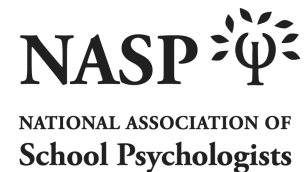


# President's Proposed Budget Presents Challenges for the Well-Being and Education of Millions of Children and Youth



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bethesda, MD**—The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) joins with other education and children's advocacy organizations in expressing deep concern regarding President Trump's proposed budget for FY19 in terms of its impact on children's learning and well-being. NASP strongly supports a robust public school system that upholds the rights, well-being, and educational and mental health needs of all students in every community. While we are glad that the administration does call for funding for school climate transformation grants to help address mental health and the opioid crisis, this budget guts significant programs within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and calls for the elimination of Public Service Loan Forgiveness. These proposals directly attack important underpinnings of a robust education system and pose a serious threat to the nation's ability to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all of America's children.

Chief among NASP's immediate concerns are:

## **Underfunding Title I and IDEA**

We appreciate that the administration did not request significant cuts to these two programs that serve some of our nation's most vulnerable children, those in poverty and those with disabilities. However, we are disappointed that the administration essentially level funds these programs without consideration for rising student enrollment and increasing numbers of students in poverty. Importantly, when IDEA was authorized, Congress promised to provide 40% of the additional cost associated with educating students with disabilities. The current budget request represents only 15% of the cost, leaving states and local school districts to make up for the shortfall.

## **Expanding Ineffective School Choice Options**

NASP opposes efforts in this budget to create a "school choice" or voucher system that funnels public education dollars to pre-K–12 schools that lack public accountability, require the loss or declination of rights afforded to students or families, or enable discriminatory practices. Current research regarding voucher programs predominately shows either no improvement or declines in academic achievement as compared to students in traditional public schools. NASP supports additional research into what forms of school choice genuinely improve outcomes for struggling students but not at the expense of effective public education as an inalienable right for all children right now. We are greatly disappointed that the President's budget calls for \$1 billion of taxpayer money to fund the expansion and creation of new private school voucher programs. The administration should be focused on strengthening our public schools, which educate 90% of our students, rather than promoting private school vouchers.

## **Eliminating the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (ESSA, Title IV Part A)**

The proposed budget completely zeroes out funding for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant (also known as Title IV Part A), which is a new formula-funded grant that would

have enabled school districts to engage in efforts to provide a well-rounded curriculum, support safe and healthy students, and promote the effective use of technology. The program was authorized at \$1.65 billion, yet funded at only \$400 million in FY17. Eliminating these funds undermines school districts' ability to provide desperately needed academic, nutritional, behavioral, mental and physical health, and safety programs that directly contribute to the school and life success of millions of children and youth.

### **Eliminating Public Service Loan Forgiveness**

The budget also puts at risk the nation's ability to attract a skilled education workforce by eliminating public service loan forgiveness for teachers, specialized instructional support personnel (SISP), and other educators who work in public service for at least 10 years. Existing shortages in these professions will only worsen as the cost of appropriate training becomes untenable. Currently, over a half million students are enrolled in this program.

NASP represents 25,000 school psychologists throughout the United States and abroad. NASP empowers school psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve students' learning, behavior, and mental health.

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**For additional information and resources to help support children and youth, visit [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org).**

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