



Navigating the Changing Federal Policy Landscape

District Leadership Forum



Events for District Leaders

Superintendent Research Briefings

We summarize the latest research on K-12's biggest challenges to help district leaders *get smart* and *make progress*.

“

EAB's research and information are some of the best I've seen...
simple, concise, easy to understand.

*Superintendent,
Missouri School District*

”



Education's Trusted Partner in Solving Today's Most Complex Challenges

EAB in Brief

2007

Forum launched with 30 partners

2800+

Partner institutions

8,000+

Peer reviewed best practices identified

10m+

Students supported by our student success platform

Helping Schools Support Students From Kindergarten to Graduation and Beyond

What Makes Our Model Unique

Depth of Insight



We "boil the ocean" to define what innovators do differently

Detailed Implementation Support



We take the guesswork out of planning and implementation

Relentless Focus on Turning Research Into Results

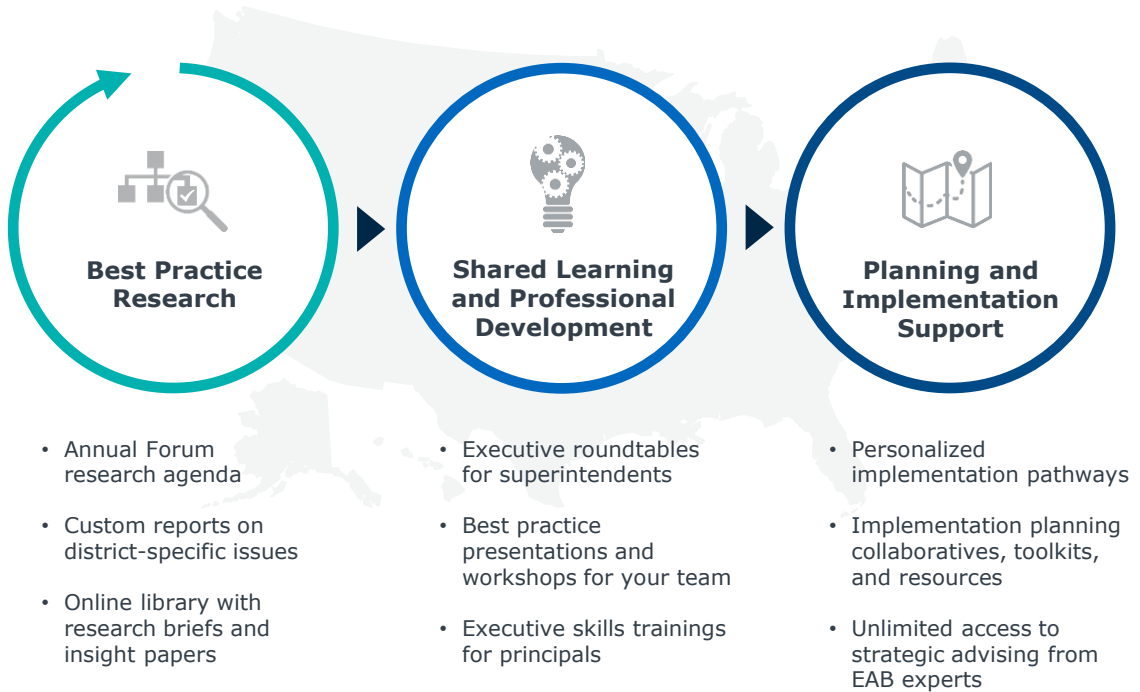
95%

of partners choose to continue our work together each year



The District Leadership Forum

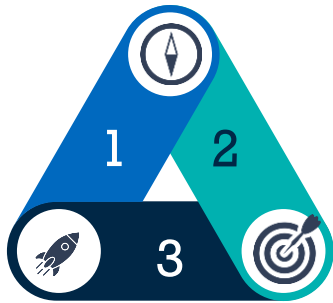
Comprehensive Support to Help District Leaders Get Further, Faster, Together



Rethinking Strategic Planning



How Districts Can Achieve Internal Goals Through External Change



Components of an Ideal District Strategy System

1. A Long-Term View of Success

- “Pillars” that will always matter to students and parents
- 3-6 KPIs for each pillar that can be used to track progress

2. Dynamic Agenda Setting and Prioritization

- Annual review of internal metrics and external change
- Categorized priorities to inform investments of time and resources

3. Student-Centered Future Visioning

- Workshops and design sprints to imagine bold futures for your schools
- Exploration of which innovations would elevate student success today

Source: EAB Interviews and Analysis

Four Years in Four Weeks

The Second Trump Administration Arrives With a Plan



"The strategy has existed since at least 2018, when [...] Stephen K. Bannon boasted of the ability to overwhelm Democrats and any media opposition through a determined effort to "flood the zone" with initiatives."

*Luke Broadwater,
New York Times, Jan 28, 2025*

"It's been overwhelming sensory overload."
Representative Jamie Raskin, (D-MD)

Today's Agenda

- 1 What's changed, and what questions should we be asking?
- 2 What have we learned about how to weather constant disruption?
- 3 How can EAB help district leaders navigate disruptive change?



**We will not replace
guidance from associations**



**We cannot provide
legal advice**

A New Daily Reality for Undocumented Students



Key Changes

- Immigration officials can now attempt operations on campuses
- Local law enforcement can be deputized to support immigration enforcement
- Undocumented immigrants can be detained if accused of theft and violent crimes
- “Expedited removal” policy now applies to all 50 states

Essential Questions

Have we...

- Defined roles and responsibilities for managing a school-based immigration enforcement event?
- Discussed ways to strengthen trust between students and SROs or local police?
- Communicated that school is still the best place for students to be?

Roll-Back of Title IX and Gender Recognition



Key Changes

- Title IX protections reverted to those in place in 2020
- The Federal Government now recognizes only two biological sexes (Male and Female)
- Schools receiving federal funds may no longer:
 - Allow trans students to use “intimate spaces” designated for the opposite sex
 - Allow trans-female students to compete on female sports teams
 - “Deliberately conceal” a child’s trans identity from parents
 - Teach topics related to gender identity

Essential Questions

Have we...

- Revised training, procedures, and documents to align with the 2020 Title IX Rule?
- Communicated with students and families since January 20th about mental health supports that can be accessed through or near to the district?
- Ensured students have access to single-use spaces in each school to avoid issues with “intimate spaces?”

Attempts to Eradicate Race-Based Actions in Schools

Key Changes

Arguments presented in the “Dear Colleagues” Letter:

- Any district engaged in “illegal DEI” (now defined as any race-conscious action) is now subject to Title VI violations
- The letter presents a simple test. “If an educational institution treats a person of one race differently than it treats another person because of that person’s race, the educational institution violates the law.”
- The letter gives 14 days to cease any and all policies and practices that meet that standard

Essential Questions

- Have we audited current policies, curricula, and practices to identify examples of race-based actions?
- Have we discussed which practices currently used to support equity and inclusion could be “hardwired” into Tier 1 for the benefit of all students?

Chat Question

If you could poll superintendents on any question related to federal policy today, what would you ask?

EAB's 2025 Voice of the Superintendent Survey
Launching in March 2025

Today's Agenda

1

What's changed? How policies are impacting our students and staff

2

What have we learned? Three keys to weathering constant disruption

3

How EAB is working to support district leaders navigate change

#1. Don't React to Every News Cycle

Timeline of Federal Funding Freeze Reminds Us to Take a Breath



OMB Memo Released

Around 5 p.m., OMB sends a memo to all executive departments and agencies which seems to require a temporary pause of all federal financial assistance.

Access Restricted

Many grantees report being unable to log in and access funds from their grants.

(Some) Details Given

FAQ document clarifies that freeze is limited to those related to seven Executive Orders. 52-page spreadsheet shared with agencies.

Freeze Halted

Around 5 p.m., a Federal Judge rules that grants and financial agreements must continue until Monday, Feb 3.

Memo Rescinded

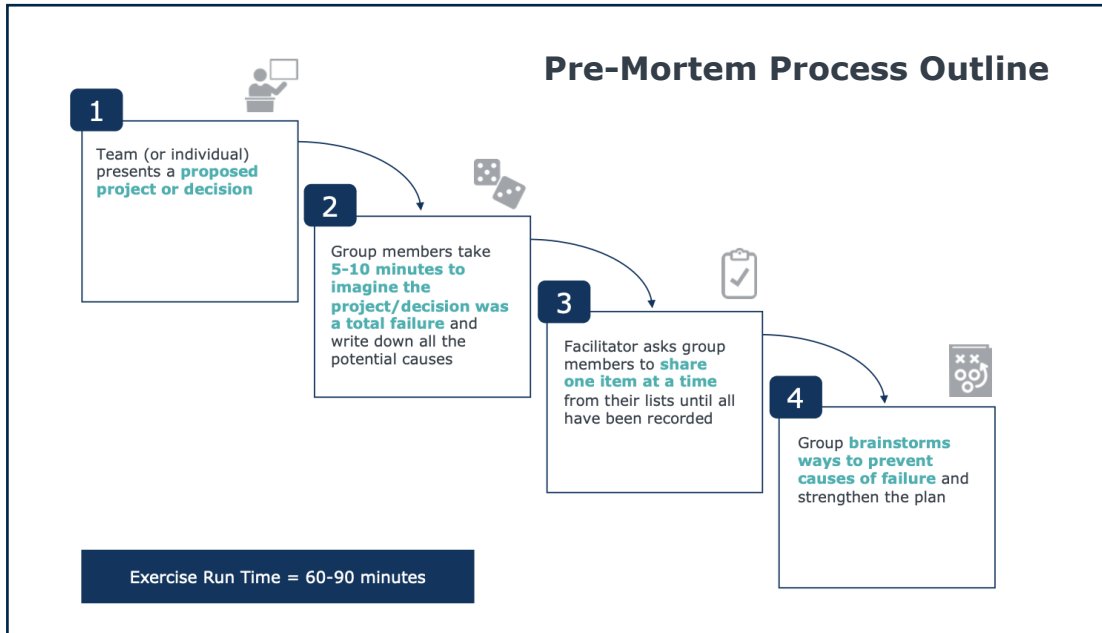
“OMB Memorandum M-25-13 is rescinded.”

EAB Toolkit: Flashpoint Communications Playbook



#2. Embrace the Power of the Pre-Mortem

The Best Way to Avoid Unintended Consequences of Compliance



"60 minutes of 'failure planning' saved us weeks of headaches."

Assistant Superintendent, IL

#3. Scenario Planning is Worth the Investment



Planning for Multiple Futures Helps Sustain Agency and Optimism Through Change

Early Skepticism About Ability to Plan for the Future

"I think we're just trying to take all of this one day at a time and not spend valuable hours discussing problems that haven't happened yet."

Superintendent,
Southwest School District

What Scenario Planning Cannot Do...



Enable teams to predict the future



Simplify complex landscapes and issues

Why Scenario Planning Remains Indispensable...



Define "no regrets" policies and actions



Uncover critical risks to address today



Sustain strategic coherence

Today's Agenda

1

What's changed? How policies are impacting our students and staff

2

What have we learned? Three keys to weathering constant disruption

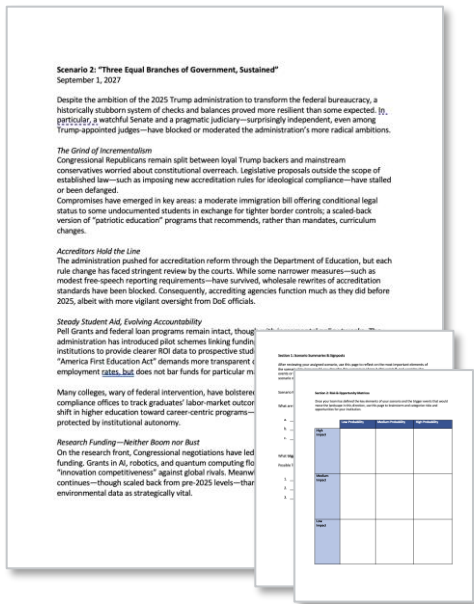
3

How EAB is working to support district leaders navigate change

EAB's Tabletop Scenario Exercises



Preparing District Leadership Teams to Navigate



Immersive Scenarios

- Each future explored through the lens of future artifacts
- Explore implications for enrollment, research, accreditation, student aid, and more

Facilitated Exploration

- Identify the key elements and signposts for each scenario
- Clarify "no regrets" moves and critical risks to plan for

Actionable Outcomes

- Draft plans for governance, monitoring, and communications
- Conduct a readiness assessment for enacting "no regrets" moves and responding to risk

Navigating the New Federal Policy Landscape



How EAB is Helping Leaders in Education Make Sense of Disruptions

Policy Proposal Primers



- Quickly educate stakeholders on proposals and implications
- Define key questions to guide cabinet and board discussions

Peer Position Pulse Checks



- Protected spaces to learn how peers nationwide are responding to policy issues
- Anonymized polling to inform discussions and decisions

Scenario Planning Exercises



- Tabletop exercises to explore potential disruptions
- Identify safe actions, key risks, and hidden opportunities



Will not replace guidance from associations



Will not provide legal advice

Upgrade Your District's Approach to Strategic Planning

19

Three Workshops Designed to Overcome Common Pitfalls in District Strategy Development

Workshop 1

Strategic Dashboard Development Workshop



- Discuss and define long-term pillars and objectives
- Select relevant and trackable KPIs for each pillar
- Map applicability of KPIs to each school and department

Workshop 2

Landscape Analysis and Prioritization Workshop



- Evaluate current performance on district KPIs
- Explore external trends and near-term impact on schools
- Craft lists of celebrations and issues to address
- Prioritize issues using categories for the year ahead

Workshop 3

"Schools of the Future" Design Workshop



- Discuss and define long-term pillars and objectives
- Select relevant and trackable KPIs for each pillar
- Map applicability of KPIs to each school and department

Workshops launching late spring 2025

Let's Continue the Conversation in New Orleans

March 6-8, 2025

AASA National Conference on Education

New Orleans, LA



*Education
Session*

Five Questions to Transform Strategic Planning

Featuring Superintendent
Panel Discussion and Q&A



Save the Date

Networking Reception at Plates Restaurant

Join EAB and fellow
district leaders for a
relaxed evening of
cocktails, delicious food,
and great conversation



Let's Chat

Schedule a Consultation with an EAB Expert

Discuss your strategic
priorities and challenges
with a member of EAB's
research team

How Else Can We Help?



I'd like to speak with someone further to...

- 1 Explore EAB's **Federal Policy Navigation Support** for partner districts
- 2 Learn more about EAB's upcoming **strategic planning workshops**
- 3 Save your seat for EAB's **Spring Superintendent Roundtables**
- 4 Schedule time with an EAB expert at the AASA National Conference in New Orleans
- 5 Something else? Choose this option and we will follow up with you

A Quick Ask



We value your feedback.

Please take a few minutes to **complete the short survey** in your web browser.

Thank you!



202-747-1000 | eab.com



[@eab](https://twitter.com/eab)



[@eab_](https://www.linkedin.com/company/eab_)



[@WeAreEAB](https://www.facebook.com/WeAreEAB)



[@eab.life](https://www.instagram.com/eab.life)

