

Press Release

U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon Celebrates President Trump's Historic First Year

January 20, 2026

Today, U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon released the following statement to celebrate an historic first year of education reforms under the Trump Administration:

“In one year, the Trump Administration has ended business as usual in education and refocused the system on students, not special interests,” **said U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon.** “We’ve empowered families with more school choice options, encouraged states to maximize their flexibility under the law to innovate in K-12, and began returning education to the states and local communities. On college campuses, we’ve worked with institutions to prioritize free inquiry and student safety—not ideological agendas—and to confront rising tuition costs. We are aggressively implementing President Trump’s Working Families Tax Cuts Act, which will expand Pell grant eligibility to affordable, workforce-aligned, postsecondary options and simplify a badly broken student loan repayment system. As we enter year two: buckle up, because our foot is on the gas.”

Watch the Department's one year video [here](#).

Check out the Department of Education's first year of wins and photo highlights:

Returning Education to the States

ED Took Concrete Steps to Return Education to the States and Empower Parents in Their Child's Education By:

- [Partnering](#) with several agencies to break up the federal education bureaucracy and refocus programs and activities to better serve students, including innovative [workforce development programs](#), [K-12 programs](#), and [postsecondary programs](#);
- [Touring](#) a variety of public, private, charter, magnet, and micro schools in nearly 30 states to empower families and hear from students, teachers, and leaders on best practices in their own communities;
- [Awarding](#) \$500 million to the Charter Schools Programs, the largest investment in the program ever;
- [Championing](#) the largest federal expansion of education freedom in history; and

- [Approving](#) the first-in-the-nation ‘Returning Education to the States’ Waiver to Iowa – empowering states and local leaders to have more control over their federal dollars.

ED Eliminated Spending on Divisive Ideologies and Invested in Meaningful Learning By:

- [Realigning](#) the federal government’s investment of taxpayer dollars in education to evidence-based literacy, school choice, and meaningful learning;
- [Awarding](#) over \$208 million directly to states and school districts for increasing the number of credentialed psychologists in schools;
- [Awarding](#) over \$167 million to states and school districts to improve literacy nationwide;
- [Funding](#) over \$50 million for colleges to build new short-term academic programs and an additional \$50 million for the development of responsible AI curricula; and
- [Eliminating](#) over \$2 billion in divisive and unnecessary spending.

Rightsizing Higher Education

ED Reoriented Civil Rights Enforcement to Prioritize Merit and Accountability in Higher Education:

- Striking historic deals with seven institutions of higher education: [Columbia University](#), [the University of Pennsylvania](#), [Cornell University](#), [the University of Virginia](#), [Brown University](#), [Northwestern University](#), and [Wagner College](#). These deals have enforced federal civil rights laws according to their true purpose. As a result, schools have rooted out DEI, restored merit by ending unconstitutional race preferences, acknowledged sex as a biological reality in sports and the protection of intimate facilities, and obligated schools to consistently apply disciplinary policies; and
- [Announcing](#) an upgraded, state-of-the-art foreign funding reporting portal to end the secrecy surrounding foreign dollars and influence on American campuses.

ED Halted the Biden Administration’s Attempt to Pass Debt to Every Taxpayer and Rooted Out Waste, Fraud, and Abuse By:

- [Putting](#) an end to the Biden Administration’s illegal student loan bailout agenda and reaching a proposed agreement with the State of Missouri to end the illegal SAVE Plan;

- [Preventing](#) more than \$1 billion in Federal Student Aid fraud this year; and
- [Introducing](#) identity verification to ensure every student receiving federal aid is a real person, not a fraudster.

ED Improved the FAFSA® Form & Delivered Reforms to Improve Market Competition in Higher Education for American Students and Families By:

- [Announcing](#) the earliest FAFSA program launch in history following years of mismanagement under the previous Administration’s leadership;
- [Launching](#) a new earnings indicator in the FAFSA to support students and families in making informed college decisions;
- [Streamlining](#) the accreditor recognition process to reduce barriers to entry for new accreditors and allowing universities to switch to innovation-friendly accrediting agencies; and
- [Holding](#) historic negotiated rulemakings on President Trump’s Working Families Tax Cuts Act, to implement a simplified loan repayment [program](#) and launch a new Workforce Pell [program](#) that will deliver affordable, workforce-aligned, postsecondary options for American families.

ED Realigned Civil Rights Enforcement with the Letter of the Law and Strengthened Protections for Parental Rights By:

- [Enforcing](#) the 2020 Title IX rule and reversing the Biden Administration’s damaging 2024 re-write;
- [Launching](#) scores of Title IX investigations, both into institutions of higher education and K-12 schools, amid allegations that they allow men to compete in women’s sports and invade women-only intimate spaces;
- [Partnering](#) with the Department of Justice to create a Title IX Special Investigations Team consisting of expert attorneys and investigators to ensure consistent investigations and expeditious enforcement for Title IX violations;
- [Investigating](#) universities for failing to protect Jewish students from antisemitic harassment—to ensure that all students have access to equal learning opportunities on safe campuses;
- [Scrutinizing](#) K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions that use race in admission and scholarship decisions, restoring the expectation that all schools will end race discrimination in favor of merit-based decision-making; and

- [Launching](#) several investigations into state departments of education and school districts that improperly concealed student records from parents to advance a dangerous transgender agenda.

[Learn more](#) about the Department's top education priorities and progress achieved in the first year of the Trump-Vance Administration.