



LET'S DEBATE...

Education Reform



Federal Funding and Public Schools...A Very Brief History

- 1791** Funding and oversight of public-school education falls primarily under state and local governments, as stated in the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution... are reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people."
- 1867** The federal government creates the original Department of Education (ED) to conduct studies and gather data on schools and teaching methods. It soon begins funding higher education.
- 1960s** It wasn't until the civil-rights era that the ED began funding K12 public education and creating equal-opportunity programs.
- Now** The issue of federal funding of and federal involvement in public schools remains a controversial political issue.



Should the U.S. federal government increase its funding of K12 public education?



Yes

No



- Most states cut school funding when the 2008 recession hit, and many states have continued cutting education budgets each year since.
- Close to 300,000 public-school teacher and worker positions have been eliminated since 2008, while the number of students has risen by more than 800,000.
- Some studies show that increased funding of low-income public schools results in significant gains in students' academic achievement.
- Low-income schools cannot afford the high-level technologies necessary to 21st-century educational environments.
- Children in low-income communities who attend wealthier schools are more likely to complete high school and earn higher wages in adulthood.
- Federal government involvement in the public-school system helps hold schools accountable for maintaining human and civil rights.
- Federal government involvement in the public-school system ensures standardized education criteria and curricula among all states' schools.

- Federal funding of K12 public education under the Department of Education rose from \$4.5 billion in 1965 to \$40.2 billion in 2016 (constant 2016 dollar value).
- Despite increases in federal funding to public schools since 1965, some studies show little or no academic improvement or gains in academic achievement.
- Increased federal funding comes with federal mandates for public schools, meaning more rules and requirements for schools to follow and fulfill.
- Increased federal funding and resulting mandates can stifle public schools' creativity and suppress innovation.
- Federal funding of public schools is supported by taxpayer dollars, of which billions are wasted when funneled through the federal bureaucratic system.
- Federal funding supports the creation of federal education programs for public schools, which make demands such as assessments and interventions.
- Federal funding of public schools is intended to supplement state and local funding; increasing federal funding threatens to supplant state and local funding.

What are your feelings about the topic of education reform?
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SOURCES

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