

# United States Senate

July 22, 2021

The Honorable Dr. Miguel Cardona  
Secretary  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20202

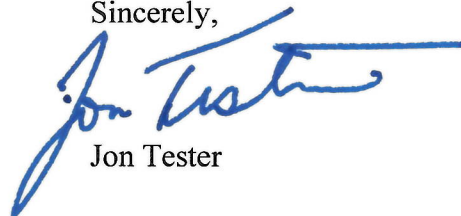
Secretary Cardona:

I write today to request your assistance in helping Montana schools bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic. I appreciate the Department's work with my office on this issue and believe we can come to a positive resolution. Additionally, the Montana Office of Public Instruction reached out to the Department of Education for guidance in meeting the Maintenance of Equity requirement in the American Rescue Plan Act. I ask that you continue to work with all involved as we prioritize securing resources for Montana students.

The American Rescue Plan represented a significant investment to combat the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on students in Montana. Throughout the pandemic, I spoke with parents, students, teachers and community leaders about the challenges they were facing as schools were forced to close for various amounts of time. Through that input, I worked with my colleagues to secure resources in the American Rescue Plan to fully reopen schools and provide our future leaders with a safe space to learn and grow. Previous Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds have been used to upgrade ventilation systems, increase the number of educators in schools to reduce class sizes, provide personal protective equipment, and create summer programs to make up for learning loss.

I ask that you work with all involved to resolve any outstanding issues to make funding available for students to learn as Congress intended in the American Rescue Plan Act. I appreciate your commitment to students and educators and stand ready to work with you to address this issue. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester