

Equity and Funding



Historical Timeline

- ✓ **1896 Plussy vs. Ferguson**
- ✓ **1954 Brown vs. Board of Education**
- ✓ **1965 Elementary & Secondary Education Act**
- ✓ **1975 Public Law 94-142**
- ✓ **1980's Shift in focus of ESEA**
- ✓ **2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**
- ✓ **2009 Race to the Top (RttT)**

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

- ✓ **Bill initially intended to provide additional resources to districts serving low-income families**
 - **At first, little federal involvement on how money used**
 - **Disagreements caused funds to be used towards specific programs**
- ✓ **Provides “categorical” support – targeted to specific population**
- ✓ **Led to increased spending on urban schools in 1970s**
 - **Many programs cut in the 1980s**

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

“One of the fundamental premises behind the idea of compensatory education, and of the ESEA more generally, was that state and local education authorities had failed to ensure equal educational opportunities for their students and that they could not be trusted to do so in the future without federal intervention.”

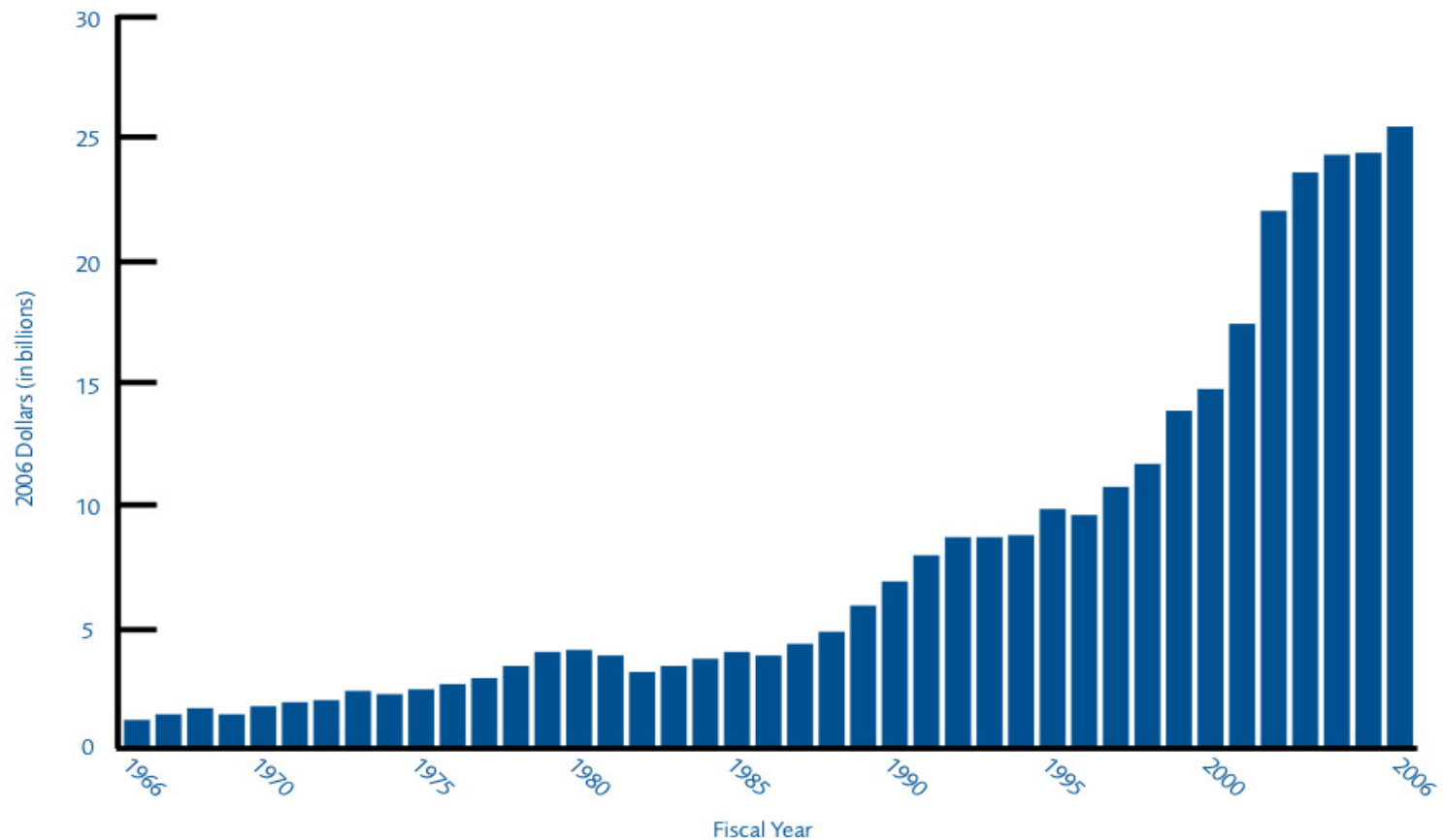
- McGuinn & Hess (2005)

Funding Sources

- ✓ **Federal Government – 10%**
- ✓ **States – up to half (from taxes)**
- ✓ **The rest of funding is from local sources (property taxes)**
 - **Those states that rely heavily on property taxes have the largest inequities in school funding**

Federal Spending under ESEA

FIGURE 1: FEDERAL SPENDING UNDER THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT



