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Research Groups File Another Lawsuit Against Trump for Gutting IES

By [Jessica Blake](#)

The Trump administration’s attempt to gut the Institute of Education Sciences—a key research arm of the Education Department—is now facing yet another legal challenge.

The American Educational Research Association and the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness [filed a lawsuit Monday](#) against Education Secretary Linda McMahon and her department, arguing that the dramatic staff and contract cuts it has made within IES are “unlawful,” “arbitrary” and “will be devastating to the field of education.”

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“Never before have there been such brazen attacks on education science, data, and research,” AERA executive director Felice J. Levine said in [a news release](#). “Without an

IES and the federal education statistical agency it houses, the studies and evidence-based findings produced by our members are gravely undermined.”

“We simply cannot allow this unlawful attack to go unchallenged,” Levine later added.

For regular updates on this case and others opposing actions of the Trump administration, check out [Inside Higher Ed’s lawsuit tracker](#).

The Department of Education first took aim at IES [in February](#), when it axed nearly \$900 million in contracts. Then, [in March](#), shortly after McMahon was confirmed, the department fired more than 80 percent of IES’s 120 employees. The latter cut was part of a larger reduction in force that [cut the department’s staff in half](#) over all, leaving remaining employees with [unmanageable workloads](#).

AERA and SREE are seeking to have all the canceled contracts reinstated or promptly re-bid, ensure all data from previous contractors is not deleted and to place laid-off staff members back into roles “necessary to carry out IES functions.”

The research associations are represented by Democracy Forward, a national legal organization that has led the way in multiple recent lawsuits against the Trump administration.

“This administration’s repeated assault of the education system in this country threatens educators, students and communities across our country,” Democracy Forward CEO Skye Perryman said in the release. “We will use every avenue the law provides to stop this unlawful and unconstitutional action.”

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