

**House Committee on Education & Workforce**  
The State of American Education  
March 19, 2024  
Questions for the Record  
**Janai S. Nelson**

Representative Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA)

**1) Can you please elaborate on the role that the Department of Education plays in helping colleges meet the needs of students with disabilities?**

Representative DeSaulnier, thank you for the opportunity to expand on my testimony regarding the vital role the Department of Education plays in supporting students with disabilities. For over 45 years, the Department of Education has played an indispensable role in advancing educational equity and safeguarding students' civil rights. Since the House Committee on Education & Workforce's hearing on the State of American Education on February 5, 2025, Education Secretary McMahon announced the unprecedented plan to eliminate staff at the Department of Education (ED), "impacting nearly 50% of the Department's workforce."<sup>1</sup> This decision also included the closure of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) offices across the country including in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco. These regional offices were on the front lines of investigating complaints of alleged discrimination in school districts across the country.<sup>2</sup>

The Department of Education plays a critical role in helping colleges meet the needs of students with disabilities through the enforcement of federal disability laws, oversight and compliance, the issuance of guidance, and administration of grants to support programs.<sup>3</sup> The impact of the decision to eliminate staff and close offices cannot be understated – funds to carry out Congressionally-mandated duties are now effectively impounded, and the Trump administration has abdicated its responsibility to investigate the thousands of discrimination complaints still pending with OCR.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, this attack on ED serves to circumvent the required Congressional approval to dissolve the federal agency. This administration's decision is an attempt to weaken federal civil rights enforcement and eliminate programs and resources vital to the agency's mission of providing all students, including Black students, with equal

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<sup>1</sup> Press Release, U.S. Department of Education Initiates Reduction in Force, U.S. Dept. Ed., Mar. 11, 2025, <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-initiates-reduction-force>.

<sup>2</sup> Jodi S. Cohen and Jennifer Smith Richards, *Massive Layoffs at the Department of Education Erode Its Civil Rights Division*, PROPUBLICA (Mar. 12, 2025), <https://www.propublica.org/article/education-department-civil-rights-division-eroded-by-massive-layoffs>.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., GAO-24-105614, *HIGHER EDUCATION: Education Could Improve Information on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* (2024).

<sup>4</sup> Jodi S. Cohen and Jennifer Smith Richards, *Massive Layoffs at the Department of Education Erode Its Civil Rights Division*, PROPUBLICA (Mar. 12, 2025), <https://www.propublica.org/article/education-department-civil-rights-division-eroded-by-massive-layoffs>.

educational opportunities. Congress must take action to ensure that this administration does not completely abdicate its role in civil rights enforcement.

Equal access to higher education for students with disabilities is mandated under The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).<sup>5</sup> Institutions of higher education are responsible for fulfilling the social and legal promise of disability rights laws.<sup>6</sup> In this regard, ED plays a pivotal role for students.

### **The Office for Civil Rights' Enforcement Actions**

OCR protects the rights of all students with disabilities by investigating complaints alleging discrimination that arise under federal disability law and issuing guidance to assist schools in complying with federal anti-discrimination laws.<sup>7</sup> From 2012 to 2021, OCR has processed 1,400 disability related complaints on average per year against postsecondary institutions.<sup>8</sup> Following investigations by OCR staff, OCR typically reaches and monitors an agreement with the institution to return the institution back into compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws and prevent future violations.<sup>9</sup> OCR also issues guidance to all institutions to instruct them on broad trends and emerging issues observed by OCR to guard against and eliminate discrimination against students with disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

### **Funding Support Programs**

ED also provides grant funding to schools and organizations to help students with disabilities navigate and graduate from college.<sup>11</sup> Collectively, these grants funded upwards of about \$30 million in programming in the fiscal year 2022.<sup>12</sup> For example, ED grants support to TRIO Student Support Services which funds programs including tutoring, advice of course selection, and assistance in applying for financial aid.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education (TPSID) grants supports institutions of higher education in creating or expanding high-quality, inclusive, and comprehensive model transition and postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 (1990); 29 U.S.C. § 794.

<sup>6</sup> Rob Gould et al., *Higher Education and the ADA: An ADA Knowledge Translation Center Research Brief*, ADA NATIONAL NETWORK (2019), [https://adata.org/research\\_brief/higher-education-and-ada](https://adata.org/research_brief/higher-education-and-ada).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 21.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 21-22.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., GAO-23-105551, *Department of Education: Additional Data Collection Would Help Assess the Performance of a Program Supporting College Students with Disabilities* (2023).

