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Building Blocks for 2028: EdPWR's Ten Commitments for Public Education



By: **Ellie Cash**

A modern vision for public education must create actionable pathways to address the evolving priorities of parents, students, and policymakers. Recently, one coalition of public education advocates—EdPWR—set out to do just that, proposing Ten

Commitments for Public Education for the Next Ten Years. The Ten Commitments define clear, pragmatic goals for what public education should guarantee for every student: a high-quality, future-ready education that equips them with the academic foundations and practical skills to pursue their chosen path.

By outlining core priorities and providing examples of state and federal policy goals to advance them, EdPWR's agenda takes a step toward filling the gap between how American families and voters think about "the system" and "my school." That's going to be an important bridge for 2028 presidential campaigns, which will need to connect voters' concerns about the direction of education with concrete reforms to get more schools on the right track in the near term.

For those who will run and lead from the center, each of the Ten Commitments offers an essential building block of a broader vision for the future of American education. Here are three that address pressing issues we've identified as part of the New Normal in K-12 education.

Safe Schools, Safe Kids

Over the past decade, school safety has become one of the most urgent concerns for parents. But keeping students safe isn't just about physically securing school buildings; it must also mean fostering environments where students *feel* safe and have access to the mental health support they need to thrive.

"Safe Schools, Safe Kids" is the first of the Ten Commitments, and it affirms that schools must provide environments where students are "known, safe, and supported." At both the state and federal levels, EdPWR calls on leaders to ensure schools meet or exceed nationally recognized staffing standards so that every student has a trusted adult who knows them and helps ensure their mental health and well-being are prioritized. Any 2028 candidate must take into account the multiple facets of school safety in a way that resonates with the challenges families and students face.

Graduates Ready for the Workforce and the World

As the economy and job market continue to shift, schools face a renewed responsibility to prepare students for both college *and* careers. With questions about the return on investment of a college degree growing, parents want to know that graduates will leave high school equipped with the practical skills they need to succeed: critical thinking, collaboration, communication.

The Ten Commitments look to states to modernize middle and high school programming and adopt rigorous graduation standards that demonstrate readiness for the futures students choose. Goals that guarantee "Graduates Ready for the Workforce and World" urge states to lead districts in developing and requiring a personalized learning plan for every student that documents their academic achievements, community service, and any additional credentials they earned both in and outside of school. This portable record would give students a tangible way to demonstrate their skills and accomplishments to employers. As families look to 2028 candidates for solutions that improve their day-to-day lives, establishing these future-focused goals would help reassure them that their children are developing the skills they need to thrive.

A Public School that Fits Your Kid

Despite relentless pushes from the right to expand private school options, 90% of kids attend public schools. Families are still seeking greater agency, though, making it essential for schools, districts, and states to provide clearer information about the options available to them.

EdPWR fully embraces the potential of public education, and transparency and accountability are central components of the Ten Commitments' vision for delivering "A Public School that Fits Your Kid." This Commitment proposes a statewide report card through which families could access transparent, straightforward information about their options. The report cards would feature data on academic performance, student experiences, and teacher qualifications and retention, giving parents the information they need to make informed decisions and find the public school that best fits their child's needs. Center-left candidates have the opportunity to champion effective public school choice policies *and* empower parents and students to have greater agency in their educational experiences, right where they are.

Conclusion

Public education is at an inflection point, but solutions to even the most complex challenges can start with common-sense, future-facing goals. The Ten Commitments offer straightforward priorities that appeal to voters in the center and refocus the national education agenda on ensuring every student graduates from public schools with the knowledge and skills needed to build their lives and careers.



Ellie Cash

Senior K-12 Education Policy Advisor

ThirdWayEDU

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