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Exploring the Education Policy Landscape: What School-Based Audiologists and SLPs Need to Know

ASHA Advocacy

May 6, 2025

Professional Development

1.0 PDH will be available for attending the live event only.

This is not available for ASHA CEUs and cannot be tracked in the CE Registry. Participants must track and use PDHs for certification maintenance.

A Certificate of Attendance will be provided toward the end of the webinar to those who attend the full live presentation.

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- **Federal and Political Affairs:**
congressional lobbyists
- **Health Care and Education Policy:**
regulatory policy experts and advocates
- **State Affairs:**
State association liaisons and advocates
- **Advocacy Communications:**
communication specialists



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- None



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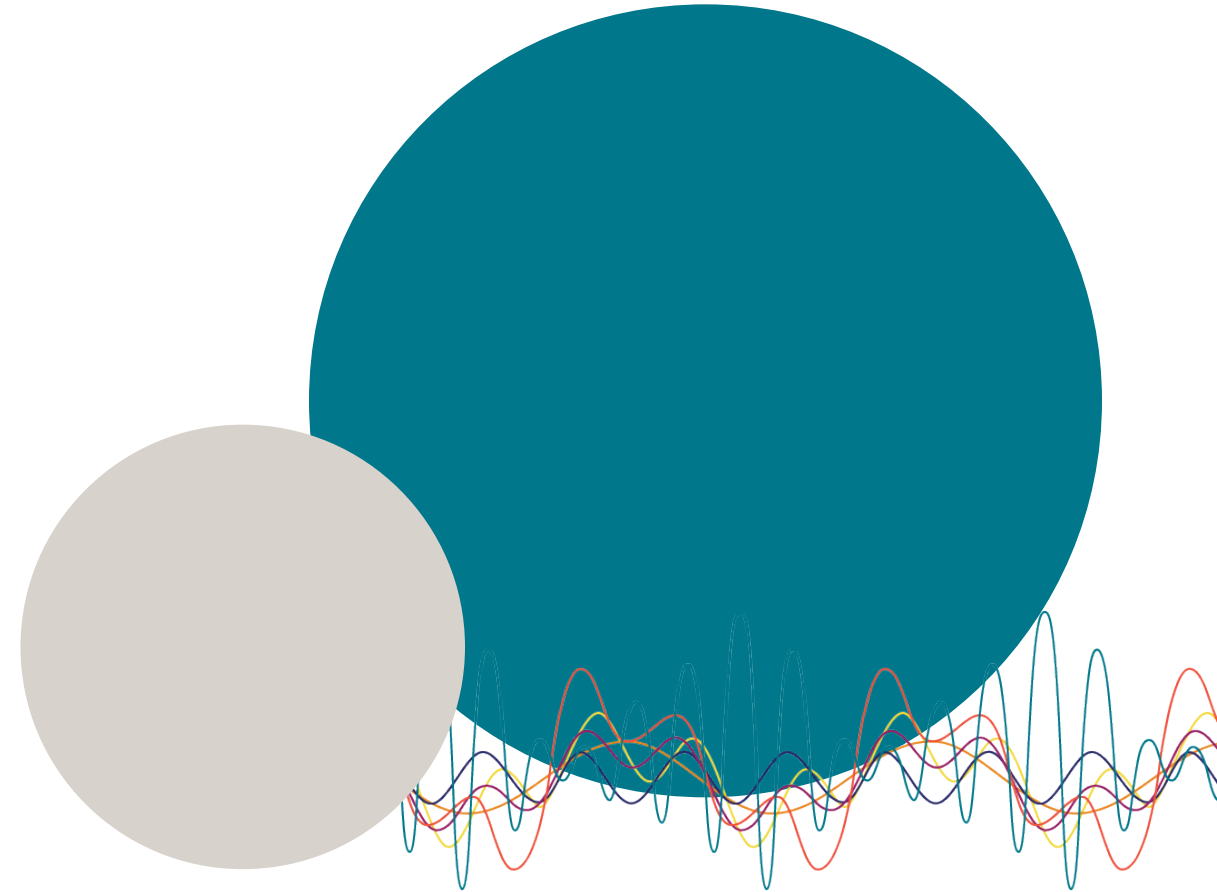
- None



Please note this information is for educational purposes only and should not be construed or relied on as legal advice or opinion. Please defer to guidance from your school administrator and/or guidance from your state education agency (SEA).

Today's Topics

1. Executive Orders/Administrative Actions
2. Civil Rights
3. Structure of the Department of Education
4. Contracts
5. Discretionary Grants
6. Formula Funding
7. ASHA Advocacy



Part I: Executive Orders/Administrative Actions

Executive Orders Impacting Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

A number of executive orders signed by the new Administration have the potential to significantly impact you and your work in health and education. ASHA is closely monitoring and tracking issues most relevant to the professions and will provide updates on current and new executive orders.

Although it will take some time to understand the full impact of current and future executive orders, we remain firmly committed to advancing ASHA's advocacy priorities. Review the [2025 Public Policy Agenda](#) to see ASHA's advocacy priorities on behalf of audiologists and SLPs, many of which support advocacy on issues directly impacted by the executive orders. You can also [take action now](#) to help influence the outcome of timely issues like protecting access to care under Medicaid, preserving the primary role of the U.S. Department of Education, and stopping Medicare payment cuts.

Executive order summaries are listed in the six categories below. Executive orders are subject to judicial review, and Congress can impose limitations through legislation, funding restrictions, or regulatory oversight. [Learn more about executive orders.](#)



Anti-Discrimination

[Learn more](#)



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

[Learn more](#)



Education

[Learn more](#)



Federal Government

[Learn more](#)



Health Care

[Learn more](#)



Other

[Learn more](#)

We are closely monitoring the Administration's executive orders and providing analysis and updates on key actions that could impact audiologists at:

- [Executive Orders Impacting Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology](#)
- [Advocacy News & Resources](#)

Education Centered Executive Orders

- [Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities – The White House](#)
- [Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families – The White House](#)
- [Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling – The White House](#)
- [Restoring Public Service Loan Forgiveness – The White House](#)
- [Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports – The White House](#)
- April 2025 EOs – Accreditation, HBCUs, School Discipline, and Apprenticeships



Federal Policy Tensions Exist

For instance:

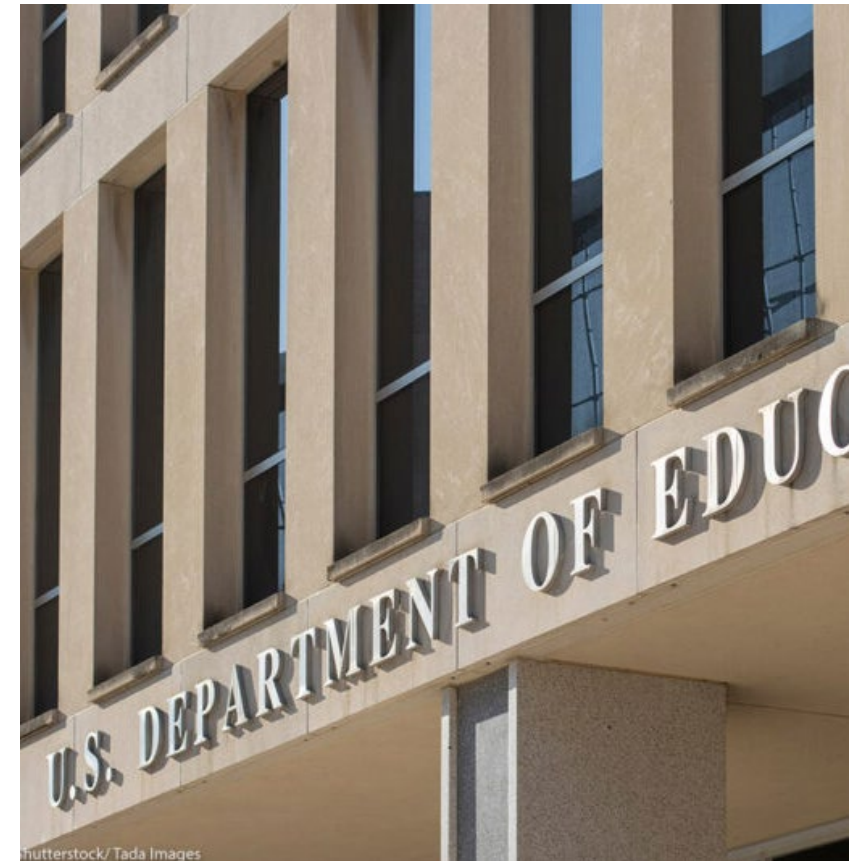
- Principled local control and best professional judgement as the drivers for decision making with students vs. federal micro-management of our professions?
- The pros and cons along the spectrum of maximal federal micro-management to maximal individual decision making.
- In IDEA, federally it's governed by a local process (e.g., IEP team) informed by principles established through a mix of federal statutory requirements, regulations, caselaw, and a limited amount of guidance. Plus, additional state and local requirements where applicable.
- Federal guidance is never exhaustive and will probably never be.
- ED, DOJ, HHS, will probably never micro-manage every potential fact pattern as it relates to Title VI, Title IX, IDEA, Title I of ESEA, etc.



Executive Order: Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities

- “The Secretary of Education shall, to the maximum extent appropriate and permitted by law, take all necessary steps to facilitate the closure of the Department of Education and return authority over education to the States and local communities while ensuring the effective and uninterrupted delivery of services, programs, and benefits on which Americans rely.”
- “Consistent with the Department of Education’s authorities, the Secretary of Education shall ensure that the allocation of any Federal Department of Education funds is subject to rigorous compliance with Federal law and Administration policy, including the requirement that any program or activity receiving Federal assistance terminate illegal discrimination obscured under the label “diversity, equity, and inclusion” or similar terms and programs promoting gender ideology.”

[Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities – The White House](#)



Department of Education's Framing



Executive Order: Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families

Promotes educational choice for parents and students by directing:

- The U.S. Department of Education (ED) to seek opportunities to use federal funds to expand K-12 educational choice initiatives;
- The U.S. Department of Labor and ED to recommend how discretionary grant programs can increase education freedom;
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to issue guidance on using block grants to support educational alternatives for low-income families; and
- The U.S. Department of Defense and the Department of the Interior to find mechanisms for military-connected and Bureau of Indian Education families to use federal funds for educational options.

[Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families – The White House](#)



Executive Order: Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling

Consistent with applicable law and within 90 days, “the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall provide an Ending Indoctrination Strategy to the President.”

This order generally aligns with the goals of the Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government Executive Order.

This order states, “‘Discriminatory equity ideology’ means an ideology that treats individuals as members of preferred or disfavored groups, rather than as individuals, and minimizes agency, merit, and capability in favor of immoral generalizations...”

Additionally, within 120 days it establishes a 1776 Commission in the Department of Education to support “patriotic education,” among other concepts.

Executive Order: Restoring Public Service Loan Forgiveness

- Seeks to place new requirements on the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to limit benefits only to public service organizations that “...engage in activities that have a substantial illegal purpose...”
- Some examples provided include public service organizations that support violations of immigrations laws; “the chemical and surgical castration or mutilation of children or the trafficking of children to so-called transgender sanctuary States for purposes of emancipation from their lawful parents”; “illegal discrimination”; and disorderly conduct such as obstruction of highways.

[Restoring Public Service Loan Forgiveness – The White House](#)



Executive Order: Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports

- This executive order, consistent with applicable law, requires the Executive Branch to “take all appropriate action to affirmatively protect all-female athletic opportunities and all-female locker rooms and thereby provide the equal opportunity guaranteed by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972.”
- This includes the review of enforcement actions such as rescinding funding. Within 60 days, this order calls for a convening of various groups to ensure appropriate enforcement as it pertains to external stakeholders including by not limited to representatives of major athletic organizations and governing bodies, State Attorneys General, and the International Olympic Committee.
- The U.S. Department of Education currently has primary enforcement responsibility of Title IX. Additional federal agencies such as Justice, Homeland Security, State are specifically called out to support elements of this order.
- Sex is defined consistent with Executive Order 14168 “Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government.”
- ““Sex” shall refer to an individual’s immutable biological classification as either male or female. “Sex” is not a synonym for and does not include the concept of “gender identity.” “Female” means a person belonging, at conception, to the sex that produces the large reproductive cell.” and “Male” means a person belonging, at conception, to the sex that produces the small reproductive cell.”

April 2025 Executive Orders

[Reforming Accreditation to Strengthen
Higher Education – The White House](#)

[White House Initiative to Promote
Excellence and Innovation at
Historically Black Colleges and
Universities – The White House](#)

[Reinstating Common Sense School
Discipline Policies – The White House](#)

[Preparing Americans for High-Paying
Skilled Trade Jobs of the Future – The
White House](#)

Part II: Civil Rights

Examples of federal laws the Office for Civil Rights helps to enforce include:

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

- “Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.”



Recent Title VI Enforcement Interpretations

- [Ending Illegal DEI and DEIA Discrimination and Preferences](#) (Department of Justice, February 5, 2025)
- [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in Light of Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard \(PDF\)](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter, February 14, 2025)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About Racial Preferences and Stereotypes Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act \(FAQ\)](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Frequently Asked Questions About Racial Preferences and Stereotypes Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, February 28, 2025)



Examples of Enforcement Actions

- [DOJ, HHS, ED, and GSA Announce Initial Cancellation of Grants and Contracts to Columbia University Worth \\$400 Million](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, March 7, 2025)
- [U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Sends Letters to 60 Universities Under Investigation for Antisemitic Discrimination and Harassment](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, March 10, 2025).
- Letters warn of potential enforcement actions if institutions do not fulfill their obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to protect Jewish students on campus.



Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

- “Prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.”



Examples of Title IX Enforcement Actions

- [U.S. Department of Education Announces Improvements to the FAFSA® Form](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, February 4, 2025)
 - “Consistent with Executive Order 14168, the Department is modifying the current question about “gender” on the 2025-26 form to collect data about applicants’ sex.”
- [U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Concludes that the Maine Department of Education Is Violating Title IX](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, March 19, 2025)

Part III: Structure of the U.S. Department of Education

- Shifting certain programs and responsibilities to other federal agencies
- Winding down programs
- Develop a plan to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education





The ABCs of Education



Authority to Parents:

Parents are the primary decision makers in their children's education.



Back to Basics:

Taxpayer-funded education should refocus on math, reading, science, and history.



Career Readiness:

Postsecondary education should be a path to well-paying careers aligned with workforce needs.

Federal Reduction in Force Notice

[U.S. Department of Education Initiates Reduction in Force | U.S. Department of Education](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, March 11, 2025)

[State Chief Letter.pdf](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter, March 14, 2025)

[Higher Education Stakeholder Letter](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Dear Colleague Letter, March 14, 2025)

Claims actions will not impact core Department functions (e.g., Title I, IDEA, Pell Grants, Student Loans).

Federal Student Aid

- [U.S. Department of Education Announces More Than 8 Million FAFSA® Forms Complete and Additional Form Improvements](#) (U.S. Department of Education, Press Release, March 14, 2025)
- The Administration claims that, “more than 8 million 2025–26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) forms have been successfully submitted and processed, nearly a 50% increase on the number of applications submitted at this time last year.”



Choosing a Different Path

- Some Presidential Administrations (e.g., Reagan) have proposed reorganizations along the lines of what the current Administration has discussed and is implementing.
- What is different this time is this Administration appears to be using their current authority to the maximum extent practicable to restructure the Department in a ways that have not been seriously considered in several decades.
- Given the historic scope and pending legal challenges, all of the implications for our members cannot be determined at this time.



Part IV: Contracts

- Institute of Education Sciences (IES): “...IES contracts worth nearly \$900 million were canceled...”
- Regional Educational Laboratories and Equity Assistance Centers: \$350 Million Contracts and grants terminated.
- Higher Education & Contract Enforcement: “Kenneth Marcus, who led the Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights during Trump’s first term, said the administration appears to be using its wide latitude over federal contracts to pressure Columbia, rather than limiting itself to the “cumbersome, bureaucratic, and relatively weak” Title VI process.”



Part V: Discretionary Grants

- Discretionary Grants vs. Formula Grants
- [U.S. Department of Education Cuts Over \\$600 Million in Divisive Teacher Training Grants | U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Cancels Divisive and Wasteful Grants under the Comprehensive Centers Program | U.S. Department of Education](#): \$226 million cut.



Part VI: Formula Grants to States

- What are formula grants?
- Examples include:
 - Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; and
 - IDEA Part B Grants to States
- How are formula grants different from contracts and discretionary grants?



IDEA Part B Grants to States

These funds are allocated to state educational agencies (SEAs), which distribute them to local educational agencies (LEAs).

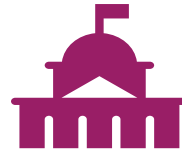
States receive funds based on a formula that considers factors such as:

- A base amount set in Federal Fiscal Year 1999;
- The state's total school enrollment;
- Number of children living in poverty.



