

Lack of Public-School Funding

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Statement of the Problem

A current issue that New York City is facing is lack of school funding. Lack of funding means cuts to education spending which affects all aspects of students' academic experience, from the condition of the school building to the courses offered and to the teachers in the classroom. But it's not only affecting the students this affects families and teachers as well. Not to mention the low-wealth districts, who are majority Black, Hispanic, and Latino families and who are schools with higher numbers of students from low-income families, who are being hit the hardest by these cuts.

Lack of school funding is a problem we have to address because it greatly affects the way the school operates and what it can provide to our children, their families, and school staff. They experienced things like teacher layoffs, increased class sizes, and reduced services in areas ranging from counseling to after-school programs. They also have significant impacts on critical outcomes such as student achievement, graduation rates, and other societal factors which include lower rates of crime, lower incarceration rates and welfare and more chances of better employment, wages and taxes. Children really have their education and their future on the line. Lack of school funding takes away from the individual attention they need and greatly changes how they learn. Families are deprived from the resources that schools should be able to offer. Such as, school meal plans, a safe place for their children to spend their time for the majority of the day, and other range of services that schools may offer to support them so they can be able support their children as well. Then there is the community that is affected by this issue because the type of education the children of this community receive is what they, in return, will be putting out in the real world and the type of contribution they make in their community and life.

This intervention is needed for families to be aware of how much of an impact this makes on their children's lives, theirs, and others around them. The reason why it is so important for this issue to be addressed now is to minimize and prevent our school system from worsening the type of education and environment children receive. We should not have to wait 2 or 5 years to address this type of issue when education has such a huge impact in their lives. And some of the many things we can do to start addressing and fixing this issue would be to voice our concerns through protests, school board meetings, and social media to get our point across and let it be known that we will not take our children's education lightly. And it is something we will do until the lawmakers make the initiative and provide schools with a sufficient amount of funding for better resources. It's important for lawmakers, administrators, community members, and everyone to be aware of this issue to help bring about some change. They're positions make them accessible to help because each group of individual plays an important role in this process. The community members voice the injustice, administrators plan and work with what is handed to them, and the lawmakers decide the amount and what is handed to the administrators. Americans all over the country should not be asking why public-school teachers are not being paid enough to support their families or why students are using worn-out textbooks, and why students are attending crumbling schools. We should do better for our children, our community, and the future.

Research

Research suggests that lack of school funding is a current concern to early childhood education field and underinvesting in our children's education can be detrimental to their learning. Time and time again it is shown that through adequate and equitable funding, wisely spent, can lead to great future outcomes. State lawmakers understand the fundamental importance of this issue, as do the leaders of many nations, that have invested well in education and surged ahead in many aspects of life. We must strive to do the same and put that research to use and create the laws that will support and offer genuine opportunities for each and every child. Equitably funded schools that invested in early childhood education, well-prepared and well-supported teachers lead to positive outcomes. And that is what's demonstrated and supported in these three following articles.

Article 1

Through lack of school funding, we are robbing our kid's future. In this Forbes article, *Americas School Funding struggle* by Linda Darling-Hammond, it illustrates the growing inequalities in the way American schools are funded, primarily through local property taxes that produce significant disparities. Although states try to offset inequalities, they rarely succeed in eliminating these funding gaps. And despite these well-known needs, only 12 states allocated more funds to districts in which student poverty is high than to districts in which there is little or no poverty. And of these 12 states, only five (Delaware, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey and Wyoming) also funded education at a level of adequacy that enables students to receive the resources they need.

These states that undertook such reforms produced much stronger educational outcomes. This author's purpose was to inform the public of how much of a significance it is to distribute school funding accordingly, so each school and student receives the resources they need to succeed in their education and future. I selected this article to highlight how each state distributes their funding and how based on the distribution is how well of schools are and how much of a difference it makes for their students' success compared to those who are underfunded and unfairly distributed this equity.

Article 2

In *Fixing Chronic Disinvestment in K-12 Schools* by Lisette Partelow, Sarah Shapiro, Abel McDaniels, and Catherine Brown, the article expresses how far too many states have systematically disinvested in K-12 funding in the wake of the 2008 Great Recession. The authors illustrate how these cuts affect school inputs and how till this day only a handful of states have returned to pre-recession levels of spending. Some states have even chosen to cut taxes during the recovery rather than invest in education. In the article, it states that on average, 47 percent of K-12 education funding comes from state revenue, while local government provides 45 percent, and the federal government provides the remaining 8 percent. Because schools depend on state funding for about half of their revenue, they must drastically cut spending when states provide less—especially when local districts cannot cover the gap.

