

Public ENGAGEMENT & Ed REFORM

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Impact of Inadequate Funding

By [Stu Silberman](#) on March 14, 2014 12:04 PM | [1 Comment](#)

The following guest post is by Kip Hottman, a 2013-14 [Hope Street Group Fellow](#) and Spanish teacher at [Oldham County High School](#) located north of Louisville, Kentucky. Kip just completed his tenth year as a Spanish teacher and has served as the lead teacher for the World Language department's [Professional Learning Community](#) (PLC).

The biggest impact on student learning comes directly from the teachers in the classroom. With more funding, our district would be able to change the teacher to student ratio and hire more teachers. These teachers would be able to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students. Our district has had to cut the Special Education department, which means the students who need the most help are not getting the level of help they need.

More teachers means more individual attention for all students, especially to provide support for those with Individual Education Plans or 504 plans, and those identified as gifted and talented who should be receiving enrichment.

We need more time to gather with other teachers in professional learning communities to data crunch, intentionally plan and collaborate.

The [Kentucky Core Academic Standards](#) prompt deeper thinking and learning, but all students need avenues of support to be successful. We are slowly destroying these avenues.

While education funding supports our overall educational effort, nothing can replace an effective teacher who can inspire students to want to learn.

If teachers don't grow, then our students suffer. Educators can always learn something new from a conference, convening or webinar. Funding for education allows teachers to collaborate outside of their community and district. Without funding, professional development (PD) is usually within the county or school. Yes, teachers can collaborate within this small world, but there is a world of education outside of Kentucky through which we can truly advance our teaching. Funding can break these barriers and give opportunities to truly learn something new. Our PD this past year was constricted to our school and we missed out on the opportunity to learn from others who may have more expertise.

Our students are being denied techniques, theories, technology and information that could truly help them toward becoming college- and career-ready.

The impact of reduced education funding has such a catastrophic effect on students which in turn affects their future and ours. How can we say that we are ensuring all students a quality education when we are taking away their pathways towards success by cutting funding, and removing the very people who are going to help them meet their needs, TEACHERS?

As a parent, I wonder why everyone is saying that education is "so important and we want all of our kids to be college- and career-ready" and then taking away the means to get there? My daughter will begin kindergarten and what will happen to her and all of our children if education funding is not a priority?

In our county, our students are receiving the same **SEEK funding** that they received in 2008. This is 24 percent less than they received in 2005-2006 (\$4,621 per student). If this trend continues, the students in the future (including my daughter and son) will not be able to receive an appropriate education due to the loss of what is most important in education, TEACHERS!

Other countries such as Finland have made education a priority. We need to do the same. It is time to look at our budget and reflect on what our children truly need, rather than looking at funding through a political lens, which usually benefits adults (or a specific political group), and not our kids!