

Project 2025: ‘Institutionalizing Trumpism’

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Donald Trump wants to run as far away as he can from the extremist—and extremely unpopular—manifesto known as Project 2025, but his attempts to disassociate himself from it don’t pass the sniff test. The explicit goal of the plan, according to its chief architect, is “institutionalizing Trumpism.” Its authors, who include former Cabinet secretaries and top White House officials in the Trump administration, detail how to do that in the first 180 days of what they hope will be a second Trump term.

This extremist manifesto is the stuff of demagogues and dictators, not democracies.

Trump recognizes that Project 2025 has become a very bad brand, but the overlap between the radical plan and Trump’s official campaign platform, Agenda47, and his own statements tie the former president to the most dystopian elements of this authoritarian and anti-American agenda. It’s why so many Republicans, including George W. Bush’s former vice president and his former attorney general, see Trump as such a grave threat to our republic that they have crossed party lines to endorse Kamala Harris.

I’ll slip into teacher mode to describe some of what’s in the 900-plus page tome. Project 2025 would affect every facet of our lives, starting with healthcare. It eliminates the protections for people with pre-existing conditions—reverting to the bad old days before Obamacare when insurance companies could deny coverage to people with asthma, diabetes, cancer or countless other conditions. It allows the government to monitor pregnancies so they can prosecute people if they miscarry and imprison doctors and nurses who treat patients experiencing pregnancy-related health crises. It would take money out of your pocket—banning Medicare from negotiating lower drug prices and ending prescription drug price caps, increasing costs for as many as 18.5 million seniors.

This authoritarian plan would undermine the rule of law and democracy. The Justice Department and the FBI would be wholly owned subsidiaries of the White House to carry out Trump’s orders, such as his threat last week to jail political opponents and election officials for what he baselessly claims is election fraud. And it would allow nonpartisan, career government experts on everything from nuclear energy to national security to be fired and replaced by Trump loyalists.

Project 2025 would kick the ladder of opportunity out from under all but the most advantaged children and families—and Trump doesn’t distance himself from these plans. He pretends that abolishing the Department of Education would be a simple bureaucratic maneuver, but it would rob millions of students in public schools in every community in the country of vital resources, programs and protections. And if states and localities wanted to replace the loss of vital federal funds, they would have to increase taxes.

Project 2025 would eliminate Title I funding for schools serving low-income children—sending class sizes soaring and stripping individualized attention from students with the greatest needs. It would slash funding to support students with disabilities, rescind protections for LGBTQIA+ students and cut free school lunches. It would harm the youngest and oldest students—scrapping Head Start and reinstate crushing student debt.

Ending Head Start would hurt both young children and their families. Children would be denied the learning and enrichment that come from high-quality preschool. And many parents would be forced out of work by the high cost and lack of availability of child care, pushing their families into poverty. This would exacerbate the already critical lack of child care, particularly in rural areas.

Project 2025 paves the way for the extremists’ holy grail—limitless funding for private and religious schools, leading to the end of the separation of church and state and of public education as we know it.

This agenda is not pro-child or pro-family; it is about cementing power, opportunity and advantages for some and denying them to others.

Why do these extremists want to erase decades of progress? Why do they want to destroy public education? They fear what public schools do—the teaching of critical thinking, honest history and tolerance—because their backward-looking brand of greed, power and privilege cannot survive in a democracy of diverse, educated citizens.

So they’re going after educational opportunity. They’re going after economic opportunity. They’re going after equal opportunity. They’re going after the legitimacy of elections. This is the stuff of demagogues and dictators, not democracies. This is not the promise of America. We can and must do better than this—for the sake of our families and the future of our republic.



Weingarten, second from left, with youth voting activists in Pittsburgh on Sept. 6.

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