



ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS
INTERNATIONAL



The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Resources,
Education and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Resources,
Education and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Resources, Education and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Resources, Education and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 2025

Dear Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As you develop the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, we – the undersigned organizations below, representing the nation’s public school superintendents and administrators, school business officials and rural educators – write to urge you to protect investments in education and highlight the critical federal formula programs that are the backbone of our nation’s educational system.

Across the country, school district leaders and staff are working to navigate increasing prices, declining student enrollment, dwindling state revenues and the diversion of state education funding towards private and homeschooling expenses. Still, they remain focused on their mission to ensure every student in their schools receives a high-quality education that prepares them to succeed in whatever path they choose, but to do this critical work it is paramount that school districts can rely on stable and robust federal investments.

We appreciate President Trump’s acknowledgement in his FY26 budget that any cuts to Title I and IDEA would be detrimental to millions of students in high-poverty communities across the country and hope Congressional appropriations packages reflect this reality. However, we are deeply concerned that, in an attempt to provide flexible funding for districts, the President is eliminating resources that are critical to delivering services for English-language learners, evidence-based reading instruction, and music, art, and STEM programs.

We look forward to reviewing the Administration’s forthcoming detailed proposal for the FY26 budget and working with Congress to streamline programs where possible and maintain local control in education without compromising the resources districts need to provide all students a high-quality education. In the meantime, we encourage Congress to move forward in their FY26

appropriations process with a focus on protecting key investments in education. Specifically, we call on Congress to prioritize all of these formula programs:

- IDEA Part B: If IDEA remains level-funded, Congress will only be funding special education at 11% of the promised 40% of additional funding associated with educating students with disabilities. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the landmark legislation ensuring every student has access to educational opportunity. We urge you to provide the maximum increase possible in funding for IDEA as part of a fair and proportional allocation for the final FY 2026 LHHS-Education appropriations bill. **Specifically, we ask that you provide no less than \$16.661 billion for IDEA Part B Grants to States, putting IDEA on a glidepath to full funding while holding all other education programs harmless from funding cuts.**
- Title I, Part A of ESEA: Title I, Part A is the backbone of the premier federal K-12 education law. The breadth and depth of Title I make it uniquely positioned for supporting districts in their work to support children—particularly those in poverty—in meeting challenging state academic content and achievement standards. Districts rely on Title I funds for critical supports like teachers, reading programs, and additional direct instructional services for students.
- Title II, Part A of ESEA: Decades of research has found that low-income students and students of color are most likely to have inexperienced teachers. Title II, Part A closes these gaps by ensuring students have greater access to high-quality, effective educators. Title II, Part A provides necessary resources to grow the skills and expertise of current teachers in essential subjects like math, reading and English or provide additional certification for teachers to expand learning opportunities for students. These investments also allow for districts to provide important induction and mentoring programs for new educators that keep them in the classroom.
- Title III of ESEA: Title III is essential for school districts to ensure English learners and immigrant students have access to the resources they need to attain English language proficiency and meet the same challenging academic standards as their English-proficient peers. These supports are vital to make sure all students leave school ready to thrive and succeed in the rapidly changing landscape of the 21st century.
- Title IV, Part A of ESEA: Title IV, Part A is a flexible program that supports investments in safe and healthy students, well-rounded education programs, and the effective use of technology in education. The flexibility of the program allows district leaders to target funding based on the specific needs of their school community. Through Title IV, Part A, districts can address students' direct needs and expand educational opportunities by funding a wide range of programs, including STEM and computer science programs, career and technical education, music and the arts, and International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses, physical education, health and wellness, and behavioral and mental health supports.

- Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)(Title V of ESEA): REAP is a cornerstone program for addressing the unique needs of our nation's rural schools, which serve more than 9 million students. Every year, almost half of all school districts in the country utilize REAP funding to make key investments for their students, including (but not limited to) providing additional staff compensation, investing in education technology and expanding curricular offerings. Investments in REAP ensure that small and low-income rural districts are able to provide equitable educational opportunities to their students.

As you embark on FY26 appropriations, it is important to note that school districts are still waiting on confirmation for FY25 due to the uncertainty created by the year-long continuing resolution. Superintendents and school leaders must be able to rely on timely allocations of funding as they plan budgets and determine how to optimize resources to support students. Predictability matters. We strongly encourage you to finalize FY26 appropriations on time with specific allocations for all programs.

Sustained federal investment in education—particularly through formula programs—is critical in ensuring that every child, in every American community, receives every opportunity to succeed in college, career and real life in the real world. Our members work tirelessly to fulfill America's public education promise, and this bipartisan priority should be reflected in the FY26 appropriations package.

Sincerely,
AASA, The School Superintendents Association
Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents
Association of School Business Officials, International
National Rural Education Association

CC: Members of Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies