

IRA Update

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FY10 Funding for Federal Early Ed Programs

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Fiscal year 2010 started in October, but Congress is only now wrapping up its work on the FY2010 appropriations bills that fund federal government activities and programs. On Sunday, the Senate passed <http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=111&session=1&vote=00374> a \$450 billion appropriations bill <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_reports&docid=f:hr366.111.pdf> that combined six of seven unfinished appropriations bills—including the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill that funds early education programs. The House of Representatives passed an identical bill this past Thursday, allowing the legislation to go directly to the President, who is expected to sign it into law. Our Education Policy <<http://education.newamerica.net/home>> team here at New America has produced a 2010 Education Appropriations Guide <http://education.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/2010_Education_Appropriations_Guide.pdf> to help you sort through what it means from the Education Department perspective.

Here at *Early Ed Watch*, we wanted to look more closely at final funding figures for early education-related programs in particular. The chart below shows funding levels for key programs operated by the Department of Education *and* the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as a column showing what President Obama had requested.

Recent Funding for Early Education Programs, plus President's Request
(in billions)
Program
FY2009
ARRA
FY2010 President's Request
FY 2010

Title I		
\$14.5	Early Learning Challenge Fund	
\$10	--	
\$13	--	
\$14.5	\$0.300	
	--	
Title I Early Childhood Grants		
--	Reading First	
--	--	
\$0.500	--	
--	--	
	--	

Early Reading First	IDEA Infants and Families (Part C)
\$0.113	\$0.439
--	\$0.500
\$0.163	\$0.439
--	\$0.439
Striving Readers	Child Care and Development Block Grant
\$0.035	\$2.13
--	\$2
\$0.370	\$2.13
\$0.250	\$2.13
Even Start	Head Start (includes Early Head Start)
\$0.066 --	\$7.11
--	\$2.1
\$0.066	\$7.23
	\$7.23
IDEA Preschool	
\$0.374	
\$0.400	
\$0.374	
\$0.374	

Source: *The New America Foundation; Conference Report 111-366* <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_reports&docid=f:hr366.111.pdf> to accompany H.R. 3288.

A couple of notes on what these numbers mean. In its fiscal year 2010 budget request, the administration proposed reducing the FY2010 appropriation for Title I, the largest federal elementary and secondary education program. The idea was that, because school districts have received a large influx of Title I funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, or stimulus), the administration could divert some funds from Title I this year to fund new initiatives focused on its key priorities. Two of the initiatives the administration proposed funding with money from Title I were directly related to early education: Title I Early Childhood Grants

<http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2009/a_closer_look_at_the_presidents_budget_title_i_early_childhood_grants-18560> and the Early Learning Challenge Fund <<http://www.newamerica.net/blog/early-ed-watch/2009/house-clears-way-early-learning-challenge-fund-14685>> . The appropriations committee didn't go for the proposal, though, so the final appropriations bill maintains Title I funds at the same level as the FY2009 appropriation bill, and it does not fund proposed Early Childhood Grants or the Early Learning Challenge Fund. The Early Learning Challenge Fund, however, is included in the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) <http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2009/wheres_safra-18439> as a \$1-billion-a-year-program and it will likely receive mandatory funding (funding that is not subject to annual appropriations), once Congress passes SAFRA, which we expect will happen after legislators wrap up work on health care reform.

Changes in funding for literacy programs also deserve some explanation. In its fiscal year 2010 budget request, the administration requested a large increase in funding for the Striving Readers program, which currently provides modest funding for adolescent literacy programs. Explanatory materials accompanying the request stated that the administration was seeking the increase in Striving Readers funds in order to both expand adolescent literacy efforts and restore federal funding for elementary literacy programs, which had been eliminated when Congress defunded the Reading First program in fiscal year 2009 <<http://www.newamerica.net/blog/early-ed-watch/2009/early-education-fy2009-omnibus-bill-10301>> . This

legislation increases Striving Readers funding to \$250 million for fiscal year 2010, and also eliminates funding for the Early Reading First program, folding it into the new Striving Readers.

Early Ed Watch is pleased to see this appropriations bill restore funding for K-3 literacy programs by including it in Striving Readers, but we are concerned that the funding levels for literacy are too sparse and are spread too thin. The \$250 million funding level in this bill is just a quarter of what was spent on Reading First only three years ago—and instead of being concentrated in the early years, it's spread across the entire P-12 continuum. The legislation also maintains funding for the Even Start family literacy program, which the administration had proposed eliminating <http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2009/will_even_start_get_the_ax_in_fy2010-18906> .

The bill maintains funding for IDEA Preschool and Infants and Toddlers (Part C) programs and the Child Care and Development Block Grant at their fiscal year 2009 appropriations bill levels. And it provides a modest increase in Head Start funding, as requested by the administration, to sustain increases in the cost-of-living allowance that Head Start staff received in the stimulus.

http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2009/fy10_funding_for_federal_early_ed_programs-25161

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