

Public Service Media

Education | Public Safety | Civic Leadership

February 2016

America's public television stations are committed to three essential public service missions: education, public safety and civic leadership.

As the last locally-owned, locally-controlled media in America, reaching nearly 99 percent of the American people, public television stations are uniquely positioned to provide these services — not only on television but in the classroom, online, as part of the emergency response network and in the community.

The federal investment in public television is essential to making these public services available to everyone, everywhere, every day, for free. And the American people are appreciative: majorities of Republicans, Democrats and independents support federal funding for public television and consider it the best use of taxpayer resources after national defense.

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

- FY 2016 Appropriated: \$445 million For FY 2018
- FY 2017 President's Budget: \$445 million For FY 2019
- *FY 2017 APTS Request: \$445 million For FY 2019*

Ready To Learn

- FY 2016 Appropriated: \$25.7 million
- FY 2017 President's Budget: \$25.7 million
- *FY 2017 APTS Request: \$25.7 million*

Interconnection Funding

- FY 2016 Appropriated: \$40 million
- FY 2017 President's Budget: \$50 million
- *FY 2017 APTS Request: \$50 million*

Education

Public television stations are educational institutions committed to lifelong learning for the American people. This work goes beyond the television, tablet or phone screen and begins with the most successful early childhood education ever devised and continues with unique classroom services and teacher professional development resources, high school equivalency preparation, workforce training and adult enrichment.

- Public television's free, universally available, children's educational content has been proven to close the achievement gap and has helped more than 90 million preschool age kids get ready to learn and succeed in school.
- More than 1.8 million teachers serving nearly 40 million students are registered to use PBS LearningMedia — a partnership between PBS and local stations — in K-12 classrooms around the country. This unique service provides over 118,000 standards-based, curriculum-aligned, interactive digital learning objects adapted from the best of public television programming and the resources of the Library of Congress and National Archives, among others.
- Public television brings world-class teachers of specialty subjects to some of the most remote schools in the country through "virtual high schools" operated by stations across the United States.
- Public television runs the largest nonprofit GED program in the country, serving hundreds of thousands of people whose high school education was interrupted prior to graduation.
- Public television stations are helping retrain the American workforce, including veterans, by providing digital learning opportunities for training, licensing, continuing education credits and more.
- Through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) American Graduate program, public television stations are helping reduce the high school dropout rate and keeping America's young people on track to complete their education and to compete successfully in the 21st century economy.

Educational Impact by the Numbers

- PBS KIDS is the #1 Innovator in kids educational media.
- 77% of all kids ages 2-8 watched PBS KIDS last year.
- NOVA is the #1 video resource in U.S. high schools, providing critical STEM content.
- More than 37,000 homeschoolers use PBS LearningMedia.
- PBS is the #1 source of educational television and online content for our nation's preschool teachers.

Public Safety

Public broadcasters have embraced their public safety mission and are focused on maximizing the broadcast spectrum for the public good. Public television stations are partnering with state and local public safety, law enforcement and first responder organizations — connecting these agencies with one another, with the public and with vital datacasting services that use the broadcast spectrum to help first responders securely send critical information and video during times of crisis. In addition, public broadcasters provide a backbone for emergency alerts and warnings to the public.

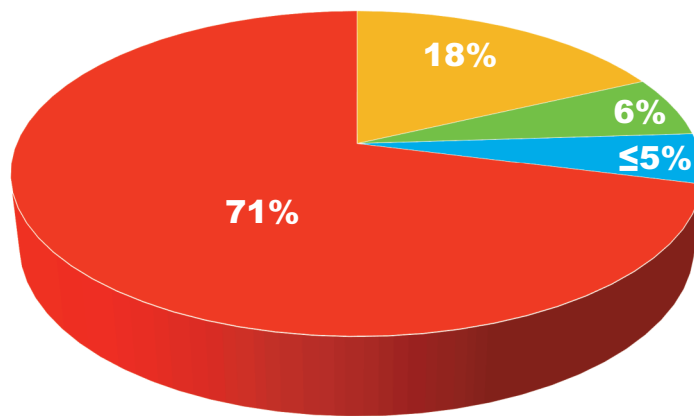
Datacasting

- Stations are partnering with local emergency responders to customize public television’s infrastructure and broadcast spectrum to securely transmit critical information (like school blueprints) and live video feeds to responders in the field, providing access to 24/7 video, connecting public safety agencies in real time.
- The Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Science and Technology conducted two successful pilots in Houston and Chicago utilizing public television’s technology and spectrum to deliver encrypted video and data to a multitude of public safety end-users. These pilots prove that public television can provide solutions for the current communications challenges of the public safety community and that public television can be a valuable partner for the FirstNet initiative by providing high-quality, one-to-many communications services.

Emergency Alerts

- Public television has partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system that enables cell subscribers to receive geo-targeted text messages in the event of an emergency — reaching them wherever they are in times of crisis.
- This same digital infrastructure provides the backbone for emergency alert, public safety, first responder, and homeland security services in many states and communities, including many local stations that serve as their states’ primary Emergency Alert Service (EAS) hub for severe weather and AMBER alerts.

Statutory Funding Formula for CPB



Grants to Local Stations
71%: Grants to local stations in the form of Community Service Grants (CSGs) for the creation of local programming and service initiatives.

Grants for Programming
18%: Grants to producers and national distributors for the creation of programming with an emphasis on educational programming and serving underserved audiences.

System Support
6%: System Support including research and national initiatives, copyright fees and station interconnection.

CPB Operations
Not more than 5%: For CPB operations and administration.

