



CBCF EXECUTIVE ORDER TRACKER

Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities

Executive Order #14242

POLICY UPDATE

Background

- Established by Congress in 1980, the Department of Education (ED) is responsible for managing education data, overseeing financial aid programs, distributing school funding, and ensuring compliance with civil rights laws in education. On March 20, 2025, President Trump signed an [executive order](#) to initiate the dismantling of the ED and transfer educational authority back to the states and local governments. The order also directs the Secretary of Education to ensure that any program or activity receiving federal funds from the ED no longer includes any initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and gender ideology. The order would also dissolve the ED's Office for Civil Rights, which investigates complaints of discrimination in educational institutions, leaving Black students and other minority students vulnerable to unchecked discrimination.



POLICY UPDATE

Current Landscape

- Since President Trump issued this executive order, the ED has reduced its workforce by [over 50%](#) and proposed [significant budget](#) cuts that will affect preschool age students to adults finishing their education. The budget cuts will also restrict federal funding through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that benefits students with disabilities. Under the Trump Administration, the ED is not renewing a [\\$1 billion investment](#) in mental health funding for schools that had already been allocated as a part of the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#), citing DEI concerns. While all students will feel the effects of this order, Black students will be disproportionately impacted, as they are more likely to receive [IDEA funding](#), and are more likely to have their mental health negatively impacted by [online discrimination](#) than their peers.
- This executive order is currently facing multiple legal challenges. More than twenty states and several advocacy groups, including the [National Education Association](#) and the [NAACP](#), have filed lawsuits against the Trump Administration, asserting that the President does not have the authority to dismantle the ED. The Constitution grants Congress the ability to establish federal agencies, as well as their functions and jurisdictions, fueling the plaintiffs' claim that the executive order is unenforceable. The groups also argue that the order violates the [Administrative Procedure Act](#), which outlines the process for federal agencies to develop regulations. On May 22, 2025, a federal judge issued an [injunction](#) to freeze the Reduction in Force at the ED and ordered the ED to rehire all employees that were fired since the order was issued. These legal matters are ongoing and will likely reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

POLICY UPDATE

Current Landscape

- The order also complicates the Trump Administration's overall education policy agenda. On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an [executive order](#) to establish the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), which aims to facilitate public-private and philanthropic partnerships to promote research and programs at HBCUs, build pipelines for students who are interested in attending HBCUs, and provide professional development opportunities for HBCU students in key professional sectors. [Rep. Alma Adams](#), Chair of the Congressional HBCU Caucus, lauded this executive order but also cautioned that the order's objectives would be further complicated by the Trump Administration's attempts to dismantle the ED. The ED manages Pell Grants, a financial aid option for students from families making less than \$40,000 a year. Nearly [60% of Black college students](#) receive Pell Grants, and the ED layoffs could disrupt the disbursement of funds, making it harder for Black students to attend college. Additionally, despite [claims](#) that HBCUs would not be affected by federal funding cuts, President Trump's budget proposal reduced funding for [Howard University](#), the nation's only federally chartered HBCU.
- Because Congress established the ED, President Trump cannot [eliminate](#) the Department by executive order alone. However, in January 2025, Republican lawmakers proposed two bills that would abolish it. H.R. [369](#) and H.R. [899](#) would reallocate funds and program oversight — including Pell Grants and special education grants — to other federal agencies and states. Both bills have been referred to the House Committee on Education and Workforce, where they are currently stalled. However, as the academic year winds down, educators are unsure how this executive order, the looming legislation, and the pending litigation will impact their classrooms when they return in the fall.