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*"If virtue and knowledge are diffused among the People, they will never be enslav'd.
This will be their great Security."
James Madison*

Report Shows Public School Spending Per Pupil Is Higher than Private School Tuition

A [recent analysis](#) of education costs shows that the average private school tuition is significantly less than the per-pupil spending for public schools. The Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs (OCPA) reviewed data in a [report](#) from the National Education Association and compared it to information found in the [Private School Review](#). In every state except Utah, the per-pupil spending in public schools was higher than the average private school tuition in that state. In Utah, the average private school tuition was \$613 higher than the public school revenue per student. The [OCPA report](#) includes a chart that compares the public school funding to the average private school tuition in each state. In some states, the difference between the costs is significantly wide, such as New York, at \$40,963 cost per student in public schools compared to a \$22,412 average for private school tuition. Other states with a large gap between public school per-pupil funding and private school tuition included Illinois (\$29,550 compared to \$12,697), New Jersey (\$30,294 compared to \$18,813), and Wyoming (\$25,943 compared to \$10,600). An additional 13 states spent double (or more) the average private school tuition on per-pupil funding for public schools (AL, IA, KS, KY, LA, MN, ND, NE, NM, OR, SC, WI, WY). The OCPA report notes that the large amounts of funding for public schools have enabled many school districts to build large, extravagant facilities, while spending considerably less on instructional uses. According to [a report](#) from the National Center for Education Statistics, an average of just 58.8% of the funding that went to public schools was used for instructional purposes. Despite the increased spending for students in public schools, private school students still [outperform their public school peers](#) academically. Opponents of school choice often cite higher private school tuition in their attempt to argue that school choice diverts funds to expensive private schools for the wealthy. However, as this report shows, the data contradicts their claim.

Department of Education Could Face Another Employment Cut Amid Government Shutdown

As the federal government remains shut down for over two weeks, Office of Management and Budget Director Russ Vought announced that reductions-in-force, or RIFs, have started at federal agencies. This includes the Education Department. The agency has already lost roughly half of its initial 4,100 staffers since the start of the Trump administration. According to [court documents](#), the Department was set to lose an additional 466 staffers as part of last week's RIF. Although the administration has yet to release specifics about affected employees, early estimates show that special education offices seem to be [significantly affected](#). Entities already awarded grants can continue to use those funds. However, the Department will not award new grants during the shutdown. The Department also reportedly planned to [lay off](#) additional staff in the Office for Civil Rights and has paused OCR investigations until the government reopens. So far, the Department has ultimately [prevailed](#) in enacting previous RIFs despite legal challenges. However, on Wednesday a federal judge temporarily paused the current RIFs. She [found](#) that implementing RIFs during the shutdown is "both illegal and in excess of authority and is arbitrary and capricious." The Trump administration will likely appeal the ruling.

Report Shows Number of Clinical Abortions Is Decreasing

A recent [report](#) by the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute shows that the number of clinician-provided abortions has decreased since the start of 2025. The report found an estimated 5% drop in abortions from the same time period in 2024. The report specifically focused on clinician-provided abortions and abortions that occur out of state. Much of the decline comes from states that have recently enacted six-week abortion bans. For instance, Florida enacted a six-week abortion ban in spring 2024, resulting in 12,090 fewer abortions in the state during the same time period in 2025. The decline from Florida made up over 40% of the nationwide drop. However, the research comes with an important caveat: the data does not include abortions that occur through non-clinician-provided abortion drugs. Around 40,000 estimated chemical abortions [occurred](#) in 2024 in states with abortion bans. Chemical abortions are now the abortion method of choice. In 2023, [63%](#) of all abortions in the United States occurred from these drugs. The [Supreme Court](#) has allowed the continuing sale of Mifepristone, one of these drugs, despite safety concerns. The FDA recently [approved](#) a generic version of Mifepristone. Many have called on the Trump administration to reverse the drug's approval. The "evidence shows chemical abortion drugs are dangerous and even deadly for the mother," [said](#) Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley. "And of course 100% lethal to the child."

DOL Issues Opinion Letter on Joint Employers

The Department of Labor (DOL) recently clarified how it interprets the overtime rule under the Fair Labor Standards Act for joint employers. The DOL occasionally issues [opinion letters](#) to address questions about how the overtime regulations would affect specific employment situations. In its [recent letter](#) on joint employment, the DOL addressed a situation in which an employee works as a hostess at a restaurant and a members-only club that resides in the same hotel. The employee worked shifts at both facilities for the same pay and would sometimes work at one place when clocked in at the other. The employee worked more than 40 hours a week at both facilities combined but was denied overtime pay because the employer stated that the restaurant and club were separate companies. However, the DOL looked at the specifics of the case and determined that the similarities between the employers and their close relationship made them joint employers, and that the employee was entitled to overtime pay. The DOL was careful to note in its opinion letter that the opinion was specific to the facts presented to it in this case; however, the letter does lay out how the DOL may approach similar situations, such as a non-exempt employee who may work for both a Christian school and an associated church. Under current DOL overtime regulations, many employees at schools are [exempt](#) from the overtime rule, including teaching staff and academic administration staff. However, other employees, including hourly employees and employees who receive a salary below the overtime [threshold](#) (currently \$35,568/year), could be subject to the rule. The DOL looks at specific job duties, not necessarily job titles, to determine whether an employee is exempt or subject to the rule. In early September, the DOL [indicated](#) it may revisit its overtime regulations. The rule issued during the Biden administration in 2024 was [halted](#) by two federal judges, although the Trump administration has appealed the rulings. The DOL is currently enforcing the 2019 overtime rule.

In Case You Missed It:

[Weekly Market Update](#) provided by Jeff Beach of the [AACS Investment Team at Merrill Lynch](#)

[Practical Legal Help for Christian Schools: ADF Ministry Alliance](#)

[Poll: Nearly Half of Students Value Free Speech, Unless It's Considered Offensive](#)

[3 Ways to Follow the Bold Example of Charlie Kirk and Voddie Baucham](#)

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