



CER Summary:

Clear Guidance Essential as Federal Education Offices Realign

The November 18th announcement by the White House moves several major education programs out of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and into other agencies, including Labor, HHS, State, and Interior [through new interagency agreements](#).

This change is significant—but it also creates an urgent need for clarity. States and communities will need guidance about what flexibility they now have, how funding works, and how to avoid compliance pitfalls.

This restructuring shifts authority away from Washington, but the goal must be to move power all the way to parents and leaders closest to students. ED retains limited oversight, but day-to-day administration will shift. Protections for disadvantaged, migrant, homeless, rural, and English-learner students remain fully intact.

We have dozens of proven innovators – **Yass Prize** leaders and alumni – who show what’s possible when autonomy meets excellence. Now is the moment for states to remove their own barriers and unlock real educational freedom.

A new culture of permissionless improvement is here.

The transfer comes as no surprise; the Trump Administration made clear from the beginning that it intended to streamline – or sideline – a Department that has grown into a compliance bureaucracy rather than a driver of educational excellence.

“If programs begin moving to agencies with very different missions and far less appetite for micromanagement, traditional education interests – from unions to school boards to the thousands of organizations dependent on federal bureaucracy – will protest. But this shift could finally force the system to focus on results instead of paperwork.” Jeanne Allen, Founder & CEO of the Center for Education Reform, shared earlier today.

While political attitudes on this shift are mixed, [a recent poll](#) found a majority support for eliminating the Department of Education when they understood that K-12 funding and core functions remained intact, albeit through different agencies.



Shifting the Paradigm – In Context:

- The restructuring decentralizes authority and empowers parents by relocating programs to nimbler agencies, **reducing federal micromanagement and giving families greater influence over education decisions at the state and local levels.** This strengthens a system where educators, families and states can pursue new models, expand student-centered options and drive opportunity.
- Moving postsecondary oversight to the Department of Labor centers workforce readiness and personalized support, **reinforcing a growing trend toward flexible pathways outside traditional models and prioritizing transformational success for students.**
- The restructuring builds on earlier federal efforts to move authority closer to communities – through Ed-Flex, Title I portability, and AI/workforce initiatives – **reinforcing the idea that innovation thrives when those closest to education, not Washington, steer decision-making.**

CER Recommendations:

As with other changes, CER urges the Department and federal agencies to provide explicit guidance, clear parameters, and ongoing support so that states and local education leaders can implement programs effectively, manage resources responsibly, and maintain focus on student outcomes.

- **Now is the moment to tell the full story with confidence:** Proactively communicate not just what is changing, but the powerful “why” behind it – better student outcomes, stronger workforce readiness, and real authority returned to parents and states. Clear, bold messaging will turn confusion into excitement and build unstoppable momentum for reform.
- **This is the season for governors, state superintendents, and education leaders to step forward and lead like never before.** With new flexibility and streamlined waiver pathways coming, states have a historic opportunity to unleash innovation, expand real options for families, and design education systems that actually work for their communities.



- **The heart of federal education funding – serving disadvantaged, migrant, homeless, rural, and English-learner students – remains fully protected and even stronger.** Transparent safeguards and joint ED-DOL oversight guarantee that every dollar keeps flowing directly to student learning, academic progress, and individualized opportunity, exactly as Congress intended.
- **A new culture of permissionless improvement is here.** States and local leaders should move quickly and confidently to pilot bold new models, expand school choice, cut red tape, and prove what's possible when bureaucracy steps aside and educators, parents, and entrepreneurs are free to deliver measurable gains for kids.

This restructuring isn't just a bureaucratic shift. It's the green light America's families and innovators have been waiting for!