



**Statement by Linda McMahon
Secretary, U.S. Department of Education
on
The President’s Fiscal Year 2027 Budget
before
Committee on Education and Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
May 14, 2026**

Chairman Walberg, Ranking Member Scott, distinguished members of this Committee, thank you very much for having me today.

I want to thank my team at the Department of Education and those across the federal government for their months of hard work and diligence to produce the President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget request.

In November 2024, the American people elected President Trump with a clear mandate: to sunset a 46-year, \$3 trillion failed federal education bureaucracy in Washington, DC, and return authority to where it belongs, with parents, teachers, and local leaders. Amid record-low test scores across every subject and grade and record-high numbers of students buried in crippling student debt, Americans urgently want results—schools that prepare students for success, pathways that lead to real opportunity, and policies that encourage innovation and excellence.

Today, I can confidently attest that we are delivering on the vision of educational renewal that, for decades, many promised but no one delivered. With your partnership, the FY 2027 Budget will propel these advancements even further to forge the futures our children deserve.

In the time since I last came before this committee, I’ve traveled to over 30 states visiting private, public, charter, magnet, tribal, and parochial schools, and engaged with hundreds, if not thousands, of students, teachers, parents, and superintendents. Seeing first-hand the successes and challenges our education systems face has reinforced my conviction that empowering local leaders and targeting federal dollars toward evidence-based programs are the force multipliers driving our educational renaissance.

To that end, my Department has carefully scrutinized every dollar of taxpayer investment to ensure that it supports clear pathways to success for our students and families. Within months of entering office, we cut billions in bloated, unproductive, and, in some cases, downright absurd program funding, and redirected those resources to revitalize literacy, invigorate workforce development, and support our most vulnerable students. We conducted an honest assessment of our operational efficacy, shrank our bloated bureaucracy, and to date, have secured ten partnerships with federal agencies far better equipped to manage programs than the Department of Education. Under the Trump Administration, bureaucracy no longer comes before the people it is supposed to serve.

At the state level, we've stopped burdening local leaders with excessive paperwork and one-size-fits-all mandates. We are now empowering them to design solutions that best support their students, including by granting them more discretion over their federal education dollars by leveraging existing flexibilities in federal law. For example, we awarded Iowa the first-ever Returning Education to the States Waiver, which combines four funding streams into one and frees millions of dollars in compliance costs. This allows Iowa to devote more resources to proven interventions—like those that led to their recent double-digit reading gains. This is what real empowerment looks like: unleashing flexibility for our local education leaders to scale the reforms that have delivered results for students and families. And we continue to work closely with other states to help them realize their potential for innovation.

We have also made unprecedented progress to expand affordable, high quality education options and restore parents to their rightful role as the primary decision-makers in their child's education. No family should be locked into an education system that limits the opportunities open to students based on ZIP code, income, or administrative barriers. Thanks to President Trump and Republicans in Congress, the Education Freedom Tax Credit—the largest national expansion of education freedom in history—gives parents access to critical resources like scholarships, tutoring, and specialized services for students with disabilities, whether their child attends public or private school. And in FY 2025 alone, we devoted half a billion dollars to Charter School Programs, and thanks to the partnership of those here today, I look forward to matching that investment in the next two fiscal years.

Across every level of education, the Trump Administration is restoring safety, fairness, and equal opportunity for our students and returning civil rights enforcement to the letter and purpose of the law. After our nation watched violent riots erupt on college campuses, men invade women's sports, and harassment against Jewish students while universities turned a blind eye, we secured seven historic agreements with universities to recommit to merit, fairness, and civil-rights protections for more than 120,000 students across their campuses. In K-12 and higher education alike, we are ensuring no student is discriminated against on the basis of their skin color, disability, or sex, and that every learner is protected by clear, consistent, and equal standards under the law.

Under President Trump’s leadership, we have also finally restored fiscal integrity, accountability, and transparency to the broken federal student aid system for the 43 million Americans holding an astounding \$1.7 trillion in federal student loan debt. Our simplified Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form finally delivers on the promise to cut completion time from days to minutes; and we launched the FAFSA on the earliest timeline in program history, leading to a record 11 million submissions to date. We introduced a new earnings indicator so students and families can see projected outcomes upfront—no longer forcing them to make life-changing financial decisions blindly or take on significant debt without clear, reliable information. And thanks to our strengthened security measures, we have prevented over \$1 billion in attempted federal student aid fraud.

We are hard at work implementing the historic provisions of the *Working Families Tax Cuts Act*, which many of you in this room helped pass. The new law simplifies federal student loan repayment rules; it launches a brand-new Workforce Pell program that will make workforce-aligned, short-term educational programs available to Americans; and it puts downward pressure on tuition to make education more affordable for students nationwide.

Distinguished members of this Committee, these historic reforms serve as a powerful demonstration of our responsible stewardship of the trust the American people have placed in us.

And today, we’re putting forward a request for \$75.7 billion in new discretionary budget authority— with every allocation scrutinized and intentionally structured to accelerate these reforms for the American people.

Today’s budget request maintains *full funding* for the Title I-A Grants to Local Education Agencies program, devoting over \$18.4 billion to serve children from low-income families.

It includes \$33 billion for the Pell Grant program, supporting low-income students who have not yet earned a degree. This represents an increase of \$10.5 billion over the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriation in order to fully fund the current maximum award of \$7,395 and eliminate the shortfall in Fiscal Year 2027. The Trump Administration is committed to maintaining access to Pell without cuts to the maximum award and looks forward to working with Congress to put the program on stable financial footing for this year and into the future.

It provides \$2 billion in new Make Education Great Again (MEGA) grants, which would include a historic investment to improve numeracy and literacy giving educators and students the resources they need to remediate our nation’s decades-long academic proficiency crisis.

And for our students with disabilities and their families, the Trump Administration requests \$15.4 billion for the IDEA Grants to States Program and \$590 million for IDEA Grants for Infants and Families Program, which is a combined increase of *over a half a billion dollars* above the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriation.

Despite relentless attacks and a slew of misinformation campaigns about our efforts to return education to the states, we have always made clear that shifting authority back to the states would *not* come at the expense of essential federal support and programs, *the vast majority of which predate the Department itself*. Today's budget request is unequivocal proof that **when the Trump Administration makes promises, we keep them**.

Our students are more than young learners—they are the future of our country and our world. Every aspect of our life – our economy, our national security, the preservation of our freedom – depends on the investments we make in them.

With your partnership, we are well-positioned to unleash momentous opportunity for every child to realize their God-given potential. Thank you for your commitment and partnership, and I look forward to taking your questions.

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