

Q&A with Miguel Cardona
Transcript

MEYER/VALANT: What was your experience, as a state commissioner, working with the federal government?

CARDONA: The Council of Chief State School Officers, CCSSO, convened calls, I want to say like once a week, and everyone showed up. I showed up to them religiously, there are times where we're on the road or whatever, but it was really important for me to just hear what other states are doing. And I'll be very honest with you, that was the only kind of national communication or guidance—we learned from one another. I did talk to Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos twice from the onset of the pandemic to the time I became Secretary, and it was during my time as Commissioner of Education before I became a candidate for Secretary of Education. So, there were two instances, where—and I would imagine other commissioners got the same—I was told, “you're going to be receiving a phone call during this window of time, please pick it up, it's going to be the Secretary of Education.” And then I would get a call, a blocked line. So, I figured it was her. And it was more of a, how are you? How's it going? How are things going over there? What's important? What's happening in Connecticut to you? And then, just to reiterate the message, we have to reopen our schools. They were brief calls, less than four or five minutes, but there were two of those spread out maybe over four months.