

April 20, 2026

Honorable Susan Collins
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Collins, Chairman Cole, Vice Chairwoman Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your continued leadership in fighting for essential federal education resources in response to the persistent challenges that schools and students, especially those most marginalized and vulnerable, are facing. The bipartisan FY26 Labor-HHS-ED funding package that rejected any substantial cuts to federal education investment is where all discussions should begin when it comes to how best to support students, families, educators, administrators, and our nation's education system as a whole. As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) appropriations process, we, the undersigned organizations working to advance civil rights and educational opportunity, urge your committees to build on that success by adopting the funding levels articulated below to help every student access the resources they need to learn, grow, and thrive.

Young people in this country deserve more than political chaos; they deserve sustained investment, stability, and opportunity. Yet instead of the federal leadership needed to help students succeed, they are facing a troubling pattern of disinvestment and disruption. Over the past 15 months, the administration has taken an unrelenting series of actions to undermine public education, including executive orders to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education (ED), threatening students' sense of safety and belonging in schools, and enacting into law legislation that allows federal money to subsidize tuition at private and religious schools while cutting funding for public schools. Mass firings of ED employees continue to undermine the agency's ability to fulfill its responsibilities to America's students and families, including enforcing students' civil rights, administering grants that support schools and districts, providing guidance on meeting the needs of students with disabilities, English learners, students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, and students experiencing homelessness, and ensuring students are able to receive financial aid to pursue higher education. The termination of hundreds of millions of dollars in ED grants and contracts have disrupted programs that prepared and strengthened our teacher workforce, developed innovative solutions for students, provided critical mental health services, and offered technical assistance to schools, districts, and states. The decimation of the Institute of Education Sciences has left families, students, educators, researchers, and policymakers without foundational information, research, and support to know how students are doing and what practices and policies are effective in supporting learning.

The wholesale dismantling of the Department of Education via Interagency Agreements (IAAs), prohibited by multiple laws, including Congress' most recent appropriations law and the Constitution, serves only to confuse and frustrate state administrators in charge of their systems. Additionally, the abdication of the Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) responsibility to investigate complaints from all families, not just a small subset of them, is harming our nation's future leaders and our communities. The [withholding of](#)

[programmatic funds last year](#) and the delays in [competing money for TRIO this year](#), have caused Senate Republicans to join their colleagues in speaking publicly about the problems the administration's actions have created. With future plans to move even more complex programs out of ED — culminating with Titles I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VII this summer — we anticipate even more breakdowns and delays, all for no clear purpose. The expected movement of special education programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) into the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) also has [opposition](#) from disability education stakeholders and the students and families they serve. Furthermore, the administration continues to allow Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to stage and enforce the law in and around schools, harming students' ability to get an education, many of whom are U.S. citizens. Levels of [chronic absenteeism](#) remain elevated post-pandemic and are worsened by the threat of ICE in and around schools; and disruptions to federal guidance and haphazard distribution and unilateral cancellation of funds have made it harder for schools to address this issue in real time. Congressional leaders have the power to stand up for students and families amid the chaos, assert their Constitutional role, and push back harder than they did in FY26. We implore you to do so.

Continuing this assault on America's students, the president's FY27 budget recommendations propose further cuts to public education and ED's capacity to protect and serve our students, including slashing resources for K-12, college access programs, and OCR. In this critical moment, our nation's students need courageous leaders to safeguard federal investments and protections that promote access to high-quality education for all.

