

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in strong opposition to the “Proposed Priority and Definitions—Secretary’s Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Promoting Patriotic Education” (ED-2025-OS-0745). I urge the Secretary of Education to not adopt this new priority into the federal grant process.

This priority is frankly un-American. It creates an ideological litmus test within the federal grant review process. Past Republican and Democratic executive administrations long understood that the federal grant process was meant to benefit the greater good of the American public, which includes all Americans, and not to support the narrow political views of one group. Of course, the political perspective of any administration has had influence. However, they respected the diversity in thinking among educational program leaders and researchers, and awarded grants based on quality and impact, rather than ideology. This priority does the opposite. It makes clear that the Secretary’s goal is to create a grant process that makes decisions based on political thinking, rather than factual accuracy and scholarly expertise. The American public will see through these (and any other) attempts to rewrite history and engage in educational indoctrination to further political goals.

As the poet Langston Hughes wrote, “Let America be America again. Let it be the dream it used to be.” As the historian Howard Zinn said, “Patriotism doesn't mean support of government. Patriotism means support of the principles it's supposed to stand for.” I believe most Americans, on the political right, center, and left, agree with these sentiments. As President Ronald Reagan said, “We the people tell the government what to do—it doesn't tell us.” Sadly, this priority would ensure, through the grants process, that the government will tell teachers, students, and educational researchers what to do and think. It is antithetical to our nation’s values and the legacy of President Reagan’s words.

I could speak at lengths about how the conditions spelled out in this proposed grant priority are deeply problematic and meant to harm. However, I know in this forum, those will be disregarded. As such, I write this, and appeal to all of my fellow Americans to do the same, to ensure it is in the public record that this change in federal regulation (and other similar actions by this presidential administration) are wrong.

Sincerely,
Christopher Martell
Boston, Massachusetts