

Education reform in the united states



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

- Yasmine Calderon

Education

Education reform in the United States is a primary goal for Congress to assist students excel and gain knowledge to survive in the growing and competitive work force. As the United States was once the leading example of Education reform, it is now 12th among other developed nations. The need for incentive programs in classrooms to prepare students for the future of higher education is in high demand. Ensuring students the future of a college education and maintaining a successful job is key to rebuilding the economy and securing bright futures for individuals. Suggested policy implementations include reforms of existing school policies, budget analysis, statistics and facts, and current stances toward the public policy.

One of President Obama's bold incentives to improve teaching and learning in the classrooms that instruct policies and strategies to achieve the goal of college readiness. To date, President Obama has opted 4 billion dollars to 19 states that help to address key areas of education reform. States serve 22 million students and employ 1.5 billion teachers in 42,000 schools representing the 45 percent of all K-12 students and 42 percent of all low income students nationwide. Setting a precedent for the future of young Americans through the Race to the Top program will help those who are challenged change policies and laws to create better college and career ready standards.

(Source: www.whitehouse.gov/issues)

As states begin to move progressively with education reforms the No Child Left Behind Act imposed by former President George W. Bush left five years of reauthorization overdue. States have been lowering their standards in classrooms by punishing failure over success and fitting everyone into a one-size-fits-all deal. While President Obama has issued a blueprint, Reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, for his incentive Congress has yet to act upon it leaving schools flexible with the law. Passing the law would then set a higher standard for high schools to achieve college readiness and careers. For states to receive that flexibility they must reward and recognize those states that make exceptionally well performance and gains while also tending to those who need help in the lowest performing schools. Under the new law states will develop and propose new plans to help improve outcomes for those groups who pose a threat in a large educational gap. Unlike the one-size-fits-all deal left from the NCLB Act states and districts can improve strategies and resources that will meet the need for student performance.

Issuing more reforms for education includes the president calling for improvements to help students gain interest in math, science, engineering and technology. The Obama Administration has reached several successful STEM initiatives that includes combining it with Race to the Top and investing into the Innovation Fund while also implementing new STEM educators called Teacher Corps to further progress students in the path of a successful career. The Teacher Corps will start with a basis of 50 teachers among 50 sites and expand to 10, 000 teachers over the next four years. The Obama Administration will launch the Teacher Corps with \$1 billion

allocated from the President's 2013 budget request currently before Congress.

Along with the President's education reforms, the Education Amendments Act of 1972 authorized the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to improve postsecondary education opportunities that include providing assistance to educational institutions and agencies for a broad range of reforms and innovations.

The role of the bureaucracy has been otherwise noted a major debate in shaping educational performance. Proponents argue that large educational bureaucracies have contributed to shortfalls in performance in America's public schools. Others view it as beneficial because they manage a wide range of problems that make it easier for teachers to focus on the core of teaching.

The federal government totaled an amount of \$141 billion on education in the 2014 fiscal year. While calculating that number is challenging, federal programs that are administered by the U. S. Department of Education appear in two separate parts of the budget and other agencies have administered large programs as well. Further measuring spending is not a straightforward deal and the government provides subsidies towards higher education in the form of tax benefits. The \$141 billion figure includes annual appropriation for the U. S. Dept. of Education, spending for the department's annual appropriations that are not subject (i. e. mandatory spending), school meal programs, the Head Start program, revenue and spending on education tax benefits for individuals and military and veterans education benefits. Since

the federal government spent a total of \$3.5 trillion in the 2013 fiscal year which means the \$141 billion spent accounts for 4 percent of the entire federal budget.

(Sources: New America Foundation; U. S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Defense, Veterans Affairs, White House Office of Management and Budget; Congressional Budget Office.)

According to the Heritage Foundation, a conservative policy research organization and interest group, a budget presented by House Budget Committee chairman Paul Ryan (R—Wis.) would provide \$74 billion on education spending, training, employment, and social services. The Ryan budget seeks to “remove regulatory barriers to higher education that act to restrict flexibility and innovative teaching, particularly as it relates to non-traditional models such as online coursework.” Policymakers who support to enable states to have more control over college costs and futures should implement the budget.

Just last year Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) and Senators Mark Udall (D-CO) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) introduced the “Growth to Excellence Act” that would include rigorous college-and-career ready standards. A bill that would surely receive support from educational advocates. The bill is sure to represent a strong step towards providing students in America with outstanding education that will bring a forefront to the future of these individuals.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the United States fails to educate students and prepare them for the future to come which leaves critical time for officials to address the situation. Statistics include:

- A recent report by ACT, a non-profit testing organization, found that only 22 percent of U. S. high school students met “ college ready” standards in all of their core subjects; figures even lower for African Americans and Hispanics.
- The College Board reported that even among college-bound seniors, only 43 percent met college-ready standards, meaning that more college students need to take remedial courses.

While according to U. S. News and World Report, nationwide the number of high school graduates is expected to grow 10 percent in the next 10 years. The northeastern states will experience declines in growth, while high school grads will grow by 24 percent in Texas and Florida.

According to the Lawlor Group, trends such as demography, the power of perception, and measurement determine aspects of higher education as seen below:

- College enrollments will shrink from 38% to 10% over the next 8 years.
- High school graduates will decrease in all but 18 states in 2019. Mostly in the South you will see an increase.
- Most students tend to attend a college with less than \$11, 100 in tuition fees and think it should cost no more than \$20, 000.

(Sources: NCES, College Board, Gallup, Federal Student Aid, Harvard Institute of Politics.)

The future of American education is critical to students and individuals who want to maintain a college education. The path of every student along with a sustainable approach would benefit the economy as well. Proposed solutions such as Race to the Top, revisions of the No Child Left Behind act and the STEM program would help to further alleviate the problems posed to higher education. Of course with solutions comes fiscal responsibilities which would introduce a need for a new education budget that would most likely benefit the future of American students. A time for reform is now and policies should be implemented as soon as possible to ensure the livelihood of students and their path to a successful life.