

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 11, 2025

The Honorable Linda E. McMahon
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary McMahon and Director Vought:

We write to express strong opposition to the reported decision by the Department of Education (“the Department”) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to withhold billions of dollars in federal education funding. These funds, which represent longstanding investments in K–12 and adult education, support a wide range of priorities such as teacher recruitment, after-school programs, English learner instruction, school-based mental health services, academic enrichment, and adult education and family literacy. Withholding funds for these important programs will disrupt essential services and undermine the support structures that students, families, and educators rely on every day.

On July 1, 2025, states across the country reported that the Department and OMB were withholding nearly \$6.9 billion in formula and discretionary education funds, pending a review of whether grant spending aligns with the President’s priorities.¹ Since initiating this review, however, both have not provided grantees with clear public guidance on its scope or criteria, even though these funds were appropriated by Congress, committed to recipients, and in many cases already built into local and state education budgets. As a result, school leaders and administrators across the country have been left in a state of uncertainty, making it difficult to finalize staffing, allocate resources, and prepare effectively for the upcoming school year. The abrupt disruption has forced schools to revise staffing, delay programming decisions, and reconsider student supports with little warning.²

Federal education programs play a crucial role in advancing equity and expanding opportunity, especially for students from low-income and historically underserved communities. These grants support after-school programming, student mental health services, educator development, adult literacy and high school equivalency programs, and English learner instruction—services that 21st Century Community Learning Centers and similar initiatives provide to over ten thousand local programs nationwide. Without access to this support, schools may be forced to scale back programs, reduce staff, or eliminate services essential to student success. With learning gaps widening and student needs growing more complex, limiting access to these resources risks deepening disparities and undermining progress across the education system.³

¹ <https://www.nea.org/about-nea/media-center/press-releases/nea-reacts-trump-administration-withholding-critical-education-funding>, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2025/07/02/schools-education-trump-administration-funding-hold/>

² <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/who-will-bear-the-brunt-of-trumps-hold-on-6-8-billion-in-school-funds/2025/07>

³ <https://apnews.com/article/trump-education-summer-school-english-language-grants-fac670e8f60fab397fbd68dfed866ea1>

We urge a response to the following requests no later than July 21, 2025:

1. Resume full disbursement of all FY 2025 federal K-12 and adult education funds currently under review or delay.
2. Provide clear written guidance to grantees explaining how the review process works, what criteria are being used, and when funding decisions will be made.
3. Publicize what steps the Department and OMB are taking to provide school districts with timely guidance and certainty regarding the release of appropriated federal education funds.
4. Identify any grants that have been terminated as a result of this review process and explain what steps the Department and OMB will take to reverse those decisions where appropriate.

We are deeply concerned about the uncertainty this funding pause has created for schools, educators, and families across the country. Congress has a constitutional responsibility to appropriate federal education funds, and it is essential that those funds be administered transparently and in accordance with federal law. We urge both the Department and OMB to work closely with school districts to provide clarity, minimize disruptions, and ensure that critical educational services remain accessible to the students who need them most.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Ruben Gallego
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



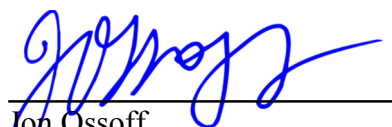
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



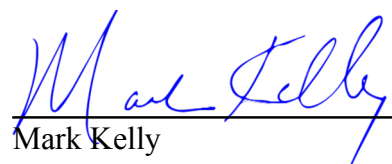
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator