

Feb. 3, 2025

Dear Superintendents and BOCES directors,

Please note that moving forward, we will adjust our timelines for these updates to get them to you by 5pm on Mondays and Thursdays (rather than by 3pm).

Today I am sharing the following updates:

- [Senate confirmation of US Secretary of Education Linda McMahon](#)
- [US Department of Education releases FAQ on 2/14 Dear Colleague Letter](#)
- [CCSSO Update on Federal Appropriations](#)
- [New Executive Order: “Designating English as the official language of the United States”](#)
- [Link to sign up for US Dept. Of Ed Newsletters](#)

Senate confirmation of US Secretary of Education Linda McMahon

This afternoon, the [US Senate confirmed Linda McMahon](#) as US Secretary of Education by a vote of 51-45.

US Department of Education releases FAQ on 2/14 Dear Colleague Letter

The US Department of Education released a [new FAQ document on Friday, Feb 28 that addresses some questions](#) related to its Feb. 14 Dear Colleague Letter.

CCSSO Update on Federal Appropriations

We received the following up from the Council of Chief State Schools Officers on Friday, Feb. 28:

Congressional appropriators continue to negotiate on bipartisan funding legislation to keep the federal government open past March 14, 2025, when the current funding agreement expires. Members report that they are close to an agreement on overall funding levels but that significant policy disagreements remain. Even if they are able to reach agreement in the coming days, another short-term funding bill will be necessary to give Congress enough time to negotiate funding levels for specific programs. On Thursday, President Trump endorsed a short-term funding bill that would last until the end of the current fiscal year on Sept. 30, 2025. Negotiations continue, and we will provide additional updates as the process develops. Please note that the federal appropriations process is distinct from the budget resolution and reconciliation processes that the Senate and House of Representatives have advanced in recent days.

If a short term funding agreement is not reached and there is a government shutdown, federal Title and IDEA grant dollars are already appropriated and, if historical precedent is followed, will continue to be available for draw down even in the event of a shutdown. Additionally, budget reconciliation will consider cuts to federal programs but are not expected to significantly impact formula K-12 programs such as Title I and IDEA.

New Executive Order: “Designating English as the official language of the United States”

A [new Executive Order was issued on March 1](#) that “[designates] English as the official language of the United States.” This executive order does not change existing legal obligations of schools and districts to support their multilingual learners and families with limited English proficiency. These obligations come from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), and U.S. Supreme Court precedent.

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