

# EDUCATION

*What is your vision for how the federal government should support education, including childcare, pre-K, public K-12 schools, and higher education, including affordability?*

## **Beth Ellen Adubato**

As this is one of my top priorities, I will refer back to my answers on question 1. I will add here, however, that I also support:

- Free Pre-K
- Encouragement of businesses to provide childcare Innovative programs could accompany this, such as, giving “field credit” to student teachers and social work students.
- Take the bonus money we have been offering ICE agents and re-direct that to teacher pay across the country. According to the American Federation of Teachers, attracting good teachers is a problem in our country right now. (Also, let’s keep guns away from schools.)
- Free community college across the country
- Student loans were never meant to be a money-making source for the government; restore the original intent
- Stop the over-hiring of administrators at high salaries! Across the nation, more and more administrators are being hired who have jobs that are not needed, while the counselors and advisors are losing their jobs. This leads to—
- Stop the corporatization of education! Stop these schools from making deals with “software companies” that insist on “designing courses” in a uniform way and making schools pay for this nonsense. The professors and teachers know how to design their own courses.
- Stop the attack against the humanities. Critical thinking, the ability to write, a knowledge of history, political science, and philosophy (just to name a few subjects under attack) lift us up...we then progress as people.
- STOP the attack on academic freedom overall!

Public education is the great equalizer, so a regime that wants to shrink the middle-class and exclude women and minorities naturally wants to reduce educational opportunities.

## **Brian Varela**

Right now families are being squeezed from every direction: childcare costs rival rent while public schools face staffing shortages, and college tuition rises faster than wages. At the same time, Republicans in Washington have chosen to cut education, Medicaid and food assistance to fund tax breaks for the wealthy while middle-class families are forced to pick up the tab. American parents feel the system is rigged against them

when parents are forced to choose between working and affordable childcare. Meanwhile students are graduating with excruciating debt, often leading to bankruptcy. And schools are being asked to do more with less money. My vision for how the federal government should support education is guided by my firm belief that the government should work to strengthen public education, not privatize it, ensuring that education is affordable and equitable.

It is imperative that we treat education as an economic issue and a civil right and put students first. At the federal level, I will fight for universal childcare and Pre-K, because families cannot thrive if childcare and higher education is unaffordable. I support fully funding public K-12 schools, expanding mental health supports, and opposing privatization schemes that drain resources from public education. In regards to higher education, I back federal accountability measures like tuition increase caps, expanded Pell Grants, and student debt relief. Education was once affordable, but today it is a luxury. I will fight to make education affordable for working families.

## **Megan O'Rourke**

A strong public education system is key to economic mobility and is an engine of economic growth. The federal government should support teachers by protecting union rights and strengthening the National Labor Relations Board. The Department of Education should fund special education in states through federal funding. I do not support publicly funded charter schools or private school voucher programs. Training in trades should be available to all high school students. Community colleges should be free and the cost of public, four-year college programs should be commensurate with what students can earn while working during a year (~\$10k/yr).

## **Michael Roth**

I am a proud graduate of New Jersey public schools. Students' opportunities should not be decided by what zip code they were born in. Democrats need to reset our focus on education and have proposals that improve outcomes. In Congress I will fight to strengthen our public education by:

- Bringing home federal education dollars so taxpayers are not burdened with ever increasing property taxes
- Raising teacher pay and classroom resources through increased federal support for Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act funding
- Expanding access to STEM, vocational, and technical education so every student has a pathway to a good-paying job, college degree, or skills trade
- Expanding paid apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs through labor unions and employers so students can earn while they learn and graduate with industry-recognized skills, credentials, and a direct pathway to good paying jobs
- Protecting public schools from extremist attacks on what books kids can read

- Expand access to childcare through a fully refundable Childcare Tax Credit and supporting childcare providers and educators with fair pay, small business support and federal funding to expand capacity in high-need areas
- Support free advanced education opportunities for graduating seniors
- Expanding national service opportunities so more young people can serve their country, diversify their perspectives, gain purpose, and earn money, strengthening both opportunity and our democracy

## **Rebecca Bennett**

I support universal pre-k and expanded early child education and strongly oppose the Trump Administration's attempts to dismantle the Department of Education. Similarly, the Trump Administration's attacks on universities must end. Ultimately when it comes to K-12 education the federal government's main role is to provide funding to ensure all students have access to a quality education. When it comes to higher education the federal government's main role is to ensure students can afford tuition and do not face discrimination.

## **Tina Shah**

Our country's future depends on supporting our children, and that means investing in and fully supporting New Jersey's public schools. I was fortunate to receive a world-class public education here in New Jersey, and I believe that every kid deserves the same. But as Republicans dismantle the department of education and embrace privatization, the institutions that are the bedrock of so many of our communities are in dire straits.

In Congress, I will be an advocate for our kids, and our public schools by:

1. Investing in our public schools and educators so every kid can receive a high-quality education that prepares them for the real world.
2. Restoring funding and oversight authority to the Department of Education to protect all students, particularly students with disabilities.
3. Reversing Trump's Department of Education decision to stop counting critical, skilled professions like nursing, social work, and education as professional degrees, so that these students can receive loans up to the full cost of their education.
4. Working to lower the costs of higher education so that you don't have to go broke, deal with predatory lenders, or dip into retirement savings to afford it, including by restoring Graduate PLUS loans so students can borrow up to the full cost of their education.
5. Ensuring there's a student loan forgiveness plan for our public school teachers so more young people can enter the profession.