Editor's Note:

This transcript was created using Otter.ai. It includes an artificial intelligence-generated overview, action items and webinar outline in addition to the transcript, which begins on page 4.

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Overview

The webinar discussed the impact of federal education policy changes on K-12 and higher education. Anne Hyslop highlighted the unprecedented volume of executive orders and their legal challenges, categorizing actions into four buckets: day-one actions, administrative actions, simple majority votes, and 60-vote requirements. Nirvi Shah emphasized the importance of verifying information and engaging with local communities. Daarel Burnette noted the significant impact on minority-serving institutions and community colleges. The panelists advised journalists to focus on local effects, track federal funding, and engage with diverse sources to provide accurate and timely reporting.

Action Items

- [ ] Reach out to local school districts, colleges, and community members to understand how federal actions are impacting them on the ground.
- [ ] Track changes in federal funding sources beyond just the Department of Education, such as Medicaid, USDA, and USAID programs.
- [ ] Investigate the status of school leadership development programs that may be impacted by federal changes.
- [ ] Monitor the federal budget process, including reconciliation bills and annual appropriations, for potential education-related provisions.
- [ ] Engage directly with state legislators and conservative media outlets to understand their perspectives and theories of action.

Outline

Introduction and Overview of the Webinar

- Denise-Marie Ordway introduces the webinar, "Uncharted Waters: What to Know About Federal Education's Overhaul," aimed at journalists covering K-12 and higher education.

- Denise-Marie notes the deluge of executive orders and policy changes, including the Trump administration's removal of various websites and data.
- The webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the EWA website later in the week.
- Denise-Marie encourages participants to use the Q&A box for questions and mentions that panelists will stay on for an extra 10 minutes to address them.

Eva-Marie Ayala's Message to Journalists

- Eva-Marie Ayala, EWA Board President, acknowledges the exhaustion felt by journalists due to the rapid changes and uncertainty in education.
- She emphasizes the importance of education journalists as truth-tellers in their communities, highlighting their deep engagement with local communities.
- Eva-Marie encourages journalists to take care of themselves and to continue their work with passion and dedication.
- She advises journalists to visit classrooms to reconnect with the hope and resilience of students, which can help restore faith in humanity.

Introduction of Panelists and Initial Questions

- Denise-Marie introduces the panelists: Nirvi Shah, Executive Editor of the Hechinger Report; Daarel Burnette, Senior Editor at The Chronicle of Higher Education; and Anne Hyslop, Director of Policy Development at All4Ed.
- Denise-Marie asks Anne Hyslop to provide an overview of how journalists should process the barrage of changes and approach their coverage.
- Anne Hyslop explains the unprecedented volume of executive orders and actions, categorizing them into four buckets: day one actions, administrative actions, simple majority votes, and 60-vote requirements.
- She highlights the chilling effect of executive orders and the legal challenges faced by many of these actions.

Discussion on the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE)

- Denise-Marie asks Anne Hyslop to discuss the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and its impact on education.
- Anne Hyslop explains that many of the actions taken by DOGE are indiscriminate and lack transparency, making it difficult to get accurate information.
- She notes that legal challenges have been successful in halting some of DOGE's actions, but the chaos caused by these actions is disruptive for communities.
- Anne Hyslop emphasizes the importance of understanding the legal challenges and the potential long-term impact on education.

Nirvi Shah's Advice for K-12 Education Journalists

- Denise-Marie asks Nirvi Shah to discuss questions K-12 education journalists should be preparing to answer for families, caregivers, parents, and students.
- Nirvi Shah advises journalists to be cautious when sharing information due to the rapid changes and to verify information with school district or university officials.
- She suggests creating a focus group of parents, teachers, and school officials to understand the real-time impact of federal actions on local communities.
- Nirvi Shah emphasizes the importance of local issues and not losing sight of important stories within the community.

Federal Funding Cuts and Their Impact

- Denise-Marie asks Nirvi Shah to discuss federal funding cuts and how journalists should think about them.
- Nirvi Shah suggests creating a focus group of local parents, teachers, and school officials to understand the real-time impact of federal funding cuts.
- She explains the difference between formula funding (mandated by law) and discretionary funding (subject to executive action).
- Nirvi Shah advises journalists to track the impact of federal funding cuts on local communities and to report on the real-time effects of these changes.

Daarel Burnette's Insights on Higher Education

- Denise-Marie asks Daarel Burnette to discuss the impact of federal actions on different types of higher education institutions.
- Daarel Burnette highlights the importance of covering minority-serving institutions, which are heavily reliant on specific grants and are at risk of budget cuts.
- He emphasizes the need to understand the impact of federal actions on community colleges, which have seen significant fluctuations in enrollment post-pandemic.
- Daarel Burnette advises journalists to focus on the local impact of federal actions and to engage with local college officials and students to understand the real-time effects.

Key Priority Issues for K-12 and Higher Education Journalists

- Denise-Marie asks both Daarel Burnette and Nirvi Shah to discuss the top priority issues for K-12 and higher education journalists.
- Daarel Burnette emphasizes the importance of understanding the state Department of Education and the impact of state-level actions on higher education.
- He highlights the leadership fiasco in higher education and the potential for censorship of discussions on race in the classroom.
- Nirvi Shah advises journalists to focus on the real-time impact of federal actions on local communities and to engage with local officials and students to understand the real-time effects.

Trusted Sources and Data Availability

- Denise-Marie asks the panelists to discuss trusted sources and data availability for journalists.
- Anne Hyslop recommends using resources like the Education Council's document, which tracks executive actions and their legal responses.
- She advises journalists to talk to legal experts, policy advocates, and other trusted sources to verify information.
- Daarel Burnette suggests going old-school and talking to local college officials, students, and faculty to understand the real-time impact of federal actions.

Balancing Uncertainty and Reporting

- Denise-Marie asks the panelists to discuss how to balance uncertainty and reporting for editors.
- Nirvi Shah advises journalists to focus on the real-time impact of federal actions on local communities and to engage with local officials and students to understand the real-time effects.
- She emphasizes the importance of tracking the current state of federal funding and understanding the real-time impact on local communities.
- Daarel Burnette suggests picking a lane and sticking with it, focusing on specific areas of expertise to provide in-depth coverage.

Final Questions and Closing Remarks

- Denise-Marie opens the floor for questions from the audience.
- The panelists address questions about the impact of federal actions on early childhood education, school nutrition programs, and the future of federal funding for local school districts.
- They provide advice on how to work around tight-lipped college administrators and how to track changes in federal policies.
- The webinar concludes with thanks to the panelists and participants, and a reminder to keep an eye out for the tip sheet on reporting on minority-serving institutions.

Transcript

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Federal education overhaul, executive orders, policy changes, Trump administration, education journalists, minority serving institutions, federal funding, school closures, immigration policies,

diversity equity inclusion, higher education, community colleges, research grants, budget reconciliation, school nutrition programs.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 00:53

Thank you for joining us for today's EWA webinar. Uncharted Waters. What to know about federal education's overhaul. This is going to be a really helpful webinar for journalists who are covering K-12 and higher education, just because of all the things that are happening, all of the changes that are being being passed down. In today's political climate, we've got a deluge of executive orders being made, policy changes being made, and as many of you know, the Trump administration has taken down a number of websites, and along with it, a bunch of data. I want to take a minute to note that this webinar is being recorded, so that means that all the conversation is on the record, and that EWA will likely have it posted to the website later this week, sometime this week. Also, I want to let you know if you have a question, and I'm sure you'll have lots, please put it in the Q&A box. You won't be able to use the chat box, so put those in the Q&A box at any point during the conversation. Oh, also, and I want to let you know that this webinar is going to go for an hour, but because we know there will be a lot of questions, the panelists have agreed to stay on for an extra 10 minutes or so to to get to some of those questions. But before we begin, I'd like to introduce a special guest, EWA board president Eva-Marie Ayala. She wanted to stop in to give us a message.

Eva-Marie Ayala, EWA Board President 02:43

Hey everyone, thanks for joining us or watching this later. I appreciate it. I know the past few weeks have been kind of exhausting, to say the least, for a lot of us. You know, students in schools are facing so much uncertainty. I mean, just the sheer velocity of news and changes coming down are just so wide ranging and changing every second. You know as journalists, it's easy to feel like we're just trying to chase all the raindrops and catch every one of them and make sense of it, and even when they don't, and that is exhausting. It's also been said that as education journalists, I think we feel, especially, feel a sense of duty to be truth-tellers for our communities, right? I don't think anyone else in our newsrooms work as in-depth and closely with the communities as we do. We are the ones who are in classrooms, and we talk with the kids. We go to neighborhood groups and we're meeting with parents. We go to legislative hearings, we go to school board meetings. We go to the places where powermakers are there trying to make decisions that are going to trickle down. And it is so easy to feel like we're not doing enough to even feel like we're failing. And I just wanted to take a time to say: You are not failing. You are we are all doing the best that we can. I know each person here who has been an education reporter, who's still in this business that can be wacky and unpredictable, you're here because you have passion, and you're here because you care. And so we're just tackling this one story of time as best we can. And one story doesn't sound like much, but collectively, that's hundreds of stories each week that we're doing that is detailing the impact that these changes on immigration are having, DEI bans, federal grants, everything. Y'all are doing phenomenal work. So I want to give you permission when you are tired, please rest. Take a nap. Drink water,

cuddle with a puppy or a cat. That's your thing. I'm a puppy person, but most of all, please go into the classroom and interview some kids. Talk to students. When I lose faith in humanity, I try to make a point to go into classroom and talk to kids who are making apps, who are starting their own nonprofits,who are doing voter registration drives. Like, these kids will be the ones to remind you that there's hope out there and that everything's going to be okay. In the meantime, please reach out to each other and reach out to EWA. You are not alone. We have your back. If you need us, you let us know. So with that, I'll turn it over. Thanks everyone for joining us. Drink your water.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 05:29

Thank you, Eva, thank you. I'm going to jump right in to the conversation. Let me pivot back to this. So, we're going to be hearing today from an education policy expert and two of the country's leading education journalists. We're going to hear from Nirvi Shah, who is executive editor of the Hechinger Report. We're going to hear from Daarel Burnette, who is a senior editor at The Chronicle of Higher Education, and we're going to hear from Anne Hyslop. Did I pronounce that right? Anne Hyslop? Oh, awesome, awesome. She is Director of Policy Development at All4Ed, which is a national nonprofit group that advocates on behalf of students from lower-income families and other marginalized groups. I'm going to start with Anne, because she's going to help us get kind of a broad overview look of what's going on and how journalists should be thinking about these issues. So, I'm just going to start with the question of: Anne, can you help the people in the room understand kind of how they should be processing this barrage of changes and how they should be approaching their coverage of them?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 06:48

Thank you so much. Denise, it's a pleasure to be here. Really appreciate it. I will say this is an incredibly challenging time to be following education news. I worked at the U.S. Department of Education for the last two years of the Obama administration. I thought we were busy in doing a lot of work at the time, but the volume of executive orders and actions is really unprecedented. So when someone asked me, "What's going on with education these days?" sometimes my response is, "I hardly know." You know I need to go, go check because you know something could have happened five minutes ago that hasn't hit my inbox yet. So, just, really appreciate the work that all of the reporters on this call are doing, and know that it is a deluge by design. You know, this chaos to flood the zone with, you know, more activity and more action. That's intentional. And, so, I think the challenge is really trying to sift through what actions are real and have an impact now versus what actions that are happening -- you're kind of signaling things that are to come -- but perhaps don't change anything right now at the moment. I think there are generally, I think, of like, four buckets of actions that can occur. The one that we have mostly seen are these day one actions that the administration can do unilaterally. That's your executive orders, your speeches and your bully pulpit moments. Rescissions of grants and contracts that

we've seen starting to like, uh, change the federal workforce. And, you know, put probationary employees, you know, out of a job, or put folks on administrative leave. Like all of that is what we're seeing mostly right now: Things that the administration can do unilaterally. And I just want, you know, also want to be really clear too: Executive orders don't have the same sort of force of law. You know, it's how we can interpret existing laws, but you can't override existing law. And I think a lot of the activities on the executive action front, whether it's immigration or anti-DEI efforts, efforts to create DOGE and then to sort of reshape the federal government, all of those are being subject to legal challenges right now. Many of them have actually been put on temporary restraining orders in certain communities or nationwide. But the real impact is that the chilling effect that that happens with folks seeing these executive orders and so almost pre-complying with them before there's been any change in federal law. The next bucket is, you know, still we're in the administrative-only realm. These are things that the Trump team can do on their own, but they take more time. That's things like regulations. Regulations do carry the force of law, but you have to go through a public notice and comment rulemaking process, which can often take federal agencies up to a year, if not longer. You know the Title IV regulations that the Biden team did are a good case in point on that. The last two buckets are things that require Congress as well as the administration, to act. One bucket is things that can be done just with the simple majority vote. That's, you know, confirmations. We saw that with Linda McMahon's confirmation hearing. Also the reconciliation process. You may hear "budget reconciliation," wonky term, but things that only requires a 50 Senate Majority vote. We expect there will at least be at least one budget reconciliation package this year, potentially pushing school choice and vouchers. A lot of times, reconciliation is about spending, tax policy. And then the final bucket is things that require Congress and require 60 votes until we get rid of the filibuster. That includes eliminating the U.S. Department of Education. That is in statute. So you know, while the administration can do a lot to reshape the department, they cannot eliminate it outright, unilaterally. It also includes your annual spending bills. We might have a government shutdown in the next few days unless Congress can agree on a temporary CR, continuing resolution, to continue funding levels. So those spending bills, and then, you know, obviously like big authorizing legislation to like HEA, Higher Education Act, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, that still requires 60 votes. So what we are seeing now are sort of what the department can do on their own, and a lot of chilling effect about that. A lot of you know, pretty abrupt and unprecedented cancelations of grants and contracts, you know, huge changes in the federal workforce. But we haven't really seen much in those later two buckets, but I think we will in the coming months.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 11:37

I'd like to also while you're talking about what's going on in Washington, ask you to talk about theDepartment of Government Efficiency, like, what education journalists need to know about it and and what's going to happen if they proceed without the approval they're supposed to be getting?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 12:01

It's a great question, and I think to this point too, a lot of the actions that we have been seeing have been more crafted and created by DOGE than by folks at the U.S. Department of Education, in large part because they haven't been confirmed yet. You know, those political appointees haven't even gotten into the building. So DOGE is really, you know, many of those folks are on shorter-term contracts. We're not actually sure how long DOGE will continue to operate, but they have been going in, and really, somebody's almost indiscriminately making decisions. You know, all probationary workers, you're gone. You know that, not based on your performance or not, but you've been at the building less than two years, fine. Or sifting through, I think, a lot of the contract side. And, you know, I can't think of another instance where just virtually tons of research contracts were pulled. You know, I am suspecting many times because of simple control-F word searches about from the abstracts of what those contracts were doing. Pulling back on grants for teacher preparation programs, for instance, for many of the sort of support systems for states and districts. Like the comprehensive centers, the Regional Educational Laboratories, the RELs, you might have heard them. Those are things that are all sort of really being DOGE led and directed. And there's not a great list of transparency, like, I can't give you a full list of all the programs that have been cut right now. So, unlike a lot of the other administrative actions that have like "notice and comment rulemaking," you know, this is not being published, so it's a real challenge, I think, to even get accurate information about what's happening. That said, there have been many successful legal challenges already to put a halt to some of these executive orders that DOGE is administering. And I do think that that's really where, if DOGE is overstepping their bounds, you know, trying to eliminate the department, which is statutorily created, many of the positions, like having an Office for Civil Rights and having an assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, those positions are in law that ultimately the courts are where this will be decided. But the chaos between when DOGE acts and when a court ultimately decides -- you know, after many challenges in the appeals process -- that chaos is very disruptive for communities, for higher education institutions, for schools, for states, for districts, and that's really what I'm worried about, even if some of these challenges are ultimately successful in the court. What will be left by the time that happens?

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 14:53

Thank you. Thank you for that. I'm going to quickly go over to Nirvi, and I'm going to ask you if you could talk about for journalists in the room who are covering public schools, who are covering issues around K-12 education: What are some questions that they should be preparing to answer for families, caregivers, parents and for students?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 15:21

I think the first thing would be to be careful when you are being asked questions because of all the things, Anne just said. The situation is moving super fast, and you don't want to share the wrong thing, and you don't want to share something that sounds really right, because it's just hard to get official information that seems really good. I would be in touch with the school district or the university officials that you talk to and really understand what they're hearing and thinking. And honestly, in some cases, you may need to refer people that you're speaking to someone else. We want to be a resource, but we also want to share information that's right. So I think that's one sort of caution I would just share. I think I would be pretty anxious if I were covering a local school district, because I'm maybe accessible to parents in a way that maybe a school, school board member or someone doesn't seem to be. But I would just caution that: To be careful there, and also, you know, ask them where they're getting their information. I think that would be one thing I know. There's a WhatsApp group I'm a member of, and people are sharing what they think are pictures of ICE agents in the community. And I don't know that any of them have actually been ICE agents. They've been law enforcement, for sure. I mean, they're clear, it's clearly law enforcement, but people are coming back to correct and say, actually, this was SO and SO County Sheriff, you know, or etc.So, just, I think it's really important to ask folks where they're getting their information. I think that might be a really good question to ask. Hopefully that helps answer your question.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 17:00

Yeah, great. And then I know that federal funding cuts is something that everybody is covering and wondering about and trying to make sense of. Can you talk about what's going on, what we should expect, how journalists should be thinking about that issue?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 17:20

I had this idea to kind of for local and regional reporters, to kind of create your own focus group parents that you can talk to and that would not mind if you spoke to them regularly. Maybe some teachers, principals, a superintendent or other type of official at a school board, and ask them, week to week, what are they actually experiencing and changing to understand some of the changes that Anne talked about. How are they trickling down? Are they trickling down to the school district? Are they getting information that a source of money has actually been upended or frozen because of all of the legal action? It is a little bit confusing about what something may have actually been handed down from the administration, whether it's DOGE or the Education Department, the White House, the executive order. But I feel like almost none of the action from the White House has gone unchallenged, and there's been this ricochet of action of like what was frozen was unfrozen, but it was frozen and it was supposed to be unfrozen. The court said it was supposed to be unfrozen. But you know, you're here. We've read about how you know whether it's Head Start Center or something else is not seeing that their money is available again, but having sort of a focus group to tell you what's really happening. What are they

actually experiencing? Has a pot of money actually gone away? In some cases, there was actually been money that was distributed to school districts even before the Trump administration actually began. And so that money may seem that it's under threat, but there's a long tail to that, you know, I would use -- this is not a great example --Title One is formula funding. So I don't think it. It's not a discretionary grant that's come into the the buzz saw the way some of the other federal pots of money are coming down, but that money was distributed in, I think, in early January, as one of many points in the year where it's distributed. So it was not, has not been necessarily, directly touched by this administration. So having a sense of people who are experiencing schools in real life, and whether or not something in their lives have changed because of federal action. I think that's a way to do a real public service to your community. Is like, okay, my school actually, thus far has not been affected, or this school district has, thus far, despite the noise, despite the huge amount of fear that's coming down. And I would also use that group to ask what things are on their mind. There may be very important local issues. It's hard, it's hard to think this way, with how much is coming up from the federal government, but it may be that, like a school closure, a change in boundary, some kind of bussing issue, a teacher shortage is actually the most top-of-mind thing for a given parent or school community. And you don't want to miss those really important stories for a lot of the federal noise that's coming on. It's not to say that the federal stuff isn't huge and could have major ramifications, but if you're if you're serving a local community, you don't want to lose sight of that and feel like you're chasing your tail with all of the kind of tornado that's happening at the federal level.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 20:27

If I could get you to clarify one thing. You mentioned formula funding and discretionary and for the individuals on the call who are trying to make sense of this financial stuff, can you explain the difference? What those are? Sure, I mean, I kind of want to punt to Anne because she'll probably say it more clearly than I can. But there's certain things that are baked into federal law that even if there's not a Department of Education, should we reach that point that somehow the actual agency does not exist, there's the laws that, some of which Anne mentioned, that govern that funding. It has to come out regardless of who distributes that money. I mean, though it sounds simplistic to say, it's governed by a specific formula that is not alterable by any kind of executive order. Could there be certain parameters or changes put into that affecting those formulas? Yes, but it's not something that can be changed with the pen stroke. It really requires Congress to actually act. I know that sounds like a crazy thing to say, because a lot of the actions that we're seeing right now seem like they should require Congress to act, but I believe, based on my years of covering education and certainly at the federal level, that that is required. Discretionary are more, are things that are -- the criteria may be developed by the Education Department. It may not be baked into law. Some of the search-and-find that Anne was talking about -- I believe Open Campus wrote a great story about a bird, I believe is either bird or biodiversity program, at a university in Texas that came into play as something that was considered for being chopped because of the word diversity. I don't know that that was intentional by DOGE or whomever put that particular program on a list, but it was considered

discretionary, at least for that moment. I'm not sure the fate of that program, if that funding has been restored. Does that help clarify that? I'm happy for Anne to augment or correct anything I just said. No, I I got it. I just wanted to for those who maybe didn't understand the differences or the jargon, I wanted to clarify for them and and I'm just getting a message from Emily about: Anne, you shared a document. Can you quickly talk about what that document is, how people can get a hold of it?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 22:50

Sure. So this is, I would say, super we be super wonky. So this is not like the summary version, but Education Council, which is an organization that's based in DC. They're housed in a law firm, so they have legal experts as well as policy folks who've worked at state departments of education and the Federal Department of Education, or in Congress. They are keeping an updated, running list of all executive actions that have been taken, as well as the response to them. So if there have been lawsuits that have filed, what's happened to that? And there's a little bit of, you know, their own analysis of like, what are the actual implications here? I am keeping this open on my desktop. It is starred. They update it maybe weekly or bi-weekly. So for example, if you saw the executive order about public service loan forgiveness that dropped Friday night, (it's) not yet in this document, but other actions they have taken are, and I think it's a really great resource if you want those weedy details. And it's organized by topics like immigration executive actions related to civil rights, which there are many at this point, some of the things that DOGE is doing with the sort of reducing or changing the government. And I checked with them, and they were happy for me to share this with reporters. So yeah, use it as you want.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 24:07

Wonderful, wonderful. Thank you. Thank you. That sounds like a great resource I will be making use of.Daarel, I want to get to you, because higher ed is going to be seeing some big impacts. So if, if I could get you to go by institutional type, to talk about what are changes we're seeing, or what are the big things coming down the pipeline, things you're expecting? Let's start, if you don't mind, with Research One universities. Can you talk about what that means and what are they facing right now?

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 24:46

Sure. First thing I just wanted to say, this is probably the most exciting time of my career to be an education journalist. We've been placed in the back of newsrooms for years and years and years and post Betsy DeVos, we've become more and more critical to telling the story of education, and for me especially, there are four buckets that I would kind of categorize as like

areas that I think education journalists for a long time have underreported on that now that are very, very, very messy, and I think now is the time to lean in. So I would just put those categories as enrollment. Folks, faith in higher education, why people are not going to college: Huge, huge, huge question. Discrimination, how colleges identify discrimination on college campuses and and fight discrimination. Very messy, very complicated, very, very interesting. Funding. How colleges are funded. It is very messy, very complicated, I dare argue, as a former K-12 funding expert, funding reporter, it is almost even more complicated in higher ed, and we're going to see that in the coming months. And then immigration. Huge, huge, huge issue. We saw it this past weekend with a student actually being arrested and possibly deported. So, your question about institution types? I think this is going to be a huge question. One, education reporters, again, just kind of pointing out the flaws in the ways that we have covered higher ed for a long period of time. We tend to focus on big Research One institutions. They have huge communications offices. A lot of us graduate from these institutions, etc, but there are 1000s of colleges across the country, different types of colleges that provide different types of services, different type of types of education, etc. And so what I think is going to be interesting in the coming years is, or in the coming months, I should say, is how they are going to be differently impacted by Trump's mandates. And then I will also just point out there is a lot of activity happening in state legislatures. One of the things that we are following aggressively, because states have just as much power, if not more, over over higher ed that than the federal government. So yes, with Research One institutions, they are heavily, heavily, heavily dependent on research grants. And not only research grants, but the indirect costs associated with research grants. Huge debate, huge issue in higher education. I would -- a way to easily localize the story is understanding what are some of the big research grants. How are they involved in your local community? We had a president here last week who was describing the fact that they've been doing a lot of the research that's bringing in factories into the into the local communities. So how the research grants are tied to the local communities. I find that to be really interesting. And then, Denise, I'm kind of preempting the next question, but other institution types that I am very fascinated by are minority-serving institutions. We all, and I'm saying this as as a fourth-generation HBCU graduate, we all think at the top of our head HBCUs, but there are close to 1000 minority-serving institutions. They are all over the place. Some are big institutions like University of Texas. Some are very small institutions like St Mary's in Texas. So I would try to understand who are the minority-serving -- what are the minority-serving institutions in your area, because they are heavily reliant on certain grants that provide services to minority students, and there is a target on the backs of these grants. So for a long period of time, they have been, and I'm saying this for a lot of institutions, why we're going to see a lot of hiring freezes in the next couple in the next couple months, a lot of small private colleges have been on the brink of severe budget cuts. If they have not already had severe budget cuts, they will likely have severe budget cuts in the coming months/years and the the unpredictability of what's happening at the federal level and especially at the state level. Because, as I pointed out, if you think that Trump is aggressive, if you think that Trump hates higher education, you bet you, if you have a Republican-dominated legislature, they really hate colleges and the sort of attacks they will be making on colleges are going to force college leaders to put a freeze on hiring, put a freeze on spending and enrollment numbers are already unpredictable next year, so I'm kind of preempting a lot of questions you had, Denise, but --

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 29:33

Thank you, Darryl, I appreciate that for sure. You didn't talk a lot about community colleges yet. So if you could talk about, you know, what are keeping community college presidents up at night?

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 29:46

One of the things that I'm just kind of keeping in mind, and I'm saying this from my transition covering K112 to higher education, is that higher education is different because there is just 30% of America who has a college degree. It's a small number. The vast majority of Americans do not have a college degree. A large portion of Americans do not have a college degree, but have college loans. And the attitude about higher education, it is at an all time low. I mean, we've been doing a series of stories about white enrollment, about the fact that there's been a severe loss in faith in higher education amongst white Americans. They are very cynical about higher education, etc, and you see this most severely at community colleges. Their enrollment has been fluctuating wildly, especially post-pandemic. The drops in enrollment is shocking. I know this is like an undercovered area. We don't really talk a lot to community college officials, but they serve millions and millions of students. They offer all sorts of programs, etc. The budget cuts at community colleges are shocking, just, just, just to put it simply, so the more that you can engage with your local community college, understand how they are trying to recruit and retain students, how they're trying to serve students in in at a time in which the economy is more and more disincentivizing college degrees in which students are losing more and more faith. The traditional student that we have heavily relied on, which is white men, are losing faith in higher education, and how they're responding, why they are so quick to respond to the state's edicts around DEI, or the federal government's edicts around anti-DEI legislation, etc. Why? If they lose a grant, that's it. I assume that there will be plenty more colleges that close in the coming months, and this is just something that we -- college closures provides a whole range of types of stories that you can write as to how students are affected, how employees are affected, etc.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 31:54

Awesome, awesome. I want to ask because this is a big question that I want to ask both Daarel and Nirvi.If you each would talk about, for people covering K-12, for people covering higher ed, what do they need to keep top of mind, like the big priority issues, and what are issues that they should put off covering for now, if there are any.

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 32:24

I mean, Daarel, if it's okay, I'll kick off. I would just say, I think again, I really want to emphasize not feeling like you are chasing your tail by trying to keep track of every single federal action. But if you know for sure something has happened in your community, a USAID program that supported a unit -- I'm speaking on higher ed, I'm I'm sorry, Daarel -- supported a program at a university, and now something has happened.That money truly may have been cut off like in real time, maybe more so even than an education department program. What is the knock on effect on your community? That's a story that you could tell that would be very authentic, and only you can tell because you're in that community, or if something similar to that is happening, that affects the K-12 level, what does that mean for the tax base, for your school district, and that their budget planning for next year? I would really try to take those big, abstract, kind of far away things and find the meaning for your local committee. I just cannot emphasize that enough. I'm actually not reading tons and tons of those stories. I may be reading the wrong things, but I I want to know what the real effect in a community is of these federal actions, because something has officially happened, and now the school district is trying to plan for that next year. We've read a little bit about, and some of you may have written about, changes in absenteeism because of the threat of ICE raids at K-12 schools. The threat of -- we, I don't know that there's any reported ICE raids specifically at a school. How is your school district planning for enrollment for the coming school year, if they were thinking about a school closure or something like that, where, what does this mean for for that planning process? Or are they trying to plan for those students anyway, in the hopes that maybe some of this will calm down and those families will come back? I think those really tangible stories, like ways to make the federal mess kind of make sense of it -- not that it makes sense -- but making sense of it in your community. I think that could be really powerful storytelling for everyone on this call, and for your readers, most of all.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 34:44

That's great. Those are great insights. Daarel?

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 34:47

Sure. So the biggest thing, and I know I'm kind of dipping into K-12 here, but if I were a K-12 reporter, I would look at the State Department of Education. Trump continues to say he himself and the new education secretary continues to say, "I'm sending the power back to states." He does not say, "I'm sending the power back to school boards," saying, "I'm sending the power back to states." And I don't know if anybody has looked at state departments of education in the last couple years, they are incredibly weak institutions. Everything that they -- their data is public. Who runs these departments is public. Who works in these departments is public. An easy "What happens if the Department of Education closes?" story is, OK: What has our State Department of Education been doing the last couple of years? How have they been supporting, not the urban districts, those are not the districts I'm concerned about, it's the suburban,

ex-urban and rural districts who are heavily, heavily, heavily reliant on trainings, grants, accountability services, etc. Beyond that, I'm more and more fascinated by the leadership fiasco. This is both K-12 and higher education. College presidents have abdicated their duties, or, I shouldn't say abdicated their dues. College presidents have been mute on issues around DEI, finance, research, etc, for the last several years for a whole variety of reasons. In many instances, colleges are actually adopting policies so that they do not lean into anything political, and that is unless the fate of the college is under threat. So what I am very more and more interested in in the coming months is when college presidents decide to speak up on behalf of their faculty or not, and this is going to become a huge issue. I think this is one of the things that we are tracking. There is a movement in the states, and we will likely see this at the federal level too, to censor discussions on race in the classroom. So this, right now, they're talking about general education courses, but this could, as we saw with K-12, this could expand to all courses in higher education, and this is going to cause all sorts of confusion, fear, etc, amongst faculty who take the First Amendment and their power over the classroom way more seriously than teachers at the K-12 level do. So this is a debate that I would just try to wrap my head around. Now, we're seeing bills being proposed and some that have already been passedat the state level, and the fear is that -- I shouldn't say the fear -- the reality is that it is likely that the federal government could tie federal funding to whether or not you are, quote, unquote, teaching DEI in the classroom. But if you look at these policies, they're very specific that, just like critical race theory laws in which critical race theory is never actually mentioned in the laws. You look at these laws, if you look at these bill proposals, etc, they will talk about, "cannot talk about white supremacy, cannot talk about white privilege, cannot talk about... make white students feel guilty." It's the same sort of language we saw at the critical race theory debate in K-12. Lastly, I will point everybody to a document. This is written by Max Eden for AEI, the American Enterprise Institute. He wrote a doc. He wrote a sort of like a manifesto called A Comprehensive Guide for Overhauling Higher Education. So AEI is a legitimate institution. A lot of us have actually spoken at this place, etc. Max Eden is somebody we have quoted many times in the past, and he has basically written a step-by-step guide to taking down higher education. Many of the steps that are identified in this guide are actually being implemented. We just saw this with Columbia University this past weekend, so it is a very sobering sort of take on what could happen with higher education in the coming months.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 38:49

Okay, I'm sorry to pivot so drastically, but I really want to get this question in before we open up questions. Can each of you talk about trusted sources? You know, we've all noticed websites going down, web pages going down, an assortment of data disappearing. Where would you guide journalists to find trusted information, whether it's organizations or a website, a database? If you could share some suggestions.

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 39:29

Well, I already shared one of them, which is Education Council's lovely Google document, which has been very helpful. I mean, I think generally I'm still following things you know that the U.S. Department of Education and the White House are putting out. I think it's just very clear then to know that it is being painted with a certain brush, and you almost have to, like, have a filter when you're looking at it to say, like, Okay, what of this is actually new? Is any of this, like new, or is it just, you know, using different words to describe something? And so that's where I go to my, like, lawyer friends. I talk to folks who work on the Hill, because they will often get briefings ahead of time. I talk to folks like me, I was...list, or other policy advocates who know the federal government, know how things work, and are filtering that. I think on the data side, it is really challenging to that so many databases and things have been taken down already. I know lots of folks try to archive things ahead of time, so that there still would be access to that data. So I think if there's ever -- the Wayback Machine is also a lovely tool. I have used it many a time. So trying to figure out... I think in many cases, the data hasn't gone away. It's just no longer in the same place that it was. And the sort of presidential archive transition, like folks who actually tried to actively grab things, I think will be really helpful. I do wonder, and I think this is an open question, about, you know, data moving forward, if there is still going to be that pressure on school districts, state departments of education, colleges and universities to be reporting data in the same way that that's where, you know, FOIA requests and other pieces... because I just don't sort of think that the federal government may be doing the same kind of data collections that they have in the past. So, now, then going to, sort of your local community or your state to request the data. I think that's something that, you know, I would encourage reporters to keep an eye on. If you usually get a certain piece of data. You know, we know that this comes out in August and it doesn't come out you know, going to your state or to your local school district or your you know, your colleges and universities to ask for that.

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 41:55

I would just encourage us to go old school. Walk to your local college campus. Talk to folks, talk to students, talk to faculty members, talk to college presidents. Now is the time to, like, you know, especially for K-12. Stand outside the school. Ask folks what they feel about immigration policies. Ask folks how they feel about whether or not they think the state and or the district is funding their school properly to handle an influx of immigrants. Ask Black people how they feel about DEI. You're going to get a gazillion different answers. So now is the time to talk to real people. My biggest frustration about DEI policy stories is that there are no recipients of DEI policies in the stories. Mostly because oftentimes reporters don't actually know students and faculty of color, but they have a lot of thoughts about this. A lot of them think that it's just, it's long been ineffective in the first place, etc. It's been done sloppily, etc. They have feelings about diversity statements versus what they feel about diversity training, et cetera. So that is the first thing you could do, is just go to the school, stand outside the door, stand outside the college campus, walk through the college campus, ask people what their experience is like. Secondly, I would encourage people to read policy documents. Historically, we kind of look at the headline and just assume this is what the rest of the policy document says. The story is at the bottom of the policy document. A challenge that I am giving all the reporters on my team, which is like, do

not use the word DEI anymore in a story. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion means three different things, sometimes opposing things. It is not specific. DEI looks like -- DEI looks differently on different college campuses, etc. But once you start reading these policy documents, you will know exactly what the policymaker wants. Another thing you can do is consume conservative media. They have full time higher ed and K-12 reporters right now. We're doing some very aggressive reporting that is dictating policy. You can preempt the debates just by looking at what they are covering. And then lastly, I would just say, build your own databases. So that's one of the things that we're doing here at the Chronicle, with DEI legislation, etc, and how colleges are actually preempting the laws around DEI, dismantling a DEI. But You can build databases to let people know: What are the test scores? How diverse are your schools? What is the makeup of like? How many immigrants go to your school? How many undocumented students are at your school, etc? You have the power as a journalist to collect that data and display it in a digestible way.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 44:56

Awesome, awesome. Those are, those are fantastic. Nirvi, did you want to share something?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 45:02

You know what? Daarel covered some of the things I was going to say, which was, make a spreadsheet for yourself. Track things on your own, and talk to real people. I just cannot emphasize enough what he said, but like you've got to get out there. One of my wiser than me colleagues at The Hechinger Report recently gave us the great advice, try to talk to a new person every day. Yes, you need your trusted stable of people that you talk to all the time, but interact with new people every day. You have no idea what they're going to say, and they are going to give you ideas, and they're going to shape your thinking in a way that you maybe not did not think was possible. I'll just leave it there, because I know there's a ton of questions. I love that. I love that. Okay, Emily says we're ready for questions.

Emily Richmond, Public Editor, EWA 45:44

Thank you, everybody. So much incredible information already. Really appreciate it. I want to jump right into this. So JOURNALIST asked: I understand that executive orders aren't legal actions, but it's clear that Trump and his administration is ignoring law and congressional actions. What do we tell readers if executive orders aren't binding, but schools and colleges are complying anyway?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 46:08

I'm happy to start on this one, since I thought that was based on my comment. I mean, I think that is a very tricky line to walk where I think Daarel has mentioned this -- that like folks are complying preemptively, and I think that that is certainly that's by design. That's part of the intention of this, of saying, you know, well now Title VI of the Civil Rights Act means this, even though it's never meant that before, and just kind of waiting for this to play out, and know that a lot of folks, out of fear, will change policies right away. And that fear is not ungrounded in the sense, you know, look, Columbia University just lost $400 million in grant funding. So they are targeting and going after through enforcement action, specific institutions. And we're already seeing this in terms of the way that the Office for Civil Rights, or OCR, is enforcing civil rights laws. So like, the threat is real in some cases, it's just really hard to predict. Like, are you going to be the institution that they go after? Are you the test case? Because at this point it is sort of a little bit of a whack-a-mole. And so that's part of this. You know, I think obviously there have been, there was a lot of news about the grants that were canceled, but those are just specific teacher preparation grants, like money for special education that goes out to the individuals with disabilities and Education Act. Nothing has changed right now. It might in a few months, but like for now, so I think it's being really clear about what the risk is and pinpointing that. You know, I think certainly if I was a elite higher education institution, I would be worried right now. If I was a community college, maybe not so much.

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 47:54

I would just encourage reporters to go back to what we used to do, which is write about the actual discrimination on college campuses. I think when colleges started giving this DEI spin, we all said, we all started writing about the solution rather than about the problem. So I would -- you can easily walk up to college campuses and ask students of color, LGBTQ, students, women, etc, what is the discrimination they are experiencing? OCR complaints are easily findable on the web. When OCR launches an investigation with the College Promise, etc, when there is a lawsuit, these are all things that are easily reported upon. And I think we've kind of, we've stopped writing about actual discrimination, because the debate over the solution to the discrimination became more newsworthy.

Speaker 1 48:46

I will just really quickly, just add to what Anne said, which is ask the institutions that are making the changes, whether they're a school district or a college, that it's based on an executive order, why they are making the change. Like, if they're making a change that doesn't seem like it's absolutely essential that they make, what is their thinking behind it? Are they just running scared? Is that what their attorney or their, you know, some kind of legal advice that they're

getting is advising them to do? But ask them why.Probe them about about that as much as possible.

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 49:17

Sorry, to interrupt too. Boards of regents, those meetings are public, and if you look at board of regents meetings, regents are very upset about DEI. Very, very upset. There's another constituency that we don't talk to a lot, which is faculty. Faculty also, the sentiment amongst faculty about DEI is at an all-time low. So these are other pressure points that we don't really consider when it comes to who is actually attacking DEI.

Emily Richmond, Public Editor, EWA 49:46

Thank you, everybody. Just a reminder to our audience, we are going to stay on for a few minutes past three to make sure we get as many questions as we can, and we thank everybody. These are terrific questions. JOURNALIST asks: What are some little known ways the federal Department of Education partners with states? Stories that haven't been told on a local level? For example, is there a particular grant program or office within that department that you think has not received coverage?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 50:13

One thing I would say -- it may not necessarily an education department thing, but there's lots of federal agencies that interact with K-12 schools and colleges. USDA, USAID, as I mentioned earlier, and on and on. So you might want to look at how does the USDA's interplay with land grant universities. What's going on with that? Is there something being lost because of, you know, DEI or Title IX, or something like that. I read a little bit about that earlier today. I don't want to regurgitate it, because I don't know if I will state it, restate it correctly. But look, look at, look at other agencies, which is, I think there's not, there's a lot of attention on what Ed does for schools, right, what the education department does for K-12 schools and colleges, but lots of federal agencies interplay with the education system. HHS is the one that administers Head Start. I know you all know all of these things, but I think that's a way to find some stories that maybe haven't been told, especially that affect your local community. I would strongly encourage that.

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 51:17

I just think Medicaid is a huge one. It's one of the top five federal funding sources for schools. And we don't always think about it that way, and it's obviously, I think, going to be a huge focus of, you know, questions about the budget moving forward. So that's another one, sort of like the ones that Nirvi mentioned, that I think is also worth taking a look at.

Emily Richmond, Public Editor, EWA 51:38

I think it's also worth looking at things like school leadership programs. A lot of things that are being cut off are pipelines that are intended to boost promotion, especially for folks who are underserved communities and underrepresented in things like superintendentships, training academies, programs, fellowships, all of those things to help people see teaching as a meaningful and fruitful career. Take a look at what that might do to some of the pipelines that your school systems depend on for cultivating some of those future leaders. That's something that I would recommend. So JOURNALIST has a great question, and that is: How to talk with editors who are hungry for articles that address what people are talking about or worried about, but when there's so much that we don't know -- trying to balance waiting too long and writing a bunch of quote "we don't know" articles. I think that uncertainty is certainly where a lot of reporters fear they are right now.

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 52:33

My pet peeve right now is I think journalists are doing a lot of "what if" stories rather than what actually is, and though what actually is -- those stories are more difficult to report, but they matter more, because what's actually happening right now in schools, what's happening on college campuses, is super, super, super compelling. I also have learned to appreciate reporters who pick a lane and stick with it, rather than trying to cover the entire watershed, like everything possible. Find an expertise. I'm going to cover my State Department of Education. I'm going to cover the state legislature. I'm going to cover funding. I'm going to cover the dismantling of higher ed. I'm going to cover immigration. Pick that lane and stick with it. I mean, you know, readers are oversaturated with news right now. You don't have to give a story. You don't have to answer everything. They don't expect that of you. Your editor should not expect that of you. So you have a right to push back with them. But I think now is the time to pick a lane and stick with it.

Speaker 1 53:38

I'll just add to that. Really think about your audience. And I mean, if you can very nicely say to your editor, like, think about our audience and what would serve them best. What do they really need to know to live their daily lives that we can help and answer definitively the way Daarel was just talking about and not just add to the noise. I think people are stressed out, obviously,

for if nothing else, even if they agree with some of the actions that are happening, there's just such a volume of them that it is hard to figure out what's going on, regardless of your politics. If you -- whatever community you live in, but answering questions that they can actually use. I don't mean "news you can use." That's not what I mean. But that is servicing them in their lives in a way that they would not have the answer to by reading a national publication or watching national news or listening to a talk show do something that is specific and concrete and tangible.

Emily Richmond, Public Editor, EWA 54:37

They said they're feeling a lot of pressure from editors. Another concern, of course, is that some folks do not want to go on the record, and more people are asking to be anonymous. And so JOURNALIST is asking for some advice on how to make that sell to editors. I mean, I think one thing, as editors, Nirvi and Daarel, you're more likely to do that if your reporter can get the confidence of the person to share that name with you, correct? Even if it's not public, there's a difference between being anonymous, outward facing and being able to share with your editor the name of that person. Is that a fair way to say that?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 55:13

My internal policy, I'm happy to share this, is that I have to know everyone that you spoke with very specifically and the context, and why are we giving them anonymity? I think that is a -- it's a question, and this is something we discuss on a case-by-case basis. Reporters, I will say, do not -- I mean, Daarel, may have a different attitude: Do not promise anonymity. And then come back to your editor and say, I promised them anonymity. Say that you will talk about it, and you hope that they can talk to you and share their comments, and if the terms they'll ultimately don't align with what the source wants, that you know, you'll talk about that. But I would be really careful about what you promise in the conversation. In other words, you may not end up using them at all as a source if they're not comfortable with their name, but don't promise that they can have anonymity and that you'll definitely quote them or anything like that.

Speaker 2 56:04

There's, there's an interesting policy question here. I want to make sure we get to it. It's for Anne, and it's from JOURNALIST. How do you make sense of the fact that Trump has nominated very serious education policymakers under Linda McMahon, such as Penny Schwinn and Kirsten Baesler? Why would you nominate serious policy makers if you intend to eliminate the department?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 56:23

I think this goes a little bit to the ultimate goal here, and the sort of the white whale of eliminating the department. I actually do not think that the Department of Education is going away. I think that it is very challenging to do. That said, there's a lot that one can do short of that, you know, and I think we've seen this in terms of being able to reorganize agencies, being able to reduce the number of staff that are at Ed and there are certain goals that I think some of these folks who I think, as you said, very seriously, share. Maybe it's about expanding school choice, or views about what the appropriate role of the federal government is. So, you know, I think the Office for Civil Rights will continue to exist. That's going to be essential to carry out many of the top priorities of this administration. You know, they want to promote school choice, maybe through a tax credit scholarship or a voucher program? How that interacts with current federal funds is a huge question, and so I think there are still functions of the department that will continue on in a much, much reduced form. And I do think that also means someone who's worked at the department, this has been, for many people, probably at the top of their bucket list of jobs that they would love to have. And, you know, when you've gotten that level, I think that they do, you know, I think they care about public service, and they see this as public service, and that's compelling to a lot of folks, you know. And the idea of the department going away, and poof, it's gone. I think that's that's not the reality. You know, Daarel said, like, write about what is happening right now. Like, there is still a Department of Education that is managing a multi-billion dollar budget, and it's really complicated work and changing that will take some time, despite sort of the wrecking ball that is DOGE.

Speaker 2 58:20

Thank you, Anne. A question from JOURNALIST. Nirvi, you mentioned briefly Head Start, and we talked a lot about K-12 and higher ed. Any advice about tracking changes or thinking about responses in early childhood education?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 58:31

Yes. I mean, Head Start is definitely -- if there's Head Start providers in your community, you might start there with any challenges that they're having with accessing federal funding or any messaging that they're getting. They're funded a very, maybe somewhat distinctly than like your typical K-12 school district. My grasp from my early education reporter here at The Hechinger Report is that they're pulling money with great frequency from the federal government. So they're kind of like hand-to-mouth in terms of their survival. So I would, I would find those providers and talk to them specifically about what's happening with their with their access. I, as I said, this has been widely reported, and certainly not by me, but that some providers who were caught in the funding freeze that was retracted or not retracted early on in the administration's history. It never turned back on for like, some select number of Head Start providers, and I'm

hard pressed to believe it, if it's weeks into it now that it's just an accident or some kind of technical problem, but is maybe feeling more deliberate at this point. Finding out about their survival is, is really, is really important. I do think that this is something where you should watch the federal picture and what's going on with the budget. Head Start has long been kind of a punching bag for some members of Congress, and there's lots of research about Head Start that has been batted about in terms of whether it's effective or not, so it could in one of these budget bills at the federal level, like, I feel like it, it has potential. I'm saying this without any insider information here. It has potential to be be affected. And I also don't know, I don't know that it's like top of mind for RFK Jr, but I think he could be influenced here. It's not his primary job, as you know, in his primary line of sight, as HHS Secretary, but I think, I think he could be influenced to change the program by people that work under him.

Emily Richmond, Public Editor, EWA 59:02

So, to piggyback on that. A question from JOURNALIST -- apologies if I mangled your last name -- If there was going to be any changes that we could see potentially as soon as this summer in terms of federal school nutrition programs, which a lot of kids rely on?

Anne Hyslop, director of policy development, All4Ed 1:00:53

I am not tracking closely. I think my answer to these things is like, possibly. I think that's worth watching, particularly because I wouldn't have predicted that they would have canceled a bunch of IES contracts and teacher preparation programs. You know, 75% of the way through spending those grants. But they did, you know. And so I think I'm not gonna make any predictions, but it's worth watching. And I think that's also a really good point, though, of bringing up, like, what we are seeing right now, again, is like the immediate executive actions. The entire budget process and how that plays out will be hugely impactful on education for the next four years. So what happens in budget reconciliation? Do they include significant education legislation in reconciliation or not, whether it's related to the student loan program or to education scholarships or vouchers of some kind. Then there's just the plain Jane budget process every year. And you know, last year, House Republicans voted to cut Title I by 50%. Will they actually do that if they think now they're in charge? And is there a chance of that proposal passing? You know, it's a different political environment than -- we don't have a Democratic president who would veto that bill. So I think watching sort of the regular appropriations process as well. You know, we, I think may have a continuing resolution that kicks the can down the road until the summer or fall, but those are two pieces that will definitely influence, not just sort of education programs, but also student nutrition, Medicaid, everything that the federal government is funding.

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 1:02:40

You could find out how many kids used some EBT last year. Get get the numbers to figure out what the impact could be. So when when the time comes, you know, you know what the impact could be on your community.

Speaker 2 1:02:57

We have three questions left, and I bet that we can get to them in the next two minutes, and then we're going to wrap things up. And just want to thank everybody very much for your participation, for these wonderful comments, especially to Denise for doing such a beautiful job preparing as moderator and keeping things going. Thank you very much. Denise. JOURNALIST wants to know, is anybody tracking the changes that are happening and lining them up against Project 2025 despite Trump's administration's protestations during the campaign that he had nothing to do with that and that it did not reflect his priorities? Anybody know if anybody's tracking that? I'm sure somebody is. I'm sure if we did a Google search that something's going to come up. So I would say, yes, Linda, I imagine somebody is tracking that. If we find it, we'll share it. For sure.

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 1:03:36

I'll also, I just want to point out that a lot of these conservatives are very willing to talk. They are very, very talkative. Call them up. Call the legislators like you know, we have ignored these people for years and years and years, and now they're in charge and they're making these changes. Call them up and talk to them, understand their theory of action.

Speaker 2 1:03:54

And JOURNALIST has already found it. Nice work, I'm going to share this with everybody in the group. If you find me at national seminar in St Louis, I will find you an actual brownie, you can take me up on that. When I say brownie points with brownies, I mean it. Folks, if you have not made your plans to join us at National Seminar, scholarships are running out. If you need financial help to get there, we want to help you. We need to hear from you. Go online to EWA.org. We're going to go to one more quick question. Daarel, college administrators are extremely tight-lipped right now about impacts on their campuses, from federal actions, any tips around working around the administration to get a big picture idea of these impacts?

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 1:04:41

Oil the hell out of public institutions. Go to private institutions. College campuses. Talk to the employees. Um, watch Board of Regents meetings. Watch state board of education meetings. These places -- watch legislative hearings. They're very, very animated. If you want to understand how the general public, not Donald Trump, how the general public feels about higher education. These politicians who won the election, they will tell you. They will say it out loud. So just you know, we don't need college officials to be our sole source, is what I'm trying to say. So yeah,

Speaker 2 1:05:20

and that one final question from JOURNALIST and that is that local school districts won't even touch talking about the future of federal funding because they don't want to get quote, unquote political. Any suggestions on how to deal with this?

Nirvi Shah, executive editor, The Hechinger Report 1:05:32

So they want to talk about the future. But how is their -- what does their budget look like now? How much is coming from federal sources? Figure out the current state of things. And you can say a lot by figuring out the current state of things. And again, some of that might be Title I money. It might be special education IDEA dollars that may or may not be touched by current actions, although Anne already told us that future actions could make those things different. But at least figure out the current state of things. And surely, I would hope, it's public. I mean, they're public officials, so I hope -- and their budget process, God willing -- is public as well, that some of that documentation, should be out there and clear. You may need some help interpreting it. I appreciate the K-12 finances, as Daarel well knows, can be opaque or certainly unclear, but find out what is the reality right now, at least?

Daarel Burnette, senior editor, The Chronicle of Higher Education 1:06:23

I'll just point out that special education and English language learners, funding for these two subjects is some of the craziest stuff ever. It's, uh, it's draconian. So just peeking at how crazy this sort of like funding scheme is for your local school districts, that's going to provide a whole range of stories right there, without Donald Trump, without the officials talking on the record.

Denise-Marie Ordway, managing editor, The Journalist's Resource 1:06:49

Wonderful, wonderful. If anybody doesn't have any last minute comments, I'm going to thank everybody for joining us. A huge thank you to the experts on the panel who shared so much

advice and so many insights with us to do a better job reporting. If I could in my professional role let you know: I'm the managing editor of the Journalist Resource, a project at Harvard Kennedy School, and I'm in the process of creating a tip sheet to help journalists report on minority-serving institutions, and that will be done this week if you want to keep an eye out for that. But thank you everyone. This has been fantastic. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

Speaker 2 1:07:37

Thank you everybody. We'll see you at the next EWA event. Take care.