

The Privatization and Defunding of Public Education in America? Trump Appointment of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos

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Long ago, inner city kids like myself had wonderful public schools with dedicated teachers, preparing us for higher education when even top colleges and universities were affordable.

No longer. Bush's **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** and Obama's **Race to the Top (RTTT)** wrecked public education the way it used to be. It was deplorable before they made a bad system worse - polar opposite how it was decades earlier.

NCLB leaves most kids behind. RTTT is a race to the bottom. Both agendas reflect schemes to destroy a nearly four century tradition.

Public schools in America don't teach. They're institutions of intimidation and social control. They produce uneducated youths unprepared for the adult world they're about to enter - most facing a working lifetime of rotten jobs with poverty wages along with few or no benefits.

No wonder many end up in prison, America's most vulnerable, mostly people of color, abused throughout the nation's sordid history.

Can US primary and secondary education get worse?

Instead of appointing an eminent educator, Trump chose the billionaire sister of Blackwater USA Eric Prince, Betsy DeVos.

She's a businesswoman opponent of public education, a supporter of pseudo-private charter and religious schools. According to American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten:

"In nominating DeVos, Trump makes it loud and clear that **his education policy will focus on privatizing, defunding, and destroying public education in America**" more than already.

Thomas Jefferson was the forerunner of US public education. In an 1813 letter to John Adams, he hoped it would become "the keystone in the arch of our government."

He feared centralized authority at the federal or state levels, calling on local areas to run their own schools, saying otherwise "they would be badly managed, deprived by abuses."

He urged parental involvement, arguing that believing schools will be better managed by

“any authority of the government, than by the parents within each ward...is a belief against all experience.”

Government can no more manage schools than “farms, mills and merchants’ stores,” he said.

National Education Association president Lily Eskelsen Garcia blasted Devos’ longtime efforts to “undermine public education,” saying she “push(es) a corporate agenda to privatize, de-professionalize, and impose cookie-cutter solutions to public education” issues.

She has longstanding GOP ties. She chaired the Alliance for School Choice and Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. She’s married to former Amway CEO Dick DeVos. Her father Edgar Prince founded the Prince Corporation, a manufacturer and distributor of agricultural and other products.

In late November, Trump nominated her to serve as education secretary. On January 31, she cleared the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on a party-line vote.

On February 7, the Senate deadlocked on her nomination 50 - 50 with two Republicans voting nay. **Vice President Pence broke the tie, confirming her as Trump’s education secretary.**

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His new book as editor and contributor is titled “Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III.”

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