaller class sizes and excellence in teaching



Source for percentages:
U.S. Department of Education
Source for chart graphic:
Education Week

The unkindest cuts of all

Elimination of Title II would cut massive amounts of education funding to the states:

- **Florida:** More than \$108 million
- **Illinois:** More than \$94 million
- **New Mexico:** More than \$18 million
- **New York:** More than \$184 million
- **Ohio:** More than \$86 million
- **Pennsylvania:** More than \$93 million
- **Rhode Island:** More than \$11 million



Title II funding cuts will hurt kids in classrooms by raising class sizes, cutting instructional resources and hampering teacher professional development.

or who speak Spanish. Syracuse (where teacher pay is much higher than in most Southern states) recruits in the South to gain teachers of color. The Central and Western New York rural school districts facilitate recruiting teachers in hard-to-staff subjects such as physics or calculus by pooling their Title II funds and sharing a teacher, either physically or through distance learning. Another option has been to use Title II funds to enable a current staff member to gain a certification (such as in physics) needed by his or her district by paying for the necessary coursework.

Improving the quality of teaching through mentors, teacher leaders or instructional coaches is another area in which schools of all sizes and types use Title II funds. A regulation from the state commissioner of education requires that districts have a teacher mentoring program, but many districts have expanded this idea using Title II funds. Thus, a teacher who is having difficulty with

a new assignment, at grade level or schoolwide, can frequently ask for a mentor. The Rochester mentoring program, Career in Teaching, is set up with the schools of education in the area. This collaboration lets students gain exposure to the district while still in college and then, as first-year hires, receive additional supports from “master” teachers or coaches. These coaches demonstrate lessons, observe, co-teach and help move the mentee to a higher level of performance. There are also team leaders, who work with the other teachers in their subject area or grade level to map out consistency in the curriculum across levels, instruct on using data to tailor lessons to what students have missed, or incorporate technology to better engage students in the classroom.

Through the transferability provisions of ESSA, many New York districts use Title II funds to hire academic intervention service teachers who are specifically trained to help students at risk of

not meeting standards. Districts often buy software or training related to supplemental academic needs, pay for tutors for students, and offer after-school programs. They also often use Title II funds for a very specific professional development need. For example, some districts provide educators professional development focused on trauma and poverty, and ways to handle issues with children who are victims of trauma or living in poverty.

Ohio

When Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and AFT President Randi Weingarten visited AFT members in Van Wert, Ohio, they praised the excellent and innovative work being done in the public schools there. For Van Wert schools, the elimination of Title II funds in the federal budget would wipe out the supports used for teacher collaborative planning time, class-size reduction for second grade, and nearly 10 percent of the district’s professional development funding stream.

These are the biggest cuts to the education budget we can recall, even during times of great fiscal stress.

The district has been using Title II funds consistently for these purposes since its big budget cut back in 2010. There hasn't been a year that these classroom reduction aides haven't been used and needed.

In Toledo, elimination of Title II funding would mean an end to RAISE (Reading Academy Intensive Support Education), the successful third-grade reading intervention program used there since 2010. Designed for third-graders who do not score at a proficient level on standardized tests, the program uses research-based strategies to address literacy instruction, with a focus on phonics, fluency, reading comprehension and writing skills. Teachers are provided with daily instructional frameworks and coordinated professional development. Across the third-grade classes where the program has been implemented, data have shown about a 50 percent increase in reading proficiency, demonstrating this program's effectiveness.

Over the past few years, the schools in Berea have implemented new curricula for both math and English language arts. Utilizing Title II funding, the school district uses an instructional coach to help teachers effectively implement the new curricula,

which are increasingly internet-based. The instructional coach provides support and training to classroom teachers through professional development offered during the summer, as well as through quarterly small-group meetings.

Rhode Island

In school districts throughout the state, Title II is used to fund professional development and professional support programs. In Central Falls, the Title II budget supports a number of programs, including two days of summer professional development for teachers prior to the beginning of school; a problem-solving model—the Multi-Tiered System of Supports—that addresses the needs of all students and is intended as an early intervention to prevent long-term academic failure; blended learning and literacy professional development; and assessment and data professional development coordinators.

In Woonsocket, Title II funds also support a variety of professional development programs, including training in increasing academic vocabulary for English language learners and in improving student achievement and “resilience” in mathematics, informational reading and writing, science, and social studies. The funds are also used to train teachers in the effective use of data to inform classroom decisions and to maximize student learning and technology integration.

In Cranston, Title II is used to support professional development, training for new mentors, stipends for mentors, I-READ training, curriculum development, and training for new professional development facilitators. Cranston also uses Title II funds to pay 40 percent of the salary for a coordinator of teacher evaluation, professional development and mentoring.



Many districts use Title II funds for a “floating class-size reduction teacher,” who can go into different classrooms and work with a group of children who need extra support in a critical subject.

