

On May 2, 2025, President Donald Trump released his initial budget request for next fiscal year (2026). Commonly referred to as the “skinny budget,” as it does not encompass the full budget request for the year,¹ the president's budget request proposes to decrease funding for the U.S. Department of Education by \$12 billion, or 15%, and includes changes to federal policies and appropriations for K-12 public education that will impact students in every level of education across the country.²

This briefing provides a high-level overview of the president's initial budget request for K-12 education and its potential effects on Connecticut students and schools. Specific district impacts are not available at this time, and there is significant uncertainty as to how the proposed changes would be implemented in a final budget.

How the Federal Budget Process Works^{3,A}

The federal budget planning process commences in the preceding fiscal year as government agencies formulate their budgetary requests and submit them to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

- The OMB then uses these requests to develop a budget proposal for the president.
- The president then submits this budget proposal to Congress.^B
- House and Senate committees then hold hearings on the portion of the budget related to their subject matters.
- Both chambers of Congress, the House of Representatives and the Senate, formulate their respective budget resolutions, which must be negotiated into a singular, cohesive budget that is approved by both houses.
- Lastly, Congress sends its approved budget to the president to sign or veto.

Key Policies in President Trump's Proposed Budget Requests

- **Funding for Title I would be maintained, but 18 grant programs for K-12 education are proposed for consolidation and reduction.** While Title I is not reduced, the proposed budget request would consolidate 18 competitive and formulaic grants into one new \$2 billion K-12 formula grant — **a \$4.5 billion reduction** overall that eliminates some federal staffing and programs focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).⁴
 - In FY 2025, Connecticut received approximately \$156.8 million in total Title I funding, the majority of which was passed through to school districts serving high-needs students.⁵

^A For more information on the federal budget process, visit <https://www.usa.gov/federal-budget-process>.

^B This is the current stage in the federal budget process.

- It is not clear which 18 grants are proposed to be consolidated under the president's proposal. The distribution formula of the proposed new grant, as well as how funds could be used, is also unknown at this time.
- **Special education funding under IDEA would remain at its FY 2025 amount.** The Funding for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) would remain flat for FY 2026. However, seven IDEA programs are proposed to be consolidated into a single Special Education Simplified Funding Program.⁶
 - In FY 2025, Connecticut received \$166.2 million in total aid through the IDEA, Part B. The majority of this funding was distributed to school districts.⁷
 - It is not clear which seven programs are proposed to be consolidated. The consolidation would also require changes to the IDEA.
- **Funding for specific multilingual learner grant programs would be eliminated.** Title III, Part A for English language acquisition would be eliminated, resulting in a **\$890 million decrease** in funding for language instruction for multilingual learner and immigrant students.⁸
 - In FY 2025, Connecticut received approximately \$8.1 million in Title III, Part A funding.⁹
 - Title I, Part C, the Migrant Education Program, which allocates aid to states for highly mobile students who experience disruptions in their education, would be eliminated. This would result in a **\$428 million reduction** in funding for K-12 education.
 - Connecticut did not receive any Title I, Part C funding in FY 2025.
- **Funding for the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) would decrease.** The president's proposed budget request includes \$91 million for the U.S. Department of Education's OCR. This represents a **decrease of about 35 percent, or \$49 million**, compared to its funding for FY 2025.¹⁰
 - The OCR is tasked with investigating education civil rights complaints and enforcing the rights of students and families. The president's proposal would devote fewer resources toward this work.
- **Charter school funding would increase.** To enhance support for charter schools, \$500 million — an **increase of \$60 million compared to FY 2025 funding levels** — would be allocated to grow the number of high-quality local charter schools.¹¹
 - Of the six charter school grant programs, Connecticut schools have received aid through three 5-year grants.¹²
 - Beginning in FY 2020, Achievement First received a 5-year total grant of approximately \$9.4 million through the Replication and Expansion

of High-Quality Charter Schools Grant program to expand its charter school in New Haven.¹³

- The Expanding Opportunities through Quality Charter School Program (CSP) — Grants to State Entities awarded the Northeast Charter School Network approximately \$24.5 million over five years in FY 2022 for Connecticut.¹⁴
- Excellence Community Schools received approximately \$1.5 million over five years in FY 2022 through the CSP Grants to Charter School Developers pathway to open Norwalk Charter School for Excellence.¹⁵
 - This school was approved by the Connecticut State Board of Education and appropriated funding in the state budget for FY 2025, however, it ultimately never opened.¹⁶

Endnotes

¹ The White House. (2025, May 2). *The White House Office of Management and Budget Releases the President's Fiscal Year 2026 Skinny Budget* [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/05/the-white-house-office-of-management-and-budget-releases-the-presidents-fiscal-year-2026-skinny-budget/>.

² Vought, R.T. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations RE: the President's FY 2026 Skinny Budget*. Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

³ USAGOV. (2024, September 20). The federal budget process. Retrieved from <https://www.usa.gov/federal-budget-process>.

⁴ Vought, R.T. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations RE: the President's FY 2026 Skinny Budget*. Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, January 14). Fiscal Year 2023-FY 2025 President's Budget State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education. Available from <https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-overview/annual-performance-reports/budget/budget-tables/fiscal-year-2023-fy-2025-presidents-budget-state-tables-for-the-us-department-of-education>.

⁶ Vought, R.T. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations RE: the President's FY 2026 Skinny Budget*. Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, January 14). Fiscal Year 2023-FY 2025 President's Budget State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education. Available from <https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-overview/annual-performance-reports/budget/budget-tables/fiscal-year-2023-fy-2025-presidents-budget-state-tables-for-the-us-department-of-education>.

⁸ Vought, R.T. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations RE: the President's FY 2026 Skinny Budget*. Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

⁹ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, January 14). Fiscal Year 2023-FY 2025 President's Budget State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education. Available from <https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-overview/annual-performance-reports/budget/budget-tables/fiscal-year-2023-fy-2025-presidents-budget-state-tables-for-the-us-department-of-education>.

¹⁰ Vought, R.T. (2025). *Letter to the Honorable Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations RE: the President's FY 2026 Skinny Budget*. Washington, DC: Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² U.S. Department of Education. (2025, May 16). Charter School Programs. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, May 15). Charter School Program Grants to Charter Management Organizations for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CMOS Grants). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs/charter-schools-program-grants-to-charter-management-organizations-for-the-replication-and-expansion-of-high-quality-charter-schools-cmo-grants>.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, May 15). Expanding Opportunities through Quality Charter School Programs (CSP) Grants to State Entities. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs/expanding-opportunities-through-quality-charter-schools-program-csp-grants-to-state-entities>.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (2025, May 16). Charter School Program (CSP) Grants to Charter School Developers for the Opening of New Charter Schools and for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs/charter-schools-program-csp-grants-to-charter-school-developers-for-the-opening-of-new-charter-schools-and-for-the-replication-and-expansion-of-high-quality-charter-schools>.

¹⁶ Laguarda, I. (2024, December 22). Stamford residents make case to CT officials for 'game-changing' new charter school. *Stamford Advocate*. Retrieved from <https://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/stamford-charter-school-ct-big-picture-learning-19993713.php>.