



How do Educational Politics Affect Teachers?

Course Syllabus

Course Description

The purpose of this professional development course is to provide educators with a window into the politics affecting their work. In this course, students will gain a foundational background on how past and current political legislation has impacted teaching from grades K-12. This will include some of the major policy protections under the Constitution and Civil Rights Act. Important Supreme Court decisions in education such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Plyer v. Doe*, and other rulings regarding students will provide a foundation to understanding the rights of students in our classrooms. Teachers will understand how politics is pervasive in public schools, reaching standards and curriculum, teacher licensure and evaluation, and affects decision making of school districts. Coverage of current issues such as how to support immigrant students and families, the politicization of equity reforms, gun violence, and how to effectively discuss these topics with those in and outside of education. Furthermore, public discourse around public education will be explored, including polarizing subjects that have influenced policy at the federal and state levels. Additionally, the course provides guidance on how teachers can effectively advocate for their schools and students. Teachers will learn ways in which they can better support their students and empower themselves through policy.

This course enhances classroom teaching effectiveness and supports improved student outcomes by introducing new knowledge in education policy, legal protections, and advocacy strategies that empower teachers to navigate and influence the political landscape impacting K-12 schools.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand how policy affects education. Examine the history of educational policy. Overview of federal and state policy.
2. Understand foundational concepts of policy creation and the pressing issues in educational policy, including the rights of students with Special Education, and how ESSA impacts schools.
3. Consider the rationale for school reform. Analyze standards reform issues. Consider the connection to school performance and funding.
4. Examine federal law that protects the rights of students in public schools, including Title VI, Title IX, and Title I.
5. Examine issues related to students who are English learners, from immigrant populations, and policies that protect their educational rights and the position of culturally relevant teaching.
6. Understand trends in partisan politics that impact public opinion about education. Examine some of the public discourse that influences educational policy.



7. Consider issues that could improve teaching and learning in your school setting. Learn and practice advocacy skills.
8. Explore the ways in which teachers can advocate in shaping new policy.

Modules

- Module 1: Introduction to Educational Policy, Quiz 1
- Module 2: Issues Governing Educational Politics, Quiz 2
- Module 3: Accountability, Standards, and Funding for Public Schools, Quiz 3
- Module 4: Race, Gender and Economic Status of Students, Quiz 4
- Module 5: English learners, Immigrant Students and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Public Discourse about Education, Quiz 6
- Module 7: Teacher Advocacy, Quiz 7
- Module 8: The Future of Educational Policy, Quiz 8

Grading

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (three attempts allowed).

Format

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course. There is an interactive forum in the course to help you connect with peers and instructors, share ideas, and collaborate on best practices throughout your learning journey.