



February 16, 2025

# All Eyes on the Department of Education

## Please Don't Tell Me To Calm Down

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With so many devastating things happening at the Federal government level, it can be really hard to find anyone, any news outlets, who are focused on the cuts and the impacts specific to the Department of Education. I have been experiencing a sort of information immobility as I have been learning as much as I can about what is happening but also not sure how to process it all. I decided to put some of the biggest pieces together in a newsletter for you in the event that maybe it is helpful to others to have the information and the resources. Maybe it will shift your feelings of powerlessness to empowered, activate your hopelessness into fight, or at the very least be there for you when you are ready. Sending you love.

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TEACHING IS  
INTELLECTUAL

New Yorker

## What's Next for IDEA?

Linda McMahon, in her confirmation hearing for the Secretary of Education, said that funding for IDEA was critical but that oversight, provision, and implementation of the law may "rest better" in Robert F. Kennedy Jr's Department of Health and Human Services. Amongst the so many other things Linda McMahon got wrong in her confirmation hearing, she is wrong about this. IDEA is an education civil rights law and it belongs in the Department of Education where funding and researching the education of America's children resides.

Before the Dept. of Ed was established, nearly [2 million students with disabilities](#) were excluded from receiving an education. Today, around 15% of the public school population receives services and supports under IDEA. That must be protected.

It's imperfect. IDEA needs to be funded by Congress. IDEA needs to have strings attached to ensure that there is accountability for schools to provide a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. "No strings attached" block grants means no incentives for inclusion, for appropriate educational opportunities, for upholding students' and families' rights under IDEA. We need the strings. The strings are critical.

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# Institute of Education Sciences

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) was established in 2002 within the Department of Education through The Education Sciences Reform Act. It has six major purposes: 1) provide data that describe how well the United States is educating its students, 2) conduct surveys and sponsor research projects to understand where education needs improvement and how these improvements might be made 3) fund development and rigorous testing of new approaches for improving education outcomes for all students, 4) conduct large-scale evaluations of federal education programs and policies, 5) provide resources to increase use of data and research in education decision making, and 6) support advancement of statistics and research through specialized training and development of methods and measures.

This week the "Department of Government Efficiency" cut approximately \$900 million worth of funded projects, grinding ongoing research to a halt.

This research is critical to the work of public education both in K-12 and in higher education, career preparation, and it is worth asking what authority DOGE has to stop work on Congressionally appropriated and funded work. However, this is where we are. While we do expect that the websites that house the IES-funded practice guides and the National Center for Education Statistics data to come down soon, they are still up now and you can download those guides and any other What Works Clearinghouse Resources ASAP while you still can.

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# Section 504 Under Attack

Texas v Becerra, a court case brought in Texas by a group of 17 states, asks the courts to get rid of Section 504 and its regulations. Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund has all the resources you need to join in fighting back. If you live in one of the 17 states involved in the suit, it is imperative that you speak up! Go watch Crip Camp and channel your inner Judy Heumann because now is the time she, and Nancy, and Kitty, and Denise and James and so many others prepared us for.

DREDF



[IES Practice Guides](#)- Search on the left by topic, population, evidence tier. Download these because they won't be available for long!

[DataLumos](#) - If you are looking for data that is already stripped from a website, check DataLumos. The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) have available this archive tool for crowdsourcing government data. DataLumos accepts deposits of public data resources from the community and recommendations of public data resources that ICPSR itself might add to DataLumos.



We're looking forward to hearing from you!

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