



Whiteboard
Advisors

Education Insider

Post-Election Analysis

November 2016

Why Education Insider?

An Insider look at education policy from leaders in the field



SURVEY INSIDERS



ANALYZE RESULTS



REPORT INSIGHTS



DRIVE ACTION

About Education Insider

Launched in 2009, Education Insider is a report that uses a proprietary survey model to cut through the noise and provide real-time insights on education policy trends from a small group of 50-75 Congressional staff, federal officials, and other Insiders close to the policymaking process. Our goal is to predict outcomes and demystify the policy and political environment that surrounds PreK-12 and postsecondary education. The views expressed by Insiders do not necessarily represent the viewpoints of Whiteboard Advisors or any of its employees.

Who Are the Insiders?

Influential leaders who are shaping federal education policy, including individuals who have served or are currently serving as key policy and political “insiders,” such as:

- Current and former White House and U.S. Department of Education leaders;
- Current and former Congressional staff;
- State education leaders, including state school chiefs and former governors; and
- Leaders of major education organizations and think tanks, as well as other key influentials.

The Education Insider Team

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Rotherham is the co-founder of Bellwether Education, a national nonprofit dedicated to improving outcomes for high-need students. He serves as the executive editor of *Real Clear Education*, part of the *Real Clear Politics* family of news and analysis websites, and as a contributing editor to *U.S. News & World Report*.

Andy also writes Eduwonk.com. A former White House aide and state board of education member, Andy has been described by *Washingtonian Magazine* as "at the forefront of U.S. education policy."

Jeff Selingo is a Senior Advisor at Whiteboard Advisors and co-publisher of *Education Insider*. Selingo is the former Editor-in-Chief of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and is currently a special advisor and professor of practice at Arizona State University and a visiting scholar at Georgia Tech's Center for 21st Century Universities. His work has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Slate*. His book *There is Life After College* was published earlier this year. He has also written *MOOC U* and *The New York Times* bestseller *College (Un)Bound*.

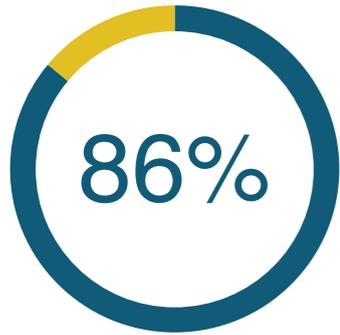
Ben Watsky serves as a Research Associate at Whiteboard Advisors. He joined the team after two years as a faculty member at King's Academy, an independent boarding school outside Amman, Jordan, where he pioneered a blended online history course and was a featured presenter on edtech at Jordan's first education conference. Ben holds a degree in Cognitive Science from Yale University, where he toured the world singing a cappella with the Whiffenpoofs.

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Executive Summary



of Insiders believe that Trump will pursue much less oversight of for-profit institutions than the Obama Administration.



believe that the Trump Administration will expand Title IV eligibility to unaccredited providers.



predict that the Gainful Employment rule will be reopened by a Trump Administration, Congressional Republicans, or both.



think that Trump or Congress will reinvigorate the federal DC Scholarship Program.



believe that federal education policymaking will become more polarized during a Trump Administration.

Higher Education

Insiders expect the Trump Administration to decrease much of the federal oversight that has typified President Obama's approach toward higher education, including on Gainful Employment and Borrower Defense to Repayment regulations.

K-12, Early Childhood, and Teacher Preparation

Overall, Insiders are confident that Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress will expand school choice, perhaps beginning by reviving the federal DC Scholarship voucher program. They are split, however, on the future of new teacher preparation regulations under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Uncertainty: The New Normal

Uncertainty characterizes many Insider responses about the Trump Administration's general education priorities. In the words of Rick Hess, Director of Education Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute: "What's the bottom line for K-12, pre-K, or higher education? I don't know. And I'd be skeptical of anyone who claims that they do."

Polarization in Policy

Insiders consider whether federal policymaking will become increasingly polarized

Background

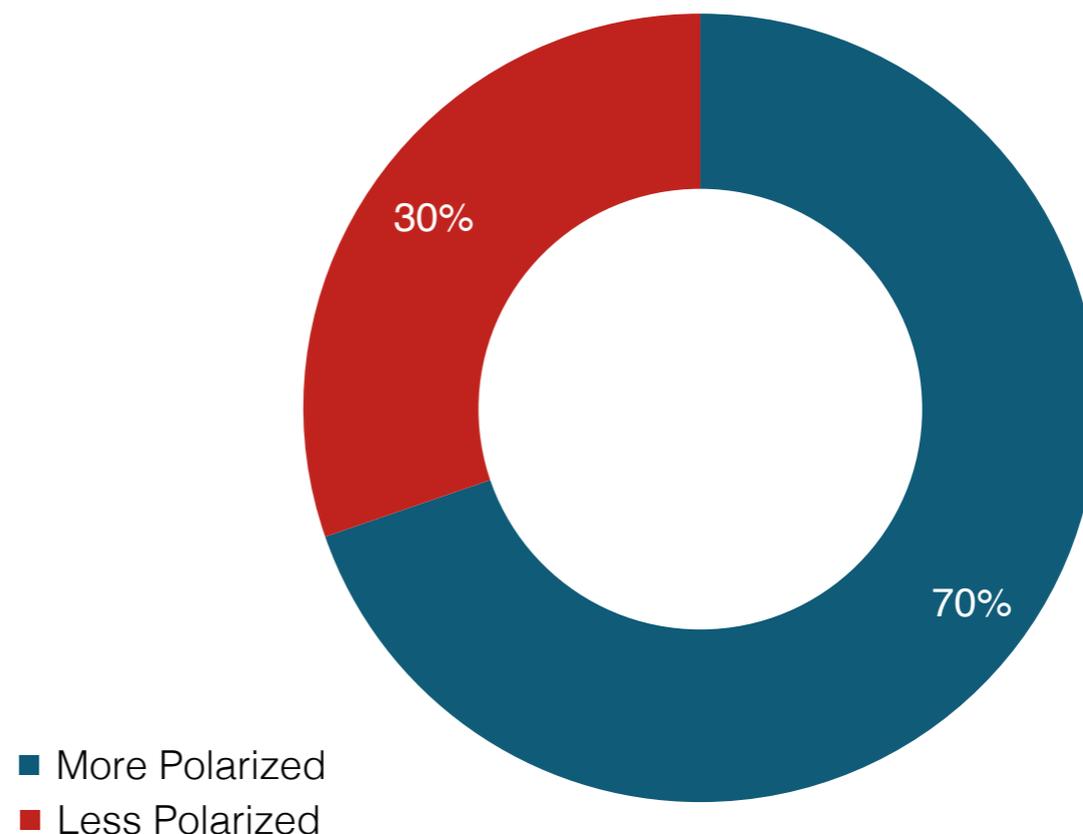
The results of the election have led to widespread press speculation about the divided nature of the country. It is unclear whether this partisan split also applies to education.

