

Q&A with Miguel Cardona  
Transcript

**MEYER/VALANT: Could the federal government have been more helpful at that time?**

CARDONA: So, I think, well, I know what would have been helpful is what we were trying to do to the district superintendents. Like, hey, this is what they're doing over here. This is the structure that's happening over there. Kind of like what the CCSSO calls were doing but a little bit more structured and a little bit more codified. I'll make it analogous to the mental health issues that we were experiencing in our country that year; within months of coming into office, we had mental health guidance with, here's a menu of things, and here are some examples of people that are doing these different things, and here is our contact. And oh, by the way, we're going to have four virtual seminars, just pop on with your team. So, for me, it would have been great from March 2020 to March 2021, when I assumed the role of secretary to get, here are the major topics, PPE distribution, working with philanthropy, feeding students, ensuring that they have devices, and engaging families in this process of remote learning. Those type of things that all 50 states were dealing with at different rates. And I got to be honest, I was living my moment, I was having my experience and that was my reality, but further west, it hadn't gotten there yet because remember, New York was the epicenter. So, what I saw was a spread west where the folks closer to the Midwest were dealing with issues that I dealt with in April; they were dealing with it in July or August. So, when the Delta variant came through it was almost like, new to them. When Omicron came through, it was fairly new to them, where for me it was like, this is the third fourth round. We already have some of the basics covered. You know what I'm saying? So that, just, support from the federal level—here's a good way to use CARE's dollars, this is what Wyoming is doing, and this is what Florida is doing, and this is what New York is doing—I think would have been... it was needed, and it would have been helpful.