

2 - Fifteen Claims about DOEd that are Off the Mark

I've had many private and public (e.g., [here](#)) discussions about what to do with the Department of Education (DOEd), and the consensus is that it should be terminated.

Many of these people were very passionate in their fervor to eliminate DOEd — but it's a well-established fact that emotion and logic are often at odds.

Let's apply some logic — i.e., Critical Thinking — to their stated objections, and see whether they stand up to closer scrutiny:

1 - "The Constitution makes no mention of a Department of Education, therefore it is unlawful."

The Constitution also makes no mention of the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, etc., etc — so to follow that reasoning almost all Federal departments should be scrapped. *I don't think so!*

2 - "Our K-12 education is a disaster, and since DOEd is the top dog, it needs to be euthanized."

We are in 100% agreement that DOEd has been terrible in the past. However, scrapping it does not remedy one iota of their prior bad behavior. On the other hand, properly reforming it does! (For example, see [here](#).)

Another flaw in this thinking is that DOEd is actually NOT at the top of the K-12 education pile! In reality, the top of the K-12 heap is each State's Board of Education (along with each State's Department of Education). They — not DOEd — control the standards for each subject area. They — not DOEd — control the textbooks in each K-12 subject area. They — not DOEd — oversee State certification tests. Etc.

3 - "There is no point in reforming DOEd as four years from now the Democrats will undo that."

- a) Extending that thinking would mean that there is no point in making ANY policy changes in ANY area. *That view makes no sense.*
- b) Note that the Left does not buy into this silliness, as when they are in power they go to great lengths to incorporate their ideology into every crevice available. Yes, some of it can be stopped, but they make large inroads in the meantime. For example, the current administration (including the Department of Energy) acknowledges the complete absurdity of industrial wind energy. However, the US has already been severely burdened by [75,000± turbines](#) that we can't just uproot and trash.
- c) If sensible Education (and other) policies are implemented, most citizens will appreciate that, and will likely vote to have four more years of the same.

4 - “I’m against giving any more authority to a Federal Government agency.”

I support that idea, and if DOEd is properly reformed, it will end up with less authority. Furthermore, its remaining authority will be significantly different (more productive) than it was before.

It’s understandable to have a concern about Government overreach, but this can be irrational — like [Trump Derangement Syndrome](#). Further, the States can be just as bad (or worse — e.g., California, NY, etc.) so turning things over to the States just gives them more power, which is the root of the overreach problem.

5 - “We should eliminate DOEd as we need less bureaucracy.”

No argument there — I advocated getting rid of 90% of DOEd. That said, the real creators of the K-12 education bureaucracy are States. For example, look at the [huge increase](#) in administration K-12 positions. Essentially all of this is due to poor State oversight rather than DOEd.

6 - “Our K-12 education system went downhill after the DOEd was created by Carter.”

Yes, but that is an example of "Correlation does not prove causation." During this same period, the Left has made a much more aggressive effort to take over K-12 education — from teacher certification to State level Subject Standards (like [NGSS](#)). Their effort (combined with no organization on the Right paying serious attention to K-12 curricula) is a primary reason for the decline in K-12 education, **not** DOEd.

7 - “States will do a better job with optimizing the K-12 curricula, etc. than DOEd will.”

- a) No one is advocating that DOEd put forth national curricula standards, so that’s a straw-man argument.
- b) To date, 95%+ of the K-12 curricula have been determined and approved by the States (more specifically each State’s Board of Education). The quality of their work in that regard is abysmal — e.g., as a lifelong scientist, I can tell you that the K-12 Science Standards (NGSS) are terrible. (For some details see [here](#).)
- c) Not a single State is formally teaching students to be Critical Thinkers, which (after the 3Rs) is the single most important skill that high school graduates should have. *DOEd has nothing to do with this abject failure.*
- d) To genuinely fix the K-12 education mess, DOEd should provide competent leadership. For example, DOEd should make clear in their Mission Statement, etc., that a primary goal of US K-12 education is to produce Critically Thinking graduates. How each State does that will be up to them, but the goal is then established. (See [here](#) for more details about this.)

8 - “We should be cautious about one-size-fits-all solutions.”

- a) This over-used adage has resulted in more problematic outcomes than the [Precautionary Principle](#). If a policy benefits 99% of students, should we trash it because 1% do not benefit? That is not Critical Thinking!
- b) None of my DOEd recommendations is a one-size-fits-all idea anyway. For example (as explained in 7-d) even though DOEd would establish goals, the States would determine how to accomplish them on their own.

9 - “Getting rid of DOEd would allow parents to have more control of K-12 education.”

This is yet another misunderstanding. The States already control 95%± of the K-12 education (e.g., curricula), so getting rid of DOEd would provide zero benefits to parents. Further, the idea that parents will fix major K-12 problems is simply without merit. For example, arguably the single most serious problem in US K-12 schools is what is being taught *via* the [NGSS](#). I’m aware of no parents, or major conservative organizations, who have publicly exposed the problems with NGSS, and are stridently advocating against using it. *None!*

On the other hand, DOEd has the pulpit and money to do something meaningful about the NGSS cancer.

10- “Getting rid of DOEd will get rid of CRT, DEI, SEL, etc in our K-12 schools.”

This is silly, but I’m listing it as people have made this claim. CRT, DEI, SEL, etc. are in State K-12 schools because the State Boards of Education (and State Departments of Education) gave them their blessing (like [here](#)). Getting rid of DOEd will not change that one iota.

Trump has already issued Executive Orders (EOs) on K-12 (e.g., on [Critical Race Theory](#)). But this would not have been needed if the States had already fixed this corruption of our education system. However, this top-down leadership is needed because States are more the problem than the solution!

11- “Core Knowledge is a curriculum built upon the concept of the Common School espoused by our founding fathers. We don’t need a DOEd to implement Core Knowledge throughout our 50 states.”

No one said we need DOEd to impart Core Knowledge. That is the purview of States — and they are NOT doing it! Please read [Part 1](#) and [Part 3](#) of this set, which discuss this and much more.

12- “We need to eliminate DOEd because they have supported inappropriate actions of teachers unions.”

Yes the old DOEd seems to have done that. So the new DOEd fires the people who were behind that, and changes policies so that it won't happen again. Further, DOEd becomes a powerful force to see that teachers unions get on the same page as to what is in America's best interests. [Note: no DOEd means that teachers unions will continue on as a negative force, as no State has the power or interest to take them on!]

13- “With DOEd gone, more money would go to the States.”

- a) In 2024 DOEd had **\$80± Billion** in discretionary money plus **\$170± Billion** of statutorily required allotments. With DOEd terminated, Congress and DOGE would use that change to aggressively REDUCE this \$250± Billion to lower our federal deficit, etc. There is almost no chance that it will be increased.
- b) In the remote case that States did get more K-12 education money, that would be a horrific waste of taxpayer funds, as THE STATES ARE THE K-12 PROBLEM! So giving them more money would REWARD them for the failing system we already have! *What sense would that make?*

14- “If we turn K-12 education entirely over to the States, some will excel and some will fail miserably — but overall, we will be better off than we are now.”

The reality is that right now, States control 95% of the K-12 education system, so the extra 5% is trivial. Further, ZERO states are currently succeeding and ALL are failing miserably — and DOEd has absolutely nothing to do with that! Nothing is keeping any State from doing a superior job at educating K-12 students — yet none of them are. What's needed is positive leadership, which has been missing from DOEd.

15- “President Trump wants to eliminate DOEd and I trust that he knows what he is doing.”

As a supporter of President Trump, I acknowledge that he has voiced his desire to eliminate DOEd. He [recently signed](#) an EO to attempt to effectively do that. That said, President Trump has a few dozen major issues on his plate, and clearly he can not be an expert on all of them.

Regarding the K-12 Education system Trump's intentions are admirable, but he does not have the experience to see that eliminating DOEd — rather than reforming it — is an extremely bad decision for America.

Every President is heavily dependent on the advice he is given. In this case, as explained above and in [Part 1](#), it appears that he has not been given good advice.

It should be clear that President Trump's **real objective** here is to significantly improve the US K-12 education system. We should all support that extremely important goal, and the best way to bring this about is to Transform DOEd, not Terminate it. Ironically, killing DOEd will make the K-12 education system WORSE!

Hopefully, Congress will step up and support DOEd **transformation** and stop its termination.

The Bottom Line —

I've tried to list every objection to DOEd fairly. Most of the complaints are entirely legitimate — but getting rid of DOEd is simply NOT an appropriate resolution (as explained above).

Interestingly, almost all of the complaints about DOEd apply to the individual State Boards of Education (along with their sister player State Departments of Education) — yet the passionate attackers of DOEd pay almost no attention to the State level problems right in their own backyard that are easily 10x worse! *Why is that?*

Lastly, there are multiple HUGE benefits to properly fixing DOEd (see [Part 3](#)), but none of the kill DOEd advocates appreciate or acknowledge that ENORMOUS upside.

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6-11-25