

Press Release



Understanding Mayor Pete Buttigieg's K-12 Education Policy Proposal

ANDREW EVANS | DECEMBER 13, 2019

Democratic presidential candidate and South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg recently released his proposal for reforming pre-K and K-12 education policy. The U.S. early education system needs reform, but it is not clear that Buttigieg's approach of injecting more money into the current system will produce improved educational results, argues AAF Data Analyst Tom Lee. A better approach would be to focus on much-needed structural reforms.

An excerpt:

Buttigieg proposes spending \$700 billion on early childhood education, which roughly translates to \$70 billion a year, with the primary goal being universal access to pre-K education....The federal government spent \$19.8 billion on early childhood education in 2019, meaning Buttigieg wants to more than triple funding for these programs. Previous funding increases for early childhood education did not result in the programs having a greater reach, however. In 2018, the federal government spent \$8.8 billion on Head Start in 2018, a 22.2 percent increase from 2013. Yet despite this increase in funding, enrollment numbers remained roughly the same. This experience indicates that simply increasing spending on pre-K education will not necessarily lead to an increase in accessibility.

[Read the analysis.](#)