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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Wins Court Order Restoring Critical Education Funds to States

Coalition of AGs Restores Access to over \$1 Billion in Funds that Help Schools, Teachers, and Vulnerable Students Recover from COVID-19

BALTIMORE, MD (May 6, 2025) -- Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today secured a court order forcing the Trump administration to restore Maryland's access to critical Department of Education (ED) programs that support low-income and unhoused students and provide funding to address the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on K-12 students.

On April 10, Attorney General Brown joined a coalition of 15 other attorneys general and the Governor of Pennsylvania in suing the Trump administration for unilaterally ending access to over \$1 billion in grants from the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) created by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021, which ED had previously determined the states could access as late as March 2026. The preliminary injunction issued today by Judge Edgardo Ramos of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York orders ED to immediately restore states' access to these critical funds as the case continues.

"COVID-19 may be over, but its impact is still being felt in schools across our State and nation as reading and math scores remain lower than pre-pandemic levels and students continue to struggle with behavioral health issues since schools reopened," said Attorney General Brown. "This ruling preserves hundreds of millions of dollars for Maryland schools, allowing our educational leaders to continue giving their students the support they need and deserve. This preliminary injunction is a big victory for Maryland families and ensures vulnerable children will be able to access the services they rely on while we continue to fight for this funding – and their futures – in court."

To combat the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress created the ESF to fund three education-related programs to help support states' school systems and direct more resources to the most vulnerable students. These three programs—Homeless Children and Youth, Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, and Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools—provide essential resources to help schools and students recover from the lasting impacts of the pandemic. In Baltimore City Public Schools, for example, ESF money has

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been used for after-school enrichment activities and tutoring programs as well as improved infrastructure to promote student health and safety.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition asserted that ED's arbitrary and abrupt termination of the states' access to these funds is causing a massive, unexpected budget gap that will hurt students and teachers by cutting off vital education services.

Judge Ramos today granted the states' motion for a preliminary injunction barring ED from blocking states' access to ESF money. The preliminary injunction order issued today prevents ED from enforcing a March 28, 2025 letter from Education Secretary Linda McMahon rescinding states' ability to access their awarded ESF money.

Joining Attorney General Brown in filing this lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Delaware, the District of Columbia Hawai'i, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, and Oregon, along with the Governor of Pennsylvania.

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