

[Medicaid](#) [Voting Rights](#) [Project 2025](#) [Economy](#) [LGBTQI+ Rights](#)[Issues](#)[Experts](#)[Events](#)[Press](#)[Take Action](#)[About Us](#)[Donate](#)

ARTICLE JUL 25, 2024

Project 2025's Elimination of Title I Funding Would Hurt Students and Decimate Teaching Positions in Local Schools

Project 2025 would decimate more than 180,000 teacher positions and negatively affect the academic outcomes of 2.8 million vulnerable students across the country.

AUTHORS

[Weadé James](#)[Will Ragland](#)

[Advancing Racial Equity and Justice, Building an Economy for All, Education](#), +5 More



A teacher leads a student to their classroom at an elementary school in Alexandria, Virginia, on August 21, 2023. (Getty/The Washington Post/Craig Hudson)

This article is part of a series from the Center for American Progress exposing how the sweeping Project 2025 policy agenda would harm all Americans. This new authoritarian playbook, published by the Heritage Foundation, would destroy the 250-year-old system of checks and balances upon which U.S. democracy has relied and give far-right politicians, judges, and corporations more control over Americans' lives.

Since its establishment, the U.S. Department of Education has led the nation's efforts to improve and advance elementary and secondary education. When Congress passed the Department of Education Organization Act in 1979 to establish the agency, it defined one of its core functions, in part, as follows: "to strengthen the Federal commitment to ensuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual."

Now, the far-right authoritarian playbook known as Project 2025 puts that mission at risk. It proposes dismantling the key role of the federal government to increase access and close the educational opportunity gap, especially in communities with lower property values, since a large portion of the country's K-12 system is funded with local property taxes. In doing so, the playbook creates intentional harm on today's children and generations to come. One of Project 2025's most extreme plans includes abolishing the U.S. Department of Education—the only federal agency that is mandated to ensure equal opportunity and accountability and to fund states and school districts for elementary and secondary education.

The policy proposals of Project 2025 undermine public education, a fundamental pillar of our democracy. Specifically, they recommend that the next far-right administration redirect taxpayer dollars intended for K-12 public education to fund private and religious schools for the wealthy; roll back Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex; eradicate Head Start; block student debt cancellation programs and increase monthly payments for student loan borrowers; censor anti-racist curricula that teach tolerance in schools; and eliminate school nutrition programs, particularly for children experiencing food insecurity during the summer when they lack access to school meals.

Moreover, Project 2025 proposes disinvestments in programs that support states in meeting the academic needs of the nation's most vulnerable students, including students with disabilities served by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and low-income students at Title I-eligible schools.

Title I supports low-income students and nearly 2 in 3 public schools

Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) obligates supplemental federal funding to states to ensure that all children, regardless of their income status, receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education. Title I was created in response to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was signed into law by then-President Lyndon B. Johnson. In enacting Title I, Congress recognized that students in high-poverty schools have greater educational needs—which continues to be a reality—and states

lacked the resources to close this divide; therefore, federal aid was required to provide the academic services and opportunity necessary for these students.



Since its inception, Title I has been a critical program to address chronic funding and opportunity gaps between students experiencing high poverty and their more affluent peers.

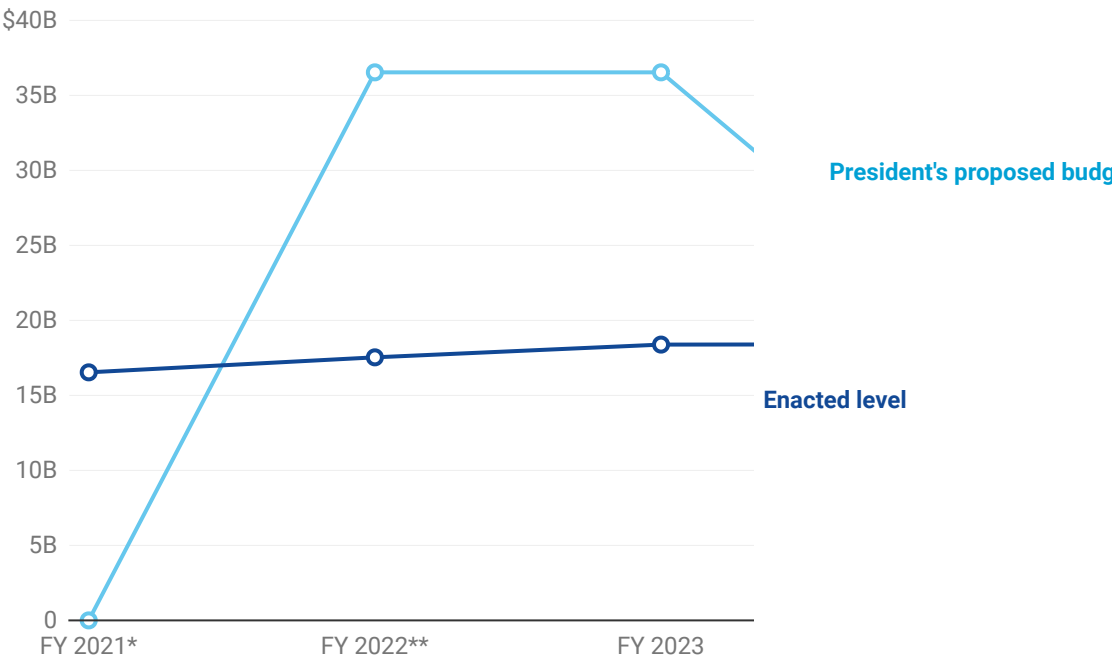
More than half of the nation's public schools serve a high concentration of low-income students, with 63 percent of traditional public schools and 62 percent of public charter schools in the 2021-22 school year identifying as Title I-eligible. Since its inception, Title I has been a critical program to address chronic funding and opportunity gaps between students experiencing high poverty and their more affluent peers. Despite its impact, Title I has experienced significantly low levels of funding over the years.



FIGURE 1

Title 1 funding in recent years

Proposed and enacted Title I budgets for FY 2021–2025



Hover or click for values.

* President Donald Trump's FY 2021 proposal included a total of \$19.4 billion for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as one block grant, without any specific designation for Title I.

*** Included in President Joe Biden's FY 2022 budget was proposed legislation for Title I equity grants worth \$20 billion.*

Source: CAP analysis based on data from U.S. Department of Education, "Department of Education Budget Tables," available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/tables.html> (last accessed July 2024).

Chart: Center for American Progress

Title I supports the teacher workforce

Title I funding is critical to hiring and retaining well-prepared teachers in schools. During the 2023-24 school year, every state in the country reported a teacher shortage in one or more subject area. But high-poverty schools are at a double disadvantage when it comes to teacher shortages: Recent research shows that turnover rates are higher at high-poverty schools (29 percent) than at schools with lower concentrations of poverty (19 percent). Indeed, teachers are leaving high-poverty schools at alarmingly high rates due to poor working conditions and unmanageable workloads.



During the 2023-2024 school year, every state in the country reported a teacher shortage in one or more subject areas.

Title I provides necessary resources for districts to support and incentivize teachers in hard-to-staff schools that serve a higher percentage of low-income students and students of color. In order to close the achievement gap between high-poverty and wealthier schools, districts need more federal aid through Title I and other programs to support early-career teachers and retain outstanding teachers who make up the "Irreplaceables," due to their high performance and success.

Project 2025 would worsen current teacher shortages by eliminating nearly 6 percent of the workforce

Project 2025 would decimate more than 180,000 teacher positions and negatively affect the academic outcomes of 2.8 million vulnerable students across the country. The loss of 180,000 teacher positions represents 5.64 percent of the teacher workforce nationally, which is roughly 3.2 million public school teachers. Table 1 illustrates the loss of teacher positions and affected students in each state as a result of phasing out Title I funding. At least 5 percent of teacher positions in 32 of the 50 states would be lost if federal Title I aid were eliminated. In some states, such as Alabama, Arizona, Mississippi, Nevada, and Florida, nearly 10 percent teacher jobs would be lost. Louisiana would experience the greatest impact, with more than 12 percent of teaching positions eliminated.

Project 2025's proposal to phase out Title I reverses national efforts to retain teachers, including legislation to increase teacher pay—a contributing factor to retention. Today, the average teacher salary in the majority of states is below the

minimum living wage, and teachers are being paid 5 percent less than what they were a decade ago when adjusted for inflation.



TABLE 1

Eliminating federal K-12 education funding would negatively affect students and teachers

Education Title I funding losses by state if Project 2025’s proposed plans are implemented

Search by state:

	Total Title I dollars received from Education Department (FY 2023)	Teacher positions at risk due to Title I elimination	Percentage of all teachers’ jobs lost	Students affected due to Title I cut/elimination*
United States	\$18,386,802,000	182,215	5.64%	2,806,108
Alabama	\$303,245,701	3,574	8.5%	63,970
Alaska	\$53,818,062	480	6.71%	8,790
Arizona	\$356,281,409	4,295	8.67%	97,931
Arkansas	\$177,372,187	2,224	5.73%	28,240
California	\$2,108,516,114	15,897	5.85%	346,553
Colorado	\$187,782,099	2,113	3.95%	34,439
Connecticut	\$156,414,141	1,268	2.88%	14,832
Delaware	\$58,187,161	583	5.84%	8,282
District of Columbia	\$61,295,998	489	6.07%	5,523
Florida	\$1,037,800,442	13,330	8.5%	243,931
Georgia	\$674,982,259	7,251	5.98%	104,420
Hawaii	\$73,083,993	718	5.99%	10,192
Idaho	\$62,700,869	761	4.2%	13,313
Illinois	\$766,835,954	6,979	5.16%	95,610
Indiana	\$286,422,432	3,482	5.31%	55,015

Iowa	\$114,425,087	1,270	3.52%	17,914
Kansas	\$120,783,715	1,450	3.83%	18,704
Kentucky	\$276,218,596	3,330	7.74%	50,955

