



# RAISE THE BAR: Lead the World

## Secretary Cardona underscored the need for a united effort to reimagine education.

On Tuesday, January 24, 2023, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona launched “Raise the Bar: Lead the World.” In a [speech](#) at the U.S. Department of Education, Secretary Cardona laid out the Department’s focus for the year, building off his [priorities](#) to promote academic excellence for every learner and better prepare our nation for global competitiveness.

We are at the onset of a new era in education in the United States. As we recover from the unprecedented disruption caused by the pandemic, we have an opportunity to improve our education system to levels that exceed pre-pandemic achievement. If we muster the will to Raise the Bar and fully support our students and schools, we can improve outcomes for all students and prepare them for a future of global competitiveness and lifelong learning.



## What it Means to Raise the Bar for Our Elementary and Secondary Schools

Getting there will require that we look past simply recovering—we must Raise the Bar. To accomplish this, the U.S. Department of Education has identified three major areas of focus, and we will continue to intentionally engage with and listen to parents and families regarding the needs of their children:



### 1. Achieving Academic Excellence,

which includes recovery of lost instructional time, an emphasis on literacy and math concepts, rigorous learning standards, and well-rounded learning opportunities that include early childhood education; science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); and the arts.

### 2. Boldly Improving Learning

**Conditions** to ensure every child has access to proactive mental health supports in an inclusive and supportive environment that nurtures the student’s and family’s well-being. It also means that every student is taught by a certified teacher, who is provided with professional learning opportunities and competitive salary.

### 3. Creating Pathways for Global Engagement

by evolving our P-12 systems, in coordination with higher education institutions and workforce partners, to establish multiple pathways to college and the careers of today and tomorrow. Preparing for global competitiveness also includes more and better opportunities for our students to be multilingual.

As we focus on these three areas at the Department of Education, we call on our governors, mayors, boards of education, and district and school leaders—working in partnership with parents, families, and educators—to join us in reimagining education in this country. The American Rescue Plan and Bipartisan Safer Communities Act funding served as a down payment on the transformative change we need. Our efforts in the past are insufficient; together, let’s Raise the Bar!

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

### ACHIEVE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- » Accelerate learning for every student
- » Deliver a comprehensive and rigorous education for every student

### BOLDLY IMPROVE LEARNING CONDITIONS

- » Eliminate the educator shortage for every school
- » Invest in every student’s mental health and well-being

### CREATE PATHWAYS FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

- » Ensure every student has a pathway to college and a career
- » Provide every student with a pathway to multilingualism

Please visit [ED.gov](https://www.ed.gov) to learn more about the specific strategies outlined in our plan, get connected to resources, and find links to grants that can support the efforts and strategies of states and districts.