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“Without God, there is no virtue, because there’s no prompting of the conscience. . . . And without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we’re one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under.”

Ronald Reagan

White House Releases Proposal for Education Budget

President Trump has released his [proposal for the 2026 budget](#), which includes significant cuts to the Department of Education. Dubbed the “[Skinny Budget](#),” the proposal cuts \$163 billion from the federal budget, including over \$10 billion from education program funding. “The President’s Skinny Budget reflects funding levels for an agency that is responsibly winding down, shifting some responsibilities to the states, and thoughtfully preparing a plan to delegate other critical functions to more appropriate entities,” [stated](#) Secretary of Education Linda McMahon. The proposal cuts approximately \$6 billion from K-12 education funding and about \$4 billion from funding for higher education programs. Additionally, the proposal consolidates 18 grant programs into one funding stream, a move the Department of Education believes will cut red tape and bureaucracy and strengthen the efforts to ensure more state and local control over educational decisions. Funds for special education will remain the same, although the seven programs funded through the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) have been consolidated into one funding stream. The proposal also leaves Title I funding, which helps low-income families, at the current level. The proposal seeks to cut funding for the Office of Civil Rights by 35% to “refocus away from DEI and transgender cases.” The proposal also [cuts programs](#) for children of migrant workers, programs for English language learners, programs for first-generation college students, and programs for adults needing basic skills. The budget proposes a 14% increase in funding (\$60 million) for charter schools, signaling the administration’s support for school choice. McMahon [explained](#) that “President Trump’s proposed budget puts students and parents above the bureaucracy. . . . It supports the President’s vision of expanding school choice and ensuring every American has access to an excellent education.” While the proposed budget represents the President’s top priorities, Congress must approve the 2026 budget, so it will likely undergo many changes before passed into law.

President Trump Signs Executive Order to Establish Religious Liberty Commission

President Donald Trump established the [Religious Liberty Commission](#) last week on the [National Day of Prayer](#). The commission will advise the administration on religious liberty policies both domestic and foreign. The commission will also produce a religious liberty report that will include a major focus on education. For instance, the commission will cover First Amendment rights for teachers and students. The commission will also report on the right of parents to religiously educate their children, including allowing public school students the time to participate in voluntary prayer and religious instruction. In his [executive order](#), Trump noted that previous government policies had prevented “parents from sending their children to religious schools” and threatened “loss of funding or denial of nonprofit tax status for faith-based entities.” To combat this problem, he tasked the commission with identifying ways to protect religious liberty. The commission is comprised of up to 14 members who will serve one term which will last till July 4, 2026, unless extended by the President. Texas Lt. Gov. [Dan Patrick](#) chairs the commission, and retired neurosurgeon [Ben Carson](#) is the vice chair. Other

commission members include bestselling author [Eric Metaxas](#), Pastor [Franklin Graham](#), and [Paula White](#), senior advisor to the White House Faith Office. “The commission is comprised of some of the foremost faith leaders, scholars, and thinkers of our time,” [said](#) Patrick. “We will carry out the president’s important mission to preserve and strengthen religious liberty in our country. I thank President Trump for his steadfast commitment to ensuring our nation returns to our founding principles of faith and religious liberty.”

DOJ Launches Taskforce to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias in Government

The Department of Justice held its [first task force meeting](#) on eradicating anti-Christian bias in the federal government. President Trump previously formed the group through an [executive order](#) that called on the heads of the administration to identify and end any federal anti-Christian actions and policies. At its first meeting, three witnesses spoke on the harms of anti-Christian bias. Two of those witnesses had strong ties to higher education. Michael Farris, the founding president of Patrick Henry College, spoke about the weaponization of the federal government against the church. Scott Hicks, provost and chief academic officer at Liberty University, also spoke. Hicks testified to the massive fines both Liberty and Grand Canyon University received under the Biden administration, fines the AACCS has noted are disproportionate compared to similar offenses at secular universities. Many department heads, including Secretary of Education Linda McMahon, spoke at the meeting. McMahon highlighted the loss of religious and parental rights in education under the LGBT movement. [Detractors](#) have said that claims of anti-Christian bias “provide cover for white supremacy.” However, in her task force remarks, Attorney General Pam Bondi spoke of the importance of the First Amendment. “Protecting Christians from bias is not favoritism,” [said](#) Bondi. “It’s upholding the rule of law and fulfilling the constitutional promise.”

Education Secretary: “Responsibility of Raising Children Belongs to Parents, not to the Government”

The Department of Education released a [document](#) reminding educators of the fundamental right of parents to protect their children. In a letter, Education Secretary Linda McMahon accused some states and school districts of inverting parental rights. Parents have a right under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to access information about their children’s education. However, many states have created a complex process that keeps parents from accessing student records. According to McMahon, the Biden administration seemingly did nothing to address the backlog of FERPA complaints, allowing states to withhold information from parents. For example, some schools create a separate “Gender Plan” for students that is not part of the “official” student record. Consequently, some schools deny parents access to this information. The Education Department clarified that parents have a right to access “all information . . . directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution” including “Gender Plans.” The Department also reminded local educational agencies of their duty to inform parents of their rights under FERPA. “Going forward,” said McMahon, “the Department of Education will insist that schools apply FERPA correctly to uphold, not thwart, parents’ rights.”

In Case You Missed It:

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

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

[Raining on Pride’s Parade: More Companies Bolt from June’s Revelry](#)

[School Choice Fights Shifts to Federal Level and Long-Sought Texas Win](#)