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"Our message to every child in America is that you are perfect exactly the way God made you."
President Donald Trump, [March 4, 2025](#)

Newly Confirmed Secretary of Education Linda McMahon: "Our Department's Final Mission"

Linda McMahon was sworn in as the Secretary of Education on Monday after a party-line vote in the Senate confirmed her nomination. On her first day as Secretary, she sent an email to all staff at the Department of Education, titled "[Our Department's Final Mission](#)," which is now posted on the Department's website. In her message, she outlined her goals as Secretary and the mission for the Department moving forward. "My vision is aligned with the President's: to send education back to the states and empower all parents to choose an excellent education for their children." Her message included an assessment of the current state of the education system, referencing declining student scores, children "trapped in failing schools" and "subjected to radical anti-American ideology," young adults "saddled with college debt," and teachers "leaving the profession in droves." To correct these problems, she said the Department has been tasked by President Trump to eliminate the "bureaucratic bloat here at the Department of Education." She stated, "Disruption leads to innovation and gets results," challenging the Department to think about its "final mission" as a "last chance to restore the culture of liberty and excellence that made American education great." She stated three core convictions which will be at the center of the work. First, she stated that "parents are the primary decision makers in their children's education." Second, public schools must focus on "meaningful learning in math, reading, science, and history—not divisive DEI programs and gender ideology." And third, "Postsecondary education should be a path to a well-paying career aligned with workforce needs." She concluded with the statement, "This is our opportunity to perform one final, unforgettable public service to future generations of students. I hope you will join me in ensuring that when our final mission is complete, we will all be able to say that we left American education freer, stronger, and with more hope for the future."

While the complete elimination of the Department of Education requires Congressional approval, rumors have been circulating that President Trump will be signing an executive order aimed at significantly decreasing the power of the Department by redirecting some education programs to other agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services. A recent [AACCS Today podcast](#) included an in-depth discussion on what dismantling the Department could look like and how it could further help return local power over education and further protect the autonomy and mission of Christian schools.

School Choice Victories in Idaho and Wyoming, on the Horizon for Texas

Within the last two weeks, two more states have enacted school choice programs enabling nearly all families in these states to choose the best education for their children. In [Idaho](#), Gov. Brad Little signed into law the Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit, a refundable tax credit program. The \$50 million program will allow a \$5,000 tax credit per child, and \$7,500 credit for each special needs child, to cover educational expenses such as tuition, tutoring, textbooks, and assessments. Set to begin in the 2025–26 school year, the program is open to all families, with low-income families receiving priority. In [Wyoming](#), Gov. Mark Gordon signed into law the Steamboat Legacy Scholarship Act, an educational savings account program that will allow families to use

scholarships for a variety of educational expenses. The \$30 million program is open to all K-12 families, and low-income families with preschoolers. The program will also begin in the 2025–26 school year and will provide a \$7,000 scholarship per student for educational expenses. In [Texas](#), the state legislature is poised to pass what could be the largest school choice program in the country. A bill has already passed the state senate, and recent reports indicate enough support in the house to pass school choice into law. Gov. Greg Abbott has made school choice a top priority for this legislative session and is [ready to sign](#) a bill into law once it is passed.

Democrats Block Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act

This week, Democrat senators blocked the [Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act](#) from advancing. The bill would protect female athletes by prohibiting any recipient of federal funds from allowing males to compete against or train with female athletes. Many groups, including the AACS, informed their constituents last week about the legislation and encouraged them to contact their senators' offices to make their voices heard. Although grassroots efforts supported the bill's passage, Democrat senators refused to even debate the merits of the bill. The Senate needed 60 votes to invoke cloture, a procedural step to advance debate and a final vote. However, all Democrat senators voted against cloture, effectively killing the bill. Many have noted the irony and cynicism exhibited by Democrats using the filibuster, a parliamentary rule they were advocating for removing just months ago, to block the bill. In the end, the Senate split along party lines in a 51-45 vote, with Democrats voting against cloture and Republicans voting for cloture. Despite Democrat opposition, most Americans support protecting female athletes. A recent [poll](#) found that 79% of Americans oppose male athletes competing in women's sports. Support for protecting women cuts across party lines, with 67% of respondents who identified as Democrats opposing men in women's sports. Prior to the vote, President Trump [endorsed](#) the bill, noting that it would codify his [executive order](#) to keep men out of women's sports. The president also [highlighted](#) the issue in his joint address to Congress. After Monday's vote, Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-AL), the bill's sponsor vowed to continue fighting. Tuberville wrote in an X [post](#), "Even after @realdonaldtrump's landslide election, Democrats STILL support men competing in women's sports. This is far from over. I'll NEVER stop fighting to protect women and girls."

Decline of Christianity Slowing

The Pew Research Center has released a [survey](#) showing that the decline of Christianity has slowed. The center released its full Religious Landscape Survey from data collected in 2007, 2014, and now in 2024. It has also conducted smaller surveys each year. In its most recent Religious Landscape Survey, the center found that 62% of respondents identified as Christian. That number is down from 2007 when 78% of respondents identified as Christian. However, the decline has stabilized in the past five years between 60% and 64%. The 62% of self-identified Christians is comprised of 40% Protestants, 19% Catholics, and 3% other Christian groups. In contrast, almost one in three Americans are religiously unaffiliated. The center also found high levels of correlation between how religious one is and his partisanship. For instance, the more religious one is, the more likely he is to identify with the Republican party. Most religious groups identify with or lean Republican. For example, 70% of evangelical Protestants and 49% of Catholics favored the Republican party. An exception to this trend was the historically black Protestant church, with 72% favoring the Democratic party. The center also found a decline in liberals who identify as Christian, going from 62% in 2007 to 37% in 2024. "The bottom line in all of this is that this particular report tells us that religious beliefs really matter," [said](#) Albert Mohler, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "And in particular in this country . . . Christian beliefs really matter."

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](#)