

Wonder Why U.S. Education Is So Bad?

by [Carrie L. Lukas](#)

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Yesterday I [wrote](#) about a counterproductive proposal to make it illegal to consider employment status when filling a job. The threat of lawsuits will discourage employers from hiring, and force those that do create jobs to waste more resources on litigation, instead on economically productive activities.

But the specter of litigation isn't just a drag on the economy and on companies. It's also affecting our education system. [Walter Olson](#) at the Cato Institute recently wrote:

As Pat Kossan reports in the Arizona Republic, the state of Arizona has averted a threatened civil-rights lawsuit from Washington by agreeing to stop monitoring teachers' English fluency and pronunciation in the classroom. "In November, federal officials told Arizona that its fluency monitoring may violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by discriminating against teachers who are Hispanic and others who are not native English speakers."

Olson explains that this one can't be blamed on this Administration: this has been EEOC policy since the early 1990s.

This is an important window into why our education system underperforms, in spite of our massive investment in it. It's pure insanity that administrators cannot take into account English fluency when evaluating potential teachers. The U.S. may in fact be the only country left that doesn't recognize that mastery of the English language is critical for future economic productivity.

I'm currently living in Brussels, and my daughters (4 and 6) attend the German school here. While German is the primary language of the school, their students are all already studying English. I feel confident that the English teachers have been selected because of their detailed knowledge of the language and that they will expose students to impeccable grammar.

It's sad--no, make that infuriating--to think that American students cannot expect the same in their own schools. And we wonder why America is become less and less competitive worldwide?