Although some policymakers and conservative education advocates have argued that spending more money on education does not necessarily improve results, they have used this claim as an excuse to keep cutting funding. Recently, however, more and more evidence is casting serious doubt on this position. Money matters a great deal, particularly for students from

low-income families and increases in education spending are associated with improved educational outcomes. Selecting this piece allowed me to demonstrate that this issue has been occurring for years and should be finally put to an end.

Article 3

In *The impact of inequitable school funding: solutions for struggling schools without the money to fully help struggling students*, by Howie Knoff, Ph.D. the main point the author wants to get across is how equity is being unfairly distributed between schools based on status and racial factors. One thing Knoff points out is how high-poverty non-white schools in this country receive significantly less money per student each year than high-poverty white schools and middle or upper class dominated schools. Because of the financial inequity, these high-poverty schools have fewer resources than middle or upper class-dominant schools, and they are typically staffed by less experienced teachers who, naturally, have more skill gaps.

In addition, the students in these schools have less access to needed multi-tiered academic and social, emotional, and behavioral services, supports, programs students need. Which can lead to classrooms and schools going into crisis, staff becoming reactive instead of proactive, and more students would then be pulled into this negative climate and culture. Knoff also indicates that this lack of proper distribution of equity requires an understanding of history, white privilege, and equity rights. Through selecting this source, I gained a new perspective on how most states do end up favoring white over non-white districts which is saddening but should be known that this is occurring.

Small Advocacy Action

An action that I can make to bring attention to the lack of school funding to parents, families, and teachers would be through social media. By posting information on my social media accounts about the issue, I can gather an audience who can help me engage in a larger advocacy action. Through posting informative images, charts, and other articles that demonstrate the many negative outcomes that this issue causes to our children and schools. I would also demonstrate how much things can improve when children are offered more resources, better opportunities, and a safe and clean space to grow and learn, which can only be obtained through more funding. Through social media, I am spreading information that can grab the attention of those who are not only parents but people who acknowledge the importance of a great education and where it can lead to. These groups of people will then work collectively make phone calls, write letters, and continue to use social media to draw the awareness needed to this issue.

Large Advocacy Action

Now in order to reach the individuals that have the power to make this change fully happen, provide the funding, and place the policies, we as a collective will make them aware of our dissatisfaction of how things been operating and being handled in these past years. With the support of parents, teachers, and the rest of the community, we will organize a protest that will lead to it being broadcast on the news. By planning and publicizing this protest and working with the press this issue will be seen by many and will definitely not be ignored by the higher ups which includes education administrators and elected officials. This will make them aware that there is many people who want to see a change and with their power they can make a difference in achieving greater equity and sufficient school funding.

Some things that they can do would be to redesign school finance to focus on pupil needs, equalize allocations of resources, so that high-poverty states receive a greater and fairer share of federal funds. Through this we can ensure and implement things like high-quality preschool for children who may have fewer learning opportunities or greater learning needs before they enter school, enable districts to hire and keep well-prepared educators in under-resourced schools, stronger educator preparation, as well as providing comparable salaries and working conditions. Parents and teachers are the main part of this all, without them voicing their opinion and taking action, their voices and discontent would not be acknowledged. Them just taking part of all this is a step in the right direction in seeing some change being done.

Commentary

I chose to advocate this issue because it is and has been such a huge problem for so long, that there just needs to be something done about it. This issue is personally so meaningful to me because I've seen how much better off schools were than mine and vice versa just because they had more school funding to provide and offer so many better resources for those students. And it's very saddening to know how other schools had these nicer books, smaller and more attentive classroom and teachers, and better after school programs than my school, it makes you think about your own worth and why you cannot receive those same benefits too. And no child should really be thinking about that. I also brought up this issue to highlight the importance and how much of a huge impact it has on how students learn and who they become. This issue definitely impacted me as an early childhood educator as well because I truly believe every child deserves the best education and learning experience and we should not let others take that away from them. Money has always been the center of our society, so why not better guide that wealth in something that truly matters, and that is our kid's education and future.

References

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