<sup>12</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, *Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Summary*, <https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/about/overview/budget/budget25/summary/25summary.pdf>.

Finally, the National Center for Information and Technical Support for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities is supported through ED and maintains an online information “clearinghouse” and resource library which provides information for current and future students with disabilities.<sup>15</sup>

**2) Can you please explain some of the challenges that students with disabilities face in transitioning to higher education?**

Transitioning from high school to higher education can be difficult for any student and can present even more challenges for students with disabilities.<sup>16</sup> Students with disabilities are less likely to graduate from college than those without disabilities and have been found to achieve slightly lower grade point averages as well.<sup>17</sup> As explained below, civil rights protections for students with disabilities are essential for their success.

**Civil Rights Framework for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees a free and appropriate education for students with disabilities in K-12 public education. However, IDEA does not apply to higher education; therefore, institutions are not required to provide, for example, individualized education to a student with a disability.<sup>18</sup> Rather, the ADA and Section 504 provide the anti-discrimination framework for students with disabilities in higher education.<sup>19</sup> The transition from IDEA to Section 504 and the ADA can leave students with disabilities entering higher education without the knowledge necessary to navigate the unfamiliar statutory framework to receive proper accommodations (i.e., including providing acceptable documentation and requesting the type of accommodation needed in the university setting).<sup>20</sup> Where K-12 public schools are obligated to seek out and identify students with disabilities, students with disabilities have the burden to disclose their disability to university officials and professors in the higher education context.<sup>21</sup> Further, the process for establishing a disability might require a new evaluation which presents additional cost incurred by the student that can range from \$1,000 to over \$3,000.<sup>22</sup> Students who lack the proper documentation may experience delay in obtaining the accommodations that they seek.

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<sup>15</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 3.

<sup>16</sup> Suzanne Eckes and Theresa Ochoa, *Students with Disabilities: Transitioning from High School to Higher Education*, AMERICAN SECONDARY EDUCATION, 33 6-20 (2005); U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., GAO-24-105614, *HIGHER EDUCATION: Education Could Improve Information on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* (2024).

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> Christos Kelepouris, *Transitioning Students with Disabilities into Higher Education*, 2014 BYU EDUC. & L.J. 27, 36 (2014).

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at 29-30; Faculty Guide: Roles and Responsibilities, Texas A&M U. Disability Resources, <https://disability.tamu.edu/facultyguide/roles/>.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 29-30; U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 3.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education**

Universities are required to make “academic adjustments” to reasonably accommodate a student which can include recorded lectures, extended exam time, and course substitutions.<sup>23</sup> Within accommodations, there are several barriers to students with disabilities including: lack of faculty familiarity with federal regulations, “ambivalent attitudes” about supporting students with disabilities, and the misperception of accommodations as special treatment rather than equal access.<sup>24</sup> Further, compared to K-12 public education where teachers can receive training on working with students with disabilities, faculty in higher education are often unfamiliar with appropriately accommodating students, leading to students experiencing resistance to accommodations.<sup>25</sup>

## **Disability Services in Higher Education**

In higher education, the responsibility for seeking out services and accessibility considerations falls onto students rather than the university.<sup>26</sup> In many cases this responsibility falls on a student who is no more than nineteen years old, individuals whose brains are still developing in ways not yet equip to manage adult level duties.<sup>27</sup> This shift in responsibility can be a challenge for students with disabilities who exiting high school without knowledge of their rights to obtain and maintain educational accommodations in higher education.<sup>28</sup> Disability supports services, often housed in the university’s diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility offices, can also fail to comprehensively resource and address the needs of disabled students.<sup>29</sup> These support services often are not facilitated to expand beyond the narrow interpretation of equal access to address campus level social barriers and foster social inclusion.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Suzanne Eckes and Theresa Ochoa, *Students with Disabilities: Transitioning from High School to Higher Education*, 33 AMERICAN SECONDARY EDUCATION, 6-20, (2005).

<sup>24</sup> Gould, *supra* note 6.

<sup>25</sup> Kelepouris, *supra* note 20, at 32-36; U.S. GOV’T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 3.

<sup>26</sup> Gould, *supra* note 6; U.S. GOV’T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 3.

<sup>27</sup> The Teen Brain: 7 Things to Know, National Institute of Mental Health, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-7-things-to-know#:~:text=Although%20the%20brain%20stops%20growing,the%20last%20parts%20to%20mature.>

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> David Leake et al., *Higher Education and Disability: Past and Future of Underrepresented Populations*, 27 JOURNAL OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND DISABILITY 4, 404 (2014).

