



May 9, 2025

Dear Superintendents,

As we move into spring, I hope you find time to reflect on the impact of your work and the success it brings to your students, communities, and staff. The return of greenery, blossoms, and vibrant life around us is a reminder of the renewal this season brings. These moments in nature are finite over a lifetime; please don't miss the opportunity to take them in.

Deputy Commissioner Morrison and I, along with our teams in the Department, would like to share recent updates and context regarding federal grants and the budget process to help you stay informed. We will continue monitoring federal budget developments over the summer, especially with the public goal of having a Congressional budget approved by July.

As an initial step in the process, President Donald Trump released [his "skinny" budget proposal for the federal fiscal year 2026](#). This proposed budget pertains to funding that would become available to districts beginning July 1, 2026 (Alaska's school budget cycle FY2027). As a reminder, ESEA funds typically have a 27-month period of availability. Generally, funds from this proposed budget would be available from July 1, 2026, through September 30, 2028. However, some ESEA programs have carryover limitations that restrict the use of funds across fiscal years.

It's also important to note that in the first year of a presidential term, administrations often release a "skinny" budget, an initial framework that lacks the detail of a full budget request. These proposals are recommendations to Congress and do not carry the force of law; they require bipartisan legislative approval to take effect.

For federal FY2026, which begins on October 1, 2025 (and influences our FY2027 planning), the president's proposal includes notable reductions and changes to K-12 education funding. It recommends consolidating 18 competitive and formula grant programs into a new, \$2 billion formula grant under a "K-12 Simplified Funding Program." The stated goal is to reduce federal involvement in education and streamline processes.

The proposal also includes:

- Full funding for ESEA Title I.

- A \$4.535 billion reduction in grant programs proposed for consolidation.
- Consolidation of some IDEA programs while maintaining current funding levels.
- Elimination of funding for ESEA Title III-A (English Language Acquisition), currently funded at \$890 million.
- Elimination of Title I-C (Migrant Education Program), currently funded at \$428 million.

For context, Alaska has historically received approximately \$1 million annually for Title III-A and \$20 million for Title I-C.

U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon has issued a statement regarding the release of the federal FY2026 budget, which is available [here](#).

Please remember this budget is a proposal and serves to outline the administration's priorities. Congressional negotiations will ultimately determine final funding levels. DEED will continue to track these developments closely and provide updates throughout the summer.

In the meantime, we wish you a restorative summer season. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. Our mission is to serve you as you serve Alaska's students, parents, staff, and communities.

Cheers,

Deena