



# Advocacy in Action

Advancing Policy on Behalf of Principals

Jan. 30, 2025

The Trump administration has hit the ground running, as you will read below. Advocacy in Action is a great resource to help keep NAESP members informed about all of the K-12 developments. We'll continue to highlight what school leaders need to know about executive and congressional actions and how it relates to your work.



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## White House Issues Funding Orders in Support of Education Priorities

The Trump administration issued two executive orders this week that impacted K-12 education. The [first directive](#) seeks to increase funding for school choice programs and to expand access to them. The executive order directs the Department of Education to provide guidance to states about how they can **use formula funds to support K-12 scholarship programs**. It also will prioritize discretionary grant programs that promote school choice.

The order also directs the Department of Defense and the Department of Interior to develop plans that would allow the students they serve via Department of Defense Education Activity schools and Bureau of Indian Affairs to use school choice. The directive also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide

guidance on **how childcare block grants can be used to pay for services provided by private and religious entities.**

The [second Executive Order](#) directs the Secretary of Education to create a plan to eliminate “**Federal funding or support for illegal and discriminatory treatment and indoctrination in K-12 schools**, including based on gender ideology and discriminatory equity ideology.”

It also requires an analysis of all federal funding that in any way supports “the instruction, advancement, or promotion of gender ideology or discriminatory equity ideology” in a K-12 curriculum, instruction or program; K-12 teacher education, licensure, or training; and, a process to prevent or rescind federal funds from a state, district, or school.

This order also re-establishes the “**President’s Advisory 1776 Commission**” that was created during the first Trump administration to promote patriotic education in advance of the nation’s 250th anniversary.

Separately, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) called for a pause on all federal grant funding pending an OMB review of each grant program’s activities. A federal judge temporarily delayed action until Feb. 3, while at the same time OMB issued a second clarifying memo that scaled back the scope of the programs that would be affected. **K-12 formula grant programs were unaffected** as their forward funding was already sent to states.

OMB did subsequently note that Social Security, Medicare, and funds sent directly to individuals such as Pell Grants would not be paused. A third, follow-up memorandum rescinded the order to freeze funding, but the White House press secretary said the pause was still in effect notwithstanding the most recent OMB memo. The widespread confusion caused the judge to keep the temporary injunction in place and to schedule a hearing to clarify the situation.

### **New Leadership and Staff for the Department of Education**

Education Secretary-nominee **Linda McMahon’s** confirmation hearing is expected to be held in the near future by the Senate HELP Committee. **Penny Schwinn**, the

former Tennessee Commissioner of Education, has been nominated as Deputy Secretary of Education. [Read more about Schwinn](#). In addition, the Trump administration announced [a series of other staff appointments](#) to the Department of Education.

## A New ICE Age in Federal Immigration Law Enforcement

Since 2011, federal guidance has restricted immigration enforcement in “sensitive” and “protected” locations, including schools.

The Department of Homeland security rescinded that policy when President Trump took office. Consequently, school leaders, educators, parents, and students have a host of questions about how to proceed if, or when, federal agents visit a school.

In a [new blog post](#) from NAESP’s The Principal Advocate series, school law experts offer **guidance for school leaders who encounter federal immigration agents at their schools**.



## The Roundup

- New scores from the **Nation’s Report Card** on 4th and 8th grade reading and math tests showed encouraging results for the highest performing students but were offset by concerning declines among the lowest performing students. [See the full results](#) and results broken down by state.
- [Public support grows](#) for **cellphone bans** in schools.
- Former Deputy Secretary of Education Cindy Marten is the [governor’s choice](#) to lead Delaware’s schools.
- Speaker Mike Johnson [has invited](#) President Donald Trump to deliver his **State of the Union address on March 4**.
- “U.S. Department of Education Takes Action to Eliminate DEI,” notes a [press release](#).
- The Oklahoma [state board of education approved](#) a requirement for **parents to show proof of citizenship** when enrolling a child in school.



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