Insiders Weigh In

The majority of Insiders believe that policymaking will become more polarized. Thirty percent think the opposite, perhaps reflecting the potential for alignment between President Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress.

By The Numbers

70% of Insiders believe that federal education policymaking will become more polarized during the Trump Administration.



Q: Will federal education policymaking become more or less polarized during a Trump Administration?

Higher Education

Higher Ed Priorities

Insiders comment on higher education priorities for Trump and the 115th Congress

Student Aid Reform

“Simplifying aid; reintroducing private capital into the student loan program; stabilizing Pell [Grants].”

“One-grant, one-loan; student loan repayment; streamlining regulations.”

“Return to [Federal Family Education Loans]; regulatory relief; pro-innovation policies (e.g., regular and substantive interaction reform; restrictions on innovation).”

Gainful Goes Down

“Gut gainful. Wouldn't it be nice if they'd expand career and tech education?”

“Revising gainful. Possibly some of Marco Rubio's higher education ideas.”

Who Knows?

“This is a place where Trump the candidate diverged some from orthodox conservatism - it will be interesting to watch.”

“There are bigger fish to fry for Trump - from healthcare to immigration to tax policy. Higher ed won't be high on the list except for rolling back Gainful Employment.”

“Not sure it will be a huge priority. If it is, then it will be Bush Plan or auto-IBR on loans. Perhaps making IBR less generous. Simplifying repayment. Easing off on for-profits. I also think a big possibility of refinancing still being pushed by Trump.”

Q: What will be the higher ed priorities of the Trump Administration and the 115th Congress? (open-ended)

NOTE: Some comments have been edited for clarity.

Title IV Access for Unaccredited Providers

Insiders evaluate the likelihood of broadening Title IV eligibility

Background

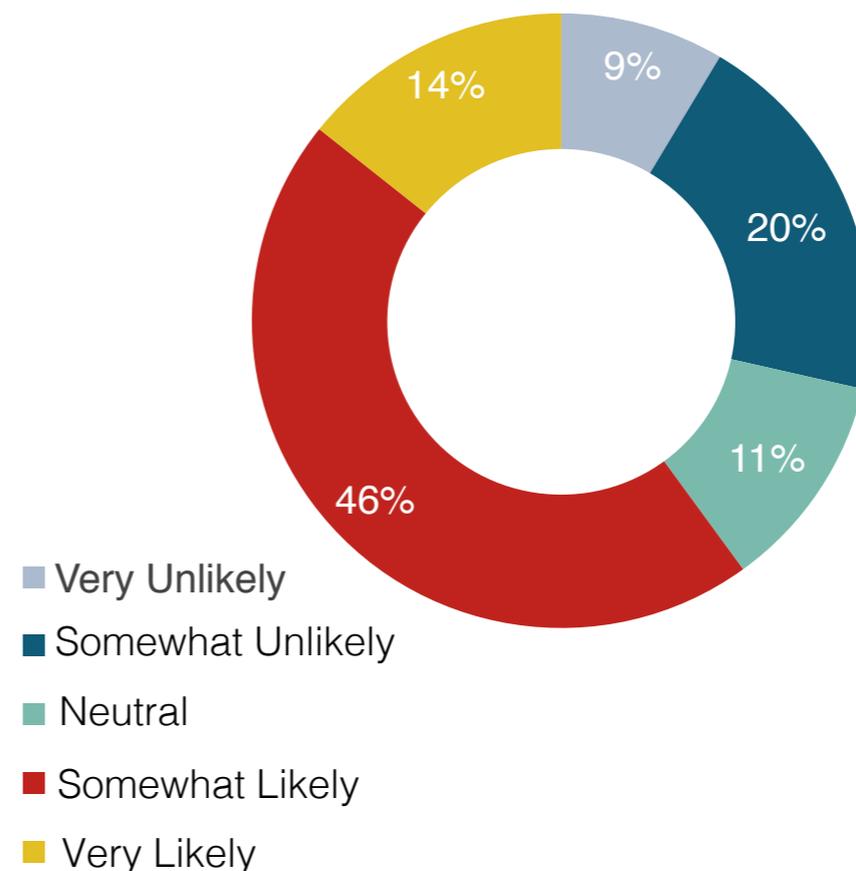
Title IV of the Higher Education Act provides financial aid to college and university students through loans, grants, and work study programs. Over the last year, the EQUIP experimental site and a flurry of draft bills have signaled an interest among policy elites in expanding Title IV access to unaccredited providers (like coding bootcamps) that are not currently eligible for federal aid.

Insiders Weigh In

When we asked this question in April, there was no consensus on whether the EQUIP experiment signaled the beginning of a trend. Now, a majority of Insiders believe that Trump's Administration is likely to expand support for unaccredited providers.

By The Numbers

More than half of Insiders believe it is likely that Trump's Administration will expand Title IV financial aid funds to unaccredited providers.



Q: How likely is it that access to Title IV funding will be expanded to include unaccredited education providers under a Trump Administration?

