

Press Release

Secretary of Education Statements on President Trump's Education Executive Orders

April 23, 2025

Today, U.S. Department of Education Secretary Linda McMahon released the following statements in response to President Trump's six education-related Executive Orders to strengthen our nation's education system and workforce.

Statement on President Trump's Executive Order to Reform and Strengthen Accreditation

"America's higher education accreditation system is broken. A small number of institutional accreditors – private, nongovernment entities – decide which institutions and their programs qualify to receive over \$100 billion annually in Pell Grants, federal student loans, and other taxpayer-subsidized higher education funding. The existing accreditation monopoly raises costs, contributes to the ever-increasing tuition and fees faced by American families, favors legacy four-year institutions, blocks new accreditors from the market, interferes with states' governing board decisions, and pushes universities in ideological directions when they should be focused on core subjects. The result is more bureaucracy, less innovation, sprawling DEI administrative complexes, and burdensome oversight by unaccountable accreditors rather than state education leaders and duly appointed governing board members.

President Trump's Executive Order will bring long-overdue change by accelerating the recognition of new accreditors and refocusing existing accreditors on helping member institutions improve the student outcomes families care most about. Instead of pushing schools to adopt a divisive DEI ideology, accreditors should be focused on helping schools improve graduation rates and graduates' performance in the labor market. The Department of Education will create a competitive marketplace of higher education accreditors, which will give colleges and universities incentives and support to focus on lowering college costs, fostering innovation, and delivering a high-quality postsecondary education."

Statement on President Trump's Executive Order to End Harmful Foreign Influence at American Universities

"Colleges and universities have a legal duty to report foreign gifts and contracts and, in President Trump's first term, the Department of Education held them to it. Unfortunately, in the last four years, the Biden Administration undermined the structures the President built to do this critical work, allowing nations like China and Qatar to funnel billions of dollars to U.S. universities with little to no oversight. This financial infiltration enabled foreign governments to steal taxpayer-funded intellectual property and reshape how our elite campuses teach about Israel and the Middle East.

President Trump's Executive Order will safeguard American interests on campus and protect students. The Department of Education will 'follow the money,' put a stop to malign foreign infiltration, secure the research enterprise, and restore American campuses to marketplaces of ideas rather than hosts for foreign propaganda."

Statement on President Trump's Executive Order to Reinstate Commonsense School Discipline Policies

“A student’s success in adulthood starts with how they perform in a classroom, and we should teach our kids to discern right and wrong from a young age. Yet, under the Biden-Harris Administration, schools were forced to consider equity and inclusion when imposing discipline. Their policies placed racial equity quotas over student safety – encouraging schools to turn a blind eye to poor or violent behavior in the name of inclusion. Today, President Trump is taking historic and commonsense action to boost school safety standards. Disciplinary decisions should be based solely on students’ behavior and actions.”

Statement on President Trump’s Initiative to Promote Excellence and Innovation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

“The White House initiative highlighted today reinforces President Trump’s commitment to supporting and elevating America’s HBCUs. The Department will work with the Initiative and HBCUs to expand partnerships and share best practices for institutions to become hubs of opportunity and economic engines for local industries and employers. I am eager to elevate and support America’s HBCUs, including in my role on the President’s Board of Advisors for the White House Initiative on HBCUs.”

Statement on President Trump’s Executive Order to Advance Artificial Intelligence Education for American Youth

“Education should prepare students for success in life, which means that American classrooms must better align their activities to meet the demands of accelerating innovation and a rapidly changing workforce. As Artificial Intelligence (AI) reshapes every industrial sector, it is vitally important that the next generation of students is prepared to leverage this technology in all aspects of their professional lives. The Trump Administration will lead the way in training our educators to foster early and responsible AI education in our classrooms to keep up American leadership in the global economy.”

Statement on President Trump’s Executive Order to Prepare Americans for High-Paying, Skilled Trade Jobs of the Future

“Today’s Executive Order is a significant step in ensuring every American can live their American Dream. Not every student needs to attend a four-year university to enter a family-sustaining career. The Trump Administration will support communities across the country that are offering career-aligned programs like apprenticeships and dual enrollment to best meet the needs of their workforce. Our goal is to build on their success and align resources across the country to equip the next generation of American workers.”