

The Impact of Federal Grant Cancellations on Educator Preparation

Findings from a Survey of a Subset of Federal Grantees

Executive Summary

In early 2025, the federal administration conducted an agency-wide review of previously approved federal awards to ensure alignment with presidential executive directives regarding administrative priorities and grant criteria. The review determined that a number of previously-approved awards no longer met the updated priorities and criteria. Consequently, the U.S. Department of Education and related federal agencies terminated over \$600 million in existing, multi-year awards that fund educator preparation. These terminations impacted programs serving all types of communities across the country and imposed financial and professional costs on teaching candidates that, in some cases, drove them out of preparation altogether. Grants canceled include those from the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP), Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED), Teacher School Leadership Incentive Fund Grants, Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration grants, AmeriCorps; Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition State Grants; and Title V, Rural Assistance Grant programs.

To better understand the overall operational and instructional impact of the cancellations, the **National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR)**, **AACTE** (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education), and **Deans for Impact (DFI)** co-designed and distributed a survey to federal grantees and their respective broader organizational memberships.

KEY FINDINGS

The Impact of Federal Grant Cancellations on Educator Preparation

-  The large majority of respondents were using funds to prepare teacher candidates in under-resourced schools and content areas, and expressed concerns over cancellations exacerbating the need for teachers where there is already significant need.
-  Cancellations have created significant financial and personal hardships for teacher candidates and educators.
-  There is significant concern about recruitment and enrollment– most expect them to keep decreasing with some already facing challenges.
-  Grants are a key source of support for educator preparation programs, and all organizations involved – including states, schools, and districts – incurred significant operational costs due to cancellations.
-  The cancellations were financially and geographically sweeping – and abrupt.

Finding 1: The large majority of respondents were using funds to prepare teacher candidates in under-resourced schools and content areas, and expressed concerns over cancellations exacerbating the need for teachers where there is already significant need.

"Several federal grant cancellations have occurred across a range of areas, including high-need fields such as STEM [...] Grant cancellations have disrupted program supports for school leaders and mentorship initiatives, as well, and they risk undermining long-term efforts to build a more representative educator workforce."

— IHE, Maryland

Finding 2: Cancellations have created significant financial and personal hardships for teacher candidates and educators.

"For some students, the loss of support made it difficult or impossible to continue in the program. Others had to take on additional student loan debt, increase work hours, or delay completion of their degree and licensure requirements [...] The sudden loss of funding created stress, uncertainty, and financial strain for students who had planned their education around the availability of grant support. In some cases, students who were committed to teaching in high-needs schools had to reconsider."

— IHE, Mississippi

Finding 3: There is significant concern about recruitment and enrollment— most expect them to keep decreasing with some already facing challenges.

"Enrollment in our MAT and M.Ed. programs has dropped to zero. The loss of federal funds has devastated enrollment of [our state's] educators in teacher, principal, and superintendent programs."

— IHE, North Carolina

Finding 4: Grants are a key source of support for educator preparation programs, and all organizations involved – including states, schools and districts – incurred significant operational costs due to cancellations.

"Dedicated recruitment strategies—including the hiring of specialized recruiters—allowed [our district] to fill hard-to-staff positions more quickly with fully licensed, highly qualified educators, especially in critical shortage areas such as special education, science, and math. The loss of funding eliminated these positions. [We] planned to use funds to hire 27 additional staff to ensure that all schools had access to student mental health services by the end of the 2025–2026 school year. The cancellation of this grant halted plans to expand school-based mental health services, including recruiting and retaining qualified providers, increasing staff-to-student ratios, expanding teletherapy and intensive mental health services, and improving awareness and utilization of mental health supports."

— LEA, North Carolina

Finding 5: The cancellations were financially and geographically sweeping – and abrupt.

"Our candidates were in the third semester (they started in Summer 2024) when the cancellation occurred in February 2025. The program covered full tuition for the students, provided comprehensive coaching support, and paid \$1000 stipends to each participant teacher per completed semester. Thanks to the brief one-month respite in the cancellation around March, we were able to get all of the Spring tuition paid for our candidates and to get their \$1000 stipends paid [...] The concern, of course, was how we would take care of the teachers for the remaining 1+ year of their degree programs. With the grant cancellation, we had no funding to pay for program staff (about 4 FTE), no funding for instructional coaches, no funding for stipends and tuition, and no funding for the evaluation which was to be a large part of year 3 of the program."

— IHE, Missouri

Looking Forward - Policy Recommendations

As programs navigate this significant period of change and significant disruption, a forward-looking strategy must pair targeted federal investments with strong governance safeguards, systemic workforce policy, and candidate-centered financial supports.

Maximize Federal Appropriations with Enhanced Governance Safeguards

FY2027 Funding Priorities

Congress should appropriate requested funding levels for key educator preparation programs, including, but not limited to, at least:

\$130M Teacher Quality Partnership

\$173M Teacher and School Leader (TSL) Incentive Fund

\$132M Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED)

\$45M Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence

\$2.4B ESEA Title II-A

\$135M IDEA Part D Personnel Preparation

Over time, increase the federal government's funding support for these vital programs beyond these levels in order to ensure all students have access to a high-quality educator workforce.

Four Policy Recommendations

1

Enact Enhanced Statutory Protections to Safeguard Congressional Intent and Program Funding

2

Ensure Objective Grant Awarding Criteria

3

Enact Systemic Educator Workforce Reform

4

Streamline and Bolster Candidates' Ability to Afford High-Quality Preparation