



Congressman Don Bacon
Second Congressional District of Nebraska

July 15, 2025

The Honorable Russell T. Vought
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Vought:

I write today to express serious concern regarding the delay in the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) issuance of federal formula grant awards for fiscal year 2025. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) was notified on June 30 that critical programs—including Title II-A (Supporting Effective Instruction), Title III-A (English Language Acquisition State Grants), Title IV-A and IV-B (Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program; 21st Century Community Learning Centers), and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)—remain under review, with no notification of award. These grants are typically released on or around July 1.

These funds are essential resources that flow directly to local school districts and educational service units (ESUs), which have already incorporated them into staffing plans and contractual obligations for the upcoming school year budget. Schools across Nebraska made hiring decisions this spring based on projected allocations and are finalizing budgets for the 2025-2026 academic year, which begins in a matter of weeks. Delays in these awards place them in the impossible position of revisiting hiring and programming decisions with little time to adjust—decisions that are foundational to academic success and student support. Additionally, without the timely release of these funds, several after-school care sites across the state will be unable to open as planned for the start of the school year, leaving working families without critical support.

These grants fund a wide range of essential services across the state:

- Title II-A impacts 246 districts and the corresponding nonpublic school systems, totaling \$11,122,992. Nonpublic Schools in the Omaha area alone utilize over \$400,000 in Title II funding for professional development, including a literacy-focused professional development opportunity, which is now at risk.

- Title III-A provides \$3,740,866 to 179 districts and 7 consortia. Norfolk Public Schools uses \$35,000 of this funding to help cover partial salaries for staff supporting English learners.
- Title IV-A reaches 245 districts with \$6,833,225 in total funding. Scottsbluff Public Schools uses \$78,244 of this Title IV funding for technology, school climate and well-being, and school safety investments.
- Title IV-B (21st Century Community Learning Centers) funding impacts 43 districts and 150 sites, totaling \$7,500,000. Lincoln Public Schools has long relied on \$1 million of these funds to support its summer and after-school enrichment efforts. In addition, after-school care sites like Collective for Youth, Boys and Girls Club, Kids Can, and YMCA locations could all be adversely affected across the state.
- The AEFLA serves approximately 9,353 adult learners with \$2,730,000. Crete Public Schools, as well as all of the community colleges in the state, use these funds to provide family literacy programs, parent education and coaching, and adult literacy efforts.

Altogether, this delay affects nearly \$40 million in federal funding and touches every public school district and the majority of nonpublic schools in Nebraska. Local leaders are doing their best to maintain stability, but prolonged uncertainty is disruptive. School budgets, especially personnel costs, cannot be restructured overnight. For example, if the grant funding is not released, Millard Public Schools in Omaha would face an unexpected burden of nearly \$900,000—costs that would fall to local taxpayers due to the timing and contractual obligations already in place. This instability jeopardizes the continuity of services and, ultimately, student outcomes.

I respectfully urge the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to release the federal funds already appropriated by Congress and expected by local communities. These dollars are already built into contracts, staffing plans, and professional development schedules across our state. Delaying their release imposes significant challenges on our school leaders, educators, and the families they serve.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter facing Nebraska schools and after school care sites. Please feel free to contact my office with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Bacon", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Don Bacon
Member of Congress