Taking aim at the heart of ESSA:

States' plans for successful ESSA implementation would founder with funding cuts

When it was signed in 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act ushered in a bipartisan vision for a new day in public education. The new ESSA keeps the best of the original intent of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, targeting funding to support the disadvantaged schools and children who need it most. But making the promise of ESSA a reality can't happen without adequate funding, including the Title II funding states rely on.

States are currently finalizing their plans for responding to the priorities of accountability and educational quality embodied in ESSA, which means the hardest work will begin this coming school year when teachers will start implementing those plans in their classrooms.

As ESSA implementation begins, states are relying on teachers, paraprofessionals and school leaders to help ensure their ESSA plans are implemented well to help every child succeed. This is the time when teachers need high-quality professional development that allows them to ensure all children can meet college- and career-ready standards. This is the time when teachers need smaller class sizes to provide more individualized support to students. Those are the very priorities that Title II funds.

Below are examples culled from state ESSA plans of how individual states intend to use their Title II funds:

- In Connecticut, \$21 million would be used to increase diversity of the teaching force,



improve in-service training, and provide ongoing support for educators or establish mentoring programs.

- In Michigan, \$90 million would be used to improve teacher preparation through mentoring, induction and teacher residency programs; to collaborate at the local level with early childhood education providers to align early learning with early elementary learning; or to include paraprofessionals in professional learning activities to build their skills and support consistency in general and supplementary services.
- In Washington, \$38 million would be used to identify equity gaps, target funding to support teachers to become in-field and highly qualified, and allow school districts to use 10 additional professional development days to support educator development.

The Every Student Succeeds Act ushered in a bipartisan vision for a new day in public education. But making the promise of ESSA a reality can't happen without adequate funding, including Title II funding.

Priceless classroom moments at stake in Title II budget fight



My name is Katie Kurjakovic, and I teach English as a new language for K-6 students in Queens, N.Y. As hard as it was, I chose to spend May 25 in the halls of Congress rather than with my students, because I am appalled about the cuts in the federal budget proposed by President Donald Trump and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

Congress needs to fully understand that these cuts will lead to larger classes at my school and schools across the country. Our representatives in Congress must appreciate that the debate isn't about billions, it's about moments. Without the funding needed to keep class sizes down so that teachers and students have time to really connect and deepen learning, many of those priceless opportunities will surely be lost.

This is no small matter. My school is like a little United Nations, with families coming from 30 countries and students speaking 21 languages. We have as many as 32 students in a class. It's not fair to stuff students into a classroom, unable to get the best from teachers who want to teach a lesson well, who want to engage students, who want to give individual attention to each child and keep discipline strong. For every child who is added, I lose the ability to give all my students the moments they need with me.

All of those things are at risk if this administration gets its way by eliminating the \$2.1 billion Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program under Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act. That would pull the rug out from under our kids—zeroing

“Congress must appreciate that the debate isn't about billions, it's about moments.”

out funds that make smaller class sizes a reality in my school and schools around the country. That would be devastating. In fact, when I told colleagues that I would be making this trip

to Washington to talk about the proposed cuts, they offered one piece of advice: Explain to them that class size matters.

Why do educators make smaller class sizes their top wish?

It's because of the moments our students need with us. These are moments when the important work happens.

These are the moments when I sit next to John, one of my students. We tap out words together every day. Then the day finally arrives when he looks at me with his face shining and says, "I read that by myself!" It clicks, and he never stops reading.

These are the moments when I stop to show Diana, one of my

special needs students, what I mean by run-on sentences. I point to one of her sentences, which runs across two pages of what she's written. I explain how she can break up that two-page sentence into perfect, smaller parts.

I'm talking about the moments when I notice Tenzin, one of my classroom newcomers. I notice he is confused by the vocabulary I'm using to explain equivalent fractions, so I hand him a fraction tile set. That way, he can see what I mean and can follow along with the lesson.

What happens to these moments if our class sizes go up, if there is not enough of me to go around? How will students be able to make

up for the rich student-teacher exchanges lost to budget cuts? This is what haunts me. And that is why I went to Washington, reluctantly sacrificing one day with my students so that Congress doesn't sacrifice many, many more to the budget ax.

I went to tell Congress to do the right thing. Don't cut funding. Don't make matters worse. Don't spin class sizes out of control and harm our students. With class sizes of more than 30 or 40 in some schools, there's no justification for any of that. We have to meet all children where they are, to help each one blossom and thrive.

Based on its budget plan, this administration apparently just doesn't care. But I do care, and so do my fellow teachers, so do their parents—and so does every child who has lost those moments they deserve to huge class sizes.

English as a new language teacher Katie Kurjakovic is 25-year classroom veteran and United Federation of Teachers chapter leader at P.S. 11 in Queens, N.Y.



"I went to Washington to tell Congress to do the right thing. Don't cut funding. Don't spin class sizes out of control and harm our students."

—Teacher Katie Kurjakovic
P.S. 11, Queens, N.Y.



A Union of Professionals

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