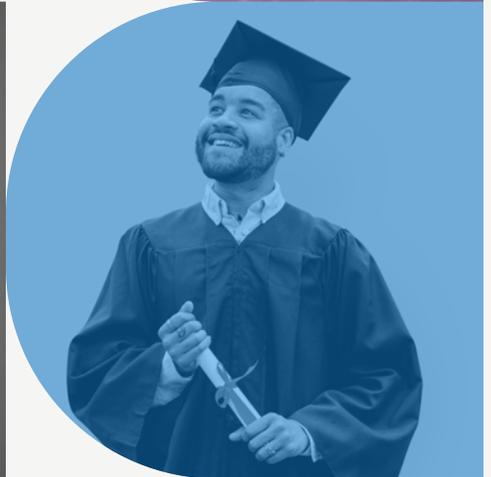
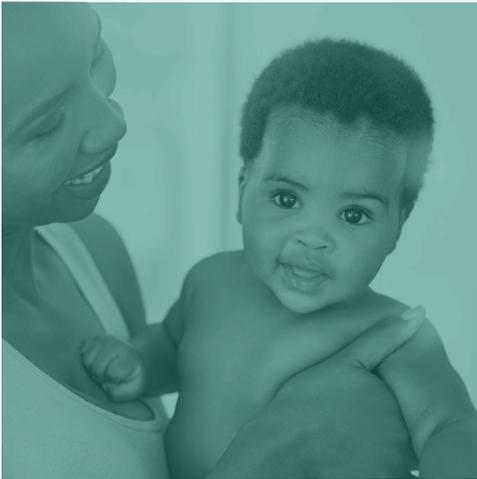
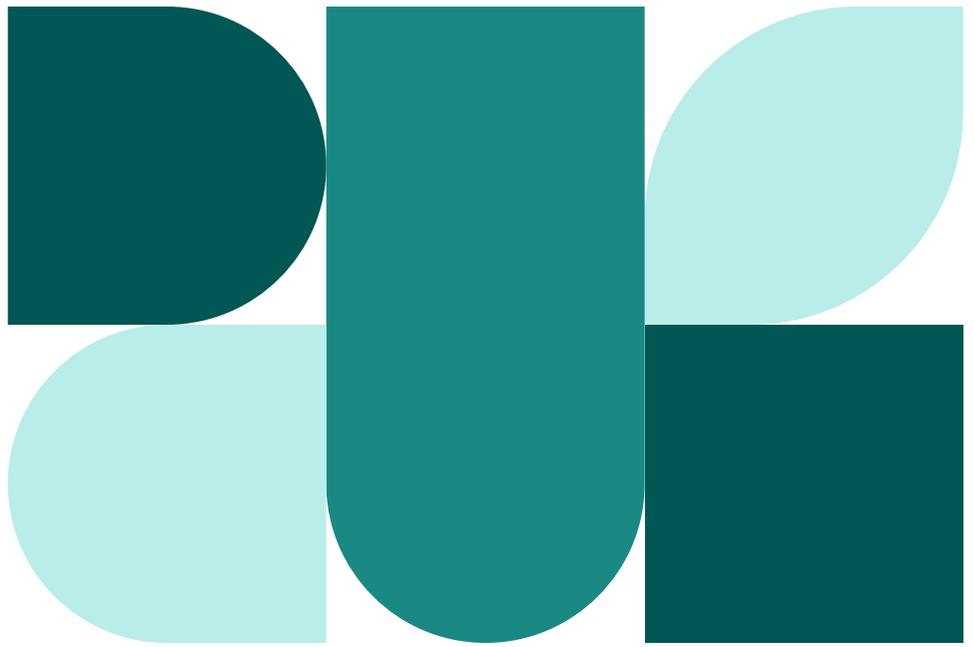


Education & Work



Year in Review

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Message from the Vice President



Kevin Carey | *Vice President, Education & Work*

This was a tough year for public education. The new administration took office with plans to shut down the U.S. Department of Education. New America's Education and Work programs immediately stood up in opposition. We believe that giving all students the opportunity to learn is a national priority requiring more strong leadership, not less.

At the same time, we continued our work to improve policy and practice in schools, colleges, and the workplace. Our early learning experts worked to seamlessly connect families with infants in neonatal intensive care units to early intervention programs that help children with disabilities. We created model policies for teaching English learners and coordinated two dozen national policy and research organizations to make sure public-school teachers are talented, well-trained, and well-paid.

Team members were a regular presence on Capitol Hill, testifying about consumer protection and accreditation in higher learning, helping community college students get good jobs, and improving career and technical education. We partnered with the National Governors Association to help six states—Maryland, Montana, North Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington—build new pathways for high school students to use apprenticeships to learn, make money, get college credit, and obtain valuable job skills and credentials. We also worked closely with the National Science Foundation to make sure new jobs in the information economy are available nationwide.

Some of our work laid the foundation for long-term change. We published a groundbreaking analysis of school district boundaries showing how new district configurations could cut racial segregation by half, increase economic integration by 65 percent, and cut tax-base inequality by two-thirds. We also focused on people in the here-and-now by improving child care services for the many college students who are also parents of young children. Our technology experts helped teachers and parents navigate the fast-moving world of screens, phones, and AI.

As a nonpartisan organization, we spoke out against harmful ideas when we saw them, providing quick, detailed analysis of how billions of dollars in proposed federal cuts would have hurt local schools. We also worked closely with lawmakers from both parties to make college financial aid more legible and transparent, and to help student borrowers in danger of financial default.

The highlights in this report show only a small sample of the projects our staff worked on this year and how many people we helped. We finish the year grateful for our supporters, our colleagues, and, most of all, the students we serve.

Who We Are

New America's Education & Work staff is divided into five areas of concentration that intersect and overlap, allowing us to collaborate with each other and help students navigate the transition from one education institution to the next and then into the workforce.



Early & Elementary Education

This program helps ensure that all children have access to a system of high-quality early learning opportunities from birth through third grade that prepare them to thrive in school and in life. We support a bold agenda for an early learning system that prioritizes high-quality opportunities for all, empowers well-prepared and fairly compensated educators to do their best work, and connects smoothly with elementary education and systems that support family well-being.

PreK–12 Education

This program focuses on strengthening public education by developing, investigating, and spotlighting new approaches to better serve children, youth, and families. Our initiatives, projects, and expertise range from children's earliest years to graduation from high school. We pay special attention to students underserved in the current system, including students from low-income families, English learners, and learners with disabilities.

Teaching, Learning & Tech

This program advances policies and practices that help educators, youth-serving professionals, technologists, and researchers design and use technology to strengthen learning systems for young people. We take a human-centered approach to understanding and addressing the needs of all learners in a rapidly evolving digital age, from early childhood through postsecondary pathways.

Higher Education

This program illuminates higher education's most complex challenges and develops student-centered policy recommendations. We are dedicated to making higher education more equitable, inclusive, and accountable so that everyone has a chance to obtain an affordable, high-quality education after high school. We are a voice for students in policy discussions dominated by institutional interests.

Center on Education & Labor at New America

This program explores the changing relationship between education, social mobility, and economic security with the goal of promoting shared prosperity and middle-class renewal. Our work spans the education-to-career continuum, with special initiatives focused on supporting young adults, strengthening community colleges, expanding access to apprenticeships, navigating the future of work, and advocating for policies that improve the quality of jobs. We work directly with communities to identify barriers to economic mobility and to develop policies and practical solutions that reflect their needs and aspirations.

Our Impact 2025



January

The **Teaching, Learning & Tech** team's "Three C's" framework was cited as the foundation for the [newly released 5 C's screen-media guidance](#) from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which will help parents, clinicians, and educators make smart decisions about using screen technology with children. A two-part New America webinar series, [Tablets and Teaching](#), featured the new guidelines and research behind them.

The **Future of Work in the Innovation Economy (FOWIE)** team formally launched the [Accelerator Partners Council](#), which spans 23 national membership associations that convene governors, mayors, and leaders from significant institutions in regional economic, workforce, and emerging technology development ecosystems.

The **FOWIE** Managing Director Shalin Jyotishi was appointed to the Workers & Workforce committee of the [Bipartisan Policy Center's Commission on the American Workforce](#), co-chaired by former Gov. Deval Patrick (D-Mass.) and Gov. Bill Haslam (R-Tenn.).

The **Center on Education & Labor at New America (CELNA)** team launched a [research project](#) on degree apprenticeships, with support from a dynamic advisory committee of education, workforce development, and private-sector leaders; it will provide the first-ever landscape analysis of existing registered degree apprenticeship programs.

February

Education & Work teams quickly responded to the dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education by the Trump administration, making the case for why it matters in [more than 30 analyses](#). We mobilized again in November, with rapid-response media outreach, resulting in coverage in *The New York Times* and an op-ed in *The 74*.

The **Higher Education** team exposed the Department of Government Efficiency's inflated claims of \$900 million in alleged "waste" at the U.S. Department of Education, sparking national scrutiny and leading to a prominent [USA Today feature](#), among other coverage.

During the Trump administration's effort to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education, the **Higher Education** team became a go-to national resource, offering rapid analysis, [public polling](#) that demonstrated the deep unpopularity of eliminating the department, and media commentary including in *CNN*, *USA Today*, and *The New York Times*.

CELNA Senior Director Mary Alice McCarthy testified before the [House Appropriations subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies](#) on the critical role that community colleges serve in expanding pathways to the middle class for millions of low-income students and adult working learners. In her oral testimony, she called on Congress to reverse the Trump administration's attacks on the Department of Education programs and staff.

March

Higher Education team members Rachel Fishman and Edward Conroy [testified before the Minnesota Senate's Committee on Higher Education](#), helping advance landmark legislation to improve financial-aid offer transparency; this legislation became state law.

April

FOWIE team hosted its first Regional Insight Summit with the [FUTURES NSF Engine of the Southwest at Arizona State University](#) to elevate workforce and economic development efforts of community college, industry, and regional innovation leaders. Participants included Senator Mark Kelly, ASU President Michael Crow, New America CEO Anne-Marie Slaughter, journalists, and leaders across the NSF Engine.

The New America-led **Good Jobs Collaborative** hosted the event [Not Working for Workers: The First 100 Days of the Trump Administration](#) to discuss the impact of the administration's actions on workers and how Democrats could regain the trust of working-class voters. The event featured Senator Chris Murphy, *The New York Times* journalist Jamelle Bouie, and a variety of labor leaders, worker advocates, and policy experts.



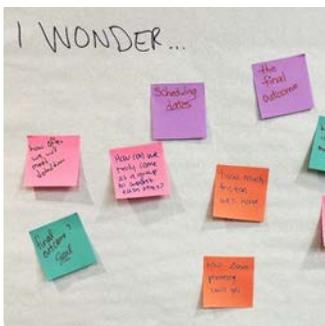
May

Early & Elementary Education Policy team leadership presented at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's [Leadership Exchange: A New Vision for High Quality Preschool Curriculum](#) to help spotlight efforts in implementing high-quality preschool curricula that redresses inequities.

The **Higher Education** team's [research](#) on the enrollment management industry prompted the House Judiciary Committee to demand information from major enrollment management firms, including details on whether they use tuition-pricing algorithms that could disadvantage students.

June

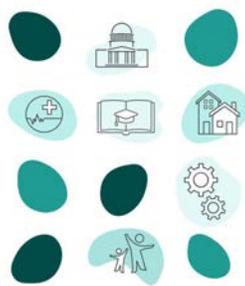
Fellows with the **Learning Sciences Exchange** designed [new tools for three elementary schools in Pennsylvania](#) to help families better connect to their children's schools and feel heard by school leaders; these resources—such as an ambassador program to help new families—are already being used by each school.



FOWIE deepened its strategic partnership with the National Science Foundation, including co-organizing a [Capitol Hill unveiling](#) of the second cohort of NSF Engine finalists with peer think tanks and hosting a webinar that engaged the NSF, NSF Engine CEOs, industry partners, members of Congress, and think-tank partners.



CELNA published two briefs—[Disconnected Systems for Disconnected Youth](#) and [Does Combined Planning Help States Align Workforce Initiatives? Survey Shows Mixed Results](#)—exploring how innovations in federal funding could support efforts to better align our systems of education and work in support of career pathways for young people.



July

Education & Work teams mobilized a rapid response within a day of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act's passage, tracking the threat of the funding cuts and their impact on students' education, health, and well-being in a [collection of resources](#) and earned-media outreach.



The **Education Funding Equity** team [published data on the budgetary impact on every school and congressional district](#) when the Trump administration withheld \$6.8 billion in federal funding to school districts. Our analysis received over 37,000 hits in its first month of publication and was cited in numerous national news outlets before the administration reversed its decision.

The **Educators** team convened 23 national policy and research organizations to develop the [Six-Strand Strategy for Educator Excellence](#) to address our nation's educator workforce issues and promote student success. The team also provided technical assistance to the U.S. Senate committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on evidence-based strategies to strengthen the educator workforce, which resulted in critical additions to Ranking Member Sanders' reintroduced [Pay Teachers Act](#).



The **Launch: Equitable and Accelerated Pathways for All** team at New America assumed leadership duties for the multi-organization initiative as it kicked off a new strategy, and it led a process to select six leading states to join its Accelerator, an intensive, year-long technical assistance sprint designed to address key priorities in the states' career pathways strategies.

August

The **Early and Elementary Education Policy** and **Early Development and Disability** teams' [article published in *Hechinger Report*](#) on NICU infants' lack of access to early intervention services led to the passage of a law in Illinois to improve access to these services.



The **English Learner** team collaborated with School Board Partners to develop a [model English learner policy](#) that strengthens data collection, monitoring, and accountability for multilingual students. Gwinnett County Public Schools—the eleventh largest school district in the country—adopted a policy based on this model in December 2025.

The **PAYA** team selected a new cohort of [six place-based partnerships](#) to receive grant funding and technical assistance to launch high-quality youth apprenticeship programs in a range of fields including health care, education, and the skilled trades.



The **Student Parent** team connected student parent advocates with journalists and shared expert analysis when the U.S. Department of Education declined to open grants for [campus-based child care for student parents](#). The team showed how these grants support college enrollment and completion and pushed the Department to issue the funds through the CCAMPIS Reauthorization Act.

PAYA partnered with the National Governors Association to launch a second cohort of its [Youth Apprenticeship Policy Academy](#), where six states will receive funding and technical assistance to develop policy strategies to advance youth apprenticeship at scale.

September

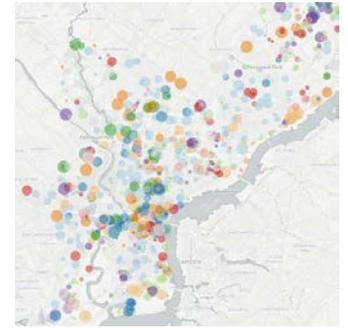
The **English Learner** team convened 35 national and state organizations to foster collaboration and coordinate efforts to strengthen multilingual learners' educational opportunities and outcomes.



The **Education Funding Equity** team released [Redrawing the Lines](#), a groundbreaking report and data simulation showing that it is possible to redraw school district boundaries to include more diverse student populations and ensure fairer access to property tax funding. The new boundaries have the potential to reduce racial segregation by half, increase economic integration by 65 percent, and cut tax-base inequality by two-thirds.



Mentors and alumni with the **build4good internship** program built a [data portal for the Data Rescue Project](#), which is coordinating hundreds of volunteers to archive government data sets that are at risk of being deleted or distorted under the current administration. The portal was covered by [The New York Times](#).



The **Community College care** team worked with six community colleges to help enhance their delivery of child care services to student parents. The team also developed a [practice guide](#) and state and federal policy recommendations to help colleges support child care for student parents.



October

Higher Education senior director Amy Laitinen [testified](#) before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Higher Education and the Workforce, shaping the national conversation on price transparency, higher education value, accountability, and the critical role of a functioning Department of Education.



November

CELNA senior policy advisor Braden Goetz [testified](#) at a House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education hearing on strengthening skills through career and technical education, recommending reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and urging against moving the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education to the Department of Labor.



The **Teaching, Learning & Technology** team released [a brief](#) arguing that digital literacy is a required foundation for AI literacy, mapping which states are leading the charge to build AI-ready classrooms in a map and which are lagging.



The **PAYA** team co-hosted, with partners, more than 350 people at its annual [National Youth Apprenticeship Summit](#) to foster impactful discussions on how to expand access to quality apprenticeship opportunities for youth.



December

The **Early & Elementary Education Policy** team advised dozens of decision-makers on strengthening early learning systems across the United States, presenting to leading organizations including the Council of Chief State School Officers, California's Department of Social Services, New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development, and SXSW EDU.



2025 *by the Numbers*

10

External Podcasts

44

Op-Eds

21

Public Events

250

Blogs Published

29

Reports and Briefs

1M+

Page Views

682K+

Unique Viewers

14K

Newsletter Subscribers

3

Capitol Hill Testimonies

772

Bluesky Followers

10K+

LinkedIn Followers

90K

LinkedIn Impressions

6.5K

Media Mentions

24.9B

Total Editorial Reach

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About Us

Public education is a pillar of American prosperity and civic life. From birth to school, college, and work, everyone deserves the opportunity to learn. But for too many students, education is inadequate, underfunded, and disconnected from good jobs. New America's Education & Work issue area is dedicated to providing the best of education to everyone, especially the historically marginalized, starting in the earliest years and continuing throughout their lives.

Our Funders

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Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arizona State University Children's Equity Project
Arnold Ventures
Ascendium Education Group
Bainum Family Foundation
Barr Foundation
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