

A REAL TIME PREVIEW OF EDUCATION POLICY UNDER PRESIDENT TRUMP

Donald Trump has appointed Williamson M. Evers, a Research Fellow at the conservative Hoover Institute, Gerard Robinson, a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and Jim Manning, a former education official under President George W. Bush, to be on his presidential transition team for education. Like Trump, Robinson is a strong supporter of school choice and places emphasis on the importance of incorporating entrepreneurship in K-12 education. [Trump's official transition website](#) education policy page states the following: “*To Make America Great Again for approximately 70 million school-age students, 20 million post-secondary students, and 150 million working adults, the Trump Administration will advance policies to support learning-and-earning opportunities at the state and local levels – where the heart and soul of American education takes place. We will accomplish this goal through high-quality early childhood, magnet, STEAM or theme-based programs; expansion of choice through charters, vouchers, and teacher-driven learning models; and relief from U.S. Department of Education regulations that inhibit innovation. A Trump Administration also will make post-secondary options more affordable and accessible through technology enriched delivery models.*”

What will President Trump’s Department of Education Look Like?

Role of Department of Education: President-elect Trump stated many times during the campaign that he would abolish the U.S. Department of Education - a decades-old conservative talking point. Now, however, Trump’s team is saying it is more plausible that a Trump Administration will more likely "downsize" the department to an entity that just allocates funding.

Office of Civil Rights: Trump staffers have stated there will be efforts to streamline the role of the Department's Office for Civil Rights, which oversees Title IX enforcement and provides oversight in campus sexual assault investigations.

Pre-K/Early Childhood Education Policy in a Trump Administration

Child Care Costs: During his campaign for the White House, the President-elect announced a series of child-care policies, including six weeks of paid maternity leave and tax-credits for child-care costs. Specifically, Trump plans to make all childcare costs tax-deductible for kids up to 13 years old, up to four children per household. In addition, Trump will push to have deductions be limited to a state’s average childcare cost and to families earning less than \$500,000 a year.

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Universal Pre-K: Despite the President-elect's commitment to affordable early care, there has not yet been a discussion on quality child care standards or universal Pre-K.

K-12 Education: A Priority for President-elect Trump

School Choice: Upon his election, President-elect Trump has committed to sending to Congress during his first 100 days in office "*The School Choice and Education Opportunity Act.*" The centerpiece of this legislation will be providing school choice to every one of the 11 million school-aged children living in poverty. It is expected that the legislation will include:

- A \$20 million block grant to the states to achieve this goal. Trump will ask states to collectively contribute another \$110 billion of their own education budgets toward school choice. The state investment, along with the \$20 billion in federal dollars, will provide \$12,000 in school choice funds to every K-12 student who today lives in poverty. This will be paid for by reprioritizing existing federal dollars. Distribution of this grant will favor states that have private school choice, magnet schools and charter laws, encouraging them to participate;
- A directive to end Common Core Standards and bring education supervision to local communities; and
- A provision to expand career and technical education (CTE).

ESSA Implementation: In reference to implementation of *the Every Student Succeeds Act*, Trump's advisors have confirmed that states will have a great deal of flexibility in the ESSA accountability plans that they submit to the Trump administration starting early next year—significantly more than they enjoyed under Obama-era waivers from the No Child Left Behind Act, which ESSA replaced.

Teachers: President-elect Trump will continue President Obama's commitment to "merit pay" for teachers, a concept that ties teachers' salaries to student test scores.

The Role of Community Colleges in a Trump Administration

Career and Technical Education: As part of his campaign to ensure all Americans have economic opportunities, President-elect Trump will ensure that the opportunity to attend a two or four-year college, or to pursue a trade or a skill set through career and technical education, will be easier to access, pay for, and finish for workers and students. President-elect Trump has stated that he plans to continue the significant federal investments in colleges and universities,

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however there will be tracking of how well graduates do in the labor market, among other indicators.

“The School Choice and Education Opportunity Act” will include a proposal to expand the availability of career and technical education programs and make college more affordable.

Trump’s Federal Higher Education Policy

College Costs and Accountability: President-elect Trump will work with Congress on reforms to ensure colleges and universities are making a good faith effort to reduce the cost of college and student debt in exchange for federal financial incentives.

College and University Endowments: President-elect Trump will pursue the examination of large and profitable college and university endowments and he will question how institutions are using endowment funds to benefit needy students.

Student Loans: The President-elect wants to get the government out of the student loan business and restore lending to private banks.

As details of President-elect Trump’s proposal emerge, the team at Holland & Knight will provide you the information you need to adjust your federal advocacy priorities. It will be crucial for educators and educational institutions to be prepared to defend important federal funding streams, comment on critical policy proposals and ensure that your voice is heard.