BEARD LEGAL GROUP

EDUCATION LAW REPORT

Published in Cooperation with the Pennsylvania School Study Council, Inc.

May 2025

Trump's Executive Order on AI Education: A Strategic Push to Prepare America's Youth for an AI-Driven Future

On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order titled *"Advancing Artificial Intelligence Education for American Youth,"* marking a bold step in reshaping the nation's education and workforce development systems through artificial intelligence. The Order launches a comprehensive initiative to establish AI literacy as a national priority, beginning in K-12 classrooms and extending through postsecondary education and vocational training. By embedding AI into the American educational fabric, the administration aims to ensure that the U.S. maintains its global leadership in technology while equipping the next generation with the skills required for an AI-driven economy.

A Vision for AI Literacy in Classrooms

The cornerstone of the Order is the creation of the White House Task Force on AI Education. This cross-agency task force includes top cabinet officials and advisors and is tasked with overseeing the rollout of national AI education goals. Central to this vision is the integration of AI concepts throughout the K-12 curriculum—not as a niche elective, but as a fundamental element of education across subjects.

To this end, the Order mandates that AI be incorporated into teaching from elementary through high school. The aim is to "demystify" AI, ensuring that all students—not just those pursuing tech careers—develop a foundational understanding of how AI works and its societal impacts. This democratization of AI education is designed to foster both critical thinking and ethical awareness in the use of technology.

National Programs and Strategic Milestones

Several high-profile programs and targets are outlined in the Order. Within 90 days, the Presidential AI Challenge must be launched—a nationwide competition highlighting student and educator innovations in AI. The task force is also responsible for identifying federal resources, including partnerships with the National Science Foundation's AI Research Institutes, to support curriculum development and educator training.

Within 120 days, federal agencies must align funding streams and launch initiatives such as AI-focused teacher training, dual-enrollment certification programs in high schools, and new AI apprenticeships. These benchmarks are intended to spur immediate progress while setting the stage for longer-term transformation.

A notable provision is the requirement that federal education funds prioritize AI initiatives. The Department of Education will issue guidance on how existing grants, such as those under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, can be applied toward AI tools and instruction. This includes using AI for personalized tutoring, curriculum development, and career exploration tools. The National Science Foundation is also directed to prioritize research on

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AI's role in education and fund programs that support AI integration in both formal and informal learning environments.

Building a Future-Ready Workforce

In parallel with classroom reforms, the Order targets workforce development through the Department of Labor. Existing funding programs, including those under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, will now support AI skills training and work-based learning opportunities. The administration aims to create new registered apprenticeships in AI-related fields and prioritize funding for training providers that offer industry-recognized certifications.

This approach not only prepares current workers and adult learners for emerging roles but also creates clear pathways for high school students to enter the tech workforce directly. By encouraging dual-enrollment opportunities and AI certifications at the secondary level, the Order ensures that students can graduate with both a diploma and in-demand technical skills.

Public-Private Partnerships and Teacher Empowerment

The initiative emphasizes the importance of public-private collaboration. Technology companies, universities, and nonprofits are expected to contribute resources, training, and expertise to accelerate the adoption of AI in schools. These partnerships will be instrumental in scaling AI education to underserved and rural communities, thereby addressing equity gaps.

A key pillar of the plan is investing in teacher training. The Order calls for federal funds to be directed toward professional development that equips educators to teach AI concepts and use AI-powered tools effectively in the classroom. Teacher organizations have welcomed this support, emphasizing that successful AI integration hinges on well-prepared educators.

Ethical and Equity Considerations

While the Order positions AI as a transformative force, it also acknowledges the importance of equity and ethics. Stakeholders, including privacy advocates and educational equity experts, have raised concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and access disparities. The administration recognizes these risks and calls for a balanced approach—ensuring that AI is implemented responsibly, with adequate safeguards and universal access.

The inclusion of the Department of Agriculture's 4-H and Cooperative Extension Programs further expands AI access to rural and non-traditional learners, reflecting a broad commitment to inclusivity.

Looking Ahead

President Trump's AI education directive is ambitious in scope and swift in its implementation goals. The Executive Order does not rely on massive new spending but rather reorients existing federal funds toward AI-focused outcomes. It sets a clear expectation that educational institutions—from elementary schools to workforce training centers—must now incorporate AI into their curricula and operations.

Success will depend on effective coordination between government agencies, educators, and private-sector partners. More importantly, it will require a commitment to nurturing not only technical proficiency but also the emotional intelligence and ethical judgment students need to navigate an AI-enhanced society.

If fully realized, this initiative could reshape American education and workforce development for decades to come, ensuring that the nation's youth are not just consumers of AI technology—but confident, capable creators and leaders in its future.

Resources

As schools are moving forward with integrating AI into education, PSBA does have a sample policy, 815.1 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education, to assist in addressing responsible use and compliance with laws and regulations, including but not limited to, FERPA, IDEA, and ADA.

Trump Signs Executive Order Regarding School Discipline Policies

On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order titled *"Reinstating Common Sense School Discipline Policies,"* marking a decisive policy shift aimed at removing what the Administration views as harmful school discipline practices rooted in "discriminatory equity ideology." The Order directly addresses guidance issued in 2014 by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice, which advised schools that disparities in disciplinary outcomes among racial groups could be investigated as potential violations of Title VI, even if policies were race-neutral on their face. While the 2014 guidance was rescinded following a 2018 report from the Federal Commission on School Safety, the Order claims that guidance issued in 2023 by the Biden Administration's Department of Education and Department of Justice effectively reinstated this approach. The Trump Administration argues this guidance led to unsafe classroom environments by pressuring schools to avoid disciplining students based on race-related statistics.

The Order emphasizes the finding of the Commission that "disciplinary decisions are best left in the hands of classroom teachers and administrators" and should be based on student behavior, not racial statistics.

The new directive mandates the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Attorney General, to issue revised discipline guidance within 30 days, emphasizing behavior-based discipline while ensuring compliance with Title VI. It also outlines a 120-day plan to review past investigations and develop alternative model policies.

The move aligns with President Trump's broader education agenda to eliminate DEI programs, reduce federal control, and return educational authority to states. Supporters say it prioritizes safety and fairness; opponents argue it may ignore systemic inequalities. Either way, the Executive Order marks a sharp pivot from the Biden Administration's equity-based approach.

Irrespective of the timeframe for the issuance of any Federal guidance, Districts are encouraged to review and revise their Student Handbooks and Code of Disciplinary Conduct.

Trump Signs Executive Order Ending Use of Disparate Impact in Anti-Discrimination Enforcement

On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order titled *"Restoring Equality of Opportunity and Meritocracy,"* marking a significant shift in federal civil rights enforcement. The Order eliminates the use of *disparate-impact liability*— a legal theory holding entities accountable for practices that disproportionately affect protected groups, even without discriminatory intent.

The Trump Administration argues that this theory undermines equal treatment by encouraging race-conscious policies to balance statistical disparities, thereby contradicting the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. The Order revokes prior presidential approvals of Department of Justice Title VI regulations supporting disparate-impact claims and directs federal agencies to deprioritize enforcement of such regulations.

Key provisions include:

- Instructing the Attorney General to review and amend or repeal all regulations contemplating disparate-impact liability.
- Directing all agencies to evaluate and act on current investigations, lawsuits, or consent judgments relying on this theory.
- Mandating a 45-day review across civil rights, housing, credit, and employment laws.

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- Coordinating with agencies to determine if federal law preempts conflicting state laws that impose disparate-impact liability.

The Order promotes a merit-based approach, aiming to ensure that success is based on individual effort rather than group identity. President Trump emphasized this philosophy by stating, "Our country is going to be based on merit again." The Administration also plans to issue guidance to help employers regarding appropriate methods to promote equal access to employment regardless of whether an applicant has a college education, where appropriate.

While the Executive Order signals a major policy reversal, its long-term impact will depend on legal challenges, agency interpretations, and potential congressional or judicial responses.

At this point, schools will more likely than not see how this and other Executive Orders play out in the Court system.

Beard Legal Group Education Law Report

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About the Pennsylvania School Study Council

The Pennsylvania School Study Council (PSSC), a partnership between the Pennsylvania State University and member educational organizations, is dedicated to improving education by providing research information, professional development activities, and technical assistance to enable its members to meet current and future challenges. PSSC offers professional development to the membership through colloquiums, workshops, study trips, consultation, publications, and customized services. For more information, visit PSSC website, *https://www.paschoolstudycouncil.org/* or contact Matthew M. Johnson, Ph.D at mmj125@psu.edu

Subsequent Issues

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Education Law Report is published by Beard Legal Group, P.C.

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