



Legislative Priorities



AACTE (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education) is the leading voice on educator preparation with over 500 member institutions of higher education in the United States and around the world. AACTE's member institutions and programs prepare more than 120,000 educators, including teachers, school leaders, counselors, and college faculty per year.

Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations

Schools across the country need a robust investment in educator workforce development to ensure every U.S. classroom has a qualified and fully prepared educator. Based on recent NAEP student achievement scores and the urgent need to recruit and retain career educators, AACTE is advocating for the following program funding levels for FY26:

- **At least \$130 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) program** to improve student achievement by supporting partnerships between high-need school districts and educator preparation programs to implement innovative, high-impact teacher preparation and professional development models utilizing the most up-to-date technology (e.g., AI) and focused on student outcomes.
- **\$173 million for the Teacher and School Leader Incentive (TSL) program** to help raise student academic achievement and to close student opportunity gaps by supporting teachers, principals, or other school leaders in high-need schools and subject areas.
- **\$132 million for the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) program** to increase the number of highly effective educators by supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices that prepare, develop, or enhance the skills of educators.
- **\$45 million for the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence grant program** to support comprehensive, high-quality educator preparation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).
- **\$135 million for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Personnel Preparation Part D** to improve educational results for students with disabilities by providing support and training for special education, general education, and specialized instructional personnel.
- **Restoration of canceled funding for education research grants and contracts** at the U.S. Department of Education, National Science Foundation, and other federal agencies. Research is essential to learn about and address real challenges in education. We urge Congress to restore funding for education research.

Reconciliation

The House Education & Workforce Committee bill would make it harder to ensure schools have highly qualified teachers, school counselors, principals, and other essential school personnel. The proposed legislation eliminates federal loan programs, restricts access to Pell grants, and strips critical protections for struggling borrowers.

AACTE is especially concerned about the following provisions:

Provisions	Impact
Student Loan Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forces students into the private loan market with higher interest rates and fees – if private loans are available• Limits financial aid for graduate students, impacting specialties like special education, school counseling, and school leadership• Makes it harder for Americans to pursue a career in education and limits eligibility for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.
Pell Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminates access to the full Pell Grant for student teachers because they cannot take a 15-credit course load.• Creates short-term Pell Grants that could benefit students in alternative teacher preparation programs, but without the necessary safeguards to ensure program quality.
Loan Repayment and Forgiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The limited repayment options will increase the cost of borrowing, a particular hardship for borrowers working in a lower-paying field such as education.

Conclusion

AACTE urges Congress to reject harmful cuts to student aid and to instead focus on policy changes that make it more affordable for students to choose careers in education. Our communities, families, and especially our children deserve nothing less.



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

STAY INFORMED BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE

