

GIVE TEACHERS A BREAK: Cutting Red Tape to Unleash the Potential of America's Great Teachers

TOP TAKEAWAYS *A Crisis of Discipline*

THE PROBLEM

- Since the onset of the pandemic, student behavior has deteriorated across the country: [70%](#) of teachers, principals, and district leaders in 2023 reported that student behavior had deteriorated since 2019.
- In 2024, the [Pew Research Center](#) found that nearly half of teachers overall, and the majority of teachers in high- and medium-poverty schools, are dissatisfied with student behavior, marking it as “fair” or “poor.”
- This problem doesn't just affect teachers: poorly behaved students, when left to their own devices, drag down their well-behaved peers. A [survey](#) found that over three-quarters of teachers agreed with the statement, “Most students suffered because of a few persistent troublemakers.”

THE WAY FORWARD

Much of the solution to the school behavior crisis—and the teacher retention crisis—involves the government getting out of areas where it doesn't belong.

- **Empower Schools to Make Their Own Decisions:** State and federal policymakers should step away from writing legislation that takes away schools' and teachers' abilities to suspend or expel students appropriately.
- **Clarify Existing Guidance:** Future administrations should align what they do with what they say. Instead of taking a contradictory approach of allowing traditional discipline but encouraging schools not to use it, federal guidance should simply leave schools to discipline students as they know best, under the supervision of their state and local jurisdictions.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full report.