Part VII: Advocacy

Congressional Action & Engagement



Member Engagement Opportunities



Take Actions on ASHA's Advocacy webpage



News Item & Updates

Congressional Action



Congressional Action

- Senate Education Chair has pledged to introduce legislation to eliminate ED (other have already introduced bills).
- House Education Committee is focusing on hearings relating to school choice and higher education.
- Legislation related to gender, DEI, and religious issues (e.g.: the Parent's Bill of Rights) is likely to advance.

Federal Education Spending

- Reconciliation Process for FY25
- President's proposed budget for FY26

Federal Spending and Budget for FY25 & FY26

- Current FY25 spending provides additional flexibility for ED in the current budget
- Congress is considering “reconciliation” legislation that provides fast-track authority for spending cuts for FY25
 - Focused on higher education spending and loan repayment
 - Tax credits for donations to “scholarship granting organizations”
 - Medicaid cuts
- President’s proposed budget for FY26 includes a 15% cut to ED

Federal FY25 Spending

- Reconciliation process may be used to enact cuts made by DOGE.
- Final spending provides additional flexibility for ED.

Federal FY26 Spending

- IDEA – Level funded. Consolidated into a block grant to states.
- K-12 funding – 65% cut. Consolidates Title I and other funding streams into a new block grant to states.

ASHA Advocacy Take Action

- Preserving the Role of the U.S. Department of Education
- Protecting Medicaid (including school-based Medicaid)
- College Affordability
- Full Funding of IDEA



Preserve the Primary Role of the U.S. Department of Education in Ensuring Access to Services and Supports Necessary for Student Achievement and Success!

7690 actions taken

2310 needed to reach next goal

President Trump has said he wants to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and bills have been introduced in Congress that would eliminate ED and shift some of its programs to other federal agencies.

These proposals would transfer responsibility for many of ED's programs to other agencies, such as moving administration of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) to the Department of Health & Human Services, or federal student lending to the Department of the Treasury. Other programs would be eliminated entirely.

It's imperative for ED to remain a cabinet-level agency to ensure that programs providing all students access to the services and supports that educational audiologists and school-based speech-language pathologists provide are overseen and implemented by those with the experience and expertise to ensure their success.

Use this form to contact your U.S. Senators and Representative to tell them about the important role that ED plays in supporting school-based SLPs and educational audiologists and urge them to preserve the role of the Department in ensuring student success. We encourage you to personalize the message to let them know directly how this would impact you and your community, their constituents.

Thank you for being an ASHA Advocate!

Take Action!

First Name *

First Name

Last Name *

Last Name

Address *

Street Address, City, and Sta

Email *

Email

Email Subscription Opt-Out

Select...

Cell Phone Number

+1

Thank you for joining our campaign. By providing your mobile phone number you consent to receive recurring text messages from our organization. Message & Data Rates May Apply. Text HELP for Info. Text STOP to opt out. No purchase necessary.

ASHA Member ID

Send

ASHA Policy Updates

What's Next for the U.S. Department of Education

Potential Impact on School-Based Audiologists and SLPs

March 25, 2025

On March 20, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order (EO) titled “[Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities](#).” This EO directs the Secretary of Education “to the maximum extent appropriate and permitted by law, take all necessary steps to facilitate the closure of the [U.S.] Department of Education.”

Fully abolishing the Department of Education (ED) requires Congressional approval—which currently lacks sufficient support. However, the Administration can take actions in the short- and long-term that could impact audiologists, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), and the students you serve.

So far, the Administration has signaled conflicting messages, making it challenging to predict what this EO really means for the future of ED and the programs it oversees. For example, the Administration has shared no concrete details on managing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act’s (IDEA’s) Part B Grants to States that provide most of the federal special education funding to school districts; distributing Pell grants for higher education; and managing the student loan program for colleges.

ASHA opposes actions to cut ED’s staff, cancel grants and contracts, and other changes that may hurt student achievement and access to the essential services ASHA’s school-based members provide.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Many of the Administration's proposed changes require Congressional approval or are experiencing judicial review.

ASHA Advocacy is engaging with Congress and providing members opportunities to engage Congress and share their [stories](#).

ASHA will continue to advocate for all necessary resources to support our school-based members and the students and families they serve.

Please note this information is for educational purposes only and should not be construed or relied on as legal advice or opinion. Please defer to guidance from your school administrator and/or guidance from your state education agency (SEA).

Questions?

Thank You!