



## Federal Policy Update

October 1, 2025

As many of you may have heard, the Federal Government is currently shut down. Every year, Congress must pass a new set of appropriations bills to fund the government for the upcoming fiscal year before it starts at 12:01am on October 1st. But so far this year, Congress has failed to do so. No progress has been made in negotiations since the shutdown began last night and there is no clear path forward on when the government will reopen. NSLA has put together some information below on the impacts of the shutdown on federal programs that support summer enrichment.

### What This Means for Education, Afterschool, and Summer Programs

- **Forward-Funded Programs:**
  - Many education programs, including Title I, IDEA, and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) program, are “forward-funded.”
  - This means funding was already appropriated for the 2025–26 school year during the FY24 process. As a result, afterschool and summer learning programs relying on 21CCLC should not immediately lose funding or shut down during the federal lapse.
  - However, if the shutdown persists, delays in reimbursements or administrative functions (e.g., processing new grants, monitoring, technical assistance) could occur.
- **Nutrition Programs:**
  - Child nutrition supports, including school meals and WIC, typically continue when carryover or contingency funds are available. But a prolonged shutdown risks strain on state agencies and local providers, which could disrupt services to children and families. Major disruptions are likely to occur if the shutdown extends past October.
- **Youth-Serving Federal Programs:**
  - Agencies that run or support youth programs—such as the Department of Education, Department of Labor (youth workforce programs), Department of Justice (mentor programs) and AmeriCorps—will see staff furloughs and slowed operations, delaying program guidance and grant administration.
  - Parks & Museums: Closures or reduced services may limit family access to public spaces and impact afterschool programs.

While forward-funded programs like 21st Century Community Learning Centers remain secure in the short term, a prolonged government shutdown creates serious risks for the children and families we serve. Delays in reimbursements, interruptions to nutrition supports, and slowed federal grant administration could undermine afterschool and summer learning programs—particularly those already stretched thin. The Department of Education (ED) has issued [this memo](#) that specifically outlines how the agency should operate during the shutdown. NSLA will continue to provide you with critical updates. If you have not already, please join our [membership](#) and sign up for our summer times newsletter [here](#). *Authored by Ally Talcott, Founding Partner, Allied for Progress, NSLA Policy Consultant*