

# ESSA School by School Spending: What It Means for You and How to Prepare

David A. DeSchryver, Whiteboard Advisors  
Katie Hagan, Research Faculty Fellow, Georgetown University  
Noelle Ellerson Ng, AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

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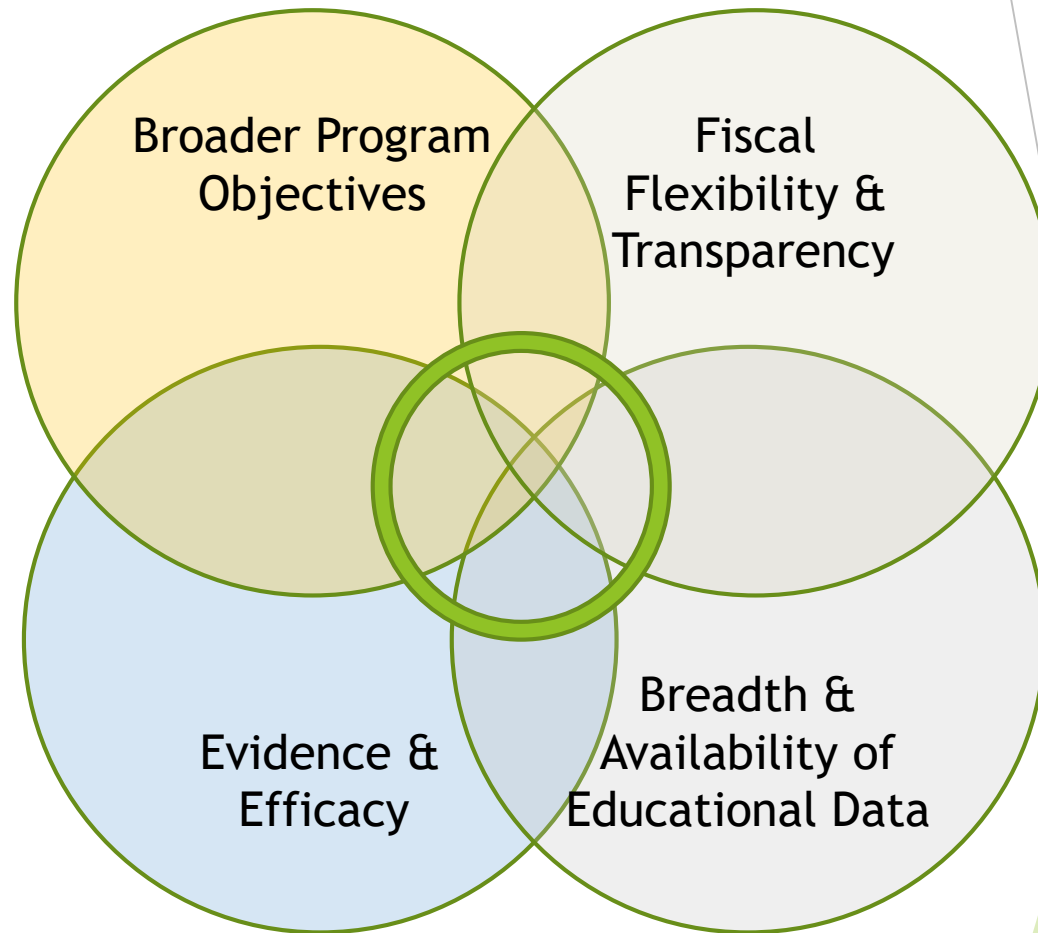
# An Historic Shift

Devolution of  
leadership back to LEAs  
and Principals

- ▶ **1965** - The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is passed
- ▶ **1973** - The Rehabilitation Act becomes law. Section 504
- ▶ **1983** - A Nation at Risk
- ▶ (1990 - *Tim Berners-Lee writes the first web client-server protocol (Hypertext Translation Protocol or http), allowing 2 computers to communicate.*)
- ▶ **1994** - The Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) is signed into law by President Bill Clinton
- ▶ **2001** - NCLB is approved by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush
- ▶ **2009** - ARRA provides more than \$90B for education, nearly half of which goes to local school districts to prevent layoffs and for school modernization and repair.
- ▶ **2009** - Common Core State Standards Initiative is launched
- ▶ **2015** - ESEA becomes the Every Student Succeeds Act
- ▶ **2018** - final ESSA state plan is approved (FL)
- ▶ **2019....**

# An Historic Opportunity

What will high quality  
program management  
look like?

