



OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

ISSUE: FUNDING FOR SAFE SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

POLICY DESCRIPTION: This recommendation addresses the funding of programs within the Department of Education that support policies and programs designed to reduce violence in our nation's schools. These programs are primarily funded by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, and overseen by the Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) authorizes important federal funding for programs that prevent violence in and around schools and to foster a safe learning environment that supports student academic achievement. Funding for SDFSCA programs has declined significantly - nearly \$200 million - since the law was authorized in 2002.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CHANGE: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) authorized \$650,000,000 for the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act state programs for Fiscal Year 2002 and such sums thereafter. Additionally, the ESEA authorized such sums as may be necessary for national initiatives under the law.

Congress provided a combined appropriation for SDFSCA state and national programs of \$696 million for fiscal year 2002, \$666 million for Fiscal Year 2003, \$674 million for Fiscal Year 2004, \$671 million for Fiscal Year 2005, \$568 million for Fiscal Year 2006, \$577.43 million for Fiscal Year 2007 and \$513.39 million for Fiscal Year 2008.

We urge the next Administration to seek funding for Fiscal Year 2010 at no less than the Fiscal Year 2002 amount of \$696 million, and urge the Administration to include language in the budget request that notes the importance investing greater federal resources in bullying and harassment prevention activities to ensure that all children,



regardless of characteristics including sexual orientation and gender identity, learn in a safe and nurturing school environment.

DESCRIBE THE PROCESS BY WHICH YOUR RECOMMENDATION CAN BE

IMPLEMENTED: The President's federal budget request is overseen and coordinated by the Office of Management and Budget, based upon requests by all federal agencies. To fulfill this recommendation the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools and the Department of Education must request increased funding for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools of at least \$696 million. The Office of Management and Budget must include these requests in the President's federal budget that is submitted to Congress.

The funding request levels will be affected by political appointees at the Department of Education including the Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free Schools, the Deputy Secretary and Secretary of Education; as well as the career-level Budget Services Director. The Office of Management and Budget personnel involved in this process include both career and political staff.

While Congress will ultimately appropriate funding for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, the Administration's request is a critical step in the budget and appropriations process. Additionally, the Administration's request can send an important message about the need for our schools to address bullying and harassment.