

Save Education Jobs Act of 2021 (H.R. 542)

The Save Education Jobs Act will save almost 4 million jobs, spurring economic growth and helping to mitigate the lasting impacts of students' learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the one of the worst public health crisis and economic recessions in modern American history. The pandemic also disrupted our education system, forcing at least 124,000 K-12 schools to temporarily [close](#) this Spring affecting more than 55 million students. Despite the [increased costs](#) school districts are facing to keep students safe and address learning loss, they are also dealing with severe cuts to education funding as a result of state budget shortfalls. And these cuts will only deepen if Congress fails to act.

The federal government has a responsibility to ensure all students have access to a quality education. This includes mitigating learning loss to prevent long-lasting effects on a student's achievement, future earnings, and the national economy as a whole. *Researchers [estimate](#) that by 2040, learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic for the current K-12 cohort will result in an earnings loss of \$110 billion per year and will reduce overall gross domestic product (GDP) by \$173 billion to \$271 billion per year. This figure also includes greater high school dropout rates that will account for \$11 billion per year.*

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, states are facing a [\\$555 billion budget shortfall](#) over fiscal years 2020-2022. Between February and September 2021, an estimated [585,300 local public education employees](#) (the majority of whom are K-12 workers) across the country lost their jobs. Since February of this year, more K-12 jobs have been lost than nearly all of the education jobs lost during the [entire Great Recession](#).

Without sufficient funding from the federal government to support states and school districts during the recovery, an estimated [1.4 million](#) to [1.9 million](#) education jobs will be lost over the next one to two years alone. Moreover, economic forecasters believe that damage from this recession will last much longer than the next two years and hurt the most vulnerable students the worst.

However, we can learn from previous recessions. For example, the Great Recession forced states to make dramatic cuts to K-12 education and their teacher workforces. And the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) and the Education Jobs Fund saved an [estimated](#) 288,000 jobs and 134,000 teacher jobs, respectively. Unfortunately, the federal government prematurely ended its support and [120,000 jobs](#) were lost. Consequently, it took an average of at least [six years](#) for states to regain investment in K-12 education funding after the Great Recession.

About the *Save Education Jobs Act of 2021*

The *Save Education Jobs Act of 2021* would establish an Education Jobs Fund to stabilize the education workforce, mitigate the impact of student learning loss, and stimulate the economic recovery in the long-term. Specifically, the bill would:

- Deliver up to \$261 billion to states and school districts over 10 years. This relief would save up to 3.9 million education jobs, including 2.6 million teacher jobs as well as the jobs of school leaders, paraprofessionals, social workers, school psychologists, nurses, bus drivers, maintenance workers, and more.
- Guarantee funding to all states for at least six years or until the national unemployment rate falls to 5.5 percent or below (if later). Thereafter, the legislation would provide additional funding up to fiscal year 2030 for individual states that continue to experience high unemployment.
- Allow state educational agencies to reserve up to 5 percent of funding to retain or create positions in early childhood, K-12, and higher education, and ensure that low-income students and students of color are not disproportionately taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.
- Require school districts to use at least 90 percent of funding to pay the salaries and benefits of teachers, school leaders, and other school personnel. This funding can be used to recall or rehire former employees, retain existing employees, and hire new employees in order to provide early childhood, elementary, or secondary educational related services.
- Permit school districts to use up to 10 percent of funding to support teacher training and professional development, high-quality residency programs, and better teacher pay for extended school time to address learning loss.
- Ensure continued funding for K-12 education and high poverty districts with strong maintenance of effort and maintenance of equity requirements.

The *Save Education Jobs Act* is endorsed by: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Federation of Teachers, American Federation of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Connecticut, American Library Association, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Physical Therapy Association, American Psychological Association, American School Counselor Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Association of University Centers on Disability, BellXcel and Sperling Center for Research and Innovation, Committee for Children, Connecticut Education Association, Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Education Taskforce, Council for Exceptional Children, Council of Administrators of Special Education, Council for Learning Disabilities, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Education Trust, EDGE Consulting Partners, Educators for Excellence, GLSEN, Higher Education Consortium for Special Education, International Society for Technology in Education, KaBOOM!, National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel, National Association of Pupil Services Administrators, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools, National Council for Languages and International Studies, National Education Association, National Science Teaching Association, National Superintendents Roundtable, Next100, PDK International, [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition (BASIC), Sandy Hook Promise, San Diego Unified School District, School Social Work Association of America, Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America), State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education, State Educational Technology Directors Association, Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, and Teach Plus.