



## Administration

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# VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Stanley C. Mantooth, County Superintendent of Schools

## INSIDE THE BELTWAY ... FEDERAL BUDGET / LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*Ventura County School Boards Association Newsletter, April 2014*

Although our primary focus revolves around events in Sacramento and the new State funding and accountability models, it is also important to keep tabs on another significant source of funding for our schools – the Federal Government. In early March, President Obama released his fiscal year 2015 budget, which begins the next round of deliberations between the President and Congress. The good news is that there are no additional sequestration cuts proposed in 2015. However, both Title I and IDEA are flat funded and are not slated for increases over the previous year. The next dance step will begin when the House and Senate Budget Subcommittees start the Congressional budget process; which is completely independent from the White House and the Administration. If the recent past is any indication, we can expect that there will be serious differences among Congressional leaders and members of both Houses over spending priorities.

With regard to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Special Education) funding, there have been two positive recent developments. Last month, 139 House members, including local representatives Julia Brownley and Lois Capps, signed a bipartisan letter calling for increased IDEA funding to ultimately reach the level of the federal government's initial guarantee to provide 40% of the cost to deliver these services. This would be a significant improvement over the federal government's consistent history of falling short of this commitment with funding never reaching above 18.5% of the average per pupil expenditure for each Special Education student. More importantly, subsequent to the submission of this letter, California Congressman Huffman, as well as one other Democrat and two Republicans have jointly introduced HR4136 to fully fund IDEA.

In other areas, the Consolidated Appropriations Act also included increased funding for early childhood education, including the restoration of cuts to programs for infants and toddlers and Head Start that were a result of prior sequestration. The Administration is also putting forth Congressional action on its comprehensive ***Strong Start for America's Children Act*** which envisions a commitment to collaboratively fund preschool for all children throughout the Country.

Although there is a long way to go before we see any results, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Assoc., (CCSESA), has scheduled a federal advocacy trip to Washington D.C. during the week of March 31st in an effort to support these proposals as well as a continuation of the E-rate program and increased funding for educational technology.

Stay tuned.

Stanley C. Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools