



Introduction

The proposed cuts to the U.S. Department of Education in the Trump administration's [fiscal year 2026 budget](#) are deeply concerning, as they would disproportionately harm young children, particularly those from migrant and under-resourced families. Programs such as the Migrant Education Program are essential in supporting children whose families move frequently to follow seasonal work. [These students face significant challenges due to the constant disruption of switching schools and curricula](#), which jeopardizes their academic progress.

Similarly, initiatives like the Ready to Learn program play a critical role in making early learning opportunities accessible to young children, helping to prepare them for success when they enter school. Eliminating these programs would not only undermine individual families but would also have societal consequences.

[Quality child care enables parents to work, while early literacy and school readiness shape a child's long-term educational trajectory.](#)



Migrant Education

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is critical because it provides educational support to children of migratory agricultural and fishing workers, an underserved student population in the U.S. These children face unique educational challenges that impact their academic achievement and long-term success.

- The MEP provides students with educational support services including: tutoring, after-school programs, English language instruction, and support for credit recovery and high school graduation.
- Nearly half ([48.94%](#)) of MEP-eligible children are English Learners, meaning they are still developing proficiency in English. The high percentage of ELs highlights the need for bilingual or English language support services within the MEP.
- As of 2024, the number of eligible migratory children ages birth through 21 is 267,643. In California alone, nearly 73,000 students benefit from this program, which provides vital academic and wraparound support to help them succeed—many of whom face unique educational and economic challenges.

Ready To Learn Programming (RTL)

The Ready to Learn (RTL) programming has funded the development of educational television and digital media targeted at preschool and early elementary school children and their families, especially those from low-income communities. [Research](#) has shown that children from low-income families enter kindergarten up to a year behind their peers in language and math skills. RTL is vital to ensure children from under-resourced communities have adequate resources to support their early literacy and math development.

Ready To Learn Programming (RTL) continued

- [An independent review of 45 studies involving nearly 25,000 children](#) aged 2 to 8 found that PBS KIDS media and resources significantly improved early literacy skills, including letter recognition, vocabulary, and phonological awareness.
- Children who interact with RTL experience a [21% increase in naming letters and 37% increase in letter sounds](#).
- RTL funding enables PBS stations to provide age-appropriate content for young children to build literacy and STEM skills while also providing introductions to career or workforce options to help children succeed in school, work and life.

Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA)

Eliminating OELA would have serious and lasting consequences for the [5.3 million English Learners \(ELs\) in the U.S. public school system](#).

OELA supports English language acquisition by: guiding schools and districts in complying with federal laws; helping English learners meet academic standards; and, offering technical assistance on best practices and research-based strategies, among other critical supports. Despite the administration's claim that the Title III program "deemphasizes English primacy," extensive research consistently shows that [bilingual education programs not only support ELs](#) in achieving language proficiency but also contribute to their long-term academic success. Defunding English language instruction would leave states and schools to bear the burden of providing these services without the support of Title III resources.

- OELA offers resources like the [English Learner Toolkit](#) to assist state and local education agencies in fulfilling their obligation. The toolkit provides guidance on creating linguistically inclusive environments and ensuring ELs' civil rights are upheld.

Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS)

The proposal to eliminate the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program, \$75 million in funding, because it is "duplicative" of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) misrepresents both its function and impact.

- CCAMPIS is the only federal program specifically designed to fund child care for low-income college students, primarily parenting students who are overwhelmingly women, women of color, and single mothers.
- CCAMPIS funding is used to: subsidize the cost of child care slots at on-campus or nearby partner child care centers; expand availability during evenings and weekends to accommodate student schedules; provide age-appropriate educational materials; hire qualified staff; and offer parenting workshops and wraparound services such as referrals to food, housing, and mental health resources.
- In the most recent round of awards, over 44 higher education institutions and districts were awarded CCAMPIS funding, totaling approximately \$16,552,000. This investment not only supports student parents in completing their degrees, but also strengthens the early learning environments of their children, promoting long-term educational outcomes and breaking cycles of poverty through targeted, two-generational support.

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