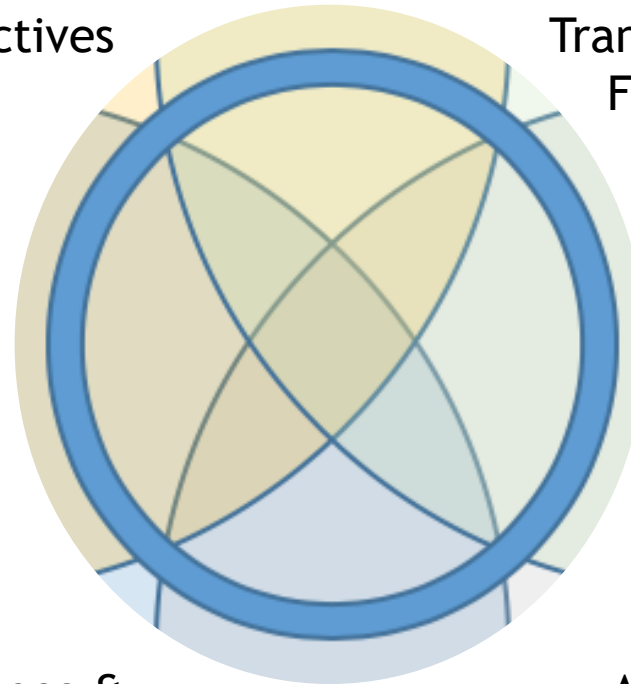


# An Historic Opportunity

Will the story be told  
by-us or at-us?

Program  
Objectives

Fiscal  
Transparency &  
Flexibility



Evidence &  
Efficacy

Available  
Educational Data

## An Historic Opportunity

How quickly can school leaders move along the path to models of success?

1

Initial Reaction

2

Strategic Response

3

Common Models of Success

# Interviews with principals/district leaders about school spending...

District Leader: We are transparent - we put all our financial files online.

Principal: All in, my school receives about \$40,000 a year.

Principal: I don't get as much \$ as other schools in the district because my school is in a neighborhood with lower property values.

Principal: Is the district shortchanging my school? I assume not, but I have no idea.

# Interviews with principals/district leaders about school spending...

District Leader: Our equity initiative has funded counselors, reading programs and social workers.

District Leader: We give extra staff to our higher needs schools, but they don't know that. They assume all schools have what they have.

Principal: In my district, principals don't question budget choices.

Principals: I want to be more engaged in school finance decisions.

# How district leaders respond to school by school spending requirement



Annoyance, Frustration, Anxiety

“This is stupid” “Insulting”

“Community won’t understand why we spend the way we do”

“More federal requirements to micromanage us”

It’s a good thing. It’s about time.

“We need more dialogue on how we spend our money”

“Maybe if more people were involved, we can start to make some changes to help students”



Commits to looking at school-by-school spending to see what the numbers say





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# THE DAILY NEWS

- *Two schools in the **same** district and cover the same grade levels*
- *Both schools have similar student enrollment and student populations, including special needs students*
- *School A: in a more affluent area of the district, small percentage of children receiving free or reduced meals.*
- *School B: in a less affluent area **of the same district**, significantly more students receiving free or reduced meals.*
- *School A's per-student expenditures are significantly higher than School B.*

## Message linking spending & outcomes was most popular among all stakeholders

*“Now with transparent spending by school, we can compare the total expenditures on each school with the student outcomes for each school to see how well each school is able to leverage its funding to do the most for students. Larger datasets may show how some spending choices yield better outcomes for the dollar for types of schools or certain student populations. District leaders can explore the data and spending tradeoffs to find more innovative ways to better meet the needs of their students.”*



# Avoid blame in messaging

*“This information makes conversations around equity possible. For too long, districts have been engaged in unjust budgeting practices that do not take into account the significant gaps between low income and high-income schools in the same district. These gaps are caused in part by tenured, more experienced teachers selecting more affluent schools and the disproportionate number of inexperienced, less expensive teachers in our most needy schools. What is the district going to do to rectify these significant gaps?”*



# Key highlights from messaging research:

- ▶ All stakeholders care about equity, and understand that high needs students require more \$.
- ▶ Principals are a critical group... they want to participate and engender trust.
- ▶ Little appetite to address inequities due to uneven salaries.
- ▶ No support for taking money away from schools.



# Successful Communication

- ▶ Avoid business lingo.
- ▶ All financial communication should reference students (and what XX will do for students).
- ▶ Communication that sites evidence/research should acknowledge local context to be trusted.
- ▶ Citing dollar figures improves credibility.
- ▶ Use school principals as communicators



Questions?