



Another administration power grab?

Bob Kellogg - OneNewsNow - 6/15/2011 4:20:00 AM

It appears the Obama administration wants to grab more authority over public education, taking advantage of a stalemate in Congress over "No Child Left Behind."

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is threatening to by-pass Congress and implement his so-called "Plan B" if Congress cannot pass an overhaul of No Child Left Behind by August. Duncan argues that his plan to give schools relief from federal mandates under NCLB -- via waivers on test scoring to flexibility on how schools spend federal dollars -- is simply a fallback. "The prospect of doing nothing is what I'm fighting against," the education secretary told reporters last week.

But Neal McCluskey, associate director of the Center for Educational Freedom at [The Cato Institute](#), has deep concerns with such a tactic.

"It looks like he wants to push the federal education policy -- and the entire nation's education system, as a result -- in a very dangerous, centrally directed direction," McCluskey explains. "It's extremely dangerous precedent if the Executive [Branch] is given carte blanche authority to do whatever it wants."

According to McCluskey, it is doubtful Congress will come to terms on No Child Left Behind by the August deadline, which would pave the way for Duncan to make his move.

"And that gives [Washington, DC] an even tighter grip...around every single school in the country -- at least every single public school," he laments.

McCluskey says a big enough outcry from both parties in Congress, complaining that the Obama administration is overstepping its bounds, might preclude Secretary Duncan from taking action.