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

Representative Haley Stevens (D-MI)

**1) Ms. Nelson, can you detail just some of the ways doing away with the Department of Education would exacerbate existing learning gaps and put our nation's youth at a disadvantage?**

Representative Stevens, thank you for the opportunity to expand on my testimony regarding the vital role the Department of Education plays in closing the learning gap, enforcing federal civil rights laws, and supporting low-income students and their educators via Title I funding. ED's role is crucial to advance policies and practices that eliminate racial disparities and strengthen state and local compliance with federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For decades, "states' rights" has been weaponized to shield bad actors from accountability for maintaining segregated, inequitable public schools. Abolishing ED will place Black students, and other students for whom the federal government is often the last line of defense, at greater risk of being denied the opportunity to receive a high-quality education in diverse classrooms with a positive school climate and rigorous academic instruction.

**Civil Rights Enforcement**

As mentioned above, ED and OCR are critical to the enforcement of this nation's federal anti-discrimination laws. These laws mandate equal access to education no matter the student's race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, English-learner status, and disability. Without equal access to education – and more plainly, the ability of students to learn free from discrimination, learning gaps will continue to expand. During Fiscal Year 2024 alone, OCR received nearly 23,000 complaints overall— a new record high.<sup>31</sup> Of those complaints, 37% (8,457) alleged disability discrimination and 19% (4,307) contained allegations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Any federal action to dismantle or defund OCR and eliminate enforcement tools will significantly hinder the ability of the federal government to provide remedies to students who have been impacted by various forms of systemic oppression, harassment, and discrimination. Additionally, efforts to weaken or terminate the ability of ED to investigate and resolve Title VI complaints based on disparate impact will significantly harm Black students and will exacerbate existing inequities for other students of color, including Latino, Asian American and Native American students, exacerbating learning gaps.

**Federal Funding to Support Equal Access to Education for Low-Income Students**

In a similar way, ED disburses billions in funding for school districts and school programs to support equal access to education for all students in this country. Without this funding low-income students, including those in rural, urban and inner-ring suburban

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Dep't of Educ., Off. for C.R., 2024 Fiscal Year Annual Report 8 (2024), <https://www.ed.gov/media/document/ocr-report-president-and-secretary-of-education-2024>.

communities, who are entitled to Title I funding will learn in even less-resourced schools that will drive down academic learning. Freezes or restrictions in Title I funding will disparately impact low-income students who are disproportionately Black. During the 2018-2019 academic year, Black schoolchildren were more likely than any other racial group to attend a Title I public school, with approximately seventy percent of Black public-school students in Title I districts and schools.<sup>32</sup>

**2) What message would such a destructive action send to public educators, parents, and students around the country?**

Dismantling the Department of Education will send a clear message to public educators, parents, and students across the country – discrimination will go uninvestigated and severely under-resourced public schools will be the default. Indeed, some states have already rolled back anti-discrimination policies, removing protected classes and examples from those policies. Without federal oversight, students in these states, like Texas, will have their access to education denied due to harassment and discrimination. Additionally, public schools will not be able to afford teachers and students will need to learn in more and more crowded classrooms. Even today, hardworking teachers around the country already supplement school needs out of their own pockets.<sup>33</sup> Wealthy families will have the resources to withdraw from public schools and send their children to private ones. However, the vast majority of Black and Hispanic families will not be able to afford the luxury of a private school and be forced to send their children to public schools where equal access to education will be denied.

**3) Unfortunately, access to quality education still varies greatly by race, income, location, and a host of other factors. How would destroying the Department of Education as we know it limit our ability to raise up students currently falling behind?**

The Department of Education is foremost a civil rights agency. Longstanding challenges in our country's education system were made worse by the pandemic. Key ways to combat COVID-19's disruption in learning for Black students are targeted federal funding and data-driven policy reform. Both of these tools are housed within ED and are functions that ED already performs. For example, Congress could expand grant programs to fund school desegregation efforts, hire and train more Black educators, and encourage the adoption of culturally inclusive curricula in public education. None of this will be possible if the Department of Education is dismantled.

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<sup>32</sup> Calculated using data points from: *Children in Title I Schools by Race and Ethnicity in United States*, Kids Count Data Ctr., Annie E. Casey Found, <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/8418-children-in-title-i-schools-by-race-and-ethnicity?loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/1696/167,168,133,3,185,107/17042> (last visited Mar. 18, 2025); Nat'l Ctr. for Educ. Stat., Inst. of Educ. Sci., U.S. Dep't of Educ., *Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools in the Condition of Educ. 2021* (2021), [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2021/cge\\_508c.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2021/cge_508c.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> Amanda Litvinov, *Why Are Educators Still Buying Their Own School Supplies?*, National Ed. Assoc. (Aug. 31, 2023), <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/why-are-educators-still-buying-their-own-school-supplies>.

#### 4) How does Title I funding help bolster the nation's educator workforce?

##### **Title I Supports Educator Retention**

Across the country, Black students are more likely to attend schools that have high percentages of novice teachers, first year teachers, and uncertified teachers.<sup>34</sup> During the 2023-24 school year, every state in the country reported a teacher shortage in one or more subject area.<sup>35</sup> Title I schools see turnover rates that are nearly 50% greater than other schools.<sup>36</sup> These factors are even higher in schools with a larger population of students of color.<sup>37</sup> For example, from October 2022 to October 2023, schools with the greatest proportion of students experiencing poverty lost 29% of their teachers compared to 19% for schools with the lowest concentration of need.<sup>38</sup> When teachers move between schools within their districts, they are more likely to move to a school with a smaller proportion of students living in poverty than the school they left.<sup>39</sup> Due to poor working conditions and unmanageable workloads, teachers are leaving high-poverty schools at alarmingly high rates.<sup>40</sup>

Teachers in districts that have higher salary scales, who are better prepared, and feel most supported by their school leaders are least likely to leave their schools.<sup>41</sup> Title I funds are used to pay for teachers and various instructional support personnel, such as coaches, librarians, and social workers.<sup>42</sup> 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 Black students and other students of color.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Sarah Mehrotra, et al., *Getting Black Students Better Access to Non-Novice Teachers*, ED. TRUST (2021), <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Getting-Black-Students-Better-Access-to-Non-Novice-Teachers-December-2021.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Weade James and Will Ragland, *Project 2025's Elimination of Title I Funding Would Hurt Students and Decimate Teaching Positions in Local Schools*, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, (Jul. 25, 2024).

<sup>36</sup> UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS GLOBAL, *Teacher turnover: What you need to know and how you can curb the trend*, <https://www.umassglobal.edu/news-and-events/blog/teacher-turnover>.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> ERSTRATEGIES, *Examining School-Level Teacher Turnover Trends from 2021 to 2023: A New Angle on a Pervasive Issue*, (Mar. 14, 2024).

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> James, *supra* note 35.

<sup>41</sup> Desiree Carver-Thomas and Linda Darling-Hammond, *Teacher Turnover: Why It Matters and What We Can Do About It*, LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE (Aug. 2017).

<sup>42</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., GAO-11-595, *Disadvantaged Students: School Districts Have Used Title I Funds Primarily to Support Instruction* (2011).

<sup>43</sup> James, *supra* note 35.

## **Title I Supports Professional Development and Classroom Management Support for Educators**

Additionally, Title I funding is used to reduce teacher/student ratios and extend instructional time. Schools use Title I funding to provide professional development to teachers, including traditional workshop training and guidance on implementing the training they received into the classroom.<sup>44</sup> Specialized training such as workshops, conferences, and mentorship programs can help educators better support the needs of low-income students.<sup>45</sup> Title I funding has also been used to provide instructional materials to improve teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction for teachers.<sup>46</sup>

### **5) A recent Center for American Progress report estimated that the proposal to phase out Title I in Project 2025 would result in the loss of over 5% of teaching workforce. Can parents, students, and public schools afford to lose any teachers at this moment, let alone 5% of them?**

Nationwide concern about a teacher shortage escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated teacher workforce issues – an area that has experienced challenges for many years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>47</sup> According to national data, the effects of the teacher shortage are most prevalent in the West, urban and rural communities, and in schools predominantly serving Black and Brown children.<sup>48</sup>

The state of our public education is in a critical moment, as younger students face larger learning gaps and academic recovery has been slow in foundational subjects.<sup>49</sup> In spring 2023, 56% of American fourth-graders were performing on grade level in math, compared to 69% in 2019.<sup>50</sup> A lack of sufficient and qualified teachers threatens students' ability to learn.<sup>51</sup> Teacher shortages result in lower student achievement, leaving schools to cancel courses due to vacancies, overcrowded classrooms, and underprepared teachers.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, higher rates of

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<sup>44</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 16.

<sup>45</sup> Nneka McGee, *Let's Talk About Title: Federal Funding for U.S. School Districts*, AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, (Oct. 1, 2024).

<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

<sup>47</sup> LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE, *Teacher Shortages Take Center Stage* (Feb. 9, 2022).

<sup>48</sup> U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE, *Back to School—Obstacles to Educating K-12 Students Persist*, (Aug. 16, 2023).

<sup>49</sup> CENTER ON REINVENTING PUBLIC EDUCATION, *The State of the American Student*, (Fall 2024).

<sup>50</sup> HARVARD UNIVERSITY: CENTER FOR EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH, *The scary truth about how far behind American kids have fallen*, (Sept. 20, 2024).

<sup>51</sup> Lucy C. Sorensen and Helen F. Ladd, *The Hidden Costs of Teacher Turnover*, THE CENTER FOR ANALYSIS OF LONGITUDINAL DATA IN EDUCATION RESEARCH, (2016).

<sup>52</sup> Emma Garcia and Elaine Weiss, *The teacher shortage is real, large and growing, and worse than we thought*, ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE, (Mar. 26, 2019).

teacher turnover results in additional cost and time to the recruiting and training of new teachers.<sup>53</sup>

**6) What would be the result of a complete rescission of Title I? Which students and schools would be most affected?**

Since 1965, and as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has provided critical financial support to school districts with students who live below the poverty line.<sup>54</sup> Title I provides \$18 billion annually to schools experiencing rates of high poverty. 37% of Black students and 38% of Hispanic students attend high poverty schools.<sup>55</sup> On average, ED provides about 13% of K-12 funding, however, this varies from state to state.<sup>56</sup> States that have more impoverished areas are more likely to be dependent on federal funds that are disbursed by ED.<sup>57</sup>

A rescission of Title I would undermine the academic outcomes of nearly three million children by exacerbating the gaps between the “haves and have-nots” and have a disparate impact on Black and Hispanic students.<sup>58</sup> It would mean losing thousands of teachers and severely limiting children’s access to quality education in school districts that need it most.<sup>59</sup> It would lead to increased program cuts and resource disparities that ultimately result in achievement gaps, increased dropout rates, lower college attendance rates, and eventually decreased economic mobility and higher rates of generational poverty.<sup>60</sup> Especially for Black children, losing Title I will impact learning with effects such as overcrowding in classrooms, less experienced teachers, and the loss of critical resources like school counselors and social workers.<sup>61</sup> Students need fully funded schools that provide safe and supportive learning environments to thrive.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> Peter Greene, *Are Red States More Dependent on Federal Education Funding?*, FORBES (Jan. 24, 2025, 9:36AM).

<sup>55</sup> NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, *Concentration of Public School Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch*, (May 2023).

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> Judith Browne Dianis, *Eliminating the Department of Education Would Hurt Black Students*, TIME, (Feb. 27, 2025 10:50AM), <https://time.com/7261667/eliminating-department-of-education-resegregate-schools/>.

<sup>59</sup> Tim Walker, *How Project 2025 Would Devastate Public Education*, NEATODAY, (Oct. 4, 2024).

<sup>60</sup> Dianis, *supra* note 58.

<sup>61</sup> Quintessa Williams, *Title I Funding in Limbo: What’s at Stake for Black Students*, WORD IN BLACK, (Feb. 28, 2025).

<sup>62</sup> Dianis, *supra* note 58; Jennifer DePaoli and Jennifer McCombs, *Safe Schools, Thriving Students: What We Know About Creating Safe and Supportive Schools*, LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE, (Sept. 27, 2023).

**7) Ms. Nelson, in your expert opinion, is it a good idea to gut all or most of that funding as the President has proposed?**

As noted above, cutting Title I funding, funding for special education programs for students with disabilities, funding to assist adults with disabilities find jobs, and funding for career and technical education will have disastrous consequences on the academic and economic outcomes for our students. Not only that, cutting this funding will effectively prevent equal access to education for many of this nation's most vulnerable students. School districts across the country are already critically and chronically underfunded – cuts to federal funding will lead to worse learning environments for all students and particularly, Black and Hispanic students and students with disabilities. For example, public schools will have fewer resources generally, fewer resources to support students with disabilities like counselors and advisors, fewer experienced teachers, fewer teachers who teach their expertise of study, fewer well-paid teachers, more teacher turnover, fewer textbooks for class, fewer books in the library (if a school library even exists), fewer heating in the winter, fewer cooling in the summer, fewer character building extracurricular activities and a lack of advanced curriculum including Advanced Placement and language courses.