Congress must reject the unlawful destruction of the Department of Education and any reductions to investments in our nation's children and youth proposed by the Trump administration. The nation's young people need and deserve greater, not less, federal support. To that end, as you develop FY27 appropriations legislation, we strongly support the following funding levels for these essential programs, and urge Congress to specify the funding levels in statutory text to ensure federal funds are used for the intended purpose under law:

Resources to ensure critical Department of Education operations:

- Congress should ensure the **Department of Education has adequate dedicated funding and staff capacity** for the agency to fulfill its responsibilities to students, families, and the public, including:
 - **Inserting statutory language to require the following:** the reopening of funded offices that have been closed; fully staffing those offices; tasking all investigatory staff — including those who have been placed on administrative leave while unresolved and uninvestigated complaints continued to grow — with upholding all aspects of civil rights law.
 - **Monitoring and enforcing the critical legal protections** for students accessing their education, including under McKinney-Vento's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (EHCY), Title I and Title III of ESEA, IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and to properly exercise OCR's mission.
 - **Executing and improving all existing data collection activities** — which are key levers to monitor the implementation of critical legal protections for students — so data is collected effectively, reported promptly, and available in a public and accessible manner.
 - The following suggested report language about such data sets can ensure this:
“The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is a critical biennial data collection on key education and civil rights issues in our nation's public schools. This data empowers the Office of Civil Rights to administer and enforce civil rights laws while also informing the public. The 2023-24 CRDC data submission by school districts and schools concluded in April 2025. The U.S. Department of Education publicly announced on their website that

this data would be available to the public by December 2025, yet the data has yet to be released. The Committee directs the Secretary to release the 2023-24 CRDoC data within 30 days of the enactment of this Act and provide the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with a briefing on the schedule of future CRDC data releases.”

- **Preventing the dismantling of the Department of Education via unlawful IAAs**
 - Congress must include unambiguous statutory language that would bar the creation of any IAAs that transfer significant responsibilities related to any ED program, project, or activity to other agencies; reverse the transfers now being implemented; and restore the Department of Education to its full operation.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Programs:

- **ESSA funds should not be block granted.** Congress has responded appropriately to the needs of your constituents by choosing to appropriate funds for key purposes and for underserved students. Pushing aside these legal and important funding decisions in the name of flexibility does not meet the needs of those students or improve educational opportunities and outcomes. The president’s budget would block grant 17 different programs and cut the overall funding level for those programs by over \$4.6 billion. This is unacceptable, and Congress should continue to reject this vision. Congressional oversight is also essential for ensuring funds serve students as programs intend, especially in this environment.
- **In addition to at least a \$3.7 billion increase for Title I, Part A (a figure based on updating the program for inflation since 2011) and as an investment toward tripling funding for the program, we recommend:**
 - **Targeting Title I funds toward the highest-poverty school districts.** We recommend that any new funding be allocated through the Targeted Grant and Education Finance Incentive Grant (EFIG) formulas or another formula that is more targeted toward high-poverty districts, and allocates at least as great a percentage of funds to school districts in the top two quintiles of poverty nationally as the Targeted and EFIG formulas.
 - **At least a \$1 billion increase for evidence-based school improvement activities** required under section 1003 of ESEA. This could be accomplished through the required state set-aside of Title I, Part A funds (if the Title I allocation is significantly increased, as we recommend above) or through a separate infusion of extra funding, on top of the Title I appropriation, for schools that states identify as in need of support under ESEA. Additional funding for school improvement will help ensure there are sufficient resources to develop, implement, and sustain comprehensive, multi-year plans to address the increased needs of districts and schools serving students most impacted by the pandemic, as states use their accountability systems to identify new schools— including those identified for Targeted Supported and Improvement (TSI) based on individual groups of students — for additional support. In particular, these funds can also be used to embed and sustain support services for students most affected by pandemic disruptions beyond the expiration of ESSER funding. We also encourage you to include language to help states improve reporting on the schools receiving 1003(a) funds and how the funds are used, as required by section 1003(i) of ESEA, so there is more transparent information on which students benefit from these resources and the evidence-based strategies schools are using.
 - **\$435 million for Title I, Part C** to support the educational needs of students from

migratory backgrounds. These funds help states and districts meet these students' distinct needs and ensure they receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards as all children. These funds support, for example, identifying and enrolling students from migratory backgrounds, providing instructional and support services, and collaboration with other organizations and programs supporting this population.

