



Gov't monopoly in education

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Because the Department of Education has granted waivers to more than half the nation's schools, one analyst says people are wondering if the No Child Left Behind Act is being nullified.

With 26 states now exempt from the program first proposed by George W. Bush's administration, Neal McCluskey, associate director of the [Cato Institute](#)'s Center for Educational freedom, says NCLB has not been completely nullified, but parts of it have. In fact, he says the Obama administration has stepped over the line in doing so.

"It doesn't say that the waivers can be contingent on states adopting whatever the administration says are the reforms it wants, so this is a complete trampling of the separation of powers," McCluskey contends.

The only way to fix the problem, according to the Cato spokesman, is to eliminate the government monopoly over education.

"Now it's coming down to one person -- the president -- dictating policy," the Cato Institute associate notes. "We've got to move away from that and move to school choice, where schools and educators are held accountable by parents taking their money and their kids out of schools they don't like and putting them in schools they do like -- and not having to go through a multi-decade political process to get the education they want for their kids."

Meanwhile, critics wonder whether replacing NCLB with the Obama administration's preferred Common Core Standards is accomplishing anything.