** These numbers reflect student-to-teacher ratios times the number of teachers affected.*

Source: CAP analysis based on data from U.S. Department of Education, “Fiscal Years 2023-2025 State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education,” available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/index.html> (last accessed July 2024); National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 208.30. Public elementary and secondary teachers, by level and state or jurisdiction: Selected years, fall 2000 through fall 2022,” available at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_208.30.asp (last accessed July 2024); National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 208.40. Public elementary and secondary teachers, enrollment, and pupil/teacher ratios, by state or jurisdiction: Selected years, fall 2000 through fall 2022,” available at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d23/tables/dt23_208.40.asp (last accessed July 2024); National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 211.60. Estimated average annual salary of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by state: Selected school years, 1969-70 through 2021-22,” available at https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_211.60.asp (last accessed July 2024); Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Employer Costs for Employee Compensation,” Press release, June 18, 2024, available at <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>.

Table: Center for American Progress

Conclusion

Title I funding directly benefits teachers and students in suburban, rural, and urban schools across the country. Districts use this funding to provide direct student support services and to hire and retain teachers. Project 2025’s proposal to eliminate Title I funding would lead to the loss of teacher positions, high teacher-to-student ratios, and a lack of school-based programs and quality instruction. This would be devastating to local schools, students, families, and communities.

Teaching is the only profession that prepares workers of every industry. Teachers, and the students they serve, must receive adequate support in preparation to entering the workforce, supporting the social and emotional development of future generations, and being informed citizens our democracy can rely on.

Methodology

The analysis in Table 1 used official fiscal year 2023 spending data from the U.S. Department of Education to demonstrate individual state and national funding implications if the federal “Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies” were to be eliminated, which Project 2025’s *Mandate for Leadership* proposes happen

To calculate the funding-cut equivalent of teacher jobs as a result of this proposal, the authors divided the most recent average teacher salary from the 2021-22 school year, according to [state figures](#) from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), by the percentage of total compensation that goes toward wages and salaries associated with primary, secondary, and special education school teachers, according to [U.S. Department of Labor data](#), to get the total employer cost for employing public K-12 school teachers. The authors then divided the total Title I dollar amount that each state receives from the U.S. Department of Education by the above sum. To calculate the percentage of the teacher workforce represented by that figure, the authors divided the funding-cut equivalent of teacher jobs for each state by the total number of public K-12 teachers in the state as of 2022, which is the [latest available data from NCES](#).

In regard to the figure indicating the potential teacher positions at risk, the authors acknowledge that there are programs that make up the total funding amount that states receive for elementary and secondary education that may not go directly toward teacher compensation; however, if that funding were altogether cut and the services it funded remained, other state and local revenue would need to fill the hole, leaving the equivalent funding cut equal to roughly 182,000 teacher positions.

Finally, to calculate the number of students affected by this proposal, the analysis multiplied the most recent data for state-by-state [pupil-to-teacher ratios](#) from the NCES by the number of teachers affected.

The positions of American Progress, and our policy experts, are independent, and the findings and conclusions presented are those of American Progress alone. A full list of supporters is available [here](#). American Progress would like to acknowledge the many generous supporters who make our work possible.

AUTHORS

Weadé James

Senior Director, K-12 Education Policy

Will Ragland

Vice President of Research, Advocacy and Outreach

TEAM

K-12 Education Policy

The K-12 Education Policy team is committed to developing policies for a new education agenda rooted in principles of opportunity for all and equity in access.

EXPLORE THE SERIES

Project 2025: Exposing the Far-Right Assault on America

The far right’s new authoritarian playbook could usher in a sweeping array of dangerous policies.

PREVIOUS

Project 2025 Would Increase Gun Violence, Reversing Historic Declines

NEXT

Raising the Retirement Age for Social Security Would Cut Benefits by Thousands of Dollars Each Year

ALSO FROM CAP

ARTICLE	REPORT	ARTICLE	ARTICLE
Trial Court Appears Skeptical of Trump Interpretation of <i>Humphrey’s Executor</i>	Industrial Policy Projects Boosted Harris and Hurt Trump in the 2024 Election, but Not by Much	Trump and Vance’s Disgraceful Oval Office Ambush of Zelenskyy Comes at America’s Expense and Only Benefits Putin	America’s Park and Forest Rangers Are Being Fired, and Oil and Gas Bosses Are Now in Charge
Mar 5, 2025 Michael Sozan, Hayley Durudogan	Mar 3, 2025 Aurelia Glass, David Madland	Mar 3, 2025 Allison McManus, Robert Benson	Mar 3, 2025 Drew McConville, Sam Zeno



The Center for American Progress is an independent nonpartisan policy institute that is dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans through bold, progressive ideas, as well as strong leadership and concerted action. Our aim is not just to change the conversation, but to change the country.



nProgress

Stay informed on the most pressing issues of our time.



Learn about our sister organization, the [Center for American Progress Action Fund](#), an advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans.

©2025 Center for American Progress

[Terms of Use](#)
[Privacy Policy](#)
[CAP - En Español](#)
[Our Supporters](#)