

NAESP Federal Relations Coordinators June 2025 Meeting Summary

Attendees: David Carpenter (AL), Heather Conn (AK), Jeff Drouin (NH), Mark Johnson (NE), Jennie Lamon (NJ), Derek Minakami (HI), Sue Myers (MD), Nick Neiderhouse (OH), Melanie Rosenberger (PA), Roz Thompson (WA), Heather Woodward (CO)

Announcements:

- We hope you had a great school year and want to thank you for your leadership and success not only in your FRC roles but also in your school!
- We are updating the current FRC website page with the FRC's name, school name, email address, and headshot. If you have not already, please send this information to avandee@naesp.org.
- There will not be a July FRC meeting. Instead, we will be hosting an FRC luncheon at the UNITED Conference which will allow us to interact in person. We will send more information out to the FRCs closer to the conference.

Budget Information:

- There have been significant delays in the U.S. Department of Education releasing FY25 state formula grant allocations that states and districts need to set their next school year state budgets.
- The Department has finally released the allocations for Title I, Title IV, and IDEA but has not yet issued the allocations for Title II.
- NAESP along with NASSP, AASA, AFSA, and Learning Forward sent a letter to Secretary McMahon urging her to release the allocation information as soon as possible.
- NAESP will continue to urge the Department to release information about the remaining funds and will continue to engage with Congress on the issue, which is also growing concerned about the delays, especially as schools finalize their SY25-26 budgets.
- The lack of Title II information is concerning because the administration is interested in diverting this pot of funds to other programs or for other purposes.

FY-26 Funding Information

- [Secretary McMahon testified before Congress in her first FY26 appropriations hearing](#), where she reaffirmed her intent to close the Department of Education, calling it the Department's "final mission," and her desire to "Make American Education Great Again."
- The administration is proposing to eliminate 18 K-12 programs, including Title II and Title IV, resulting in a net \$4.5 billion cut to K-12 education.
- The administration also proposed a \$2 billion block grant.
- For FY26 Title I funding should remain level at \$18.4 billion, while IDEA would receive an "increase" by folding in smaller subprograms such as Preschool Grants (\$400 million) and Professional Preparation into the main IDEA funding stream (Part B, grants to states).
- The Department plans to maintain the main Title I grant but would eliminate the Literacy Development, Migrant, and Neglected & Delinquent Student Grants subprograms.
- During a separate appropriations hearing, HHS Secretary Kennedy said that Head Start funding would not be cut. Earlier press reports suggested the program was going to be eliminated and the administration's "skinny budget" made no mention of Head Start.
- The budget plan proceeds as if the Department of Education will continue to exist.

- [Read more about the FY26 “Skinny Budget” here.](#)

Budget Reconciliation Package

- *House Action*
 - The current budget reconciliation package does not directly impact K–12 education, but it includes major cuts to Medicaid and food assistance to low-income families that will affect school communities.
 - The House passed the package by a narrow party-line vote of 215–214.
 - The bill includes over \$500 billion in cuts to Medicaid.
 - NAESP launched an education awareness campaign to highlight that Medicaid is the fourth largest source of federal K–12 funding which reimburses expenses for school-based health services and IDEA-related services.
 - Schools receive approximately \$7 billion annually in Medicaid reimbursements, and a cut as severe as +\$500 billion would strain school and state budgets.
 - Please use [this Action Alert to contact your member of Congress about the concerns of cutting Medicaid](#) and share it with your colleagues.
 - The package also proposes cuts to food assistance programs, which would reduce the food available to low-income families.
 - In addition, House Republicans included a new private school voucher scholarship program in the bill that would give a dollar-for-dollar tax credit to individuals who donate to such programs that are then used to pay for private school vouchers.
- *Senate Action*
 - The Senate now takes up the package where they are free to make any changes they want. Negotiations are expected to be slow. Senate GOP leaders have set an informal deadline of July 4th to complete action on the bill.
 - Under a Senate rule created by former Senator Robert Byrd (WV), no policy-based provisions are allowed to be included in any Senate budget reconciliation bill (only revenue and spending provisions are allowed), You may start to hear bird-related puns as legislators talk about “Byrd baths,” which is the process where provisions are evaluated and stripped out of the bill if deemed to be policy-related.
 - For example, the Senate could include tax credits for voucher scholarships (revenue-related) but cannot create a program at the Department of Education to support private school vouchers (policy-related).
 - Read more about the [FAQs on House Budget Reconciliation Package](#).

Department of Education Nominations

- The Senate education committee approved the nomination of North Dakota State Superintendent [Kirsten Baesler to serve as Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education](#) last week.
- The Senate HELP Committee will hold a confirmation hearing June 5 for former Tennessee Commissioner of Education Penny Schwinn to be Deputy Secretary of Education; the Department’s second in command. The [Senate Health Committee will hold her confirmation hearing on Thursday, June 5](#).
- Additional nominations for Department of Education leadership roles are awaiting final Senate approval. All nominations are expected to be confirmed.

SCOTUS Updates

- In *St. Isidore v. Drummond*, the Supreme Court issued a 4–4 tie on the case involving an Oklahoma religious charter school. The tie leaves the lower court's ruling in place, allowing the religious charter school to proceed, but the decision does not set a federal precedent. A new case about this issue is expected to be brought up in the future.
- 12 states secured a preliminary injunction against the Department of Education's efforts to close the agency and ordered the reinstatement of laid off Department staff.
- 16 states won an injunction requiring the Department of Education to process late COVID relief (ESSER) fund reimbursements.