



## Cutting ed. budget won't harm students

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Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is asking Congress to stop the looming mandatory budget cuts aimed at federal education programs, as he claims such cuts would cause students long-term harm.

Duncan compares the proposed cuts to "playing chicken with the lives of the American people." But Neal McCluskey of the [Cato Institute](#) says that is ridiculous, because the proposal amounts to about a 0.87 percent cut to education.

"You can't take a less than a one percent drop and call that 'playing chicken with the lives of our children,'" he argues. "It simply doesn't hold up when you look at the numbers."

McCluskey further asserts there is plenty that can be cut from an education budget that has massively increased over the past 40 years.

"Federal spending has come close to tripling on a per-pupil basis, and overall spending has come close to tripling on a per-pupil basis," he explains. "And we've got no increase in scores for 17-year-olds, who are our high school seniors in that time."

Additionally, the analyst points out that the federal government has no constitutional authority to fund and administer education programs.