



USD 497 News Release

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Superintendent and Board President Statement
Thursday, July 17, 2025

Federal Funding Freeze and Impacts to Lawrence Public Schools

Understand the impact of the federal freeze to USD 497

[View the Impact on USD 497 Federal Funding Freeze](#)

As headlines swirl about the freeze on federal funding for schools by this current administration, it is important to understand the potential impact of these actions for our children right here in our local Lawrence community, and on our work to serve students and to carry out the critical mission of student learning, growth and achievement in the Lawrence Public Schools.

President Kelly Jones shared on Monday, July 14:

"The Trump administration's last-minute decision to withhold nearly \$7 billion in approved education funding—meant for after-school programs, for students learning English, students with disabilities, and teachers' professional development and other supports—caught school districts off guard and shows a blatant disregard for the needs of children and public educators.

Consider that the dollars were allocated by Congress in March and affirmed by the President shortly thereafter: Districts across America budgeted accordingly based on the federal government's legal obligation to distribute that funding. With very little explanation, they pulled the funding at the last minute, and districts everywhere are left scrambling.

This move undermines essential services for students, especially students from working-class families. Coupled with the cuts to food stamps and other Medicaid services, it's unjust and immoral.

Our students and educators deserve better than this kind of instability."

We have prepared a [USD 497 graphic illustration](#) to demonstrate the impact of the Federal freeze on funding, and the following numbers, prepared by Cynde Frick, Executive Director, Finance, are helpful for our understanding:

Title II - \$309,310

Supports recruitment, preparation, training and retention of effective teachers and principals

Title III - \$63,185

Supports language instruction for English language learners

Title IV - \$95,656

Supports programs and activities aimed at enhancing student success and well-being.

Total \$468,151

When we consider the pause, or freeze of these federal funds, we know the importance these resources offer in providing real-time support for our students, specifically in the areas of ensuring quality staff (Title II), supporting English learners (Title III), and supporting student well-being (Title IV).

We know that while federal funds for programming may be on 'pause,' our children do not have time to wait. Student needs continue, and critical supports provided through these funds make a powerful difference in real-time for students. Student growth and learning is our mission, and our USD 497 students, families, and community are counting on us to deliver. Students will arrive in our classrooms bright, beautiful, and ready-to-learn in just a few days, and we take seriously our responsibility to ensure appropriate plans and supports are in place for every child to experience their best year ever: opportunities to learn, grow and achieve this year.

We will continue to monitor this federal funding situation and appreciate the advocacy and outreach of so many, in Lawrence and across the country, who care about students and our collective future. We encourage everyone to stand up, and speak out; reach out to a legislator, and let's all make our voices heard on behalf of our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanice Kerr Swift".

Jeanice Kerr Swift
Superintendent of Schools
Lawrence Public Schools