

FY08 Appropriations: EETT Funded at \$267.5 Million

After months of political wrangling that included vetoes, failed veto overrides, and intense partisan battles between the White House and Congress over FY08 appropriations, on December 26, 2008, President Bush signed into law an omnibus bill that encompassed the eleven remaining appropriations bills, including the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. The Enhancing Education Through Technology program survived the political horse-trading but sustained a \$5 million cut over last year as part of a 1.747% across-the-board FY08 funding cut that all programs received. Appropriators agreed to the across-the-board cut in order to keep the overall appropriations numbers below the level set in the President's initial budget proposal. Nonetheless, this represents a big victory for education technology because the bill preserves EETT after the President had again sought to eliminate all funding for this program.

While this omnibus bill provides much less money for domestic priorities than Democrats had sought, congressional leaders were able to avert major cuts to key funding priorities such as education, low income housing and National Institutes of Health medical research by redirecting funds from some of President Bush's priorities, including nuclear weapons programs and abstinence education. Overall, the U.S. Department of Education saw a \$2 billion increase over last year. Despite these small victories, some Democrats were not pleased with the bill. House Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-WI) commented, "The omnibus appropriations bill is totally inadequate to meet the long-term investment needs of the country, but it is a whole lot better than the country would have without a Democratic Congress."

Here is a list of how key education programs fared in the final bill, compared with last year's funding and the Administration's original proposal.

	FY07	FY08 Budget Proposal	FY08 Omnibus
Title I	\$12.8B	\$13.9B	\$14.027B
IDEA, State Grants	\$11.6B	\$11.3B	\$11.85B
Title IIA	\$2.9B	\$2.9B	\$2.96B
EETT	\$272M	\$0	\$267.5M
Reading First	\$1.029B	\$1.019B	\$393M
State Data	\$24.6M	\$49.2M	\$48.3M
Title V	\$99	\$0	\$0