

MEMORANDUM

September 26, 2019

TO: The Honorable Chair and Members of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: SENATE FY 2020 EDUCATION BUDGET DIFFERS FROM HOUSE; CONTINUING RESOLUTION EXPECTED THROUGH NOVEMBER 21, 2019

The recently passed Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 lifts the debt ceiling for two years and provided a rough framework to achieve bipartisan budgets for FY 2020, yet the House and Senate have staked out very different versions of the Labor-HHS-Education bill. On June 19, 2019, the Democrat-controlled House passed H.R. 2740 with an increase of about 6 percent over the 2019 enacted level and a 9 percent increase for the Department of Education. On August 1, 2019, Congress passed the bipartisan debt ceiling agreement which authorizes non-defense spending increases of about 3 percent, slightly above the cost of inflation. On September 18, 2019, the Senate's Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee released its chairman's recommendations with a 1 percent increase overall, with approximately level funding for the Department of Education.

A Continuing Resolution through November 21 passed the House on September 19 by a 301-123 margin, including authorization to ramp up Census activities that are a District priority. The two-month extension is expected to be passed by the Senate before the September 30 deadline to avert a government shutdown.

The path towards budget passage has become increasingly complicated by partisan differences. It remains unclear whether the Senate's initial Labor-HHS-Education recommendations will go to committee for mark-up, as this process was tabled on September 10 and has not been rescheduled due to an unresolved dispute over family planning funding. On September 18, Senate leadership attempted to move the draft bill directly to the Senate floor without committee consideration, but the 51-44 vote failed to gain the necessary 60 votes. Underlying the dispute, Senate minority leadership expressed a concern that Homeland Security's 7 percent increase was being funded at the expense of Labor-HHS-Education, the largest domestic spending bill, and would later be transferred to fund the controversial border wall without Congressional approval under a declaration of emergency.

Below are the key House and Senate differences on issues of concern to the District.

Total funding. Department of Education funding in the Senate remains at 2019 levels for most programs, thus effectively losing purchasing value against inflationary cost increases. The Senate's \$71.4 billion budget is \$4.5 billion below the House version.

Top District priorities. The largest District allocations would remain level in the Senate bill, but they would gain \$2 billion in the House, consistent with the District's need for higher resources to educate students with low income or disabilities.

- **Level funding for low-income Title I schools (\$15.9 billion vs. \$16.9 billion in House).** Half of the House increase is allocated to targeted grants in high-poverty districts such as Miami-Dade. The Administration also proposed level funding, as well as an increased set-aside that would have reduced District Title I allocations, which the Senate did not adopt.
- **Level funding for special education (\$13.5 billion vs. \$14.5 billion in House).** The House provided the largest gain in a decade under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The federal share has declined to 13 percent of the national per-child average, versus the authorized federal share of 40 percent. The Administration also proposed level funding, which would slightly decrease the per-child share due to more students being served.

Programs that the Administration had proposed for elimination. The Senate would retain several locally relevant programs that the Administration had targeted for elimination, though the House calls for larger increases in several of these areas.

- **Level funding for teacher training in Title IIA (\$2.1 billion vs. \$2.6 billion in House).** The House version represents a 24 percent gain under Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants, which have not been increased since 2010.
- **Increased funding for school improvement in Title IVA (+\$50 million vs. +\$150 million in House).** These flexible block grants support Student Support and Academic Enrichment, replacing programs that were consolidated under the Every Student Succeeds Act.
- **Level funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (\$1.2 billion vs. \$1.3 billion in House).** Funds support after-school services in targeted schools.
- **Extended funding for public service loan forgiveness (\$100 million vs. \$350 million in House).** FY 2020 allocations are added to \$659 million previously allocated for loan forgiveness that remains unexpended. Both Senate and House provisos direct the Administration to take steps to address known implementation problems that impede loan forgiveness for public employees, including teachers.

Targeted support programs. Various programs that are mostly level funded in the Senate and Administration budgets have been proposed for increases in the House plan.

- **English Language Acquisition (level funding vs. +\$243 million in House).** The House increase is 35 percent, following large English Learner increases and level funding since 2015.
- **Homeless children and youth (+9 million vs. +\$6.5 million in House).** Both chambers call for increased services.
- **Migrant education (level funding vs. +\$5.2 million in House).**
- **Neglected and delinquent children (level funding vs. +\$2.4 million in House).** This includes education within state facilities and re-entry transition into training for youth offenders.
- **Impact aid (+\$25 million vs. +\$52 million in House).** This compensates districts with untaxed, federally-owned property. Both chambers preserve a payment category eliminated by the Administration, compensating for federal properties that reduce local taxes but are not associated with children.

Early learning and adult/workforce programs. Among programs that impact the District outside of K-12, the Senate called for small increases in early learning and level funding for adult programs, while the House calls for substantial increases in these areas.

- **Child care and development block grants (+\$25 million vs. +\$2.4 billion in House).**
- **Head Start/Early Head Start (+\$50 million vs. +\$1.5 billion in House).**
- **Preschool development grants (level funding vs. +\$100 million in House).**
- **Adult education (level funding vs. +\$23 million).** The Administration requested a 24.5 percent cut (\$-157 million).
- **Career and technical education (level funding vs. +\$47 million in House).**
- **Youth Career Pathways (new \$10 million demonstration program).**

School choice. The House and Senate differ on support for magnet and charter schools. A national report earlier this year indicates that nearly one in four charter schools that received federal funds has been closed or was never opened.

- **Level funding for magnet schools (\$107 million vs. \$120 million in House).** The House increase of \$13 million allows for new sites rather than only currently funded schools as the Administration requested. Magnet school funding is a District priority.
- **Increased funding for charter schools (+20 million to \$460 million vs. -\$40 million in House).** The Senate calls for an increase below the Administration's \$500 million request, while the House called for reduced funding.
- **No increase in set-asides from Title I.** Neither chamber adopted the Administration's request for voucher portability or direct student services.

School safety. The Senate does not adopt the House's \$260 million initiative to fund social and emotional learning (SEL), but it increases Safe Schools National Activities by \$10 million with proviso language that emphasizes SEL as a priority in grants and national centers. The House bill provides for new SEL innovation grants, professional development, and mental health experts in schools, as well as doubling full-service community schools to \$40 million, which the Senate does not fund. Neither chamber created a new \$100 million grant program requested by the Administration to implement national task force recommendations in school safety; House proviso language seeks to limit Administration support for guns in schools, but the Senate did not address the issue.

District staff will continue to monitor these and other items as the FY 2020 appropriations process continues. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305 995-1497.

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cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet