

February 13, 2026

On February 3, 2026, President Donald Trump signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026, which ended a four-day partial federal government shutdown and extended \$1.2 trillion in funding for roughly half of all federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education, through September 30, 2026 (the end of the federal fiscal year).¹ The partial shutdown was the second time in the last four months the federal government has been shut down, following the late 2025 shutdown that was the longest in U.S. history.

While the new budget agreement provides funding for most agencies and services, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is only funded through a short-term continuing resolution that maintains its current funding levels through February 13. In contrast to the education budget proposals from President Trump and the House Republican caucus, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026 largely maintains current federal education funding levels.²

This briefing provides a high-level overview of how the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026 affects K-12 education and its implications for Connecticut.

Key Takeaways³

- **Federal K-12 education funding for most key programs generally remains flat-funded.** The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026 specifies program-level funding levels, as shown in Table 1.
 - A \$20 million increase was allocated to both Title I, Part A as well as IDEA, Part B.^A
 - Increased funding for these grants may result in small amounts of additional funding for districts across Connecticut, enabling local education agencies (LEAs) to provide greater support to the highest-need students.
 - Unlike previous appropriations which provided \$500 million for the Charter School Program (CSP), this Act funds the CSP at \$440 million but allows up to \$60 million be transferred from a non-recurring expense fund.
 - This optional increase to the CSP may provide greater support for Connecticut charter schools, expanding access to choice programs.

^A The breakdown of spending may not depict the increase in funding outlined in the Key Takeaways section due to rounding.

- **Most K-12 federal education aid is forward-funded.** This means funding becomes available late in the federal fiscal year and is carried into the next federal fiscal year.⁴ Generally, appropriations in this Act will support education activities next school year (2026-27)
 - For these programs, the State of Connecticut has already received funds from the federal government for the current school year (2025-26).
 - Other federal aid programs are funded through advance appropriations. This means their funding was already appropriated in the 2024 federal fiscal year and became available on October 1, 2025.⁵

- **Reduces funding for education data and research programs.** The Act cuts funding to the Institute of Education Sciences — allocating \$790 million, \$3 million less than the previously granted \$793 million — and reduces the appropriation to the Education Innovation and Research Program by \$24 million to \$235 million.
 - Cuts in funding for education data and research can significantly hinder the critical analysis of education programs at both the federal and state levels. Such reductions may also affect evaluations of the overall quality of education Connecticut students receive.

- **Extends and attempts to clarify the limits of the U.S. Department of Education’s ability to transfer funding and responsibilities to other agencies.** Like the previous appropriation bill, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026 seeks to reduce ambiguity by setting statutory limits. These limits aim to prevent future restructuring of the Department of Education by clarifying which funds and responsibilities the Department and presidential administration can transfer to other agencies.
 - During his 2024 presidential campaign, President Trump announced plans to end the Department of Education. As she began her tenure as Secretary of Education in March 2025, Linda McMahon declared the Department was beginning its “final mission” and she aimed to eliminate various Department agencies and programs.⁶
 - These actions may restrict access to guidance and support from agencies such as the Office for Civil Rights and the Office of English Language Acquisition, which could affect the quality of education for students in Connecticut.

Beginning on the following page, Table 1 shows funding for major federal education grants to states, including current levels and those authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026. It also provides grant allocations to Connecticut in FY 2024.

Table 1: K-12 Education Grants to States⁷

Program Name	Program Description	Current Federal Funding Levels	FY 2024 Federal Funding Levels for Connecticut ^B	FY 2026 Federal Funding Level
<u>Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies</u>	Title I, Part A provides grants to LEAs with high percentages of children from low-income families to aid in meeting academic standards	\$18.4 billion	\$155 million	\$18.4 billion
<u>Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant⁸</u>	Perkins V provides aid for career and technical education (CTE) programs to youth and adults	\$1.44 billion	\$12.3 million	\$1.44 billion
<u>Title II, Part B: State Assessment and Related Activities⁹</u>	Provides aid to design or improve teacher and principal instruction	\$380 million	\$5.1 million	\$380 million
<u>Title I, Part C: Migrant Education Program¹⁰</u>	Title I, Part C grants are provided to help ensure all migrant children achieve high academic standards and graduate from high school or complete a GED program that prepares them to be responsible citizens, continue learning, and become gainfully employed	\$376 million	\$0	\$376 million

^B The grant allocations listed here are derived from the latest available budget reporting data.

Program Name	Program Description	Current Federal Funding Levels	FY 2024 Federal Funding Levels for Connecticut ^B	FY 2026 Federal Funding Level
Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants¹¹	Title II, Part A provides grants to state education agencies, and subgrants to LEAs, to increase student achievement and meet academic standards by improving the quality and effectiveness of faculty and staff, increasing the number of faculty and staff who effectively improve students' academic achievement in schools, and providing more access to effective teachers and principals	\$2.2 billion	\$6.6 million	\$2.2 billion
Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition State Grants¹²	Title III, Part A provides grants to improve the education of multilingual learners and help them achieve academically and meet challenging state academic content	\$890 million	\$7.8 million	\$890 million

Program Name	Program Description	Current Federal Funding Levels	FY 2024 Federal Funding Levels for Connecticut ^B	FY 2026 Federal Funding Level
<u>Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Enrichment</u> ¹³	Title IV, Part A grants expand the capacity of LEAs to improve students' academic achievement	\$1.3 billion	\$11.4 million	\$1.3 billion
<u>Title IV, Part B: Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers</u> ¹⁴	This grant is used to support programs that create community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children during non-school hours, especially in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas and low-performing schools	\$1.4 billion	\$11 million	\$1.4 billion
<u>Title VII: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths</u> ¹⁵	McKinney-Vento provides support for the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness	\$129 million	\$1.1 million	\$129 million
<u>IDEA State Grant Programs</u> ¹⁶	IDEA, Part B are formulaic grants provided to states to support the costs of providing education and related services to students with disabilities ages 3-21	\$14.2 billion	\$159.2 million	\$14.2 billion

Program Name	Program Description	Current Federal Funding Levels	FY 2024 Federal Funding Levels for Connecticut ^B	FY 2026 Federal Funding Level
<u>Charter School Program</u> ¹⁷	The CSP provides grants to start, expand, improve, or replicate high-quality charter schools	\$500 million	— ^C	\$440 million

^C The FY 2026 state-level allocation for the Charter School Program is not available.

Endnotes

¹ Scholtes, J., & Tully-McManus, K. (2026, February 3). Congress ends shutdown, approves \$1.2T in funding — and sets up DHS cliff. *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/02/03/congress-ends-shutdown-00flatflat-funded-funded762482>.

² Ibid.

³ Public Law No: 119-75

⁴ Tollestrup, J., & Lynch, M.S. (2019). *Advance Appropriations, Forward Funding, and Advance Funding: Concepts, Practice, and Budget Process Considerations*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/R/PDF/R43482/R43482.8.pdf.

⁵ WestEd, Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting. (2024). *Understanding the IDEA Part B State Grant Funding Cycle and Different Fiscal Years*. San Francisco, CA: Author. Retrieved from https://cifr.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CIFR_Understanding-the-IDEA-Part-B-State-Grant-Funding-Cycle-and-Different-Fiscal-Years_2024-ADA-FINAL.pdf.

⁶ Bender M.C. (2025, March 4). 'Final Mission' for Education Dept. Begins Now, McMahon Says. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/04/us/politics/mcmahon-education-final-mission.html>.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, June 13). Fiscal Year 2024-FY 2026 President's Budget State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-overview/annual-performance-reports/budget/budget-tables/fiscal-year-2024-fy-2026-presidents-budget-state-tables-us-department-of-education>.

⁸ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, December 31). Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/school-improvement-grants/title-i-part-improving-basic-programs-operated-local-educational-agencies>.

⁹ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, June 10). Grants for State Assessments. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/school-improvement-grants/grants-state-assessments>.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Education. (2026, February 5). Migrant Education Program (Title I, Part C) - State Grants. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/formula-grants-special-populations/migrant-education-program-title-i-part-c-state-grants>.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 2). Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Title II, Part A). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/school-improvement-grants/supporting-effective-instruction-state-grants-title-ii-part>.

¹² U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 16). English Language Acquisition State Grants; Title III, Part A. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/formula-grants-special-populations/english-language-acquisition-state-grants-title-iii-part>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 24). Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program (Title IV, Part A). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/school-improvement-grants/student-support-and-academic-enrichment-program-title-iv-part>.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2026, January 26). Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (Title IV, Part B). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/school-improvement-grants/nita-m-lowey-21st-century-community-learning-centers-title-iv-part-b>.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, December 10). Education for Homeless Children and Youths. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/formula-grants-special-populations/education-homeless-children-and-youths>.

¹⁶ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, July 23). Special Education — Grants to States (ALN: 84.027). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/formula-grants/formula-grants-special-populations/special-education-grants-states-aln-84027>.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 25). Charter School Programs. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs>.