

How the Trump Administration 2.0 Has Hurt Students

The Department of Education is responsible for supporting the success of students and educators across the country. Since President Trump returned to the White House, the Administration has steadily dismantled the Department of Education, as well as undercut the programs that students, teachers, and communities rely on. Despite the Trump Administration's attacks, Committee Democrats are focused on ensuring everyone has access to a quality, public education—from early childhood and K-12 education to college and career education.

Early Childhood Education

- The Trump Administration has rolled back provisions that would have [raised most Head Start teacher pay](#) by \$10,000 per year and required basic benefits for full-time Head Start staff, among other policy improvements.
- The Trump Administration repealed policies intended to make [child care more affordable and accessible](#) for working families and improve the stability of the child care sector.
- The Trump Administration is [proposing to undermine](#) Head Start's education quality standards, strip away requirements designed to ensure children meet critical benchmarks, and make it harder for English Language Learners to participate fully and engage with their peers, among other harmful changes to the regulation.

K-12 Education

- The Education Department has granted [waivers](#) to Arkansas, Vermont, Iowa, Louisiana, and [Indiana](#), allowing them to undermine federal oversight of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), which specifically directs funding to high-poverty schools, English as a Second Language programs, afterschool and summer learning, and more, and requires states to meet certain accountability standards.
- The Republicans' 'Big Ugly Bill' will create the [first nationwide federal elementary and secondary school voucher program](#), force taxpayers to fund private schools, including religious schools, and effectively divert funding and resources away from public schools that serve over 90 percent of students.
- The Trump Administration has conducted [unprecedented immigration enforcement actions](#) around public schools to effectuate President Trump's stated goal of creating the country's largest deportation operation, creating fear and chaos [in schools impacting K-12 educators, students, families, and communities](#).
- The Education Department created a priority for discretionary grant funding for projects that promote President Trump's "[patriotic education](#)."

- The Education Department [illegally delayed nearly \\$7 billion](#) of funding for K-12 schools and adult education from states and local school districts around the country and let millions more go unspent last year. Without these funds being available on their usual timeline and without certainty of if and when they would be released, schools faced difficult and unnecessary decisions on programs for students and teachers. The Trump Administration is on track to let millions more go unspent again this year.

Higher Education

- The Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) stopped key oversight of student loan servicers, leaving [43 million](#) borrowers without sufficient support. [Without proper oversight](#), borrowers may receive inaccurate information, be placed in the wrong repayment plans, or miss out on earned debt relief.
- Republicans' '[Big Ugly Bill](#)' makes it [less affordable for students](#), [raises student loan payments](#) for current borrowers, and exposes students to predatory, for-profit lenders—all to pay for tax breaks for billionaires and corporations. Specifically, it:
 - [Raises costs for students](#) by forcing student loan borrowers into unaffordable repayment plans, eliminates resources to help struggling borrowers, and pushes students into the predatory, private loan market by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans, capping Parent PLUS loans, and limiting Pell Grant access.
 - Makes it harder for institutions of higher education to [enroll students in public service programs](#) such as medicine, dentistry, and social work.

The Department of Education created a rule that [disqualifies public service employers whose](#) work does not align with President Trump's partisan political agenda [from eligibility to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#) program.

- The Department of Education [cut funding](#) for Hispanic Serving Institutions, Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans, Hispanic Serving Institutions–STEM Programs, Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions, Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program, Predominantly Black Institutions formula grants, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions, and Native Hawaiian Career and Technical Education Program.
- Fired a [significant number of staff](#) at the Office of Post-Secondary Education, which serves Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority Serving Institutions.

Civil Rights

- The Department of Education paid Office for Civil Rights investigators up to [\\$38 million](#) not to work and created a [backlog of cases](#) so bad that some students and families pursuing open cases with the Office for Civil Rights have lost contact with the office entirely.
- In 2025, the Office for Civil Rights [reached zero resolution agreements](#) involving sexual harassment, sexual violence, seclusion or restraint, racial harassment, or discriminatory school discipline—despite more than 2,700 pending cases in these areas.

Actions to Close the Department of Education

- Since March 2025, ED has [reportedly](#) sent layoff notices to 1,400 employees. Another 600 employees, faced with the threat of layoffs, retired or accepted voluntary separation incentives. The department also fired about 100 employees who were still serving in their probationary period. All told, ED lost about half of its total workforce.

- On March 16, 2026, the Administration [announced](#) it would transfer ED's Lyndon B. Johnson headquarters building to the Department of Energy.
- As of June 16, 2026, ED has entered [14 interagency agreements](#), transferring 148 programs to six other federal agencies outside ED. Significantly, as part of these agreements, ED is offloading the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, the Office of Civil Rights, and core functions of the Federal Student Aid Office.