- **\$3 billion for Title II, Part A of ESEA** to support local efforts to diversify the teaching workforce, advance teacher leadership, and provide high-quality teacher professional development — including support for high-quality induction and mentorship, training in culturally responsive instruction, supports for English learners and students with disabilities, social and emotional development, restorative justice, and trauma-informed instructional practices.
 - **\$200 million to support Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grant.** Specifically, we support requiring ED to prioritize funds for teacher leadership models and activities that provide experienced and effective teacher leadership opportunities that allow them to have a greater impact on their school community while remaining in the classroom — and be compensated for additional responsibilities. This could include, for example, distributive leadership models, which allow teachers to lead alongside their principal to facilitate positive schoolwide change; teacher-led instructional improvement efforts focused on specific areas of academic content; opportunities to shape schoolwide policies and climate, and lead professional learning communities; participation in master teacher programs, teacher mentorship programs, and job-embedded content coaching; and implementation of advisory systems.
 - **\$200 million for the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED)** grant program, which funds the implementation of research-based practices to support the preparation and professional learning of teachers, principals, and other school leaders. This program is vital for developing high-quality educators, who are crucial for improving literacy and STEM outcomes for our nation's students.
- **\$1 billion for Title III of ESEA**, which provides English learners (ELs) access to the resources they need to learn English and meet the same challenging academic standards as their peers. Increased funding is necessary to support the growing number of ELs and recent immigrant students. ELs account for over 1 in 10 of all K-12 public school students in the U.S.; yet as this population has grown, funding has not kept pace. Title III helps states and districts meet the needs of these students by supporting effective language and academic instruction programs, professional development for EL educators, and community engagement activities that enhance language instruction.
- **\$5.2 billion for Title IV ESEA programs**, including:
 - **\$1.6 billion in Title IV, Part A funding** for the breadth of academic, mental, physical, and social-emotional student supports and services, such as funding for school counselors, social workers, nurses, and nutrition programs, and for closing the digital divide. Additionally, we encourage Congress to exercise oversight to help ensure the funding provided by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is allocated toward student support programs and staff, and evidence-based practices, through possible incentives and supports to assist states in implementing those evidence-based practices in high-need schools.

- **\$1.8 billion in Title IV, Part B funding** to support 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which offer robust after-school and extended learning time programs.
- **\$500 million within Title IV, Part D for the Magnet School Assistance Program.** Research shows magnet schools support school integration and have positive academic and social outcomes for students, yet the Magnet School Assistance Program has been underfunded.
- **\$1 billion for Title IV, Part F** for Full-Service Community Schools, which encourage coordination of academic, social, and health services through partnerships among public elementary and secondary schools, LEAs, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other public or private entities.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Programs:

- **IDEA funds should not be consolidated or block granted.** Technical assistance, funding for personnel preparation grants, and other federal supports for students with disabilities are essential to full implementation of IDEA.
- **\$16.7 billion for IDEA, Part B, Section 611**, which provides special education grant funding to states and requires all participating states to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities ages 3 to 21.
- **\$491 million for IDEA, Part B, Section 619**, which authorizes grants to states for preschool services for students with disabilities ages 3 to 5.
- **\$632 million for IDEA, Part C**, which provides funding and services for infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth to age 2.
- **\$300 million for IDEA, Part D**, which provides competitive grant funding to support a host of national activities to improve education for students with disabilities, such as bolstering the development of state personnel and providing information and support services for families.
- **Prevent the transfer of special education programs** under the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services' (OSERS) jurisdiction to other agencies via the inclusion of new statutory language.

