What's Happening in Washington

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Agenda

- CEC's P/A Priorities
- Brief Congressional Update
- Administration priorities
- Recent Executive Orders

CEC Policy Agenda

- Protecting and supporting IDEA
- Strengthening the professions that provide the specialized interventions, education, and services to infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents
- Protecting and expanding policies outside IDEA that support students with disabilities and/or gifts and talents
- Advocating for ample funding for IDEA and other relevant programs
- Advocating for policies that promote safe, inclusive, and supportive schools

Appropriations: The Annual Funding Process

Includes funding levels for all federal education programs

Continuing resolution through March 14



*Federal Fiscal Year: October 1-September 30

House Education and Workforce Cmte



Chair
Tim Walberg (R-MI)

Chairman sets the agenda:

- School choice
- Race/gender/religion in schools
- Parents rights
- Reauthorizations- WIOA?
- Shuttering ED?



Ranking Member
Bobby Scott
(D-VA)

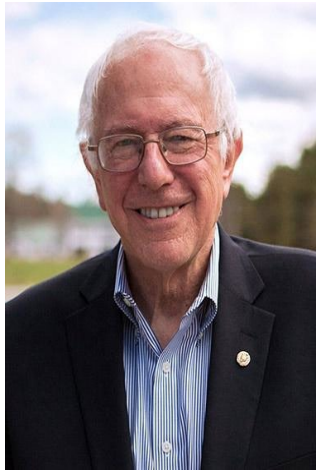
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee



Chair
Bill Cassidy
(R-LA)

Chairman sets the agenda:

- School choice
- Dyslexia
- Literacy
- Holding education-related hearings



Ranking Member
Bernie Sanders
(I-VT)

Trump-Vance Administration Education Priorities

- Goal to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education
- School choice - universal
- Withhold federal funds from schools over curriculum related to race, sexual orientation or gender identity
- *Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal will indicate more specific priorities

Voucher/School Choice Action

- Priority for Trump-Vance Administration
- Priority for Congressional Republicans
  - Proposals take a tax credit approach, i.e. Educational Choice for Children Act
- 3 failed ballot measures: Nebraska, Kentucky, Colorado
  - Not so great in rural areas, not a fair “choice” for students with disabilities
- CEC position statement, advocacy against vouchers

Closing U.S. Department of Education

Rationale: close ED, give control back to states

- Returning Education to Our States Act
  - IDEA goes to Health and Human Services; Adult Education goes to Labor, ESEA goes to Treasury, Title I formula changes
- HR. 899 (Rep. Massie (R-KY)): “The Department of Education shall terminate on December 31, 2026.”
- Congressional action required to close ED, to change any laws (i.e. IDEA)
- Most recent vote: 60 House Republicans “no” to closing ED in 2023
- *Would need all but 2 Republicans in House, 60 votes in Senate

Nomination of Linda McMahon

HELP Committee to consider nomination Thursday

- Top priority- to shutter the U.S. Department of Education
- “I told Linda: ‘Linda, I hope you do a great job and put yourself out of a job.’ I want her to put herself out of a job.” -President Trump, 2.4.25



Executive Orders/Implementation

Executive Orders:

- Legally binding orders issued by the President in relation to executive branch functions
- Must be constitutional
- Can be overturned by and act of Congress

Examples of Current "EOs" that are being enforced, ongoing:

- *Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing*
- *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government*
- *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*

Executive Order Implementation

Office of Management and Budget Memo to Agencies, Jan. 27:

- Pause all federal assistance to conduct a government-wide review
- Report back on each program and its compliance with EOs
- Exceptions: programs that serve individuals (social security, Medicaid, etc)
- Deadline for reporting to OMB: Feb. 10
- Current status: memo withdrawn, freeze blocked by judge, Agency compliance with EOs ongoing

Education-Related Executive Orders

- *Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families*
  - directing the agency to prioritize school choice in discretionary grants examine how to use formula funds for vouchers
- *Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling*
  - prohibit federal funding for schools that include "gender ideology and critical race theory in the classroom"
  - "file actions against teachers and school officials who sexually exploit minors or practice medicine without a license through 'social transition' practices,"
- Anticipated EO on closing the U.S. Department of Education
  - Congressional Democratic leaders: "We will not stand by and allow this to happen to the nation's students, parents, borrowers, educators, and communities."

All executive orders at Whitehouse.gov

You Can Stay Engaged!

- Legislative Action Center
  - Look for prompts in Policy Insider, or send letters now!
- Policy Insider
  - Hits your inbox regularly when there is news to report!
  - Now part of Special Education Today newsletter
- Special Education Legislative Summit…
  - July 13-16, website live, stay tuned for updates for 2025!

Questions? Thoughts?

Please feel free to contact me!

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