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Federally Funded Schools

Have you ever walked down the halls of a school where water dripped from the ceiling, and there were over 30 students per class? Well, this is the case for many students in poverty-stricken areas. There are so many children nationwide who are forced to go to school in inadequately funded districts just because of the area they live. All of this could be easily solved by providing one equal source of school funding. The idea of fully funding all schools with federal money has been around for a while, with many people arguing its benefits that ensure a more thorough education for all. Still, others claim that it could lead to indoctrinating children and being flat-out unconstitutional. However, the benefits of federally funded schools outweigh the risks, and with proper legislation put in place, we could mitigate all of the risks.

One of the more significant potential benefits of federal funding schools is helping students break a cycle of poverty. A lot of children who are growing up in poverty also have parents who have grown up in poverty, creating this cycle where the children have a tough time escaping. Many schools in poverty-stricken areas need more resources to help the students achieve higher education or high-paying jobs, "Providing these schools with better funding could make school counselors more accessible. They'd be available to assist students afflicted with mental health troubles, which are more prevalent among low-

income individuals” (Sharkey). A lot of the children growing up in poverty-stricken schools will not have the resources to pursue higher education. This will cause them to be limited in career options and, in many instances, will end up living and raising their children in similar conditions they were raised in. Others believe that while this funding could help, there are no easy ways to regulate how the money is spent, and we can’t ensure that the money is benefiting the children. Under Donald Trump’s 2025 Plan, he plans to “...drain the government education swamp and stop the abuse of your taxpayer dollars to indoctrinate America’s youth...” (qtd. in Lobosco). He thinks we should reduce federal funding because it just opens more opportunities for money to be wasted and not be spent correctly. While some may find this point valid, with more control over funding, the federal government will have more power to create and enforce standards.

Some argue that schools receive need-based funding to mitigate the inadequate financing; however, not all this money is spent correctly, and if schools were to be fully funded by the government, the schools would get the proper amount of money. Sometimes, the money is obtained from the federal level but not correctly used: “The federal government similarly attempts to channel funding toward students from low-income families. But whether funding is progressive, with the most money going to low-income students, or regressive, with more money going to nonpoor students, depends on the interaction of multiple funding streams, policies, and the demographic structure of the state and its districts” (Chingos). Even though we are giving the schools some federal money, it doesn’t always trickle down to the actual schools and sometimes can get hung up and sent to the wrong places. If schools were to be directly funded by the federal

government, more plans and procedures would be in place to ensure that this money goes down to the school-to-school level.

Current methods of funding schools leave some districts with inadequate funding and resources. Currently, most schools are funded through local property taxes, which can cause districts with less affluent areas to have less funding. This is unfair to the children as they did not choose where they grow up, "... in poorer areas, where housing prices are substantially lower, much less money is produced to fund the local schools. In short, American children from low-income families often have no choice but to attend defective, inadequately funded public schools" (Sharkey). This can cause some children to fall behind and get stuck behind their peers who live in more affluent areas. While in poverty, the children are also frequently **limited** by the resources of their schools as their parents cannot afford additional traditional tutoring or other resources.

Many parents feel pressure to supplement their children's education because the schools lack the necessary funding to support the children. However, these activities are often expensive, and many parents feel stressed because they cannot afford them and feel like their children are going to be behind on the class material. According to Claire Miller of the New York Times: "Starting very early, children from rich and low-income families receive vastly different educations, in and out of school, driven by differences in the amount of money and time their parents can invest" (Miller). These students are going to feel stuck behind just because their parents are not enrolling them in expensive summer educational programs or having them do educational extracurriculars outside of their schools. However, others argue that that is the right of the parents under social mobility.

People who believe in social mobility believe that you should be able to freely move up through the ranks of society with the use of money: “Although there are various means for attaining upward social mobility, obtaining a college degree is one of the most common and proven methods...” (Thropay). If the schools were to have more money and more funding provided by the federal government, they would be able to offer a stronger education, and there would be less pressure on parents to send their children to expensive programs. Although it should be the parent’s right to pay, it is fast approaching a necessity, which is not fair to all parties.

People who are in favor of fully funding schools believe that it would be more constitutional. While the US Constitution makes no mention of federally required public education, and therefore, it is up to the individual states, there is a protection of equal rights: “The United States Constitution doesn’t explicitly guarantee a right to public education, but that doesn’t mean that it can’t help ensure that all students can access an equal educational experience” (Bowen). The way our schools are currently divided goes against equal protection as not all have equal opportunities. In a tiny Texas town, parents filed a federal lawsuit against the schools over this same thing:, “Specifically, the suit claimed, the way we pay for our schools violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause, which says that no state shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” (Turner). This case did not make it very far in the judicial system, but there could and should be further instances if we don’t change school funding to make it more equal. It is our job as citizens to fight to uphold the Constitution and call the government out when it is not.

Public schools suffer from inadequate resources, and changing how they are funded could help solve this. Some argue that it is a waste of money and can lead to trust issues. If we could look at the benefits for the children, we would all be able to agree that it is what's best for the kids.

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