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# Politics AP

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## What would happen if Rand Paul, allies kill Education Department? Like

BY HALIMAH ABDULLAH  
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — If calls by Kentucky Republican Senate candidate Rand Paul and fellow tea party conservatives to abolish the U.S. Department of Education are successful, the move could adversely impact the nation's economically disadvantaged students — including thousands of schoolchildren in rural Appalachian Kentucky districts.

Completely dismantling the Department of Education would prove a herculean and politically unpopular task, said Frederick Hess, director of education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative Washington think tank. Officials would have to determine whether such federally funded programs as Title 1 — which distributes funding to schools and districts with high numbers of low-income students — the need-based Pell Grants to low-income college students, and programs that benefit Head Start — an early childhood education program for lower income children — would have to be downsized, reassigned or eliminated altogether.

"It's not realistic. If there is any official in Obama's cabinet who has gotten more praise from the Wall Street Journal and conservative corners it is the secretary of education," Hess said of Arne Duncan, the former head of public schools in Chicago. "Republicans have spoken relatively kindly about what's being done with education."

Paul himself has, at times, seemed conflicted on the matter. Paul didn't respond to repeated requests to further clarify how, if the Department of Education were abolished, he envisions retooled education policy and funding.

At a gathering this week for young Republicans at Henry Clay High School in Lexington, Paul reiterated his support for "sending less money to Washington" and returning control over education solely to states and local communities. Paul made similar comments earlier this month at a Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce function in Covington.

"The Department of Education, I think, should be done away with," Paul told the chamber. "It doesn't mean we won't still be involved with education, it would just be done at the local and state level. There is no constitutional mandate for the federal government to be involved in education."

In May, however, Paul told WHAS 11 in Louisville that he didn't want to abolish the Department of Education.

"I say what we do is take a multi-step look at every department," Paul said in an interview. "But you do look at everything across the board and say 'What can we downsize? What can we privatize? What can we eliminate?'"

The U.S. Department of Education currently administers a budget of \$63.7 billion, and its programs serve 56 million students. The economic stimulus law provided an additional infusion of \$96.8 billion to school districts.

States traditionally get 10 percent of their education dollars from the federal government — \$429 million in Kentucky, according to the state Department of Education.

Fayette County schools, for example, typically receive \$25 million in federal funding. The use this money to help fund everything from reading and math programs designed to level the academic playing field for economically disadvantaged students, to improve teacher quality and to meet the needs of student with

disabilities.

Calls to abolish the Department of Education are part of a broader belief among conservatives that the federal government must be downsized. It's a refrain that has roots in Ronald Reagan-era politics, said Andrew Coulson, director of the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute's Center for Education Freedom.

McClatchy Newspapers 2010

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tpahl wrote on 09/20/2010 03:14:39 AM:

What would happen? Well maybe we would revert back to something similar to the way things were in 1977 when the department was created? Why does the article not mention the department has been around so few years and maybe describe what it was like before rather than trying to scare people into thinking Paul is proposing some radical experiment?

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Kurtis wrote on 09/19/2010 08:55:32 PM:

Besides the fact that education should be a state and local priority is the fact that in order to avoid a collapse of the dollar federal spending must be slashed with an axe. A collapse of the dollar would be disastrous since the price of everything would skyrocket. The Education Department is but one of many Departments that have to be abolished if we are to avoid a crisis much worse than the Depression. Such a crisis needs to be avoided at all costs, (including abolishing favored institutions), since it would result in massive government restrictions on our freedoms and liberties. Only the government loves a crises, since it makes it possible for it to expand its power and control.

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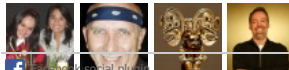


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