Civic Leadership



Public television regards its viewers as citizens rather than consumers. Many political leaders are concerned that a lack of fundamental civic education — understanding how government works, who makes it work and the issues they must confront — is undermining Americans' ability to perform their duties as self-governing citizens.

Public television is committed to thorough and thoughtful historical and public affairs programming that provides all Americans with a better understanding of our country and its place in the world. Public television stations, all locally-owned and locally-operated, are also helping citizens and communities understand the issues they face locally and regionally, enabling them to develop solutions based on facts and rooted in community partnerships.

- Local public television stations serve as the “C-SPAN” of many state governments, providing access to the state legislative process, Governors’ messages, court proceedings and more.
- As virtually the only locally-owned and operated media remaining in America, public television provides more community public affairs programming, more local history and culture, more candidate debates, more specialized agricultural news, more community partnerships to deal with issues of concern like veterans’ affairs and more civic information of all kinds than anyone else in the media universe.
- Through such programming as *American Experience*, *American Masters*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Frontline* and the works of Ken Burns, public television tells the story of America more thoroughly and authoritatively than anyone else in the media world.
- President Reagan hailed Ken Burns as “the preserver of the national memory,” and Mr. Burns has often said he could not do his work anywhere but in public television.

Did You Know?

- **Nearly 99% of Americans are served by a local public broadcasting station.**
- **The cost of public broadcasting is about \$1.35 per American, per year.**
- **Public television has been ranked the most trusted public institution for 13 consecutive years.**
- **Public television has been ranked the second best use of taxpayer dollars (behind only military defense) for the 13th year in a row.**
- **The Government Accountability Office has found that there is no substitute for federal funding to ensure universal service for public television.**

Ready To Learn

Ready To Learn uses the power of public television's on-air, online, mobile and on-the-ground educational content and engagement to build the math and reading skills of children between the ages of two and eight, especially those from low-income families.

First authorized in 1992, and most recently reauthorized in 2015 as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Ready To Learn is a competitive grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Ready To Learn investments have supported the production and academic rigor of math series *Peg+Cat*, *SuperWHY!*, *The Electric Company*, *Martha Speaks*, *Odd Squad* and other iconic programming for children.

But this investment in programming is only the beginning. Ready To Learn leverages a national-local partnership among CPB, PBS and local public television stations that helps teachers and caregivers make the most of these media resources locally — including online and mobile apps as well as television — in schools, preschools, homeschools, Head Start and other daycare centers, libraries, mobile learning labs, Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers.

Ready To Learn has proven to be particularly helpful to preschool age students from low-income communities who have access to Ready To Learn's innovative learning tools and targeted on-the-ground outreach.

READY TO LEARN ACCOUNTABILITY

Ready To Learn's math and literacy content is rigorously tested and evaluated to assess its impact on children's learning. Since 2005, more than 100 research and evaluation studies have shown that Ready To Learn literacy and math content engages children, enhances their early learning skills and allows them to make significant academic gains, helping bridge the achievement gap.

READY TO LEARN HAS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT

The success and value of Ready To Learn has been broadly recognized. This support was especially visible during the program's reauthorization in the Every Student Succeeds Act. Ready To Learn is a federal grant program that has worked — and worked very well — exactly as it was intended to, with well-documented results that prove its enormous value to all American children.

Ready To Learn Quick Facts

- 54% of 3-4 year olds in the U.S. do NOT attend preschool, but nearly 99% of Americans have access to Ready To Learn television content through public television.
- 21.7 million kids ages 2-11 viewed Ready To Learn television content last year.
- Ready To Learn content improves early math and literacy skills.
 - 14% increase in knowledge of numbers, operations and algebraic thinking
 - 25% increase in skip counting
 - 21% increase in naming letters
 - 37% increase in letter sounds

CPB Advance Funding

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) annual two-year advance appropriation is an essential part of public television's success in pursuing its public service missions of education, public safety and civic leadership.

President Ford first proposed an advanced-funding mechanism for CPB in 1976 to insulate programming decisions from political influence. Congress reduced President Ford's request from a five-year advance to a two-year advance and has maintained this advanced-funding regime for 40 years, with excellent results.

At the national programming level, producers such as Ken Burns work with very long lead times to develop the educational programming that the American people value so highly. Between now and 2020, public television will broadcast Ken Burns' specials and series on the history of the Vietnam War, Jackie Robinson, Ernest Hemingway and the history of country music.

It would be impossible to produce such programs, and create the standards-based, curriculum-aligned educational components that accompany them, without the assurance of advance funding. And stations will create local programs and services to tie into these national productions.

At the local level, CPB advance funding is essential to stations' ability to leverage the federal investment to attract six times as many resources from state, local and private contributors to support our education, public safety and civic leadership missions.

Interconnection Funding

For more than 20 years Congress has provided separate funding for public broadcasting's interconnection systems — the backbone of public broadcasting.

Public television's lease on the current interconnection system is coming to an end and Congress' inclusion of funding in the FY 2016 Omnibus appropriation was a critical first step in updating the interconnection infrastructure to ensure continued public television service to all Americans, particularly those in the most rural and remote regions. FY 2017 funding is necessary to continuing the critical work that is now underway.

The public television interconnection system is used by PBS, other national public television distributors, state and regional public television networks, individual stations and individual producers to distribute television programming and related materials to the 171 noncommercial, educational licensees in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

In addition, public television's work supporting national alert and warning communications depends on a well-functioning interconnection system that takes advantage of technological innovation.

The Public Television Interconnection System has needed to be replaced several times to ensure universal and reliable service, and each time the system upgrade has been funded by the federal government. Since 1988, and most recently in FY 2016, Congress has supported a critical, separate multi-year appropriation for this periodic interconnection replacement.

