

Federal Funding Cuts Threaten Coffeyville Students and Families

By Dr. Craig A. Correll, Superintendent, Coffeyville Public Schools

As superintendent of Coffeyville Public Schools, I'm writing to inform our community about a critical situation that directly threatens the quality of education we provide to Coffeyville students. The U.S. Department of Education is currently withholding over \$6.2 billion in federal education funding nationwide, and Kansas stands to lose \$45 million. For Coffeyville's Public Schools, this translates to a potential loss of \$172,000 in essential educational resources plus an additional loss of \$137,000 in 21st Century funds used for Boys & Girls Club who offers both afterschool and summer academic programming for the youth of Coffeyville.

These aren't abstract numbers—they represent real programs that support real students in our community. Let me be clear about what this funding cut means for Coffeyville families.

Teacher Quality and Professional Development at Risk

Our Title II-A funding directly impacts teacher quality and our district's capacity to grow. In a community like Coffeyville, where every dollar counts, these funds are not optional extras—they are essential to building a strong, equitable education system. This funding supports professional development for our secondary teachers and all administrators, teacher recruitment and retention efforts including mentor pay for new teachers, and programs that help paraprofessionals become certified teachers.

We also use these funds for critical initiatives like AVID and Capturing Kids Hearts, which create cohesion across our district-wide improvement goals. Without this funding, our ability to maintain high-quality instruction and support our educators suffers.

English Learners Lose Critical Support

Title III funding directly impacts the learning, engagement, and success of our English Learners. In Coffeyville, where diversity is a strength and equity is a core value, losing these funds makes it harder to serve every student well and uphold the promise of a public education that works for all.

This funding provides targeted support for English Language Learners, maintains essential support staff who provide translations for families, and funds targeted professional development for teachers working with multilingual students. When we lose this funding, our most vulnerable students lose access to the specialized support they need to succeed.

Student Mental Health and Well-Rounded Education Under Threat

Our Title IV funding supports what many consider the heart of education—student mental health, social-emotional learning, college and career readiness, and positive school culture. These cuts put well-rounded education, student mental health, and technology equity at risk. For Coffeyville, this means fewer opportunities for students, less support for staff, and a setback in our commitment to the whole child.

The Broader Impact

What makes this situation particularly frustrating is that these funds were approved by Congress and signed into law earlier this year. Our district, like others across Kansas, developed budgets and programming based on receiving these federal dollars. Now, with the school year approaching, we're left scrambling to determine how to maintain essential services without clear guidance on when—or if—these funds will be released.

This isn't just about Coffeyville. This is about the federal government's commitment to public education and to the communities that depend on stable, predictable funding to serve their students well.

What You Can Do

I encourage our community members to contact our federal representatives and express your concerns about this funding freeze. Our students deserve better than to be caught in the middle of political disputes. They deserve the resources and support that Congress has already approved.

Public education in Coffeyville has always been about more than just academics—it's about providing every child with the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or circumstances. These federal funds help us live up to that promise.

The staff of Coffeyville Public Schools will continue to advocate for our students and work to minimize the impact of these cuts, but we need your voices and your support. Together, we can ensure that Coffeyville students receive the quality education they deserve.

Dr. Craig A. Correll serves as Superintendent of Coffeyville Public Schools and advocates for Kansas public education through the state superintendents association.