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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

July 3rd, 2025

Dear Secretary McMahon and Director Vought:

Your decision to withhold \$6.88 billion in vital funding that Congress appropriated for our nation's public schools – including \$26.1 million for Vermont - is not only horrific public policy, it is blatantly illegal and unconstitutional.

As the Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, I am writing to urge you to reverse this disastrous decision and immediately release this funding as required by law.

School districts throughout the country were expecting to receive this money by July 1st to provide funding to more than 10,000 summer and afterschool programs for 1.4 million students. Your unexpected and cruel decision has sent shockwaves, distress and heartbreak in local communities all over America who now may be forced to cancel or substantially delay summer school activities that had been planned for months.

Further, your illegal actions have denied teachers the funding they rely on for professional development. Important services for English learners have been halted. Thousands of school principals, superintendents, and school board members may be forced to lay off dedicated staff. And school district budgets in every State and community have been negatively impacted. That is beyond unacceptable.

As you know, all of the funding you abruptly withheld was included in the *Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act of 2025* that President Trump signed into law on March 15th, 2025. And yet, on Monday, June 30th, less than 24 hours before states and thousands of school districts across the country expected to access this Federal education funding, the Department of Education (“the Department”) released a three-sentence letter to states informing them of the Trump Administration’s unacceptable decision to withhold \$6.88 billion in funding under five programs.¹ With no advanced warning, the Department informed states that it would be conducting a review and that it would “... not be issuing Grant Award Notifications obligating funds for these programs on July 1 prior to completing that review.” Bizarrely, the Department

¹ Fiscal year 2025 funding under the following programs was not allocated to States on July 1: Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Title II-A), 21st Century Community Learning Centers (Title IV-B), Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV-A), English Language Acquisition (Title III-A), Migrant Education (Title I-C), and the Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants (including Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education State Grants).

also informed Congress that all inquiries must be directed to the Office of Management and Budget, which is unprecedented.

Secretary McMahon: What makes this so disappointing is that during your confirmation hearing you committed that “we will certainly expend those dollars that Congress has passed...”

Well, Congress clearly and unambiguously passed this \$6.88 billion in education funding. The President signed it into law. The Trump Administration has no right to withhold or impound it.

I urge you to immediately reverse your decision to illegally withhold Federal education funding appropriated by Congress and release this funding to the States, school districts, and students as soon as possible. Please respond by Monday, July 7th 2025 to inform Congress about the steps you are taking to ensure this funding is immediately allocated to states.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions