

*Funding issue critical
and lots going on*

**International Reading Association
Government Relations Update
November 7, 2007**

Overview

There are three issues being touched in this update, the funding bill and what happens next; the status of NCLB and the expected pending action on the Higher Education Act. The backdrop to all three of these issues is the calendar. The First Session of the 110th Congress is scheduled to adjourn sometime this month. The House hopes to be finished by November 16th and the Senate is planning on coming back after Thanksgiving. This means that there is little time to finish just about anything. The second confounding issue is that next year is both a presidential and Congressional election year. Interestingly enough after the first week of February both parties may know who their presidential nominee is and there may be a bit of a window for Congressional action on several measures including the re-write of NCLB.

*Presidential veto
expected for higher
funding levels for
education*

Funding

The House and Senate Conferees met and came to an agreement on funding for school year 2008-09 (Fiscal year 2008). The president has said that he will veto this spending level when it is presented to him because it exceeds his recommendation and because of the large number of earmarks for specific projects. Congressional leaders are creating a funding bill that will include not only the traditional Labor/Health and Human Service/Education spending bill with two other spending bills, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. This large appropriations bill will most likely be vetoed and the Congress will then move for an override. The bill originally passed the Senate with enough to override a veto but not enough to override in the House. The override fight

will be in the House. Attached to this update is a chart from the IRA supported Committee for Education Funding.

Please note several key points, first that Title I funding is increased, Reading First is decreased, as is Even Start; while Striving Readers received a small increase. It is expected that the entire education, health, and others will push for a veto override because this bill increases funding over all for education. The president's spending recommendations were over \$2 billion less than this measure.

If the override vote isn't successful, then the Congress is likely to pass another emergency spending bill that will keep the spending levels at last year's level, for a short period of time.

*Continuing resolution
for spending likely*

NCLB

The House and Senate education committee chairs have acknowledged that moving a reauthorization of NCLB this year will not happen. At the same time, Senator Kennedy (D-MA) and Senator Enzi (R-WY) the chair and ranking member on the Senate education committee have said that they will be moving a proposal early in the new year. Senator Kennedy has said they he thinks that they have until the spring of 2008 to finish it. The Senate education committee has released a draft proposal but without the sections of Title I covering literacy, adequate yearly progress, growth models, and other controversial areas.

NCLB in the spring?

Higher Education

The House and Senate education committees have announced that they are now going to focus their time for the balance of the session on reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. We are expecting new language to be introduced in the next week and will update you on the literacy sections.

Higher Ed next week?

*Override of veto vote
possible in House*

Next Steps

The next big step for the education community will come if the president does veto the education spending bill. While the veto may not be overridden it is important to get members of Congress on record whether or not they support funding for education programs.

Please watch the IRA Legislative Action Team blog for updates at LATAdvisory.blogspot.com.

Selected Education Programs	FY07 Enacted	LHHSED HR 3043 Conference Report	Difference
Title I (Subtotal Grants to LEA's)	\$ 12,838.00	\$ 14,311.40	\$ 1,473.40
Improving Teacher Quality State Grants	\$ 2,887.40	\$ 3,037.43	\$ 150.03
Special Education-IDEA (total)	\$ 11,802.90	\$ 12,357.90	\$ 555.00
Title I (Basic Grants)	\$ 6,808.40	\$ 6,808.90	\$ 0.50
Title I (Concentration Grants)	\$ 1,365.00	\$ 1,365.00	\$ -
Title I (Targeted Grants)	\$ 2,332.00	\$ 3,068.60	\$ 736.60
Title I (Education Finance Incentive Grants)	\$ 2,332.00	\$ 3,068.60	\$ 736.60
Reading First State Grants	\$ 1,029.20	\$ 400.00	\$ (629.20)
Early Reading First	\$ 117.60	\$ 114.50	\$ (3.10)
Striving Readers: High and Middle school pgm	\$ 31.80	\$ 36.00	\$ 4.20
Even Start	\$ 82.30	\$ 62.60	\$ (19.70)
Literacy through School Libraries	\$ 19.49	\$ 21.24	\$ 1.75
School Improvement Grants	\$ 125.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 375.00
All numbers in millions			