McKinney-Vento Act's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program:

- **\$200 million for EHCY.** Homelessness presents distinct challenges to school attendance and academic success, requiring targeted services and policies to overcome. The EHCY program uniquely provides these supports — including transportation, outreach, enrollment assistance, school supplies, and designated staff who help connect students to community resources. As the only federal program specifically focused on ensuring that children and youth experiencing homelessness can attend and succeed in school, EHCY plays a unique and critical role. Established in 1987 under President Reagan and backed by decades of bipartisan support, the program addresses the educational consequences of homelessness, such as higher rates of chronic absenteeism and lower graduation rates compared to low-income peers with stable housing. Encouragingly, [recent research](#) shows that school districts receiving EHCY funding have seen measurable gains in both attendance and academic achievement. Without this funding, students experiencing homelessness risk losing access to the essential educational opportunities they need to break the cycle of poverty and achieve long-term stability.

Higher Education Act (HEA) Programs:

- **\$1 billion for the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grant Program** to support yearlong,

paid teacher and school leader residency programs and Grow Your Own (GYO) programs, which prepare candidates to serve in high-need rural, suburban, and urban schools. If TQP funding is not increased this year, there will not be sufficient funding to fully support continuation grantees, let alone make new grants. This program is crucial for addressing the teacher shortage.

- **\$300 million in the Augustus Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program** to support comprehensive teacher preparation programs at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), and minority-serving institutions (MSIs).
- **Double TEACH Grants from \$4,000 to \$8,000** so the program more effectively underwrites the cost of comprehensive preparation and lowers inequitable affordability barriers faced by students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. To make the program more effective, the loan conversion penalty should be removed, or reformed, and early educators should be made eligible for benefits.
- **\$55 million for Postsecondary Student Success Grants (PSSG)**, which will support the implementation and expansion of evidence-based practices that improve postsecondary retention and completion.
- **\$60 million for new investments in a Holistic Student Supports program and a new Postsecondary Advancement and Success Technical Assistance Center** to facilitate student access to state and local benefits, and provide resources to institutions implementing student support programs.

Data, Innovation, and Connectivity Programs:

- **At least \$900 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES)**, to ensure equitable access to evidence-based educational opportunities. IES provides and supports crucial research, data collection, and evaluation to help Congress and the education field understand what works to improve student outcomes and how to use taxpayer dollars effectively.
- **At least \$100 million for the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) program and at least \$40 million for the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI)**, so state and district leaders can address current and evolving information needs. States need federal funds to modernize their data systems so that they are oriented toward access, support responsive policymaking, and address the complex challenges education leaders are facing. Modernizing state data systems to meet these challenges also requires strong data governance, privacy, and security; joint guidance for SLDS and WDQI grantees will help them develop effective, integrated data systems and the policies and procedures to safeguard that data. Congress should ensure that federal agencies also offer the technical assistance states need to ensure robust privacy and transparency safeguards are in place.
- **\$469 million for State Assessment Grants** to provide states with the resources necessary to adapt, improve, and conduct student assessment activities, which are a necessary component of understanding how the pandemic has impacted student academic learning.
- **\$58 million for Comprehensive Centers and \$60 million for Regional Educational Laboratories** to support educational improvement for improving student outcomes. They support states, districts, and schools to utilize evidence-based research and focus on building capacity to implement reform.

- **Provide funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program** to conform to the reality that home broadband connectivity is a necessity, not a luxury, for today's students. The Affordable Connectivity Program supported 23 million households across the nation. The expiration of this program has hampered the ability of the nation's students to do homework, communicate with teachers, and fully participate in a modern education system that increasingly relies on digital tools.

Career and Technical Education Programs:

- **\$200 million for Career-Connected High Schools** to support the expansion of, and equitable access to, advanced coursework and pathways that lead to postsecondary credentials of value and ensure greater alignment between states' policies and systems for high school and higher education.

As the administration repeatedly undercuts public education, we urge lawmakers to stand up for students and ensure they have the resources they need to succeed, no matter their background or ZIP code. Every student deserves access to a high-quality education — our democracy, economy, and shared future depend on it.

Sincerely,

All4Ed
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National Center for Learning Disabilities
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