

July 23, 2025

Senator Shelley Moore Capito
Chair, Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Robert Aderholt
Chair, Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member, Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We, the undersigned members of the National Alliance for Family Engagement, write to thank you for your past commitment to programs that support meaningful connections among parents, families, schools, and communities. We also write united in our opposition to the President's fiscal year 2026 budget request, specifically the proposed Department of Education budget, which will severely undermine past progress to ensure parents, families, and communities are involved in their schools and in their children's education.

To meet the needs of students, parents, families, communities, and schools, we ask that you and your colleagues expand or preserve federal commitments to family and community engagement programs. Among the imperiled programs, Statewide Family Engagement Centers, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Full-Service Community Schools, and Parent Training and Information Centers are some of the most powerful tools we have to engage parents, families, and communities in supporting student success.

Meaningful family and community engagement is an essential approach and strategy to support healthy child development, student achievement, and school improvement. When practiced in ways that build shared responsibility and mutual trust, it can lead to positive outcomes for everyone involved, including increased school readiness, lower absenteeism rates, higher academic achievement for students, greater retention and job satisfaction for teachers, and improved parent-teacher relationships.¹

The President's FY26 proposed Department of Education budget would greatly destabilize family, school, and community partnerships by slashing over \$6 Billion through eliminating or

¹ Karen L. Mapp et al., *Everyone Wins: The Evidence for Family-School Partnerships & Implications for Practice* (New York: Scholastic, 2022).

substantially decreasing funds that could support family and community engagement programs, while also forcing them to compete for substantially decreased funds through block grants. It does this in three key ways.

First, the FY26 budget proposal includes many family and community engagement initiatives in its new K-12 Simplified Funding Plan - a block grant to states that also cuts 70 percent of the total dollars (\$4.53 billion) that were flowing to these programs. Most states will not be able to maintain adequate funding, oversight, and prioritization of these essential programs. You can find a full list of programs, and see the scope of the cuts [in this fact sheet](#). Primary among these are:

- Statewide Family Engagement Centers (ESEA IV-E)
- Promise Neighborhoods (ESEA IV-F-2, section 4624)
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers (ESEA IV-B)
- Education for Homeless Children and Youths (MVHAA Title VII-B).

Second, the FY2026 budget proposal also eliminates programs which have a significant role in supporting family and community engagement. These eliminations include the following, which totalled \$1.4 billion in FY24:

- Full-Service Community Schools (ESEA IV-F-2, section 4625)
- English Language Acquisition (ESEA III-A)
- Migrant Education (ESEA I-C)
- Ready to Learn programming (ESEA IV-F-4, section 4643).

Third, the FY2026 budget proposal also shifts several other key programs within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to a new block grant. The block grant will pit these important initiatives against one another and create significant inconsistencies in services state-to-state. IDEA programs that support family and community engagement facing deprioritization by block granting include:

- Parent Information Centers (sections 671-673)
- State Personnel Development (subpart 1)
- Grants for infants and families (IDEA C)
- Preschool Grants (IDEA B-619).

By reducing, eliminating, and otherwise deprioritizing support for family, school, and community engagement, the President's FY2026 budget proposal will be devastating to children and families, as well as their communities and schools.

- **We ask that Congress make clear that the children, families, and communities they represent are worth investment with increased, or at least maintained, funding for these programs.**
- **Moreover, we ask that Congress include each of the programs we mention as a specific line-item appropriation to ensure Congressional intent around each program (e.g. Statewide Family Engagement Centers and IDEA Parent Information Centers).**

Although this letter focuses on the Department of Education budget request, we also hope Congress remembers education is reinforced by investments in various other health and human services that must also be protected, such as Head Start, Medicaid, SNAP benefits, and mental health services.

Supporting families is a non-partisan issue that has historically enjoyed bipartisan support. We sincerely hope you protect these programs and their positive impacts on the country's children, parents, families, and communities. For any questions, please contact Vito Borrello, Executive Director of the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (borrellov@nafscce.org).

Sincerely,

Afterschool Alliance
Coalition for Community Schools
COFI
Families In Schools
Institute for Educational Leadership
Mocha Moms, Inc.
National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
National Center for Families Learning
National Parent Leadership Institute
National Parents Union
ParentChild+
Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)
Parent Teacher Home Visits
POWER-PAC IL
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
SPAN
United Parent Leaders Action Network (UPLAN)

CC: The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair; The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair; The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair; The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member; The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D., Chair; The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member; The Honorable Tim Walberg, Chair; The Honorable Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member