



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on March 17, 2023

Tennessee Lawmakers Consider Ending Federal Funding of Education

Tennessee lawmakers, led by House Speaker Cameron Sexton, are proposing the creation of a state task force to study how the Volunteer State can free itself from federal mandates by weaning itself off federal funding for education. The move drew praise from conservatives and whining from liberals.

The legislation, filed this week, [would](#) create an 11-member panel that would ultimately make recommendations to top state officials, including the governor, on how Tennessee's public education system could cut ties with the increasingly radicalized federal government. The state should "do things the Tennessee way," said Speaker Sexton.



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Like other states, Tennessee receives some federal money each year, much of which comes with strings attached — including testing and increasingly, gender-bending extremism. For most states, the total federal funding amounts to about 10 percent of the state's education costs or less. Tennessee receives almost \$2 billion per year.

If approved, the bill would create a committee including six legislators, two school superintendents and two teachers. The panel would be appointed by Gov. Bill Lee and Sexton, the House Speaker. It would be chaired by Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn, who [made headlines during the Covid crisis](#) for peddling government "wellbeing checks" for all children in the state.

The task force would examine whether it is feasible for state and local authorities to quit taking money from the federal government. It would also be tasked with outlining a roadmap for getting it done. "Basically, we'll be able to educate the kids how Tennessee sees fit," Sexton said last month, adding that this would allow the state to eliminate "federal government interference" in its schools.

"We as a state can lead the nation once again in telling the federal government that they can keep their money and we'll just do things the Tennessee way," Sexton declared at a Farm Bureau event held last month. "And that should start, first and foremost, with the Department of Education."

Spokesmen for the governor and Senate leadership expressed openness to the idea, too. Sen. Randy McNally, who leads the Senate and serves as lieutenant governor, also blasted "overly burdensome" mandates from the feds—especially on education. His spokesman said he thinks discussing an end to federal funding in order to retain control over education is "constructive."

By contrast, those content with having Tennessee schools continue to indoctrinate and brainwash children with federally backed, dumbed-down standards and mandates expressed outrage that top state officials would even consider having the state go its own way. Less than half of students are proficient in anything. But Democrats, in particular, claim the state needs D.C. help to keep the status quo in



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place.

“This funding lifts up underserved students and rural schools and ensures every kid gets warm meals during the school year,” claimed Senate Minority Leader Raamesh Akbari, who purports to represent a Memphis district where illiteracy is the norm. “No matter how many studies they do, there will never be a scenario where it’s a good idea to reject billions worth of federal funding for our students and teachers.”

U.S. Parents Involved in Education, which has chapters nationwide seeking to end all federal involvement in schools, is already working on a plan for state governments to cut their ties with the feds. Multiple experts have suggested that ending federal funding and mandates might actually save states money, as complying with unconstitutional demands from Washington costs so much.

There is absolutely no legitimate reason for the federal government to extract money from Americans to unconstitutionally hijack education. And there is no reason for states to help. Getting the feds out of public schools would be a good start on the road to eventually restoring control over education to parents, churches, and local organizations. Perhaps Tennessee can lead the way.

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