



## U.S. Department of Education Requires States to Certify Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

On April 3, 2025, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) issued letters to state education agencies, including the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), requiring that they [certify compliance](#) with antidiscrimination obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the recent U.S. Supreme Court case *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, which prohibits the consideration of race in college admissions, as a condition of receiving federal funding. [DOE states](#) that state education agencies, including ISBE, are also responsible for collecting certification responses from their local education agencies but does not specify when they should be collected. To date, ISBE has not requested certification responses from local school districts. The DOE response deadline was originally April 13, 2025, but has since been extended to April 24, 2025.

Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. State Education Agencies regularly certify to DOE that they comply with federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including Title VI, as a condition of receiving federal funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Despite this, the DOE has requested the additional certification. As state education agencies assess whether and how to respond to DOE, questions over the legality of DOE's directive to certify compliance have arisen and at least one legal challenge to the certification request has been filed in a federal court in New Hampshire.

IASB is engaging with the Illinois Council of School Attorneys and ISBE to determine the impact of this directive by DOE. ISBE has not announced how it will respond to DOE. Until ISBE determines how it will proceed, IASB encourages members to discuss the potential impacts with their school business official and board attorney and to direct any questions to ISBE.

IASB will continue to monitor this matter, including the pending case in New Hampshire, and update our members on any practical impacts.

**Kimberly A. Small, J.D.**  
Executive Director

Illinois Association of School Boards

(217) 528-9688

(630) 629-3776

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### Illinois Association of School Boards

2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929

One Imperial Place, 1 East 22nd Street, Suite 310, Lombard, Illinois 60148-6159

Springfield: (217) 528-9688 | Lombard: (630) 629-3776

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