For-Profit Oversight

Insiders consider Trump's stance on for-profits

Background

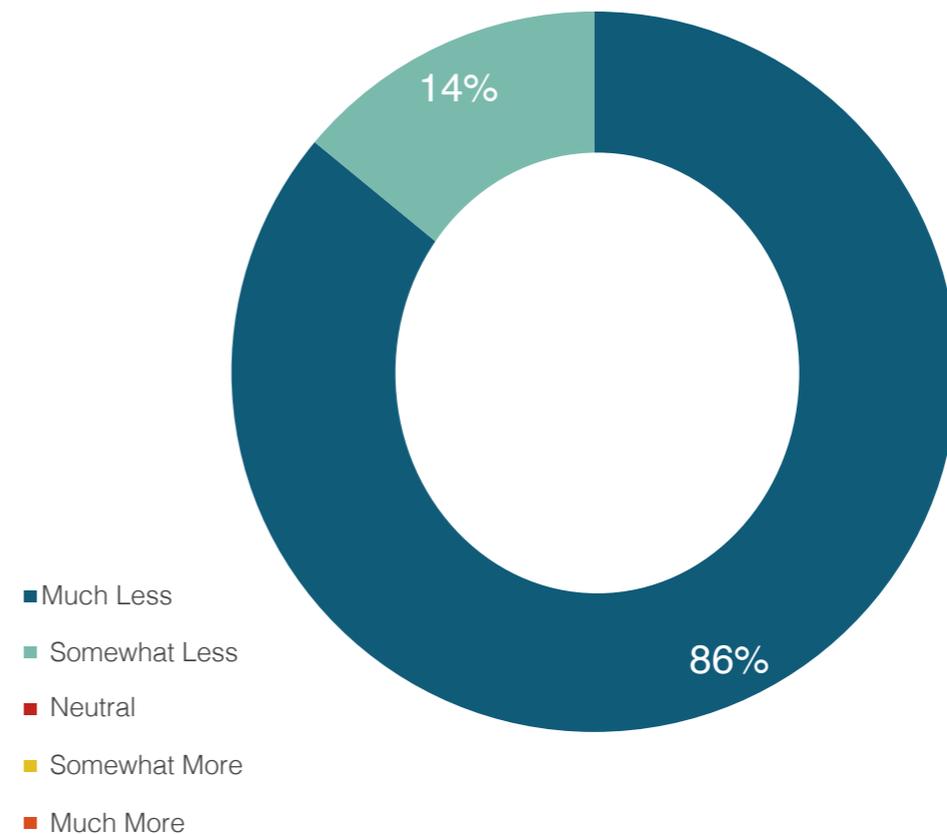
The Obama Administration's higher ed policy was characterized by hostility toward for-profit colleges and universities. Trump is expected to take a softer stance when it comes to regulation of these institutions.

Insiders Weigh In

Insiders overwhelmingly believe that Trump will scale back federal oversight of for-profit institutions. While a minority of Insiders think that oversight will be "somewhat less" aggressive, most believe that it will be "much less" aggressive.

By The Numbers

Every respondent believes that the Trump Administration will pursue less aggressive oversight of for-profit institutions than President Obama.



Q: Will a Trump Administration pursue more, less, or about the same aggressive oversight of for-profit institutions as the previous Administration?

Gainful Employment

Insiders gauge whether Trump or Congress will revisit Gainful Employment regulation

Background

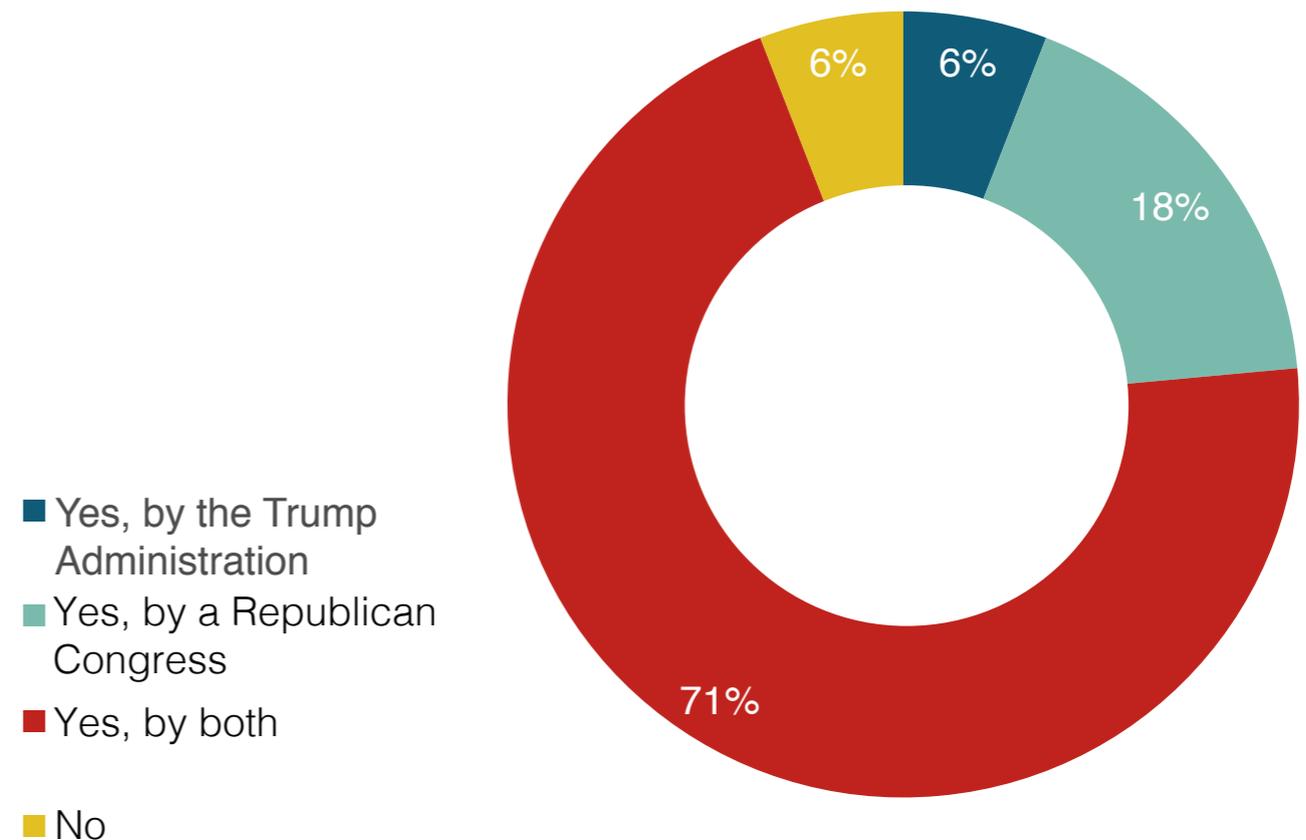
In 2015, the Obama Administration's Gainful Employment rule took effect. In order to qualify for federal student aid under the regulation, for-profit programs and certificate programs at nonprofit or public universities must demonstrate that their graduates pay no more than 20% of their discretionary income in loan payments. The rule's new disclosure requirements, which set standards for institutional reporting on cost, job placement rates, and other metrics, will go into effect on January 1, 2017.

Insiders Weigh In

Most Insiders believe that Gainful Employment will be reopened for consideration by both the executive and legislative branches.

By The Numbers

More than 70% of Insiders believe that both Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress will reopen the Gainful Employment rule.



Q: Will the Gainful Employment rule be reopened by a Trump Administration or Congressional Republicans?

NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Student Loans: Direct Lending

Insiders weigh in on the future of federal direct lending

Background

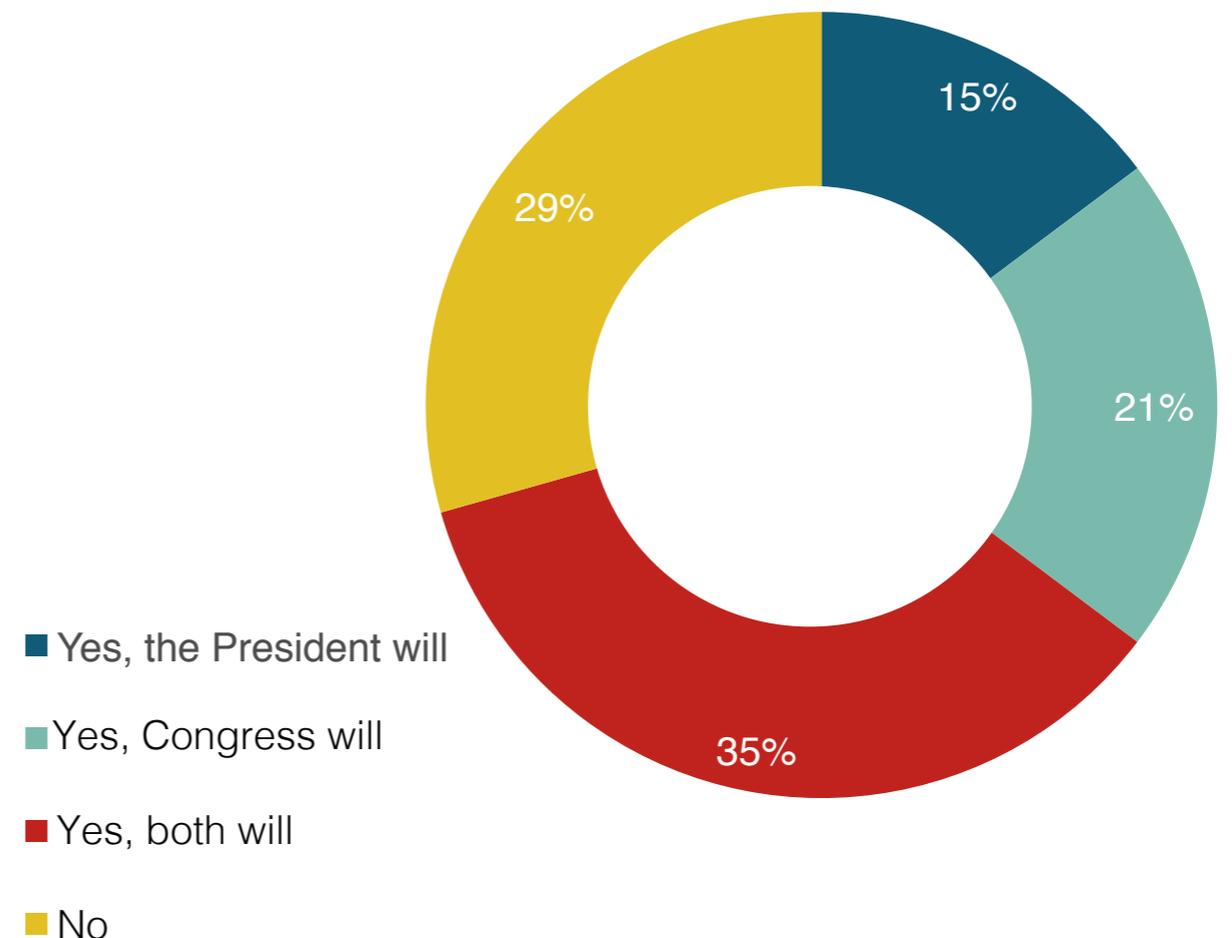
In 2010, the Obama Administration eliminated privately-originated, government-guaranteed loans and switched to a 100% direct lending system. At the time, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that this move would result in \$62 billion in savings between 2010 and 2020. However, due to the high volume of students who are behind on their payments or have defaulted (more than 40% this year) and executive action (e.g., pay-as-you-earn), it is becoming less likely that the government will realize these savings.

Insiders Weigh In

Most Insiders believe that Trump or Congress will attempt to end federal direct lending.

By The Numbers

Just over 70% of Insiders believe that either the President or Congress will attempt to return to a bank-based student lending system.



Q: Will President Trump and a Republican Congress attempt to end direct lending for student loans and return to a bank-based system?

Student Loans: Income-Driven Repayment

Insiders consider whether Trump or Congress will change income-driven repayment policies

Background

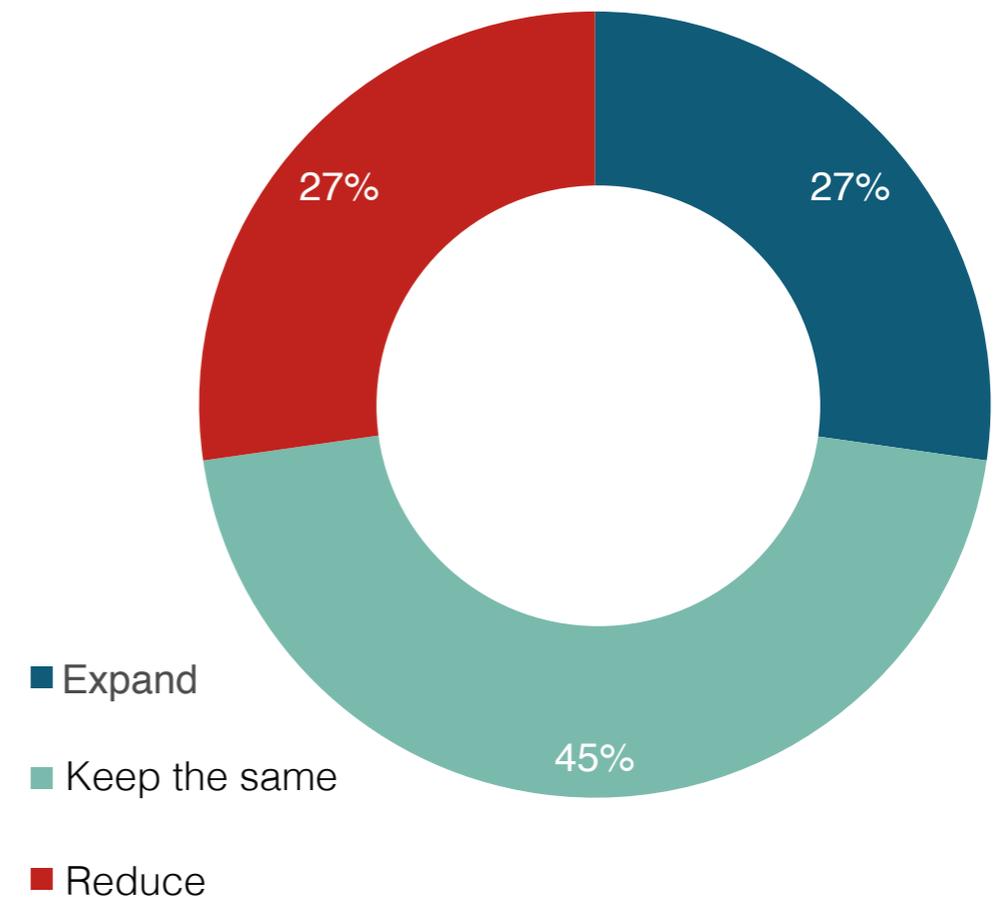
The Department of Education offers four different income-driven repayment plans, in which student borrowers pay back their loans based on income and family size. Last October, the Department released its final rules for the Revised Pay As You Earn (REPAYE) plan, aimed at expanding eligibility for income-driven repayment to more borrowers.

Insiders Weigh In

Insiders are split on the Trump Administration's approach to income-driven repayment. A plurality (45%) believe that the policy will remain the same.

By The Numbers

45% of Insiders do not expect any changes to income-driven repayment policies. The remainder are evenly split as to whether the Administration or Congress will expand or reduce the program.



Q: Will President Trump and a Republican Congress expand, keep the same, or reduce income-driven repayment of student loans?

NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Defense to Repayment

Insiders weigh in on the future of Defense to Repayment

Background

In March of this year, the Department of Education announced that thousands more students who attended campuses owned by Corinthian Colleges would be eligible to have their federal loans forgiven through the "borrower defense to repayment" (DTR) provision of the Higher Education Act. Since then, thousands of other students holding federal loans have also filed for their loans to be canceled. In October, the Department released its final DTR regulation, aimed at simplifying the claims process for students, which will take effect in 2017.

Some Insiders expect that under a Trump Administration, the Department of Education will reexamine the DTR regulations, either by postponing them or attempting to rescind them entirely. Others believe that the transition may stall the implementation of the rules, but that they will remain in effect unless Congress takes action to change them.

No More DTR

"In light of the statement released by Republican congressional leaders after the release of the final rule opposing ED's Defense to Repayment rule, it is likely to be rescinded or be null through an appropriation limitation amendment."

"A more strict interpretation of the provisions and maybe even a return to the original definition based on state consumer laws. Since the regulation won't go into effect until after Trump takes over, it could be easily postponed or unwound."

Not So Fast

"It will be stalled by the normal course of events in a transition and then complicated by the potential composition of a Trump Department of Education."

"While Republicans on the Hill will want to eliminate the regulation, the Department is likely to keep providing relief to Corinthian and other affected borrowers as-is unless and until that happens."

Q: What will the impact of a Trump Administration be on Defense to Repayment? (open-ended)

HEA Reauthorization

Most Insiders believe HEA will be reauthorized in 2018

Background

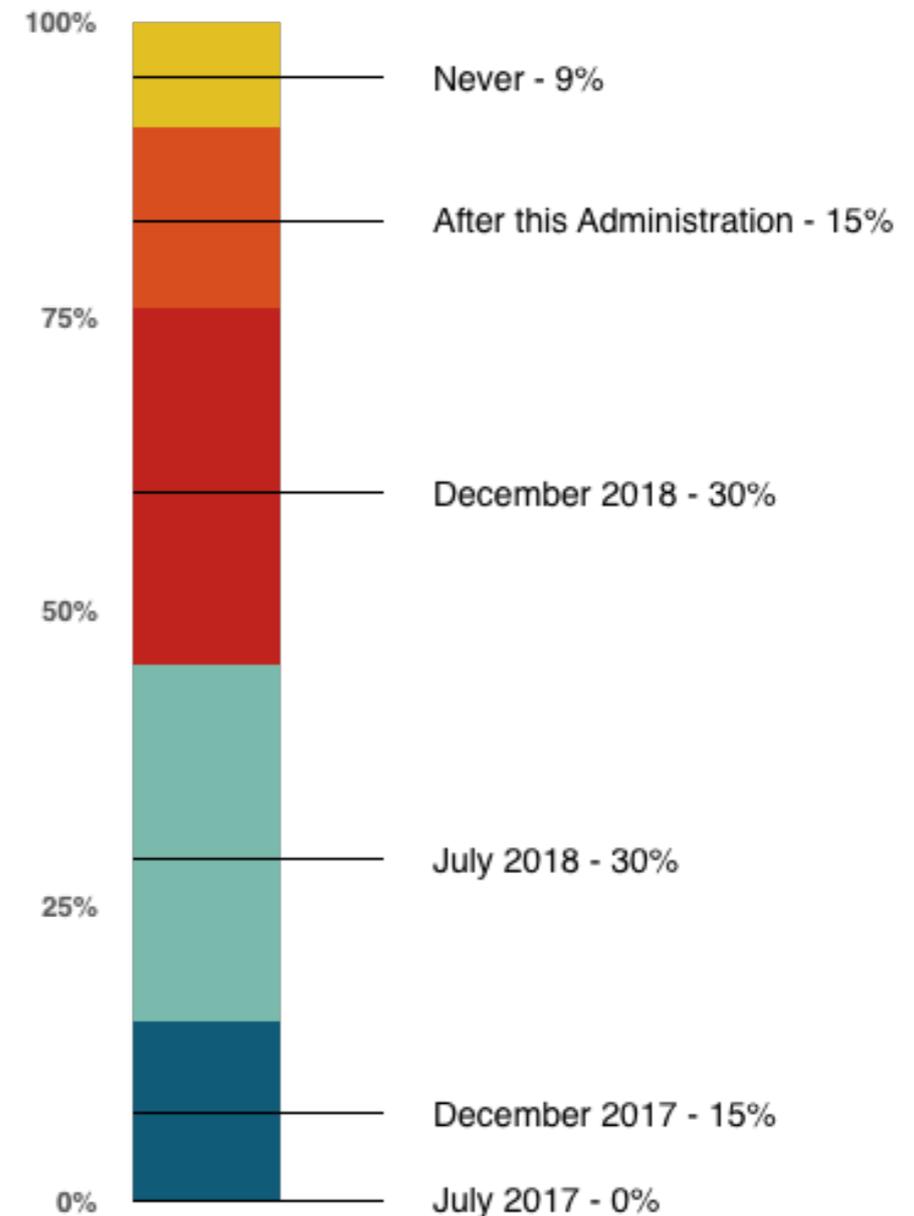
The latest iteration of the Higher Education Act (HEA), passed in 2008, was set to expire in 2013. Congress and the Administration have made tweaks through other legislation and regulatory action since then, but there has been little movement on an overall HEA bill.

When we last polled Insiders on this question, 77% believed that HEA would not be reauthorized until after the Obama Administration.

Insiders Weigh In

84% of Insiders do not believe that HEA will be reauthorized until 2018 or later.

By The Numbers



Q: By about when do you believe Congress will pass a bill reauthorizing HEA?

NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

K-12, Early Childhood, and Teacher Preparation

School Choice (DC Vouchers)

Insiders evaluate whether Trump will reopen the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program

Background

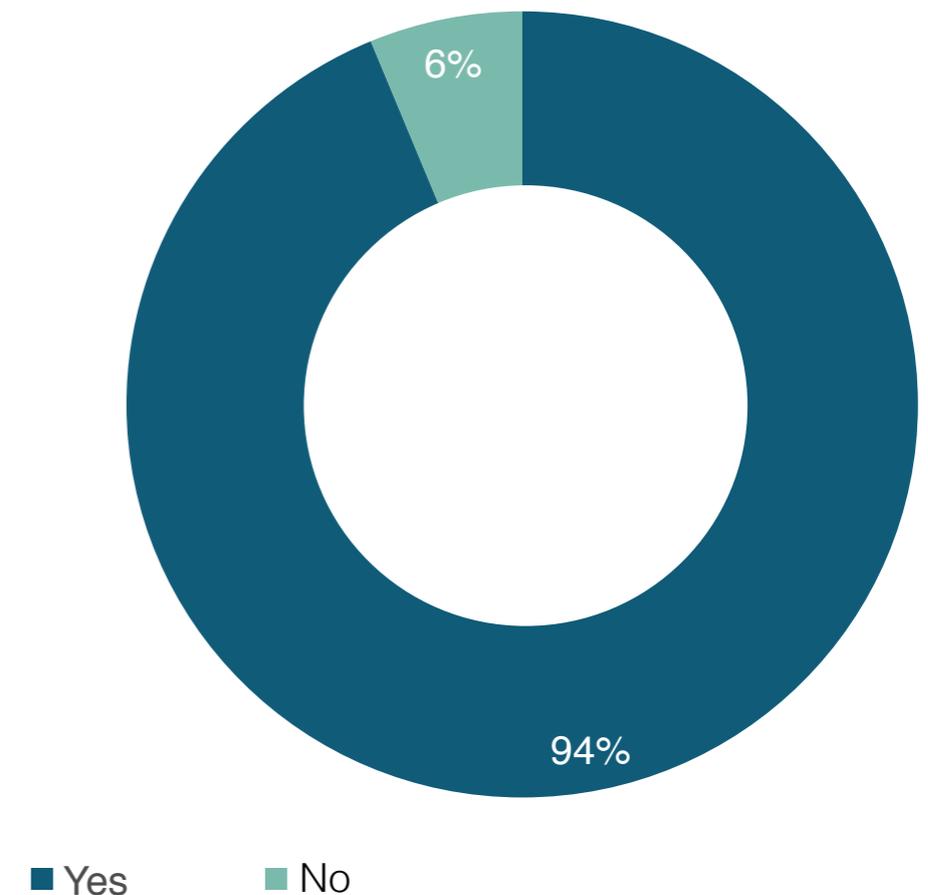
In 2003, President George W. Bush signed the DC School Choice Incentive Act, which provided federal funding for low-income students in Washington, DC to attend private schools. President Obama allowed the program to expire in 2009, but it was reauthorized for five years in 2011. The program was found to have a significant effect on graduation rates, though its impact on student achievement was inconclusive.

Insiders Weigh In

A vast majority of Insiders believe that the Trump Administration or Congress will reinvigorate the DC voucher program. In their comments, they suggest that revitalizing the program could be the first step in a larger effort to increase federal support for school choice.

By The Numbers

94% of Insiders believe that federal funding for school vouchers in DC will be restored during this Administration.



Q: Will a Trump Administration and Republican Congress reinvigorate the federal DC Scholarship Program (vouchers)?

School Choice

Insiders weigh in on the Trump Administration's school choice push

Vouchers Lead the Way

“DC vouchers. Then charters and choice as part of some sort of urban bill.”

“Protecting and growing DC vouchers.”

“I do not think they have any idea yet. It will probably start with the DC voucher program and evolve.”

Expect Something...But What?

“Hard to tell. Probably funds will be made available for it or re-allocated for it.”

“Unclear - except that we do know it is one of the few education related policies/ priorities he has talked about.”

Funds, Funds, Funds

“Push for tax credit/[Education Savings Account] or expand/alter existing savings vehicles to preference private school choice. Appropriations push for increase in [Charter Schools Programs through the Department of Education]. Attempted legislative vehicle for state grants.”

“A stand-alone bill, a proposal that starts as a full voucher of Title I but gets compromised down to a smaller-in-scope pilot, even including portability. That gets passed and opens up Title I for privatization.”

“Effort to push more charters; Department initiative for vouchers; and increased funding at the expense of other public schools.”

Q: What will the Trump Administration's school choice push look like? (open-ended)

NOTE: Some comments have been edited for clarity.

Early Childhood

Insiders consider how Trump will approach early childhood education

Background

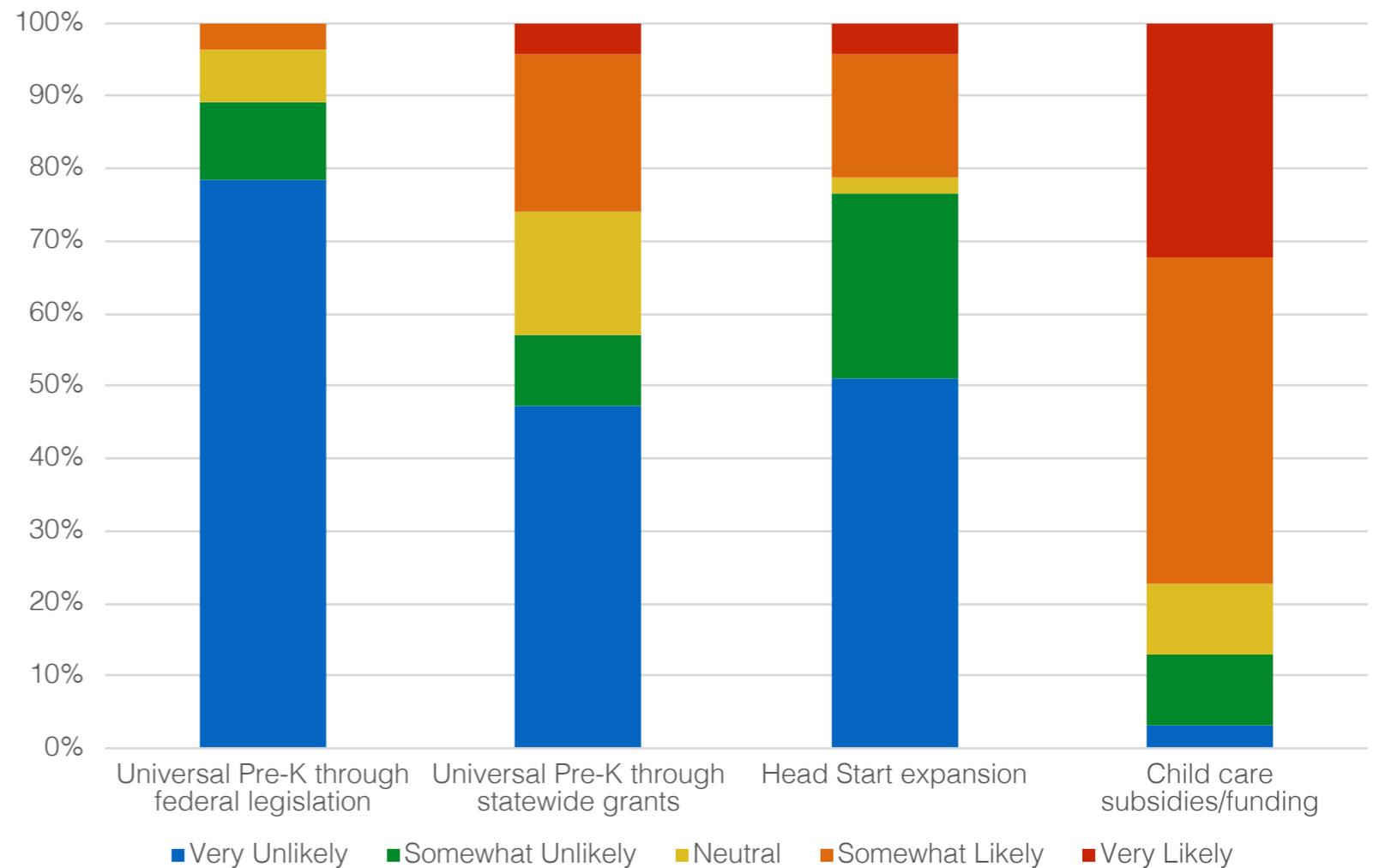
A hallmark of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, early childhood education did not receive much air time from Trump. When the issue did come up for Trump on the campaign trail, it was largely in the context of expanding child care, including by guaranteeing six weeks of maternity leave and incentivizing employers to offer on-site day care.

Insiders Weigh In

Most Insiders believe that funding child care will be Trump's most likely approach to supporting early childhood education.

By The Numbers

More than 75% of Insiders believe that child care funding will be Trump's most likely pathway for supporting early childhood education.



Q: What early childhood education policies will a Trump Administration be likely to pursue?

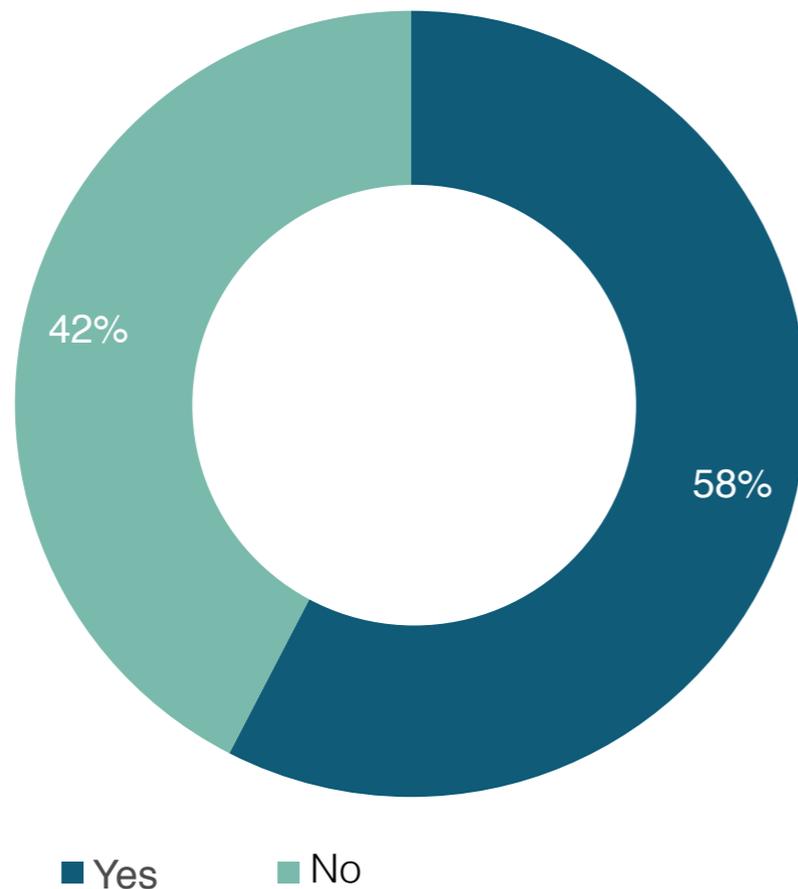
Teacher Prep

Insiders gauge how the Administration and Congress will approach teacher prep programs

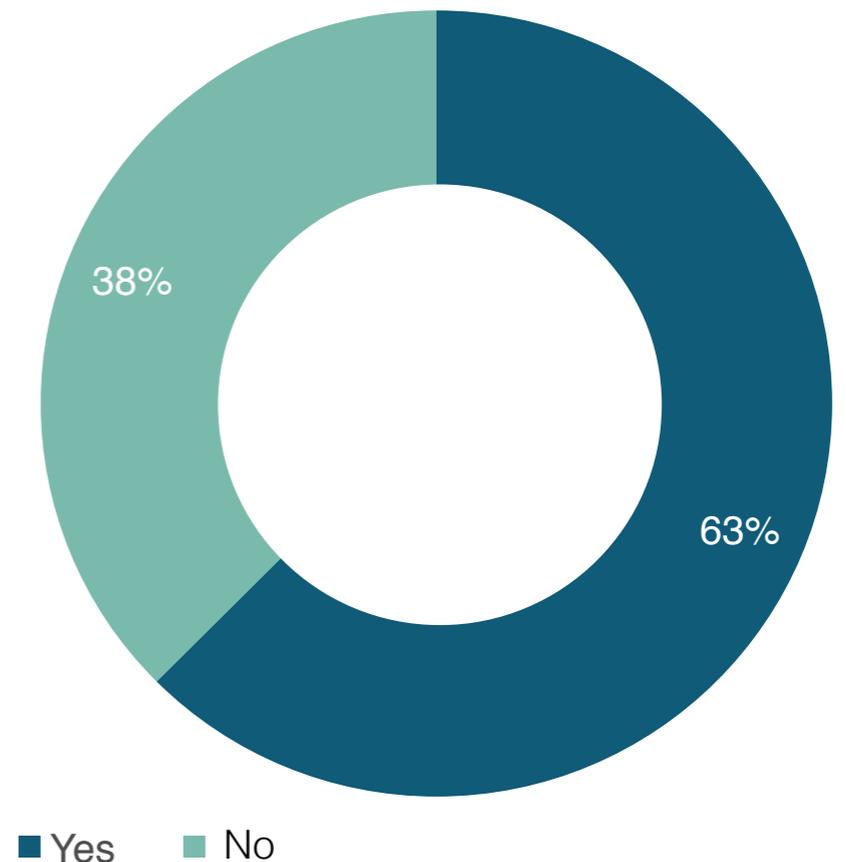
Background

In October, the Obama Administration released its final regulations for teacher preparation programs. The rules require states to report annually on the effectiveness of teacher prep programs (regarding student outcomes, teacher evaluation results, and other measures), and require states to provide technical assistance to any program deemed “low-performing.” Ultimately, low-performing programs could become ineligible for federal funds. Teachers’ unions and some Congressional Republicans vocally opposed the regulations. Overall, Insiders are split on the future of the regulations, but a slight majority believe that either the Administration or Congress will reopen them.

Administration



Congress



Q (left): Will a Trump Administration reopen the recently finalized federal regulations for teacher preparation programs?

Q (right): Will Congress reopen the recently finalized federal regulations for teacher preparation programs?

NOTE: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Teacher Prep

Insiders consider the impact of new teacher training models on existing programs

Background

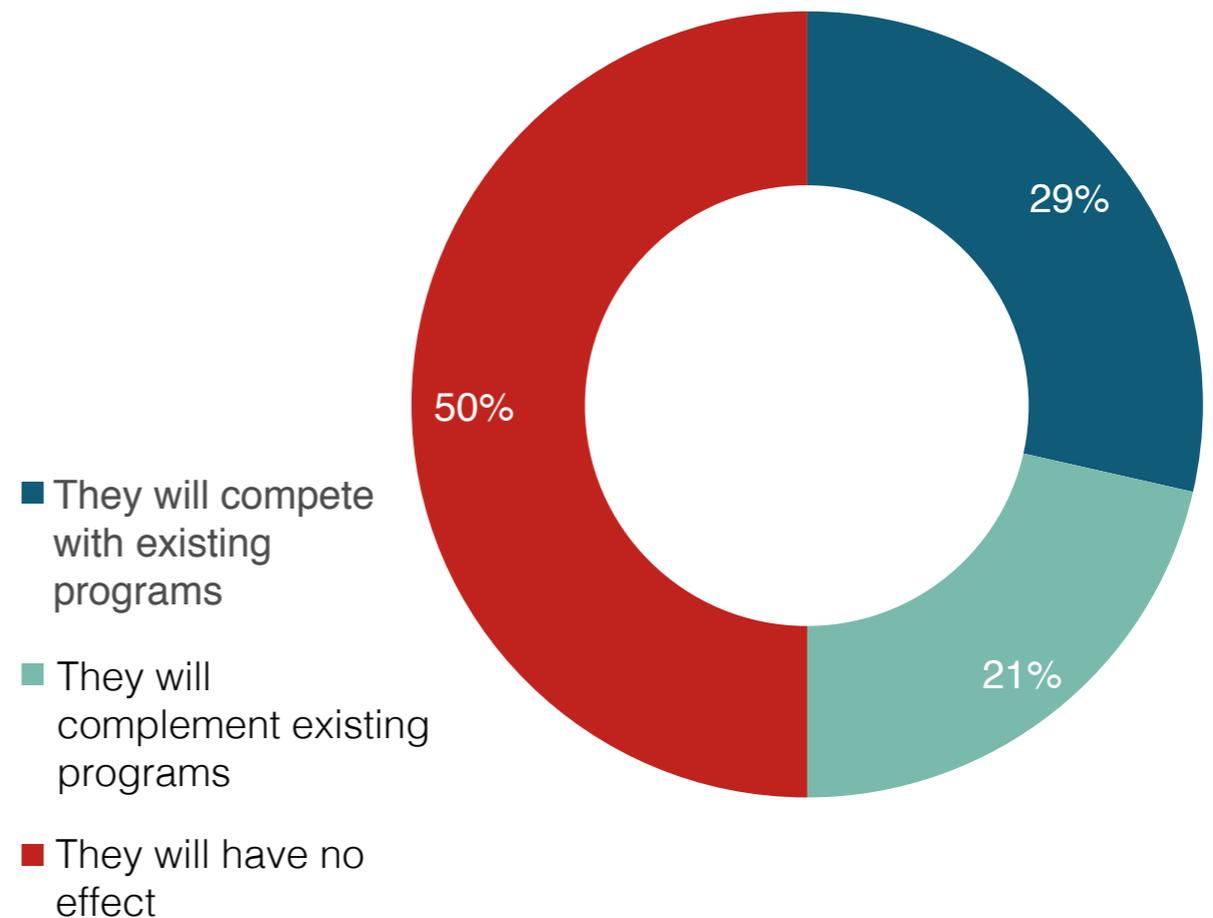
Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act allocates funding for teacher preparation, training, and support. In late September, the Department of Education issued guidance on changes to Title II under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These changes include a provision for states to use federal funds to support alternative teacher preparation programs, such as so-called “academies,” provided that they are supervised by a state-selected authorizer.

Insiders Weigh In

In general, Insiders do not expect the new programs authorized by ESSA to have a significant impact. Those who do expect an impact are split nearly evenly on whether these new models will help or harm extant programs.

By The Numbers

Half of Insiders believe the new programs authorized by ESSA will have no effect. The remainder are split regarding whether they will support or conflict with existing programs.



Q: How will the new teacher training, recruitment, and retention programs authorized by ESSA Title II (including so-called “academies” and teacher residencies) influence existing teacher prep programs?



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