Effects of Inequities on School Funding

- ✓ **Higher quality teachers work in wealthier schools**
 - Demand better conditions
- ✓ **Schools with primarily minority students have less challenging requirements, curricula, materials, and equipment**
- ✓ **Parents of middle and upper class schools lobby more effectively for academic programs, libraries, computers, and teachers**
 - Do not tolerate poor conditions
 - Raise funds for more programs

Arguments For Competitive Funding

Competition:

- ✓ **leads to innovation, efficiency, and accountability,**
- ✓ **requires school districts to analyze current organizational models and enhance transparency in use of funds,**
- ✓ **provides a direct link between accountability for the use of funds and student achievement**
- ✓ **gives the Secretary of Education clear authority to guide and redirect as necessary, the Department of Education's approach to state and local funding**

Arguments Against Competitive Funding

- ✓ **There are winners and losers in any competition**
- ✓ **Grant writing requires the use of state and local education funds, that may adversely impact small and rural areas**
- ✓ **If education is a moral obligation and a social justice, adequate funding should be provided**
- ✓ **There is incomplete data to support competitive funding and its impact upon schools, districts or state education agencies**
- ✓ **Competitive funding opportunities may be inconsistent and driven by a particular agenda**

Arguments For Federal Mandates

Mandates:

- ✓ **provide guidance and accountability to ensure equity**
- ✓ **reflect a commitment from the federal government**
- ✓ **encourage needed innovation, reform, and school improvement**
- ✓ **ensure national, state and local consistency**
- ✓ **call for a greater federal investment in research based programs to help states and districts respond to the needs of schools**

Arguments Against Some Mandates

- ✓ **Mandates restrict flexibility of state education agencies and school districts**
- ✓ **Mandates' accountability measures may be viewed as unrealistic and therefore not implemented**
- ✓ **Mandates' sanctions may adversely impact schools that need the most assistance because the federal financial assistance is not enough to support the mandate.**

Unfunded Mandates

- ✓ **The federal government says there are no unfunded federal mandates because they explain that districts do not have to comply with their mandates, therefore accepting no funding.**
- ✓ **However, the funding for accepting the federal restrictions does not cover the total cost of complying with that mandate (only 17% coverage as of last reporting)**

Special Education Funding

- ✓ **Federal funding under IDEA, (in 2004 called IDEIA) was projected to provide up to 40% of expenses but was never higher than the current level (17%)**
- ✓ **State receives federal funding and passes on to Local Education Agency (LEAs)**
- ✓ **Local: allotments based on:**
 - **Number of students on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)**
 - **Excess costs to LEAs**

Department of Education

- ✓ **The anti-poverty and civil rights laws of the 1960s and 1970s brought about an emergence of the Department of Education's equal access mission.**
- ✓ **Despite the growth of the federal role in education, the Department never strayed from its official mission: to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.**

Categorical Funding

Categorical funding, which is targeted at providing access and quality educational programming for special education, low-income, early childhood, etc. is a threat to local control.

Local Control versus Privatization

- **Individualism is central to American identity**
- **Local districts should know best how to meet the needs of the community**

Reasons for Local Control

- ✓ **Tradition of local funding**
- ✓ **Educational efficiency**
- ✓ **Conviction that the level of funding does not affect education**

Reasons for Stronger Federal Role

- ✓ **Funding model which prohibits sharing resources among communities**
- ✓ **Varying levels of funding are required to provide equal educational opportunities to children with different needs**
- ✓ **A sufficient overall level of funding is crucial**

Research-based Recommendations to Promote Equity

- ✓ **Secure housing, food, and health care**
- ✓ **Supportive learning environments**
- ✓ **Equitably funded schools**
- ✓ **Provide well-prepared, well-supported teachers/principals**
- ✓ **Support standards, curriculum, and assessments that focus on 21st century goals**
- ✓ **Encourage schools to be organized**
- ✓ **Improve teacher recruitment**

Early Childhood Education

Head Start began in 1965

- ✓ **Provided children from low-income families and children in some at-risk categories to early education**

Some additional early childhood federal programs are:

- ✓ **Early Head Start: Program beginning prenatal – age 3 and their families that qualify**
- ✓ **Early Reading First: Language / literacy grants for low-income families**
- ✓ **Even Start: Integrates early childhood education, adult education, and family literacy programs (birth – age 7)**
- ✓ **IDEA: Special Education Grants (birth – age 2; ages 3 – 5)**

Early Childhood Education

Social and Economic Impact:

- ✓ **High-quality prekindergarten has proven to alleviate grade repetition, dropouts, and special education placement**
- ✓ **Project STAR report indicates higher kindergarten quality increases earning and college attendance rates 20 years later**
- ✓ **Early investment assists in preventing the achievement gap, reduces special education needs, in raises the likelihood of healthier lifestyles, and lowers the crime rate of overall social costs.**

Early Childhood Education In Favor

Reasons for universal early childhood education:

- ✓ **Long-term economic impact results in more people employed, paying taxes and social security**
- ✓ **Long-term results supported by strong research**
- ✓ **Stronger health in long-term**
- ✓ **Stronger social, emotional and cognitive skills**
- ✓ **Early preparedness leads to subsequent school achievement**
- ✓ **Stronger citizenry**

Early Childhood Education Against

Reasons against quality early childhood education

- ✓ High cost of high quality early childhood education**
- ✓ Fear that it will take away from funding at K-12 levels**