

Board of Education

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Sarah Norton, Director of Partnerships
DATE: 1/8/2026
RE: Loss of Full Service Community School Grant Funding

This memo is:

Information only.
 Information with a recommendation, and a request for Board consent.
 Information with a recommendation, and a request for Board approval by vote.

Date by which a Board decision is needed:

Previous memos on this topic can be found:

in previous Board packet(s) dated. _____
 or attached to this memo

Basic information:

On Monday, December 16th, 2025, District 33 received notice of non-continuation for the Full Service Community School (FSCS) Grant, effective January 1st, 2026.

The [FSCS grant program](#) is run by the U.S. Department of Education. In Illinois, an organization called ACT Now was awarded two state-scaling grants, which fund 32 individual schools in IL. District 33 was awarded \$1,000,000 per year for five years for programming at Wegener Elementary School and Leman Middle School. When we received the discontinuation notification, we were in the middle of our second fiscal year. The programs included in the Year 2 budget were informed by a variety of stakeholders in the community, including students, parents, staff, and community partner organizations. The D33 Community School Advisory Board committee implemented an Asset and Needs Assessment last year and received over 1,500 responses. The Committee then reviewed the responses to inform the type of programming to implement in years two through five.

The abrupt halt of funding impacts a wide variety of D33 programming. The District leadership is reviewing the programs to determine which items can be continued with alternative funding and which need to be stopped indefinitely.

ACT Now, the IL state-scaling grant recipient, submitted a Request for Reconsideration to the Department of Education and received notice on December 29, 2025, that their request was denied. ACT Now then filed a lawsuit against the Department of Education regarding the notices of non-continuation on December 29, 2025.

In District 33, we have stopped programming funded by this grant effective January 1, 2026. We are working diligently to submit reimbursement requests to ensure we are paid for programs through December 31st, 2025. We will await the outcome of pending litigation by ACT Now to learn more about the possibility of regaining access to funds in the future.

Background or historical information: Overview of programs provided through this funding: After-school programs: Impact Kids after-school clubs at Wegner, Mental health club called Hope Squad at LMS, Homework Help Club, Summer Impact Kids programming for 5th - 8th graders, LMS Open Gym Nights Mental Health Programs: Becoming a Man youth mentoring program at LMS, Full-Time Community Mental Health Clinician hired by WeGo Together for Kids, Parent Speaker Series on teenage mental health topics, self-esteem building girls retreat at LMS Safety and family engagement: Walking school bus from Timberlake Apartments to Wegner School, Parents in the Classroom Program at Wegner, multicultural night, resource fairs, newcomer family night, and field trips, including community field trips and special incentive trips for LMS high honor roll students. Family health and stability: Funding for the school-based food pantry WeGo Community Market, creating two community caring closets for district families, nutrition programming for kids, Small Bites, D33 family cooking classes at the Kitchen Table, transportation to required school events, medical appointments, and mental health services. Robust Professional Development for Staff - Training and subscriptions for AVID at LMS, Community School, and Mental Health training for staff across the district. Adult Education Classes: Adult English as a Second Language Classes, Adult Spanish Classes, Parent Cafes, Parenting Education, Parent Speakers, Community School Advisory Board, childcare, food, and supplies for parent events. Beautification of our Buildings and School pride- Updates to LMS gyms, benches, tables, playground upgrades, community garden, hydroponic gardens, new gym equipment, a climbing wall, soundproofing to gyms, murals in gym and community art murals with local artists, purchasing club t- shirts, new uniforms, installing a washer/dryer in the school, new signage and marketing materials, and more.
Previous decisions, actions, or parameters that relate to this topic or issue: District 33 fully implemented the Community School Model in 2016. District 33 was a recipient of a Full Service Community School Grant in 2016 - 2020, which helped launch our staffing model and programming. Since the end of the previous grant, we have maintained staffing and programming with a combination of local funds and grant funding. Even with the loss of grant funding, D33 will continue to utilize the Community School Model and work closely with community partner organizations to best serve our students and families, making sure students have what they need to come to school ready to engage in learning.
Recommendation:

No recommendation at this time; this notice is for information only.

Other questions? What else does the Board wish to know?: