

# Trump wants to shake up education. What that could mean for a charter school started by a GOP senator's wife <sup>[1]</sup>

Louisiana Key Academy, co-founded by Laura Cassidy, wife of Sen. Bill Cassidy, is one of a growing number of specialized charter schools for students with disabilities

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## AVAILABILITY

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## Excerpts

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Nationwide, about 15 percent of students, or 7.5 million children, receive special education services. Most attend traditional public schools, but a growing number are enrolling at specialized charter schools like Louisiana Key Academy. The federal government plays a role in serving those students by issuing guidance, defending their right to a “free appropriate public education” and providing money. Louisiana Key Academy, for example, received \$165,000 in special education funds in 2023, the most recent year for which data was available; including pandemic relief and school lunch money, federal funds made up 18 percent of the \$11.6 million in revenue it reported that year.

President Donald Trump has vowed to shrink the federal government’s role in education. Already in his first weeks in office, he’s sent the education world into a tailspin by trying to impose a temporary freeze on federal grants and loans and signing an order to expand school choice, among other actions. He is also reportedly preparing an executive order to dismantle the Department of Education, with the ultimate goal of eliminating it altogether. Families and advocates are watching to see how the new administration’s approach will alter the day-to-day reality for students who rely on special education services.

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Trump’s January announcement freezing federal grants and loans (an order rescinded the next day after an outcry) was also outlined in Project 2025, as was his call to cut the Department of Education.

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And advocates for special education, including Katy Neas, CEO of advocacy group The Arc of the United States, say they’re concerned that a no-strings attached block grant would weaken protections for students with disabilities.

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**Region:** United States <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** disability <sup>[4]</sup>

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