

GOVERNANCE FORWARD: ADVANCING INSTITUTIONAL MISSIONS

3 Current Developments | 2 Powerful Perspectives | 1 Call to Action

In today's higher education climate, boards are navigating complex terrain: shifting priorities, evolving regulations, and growing scrutiny of mission-driven values. Boards are expected not only to govern effectively, but also to safeguard the institutional identity and lead with vision, integrity, and adaptability. To support that responsibility, we offer Governance Forward—a curated weekly briefing designed to help boards remain informed, aligned, and strategic.

A weekly Board Briefing for :

➤ ADVANCING

Encouraging proactive board action that is guided by strategic foresight rather than reactive compliance. Forward-focused governance is shaped by anticipating emerging challenges, aligning decisions with institutional values, and acting with clarity and purpose. In doing so, boards help shape an institution that can adapt, lead, and thrive.

➤ INSTITUTIONAL

Framing developments through the lens of institutional goals and community context. This approach ensures that boards interpret challenges and opportunities as issues deeply connected to their institution's identity, priorities, and the diverse needs of the students, faculty, and all stakeholders.

➤ MISSIONS

Reinforcing the board's commitment to mission-centered governance as a foundational principle that informs institutional strategy, advances student success, and sustains long-term impact. Alignment with institutional values ensure that strategic choices remain responsive to the evolving needs of the communities boards serve.

In This Week's Briefing: Week of April 14, 2025

➤ 3 Current Developments

- Supreme Court Ruling on Federal Teacher Training Grants
- Federal Termination of International Students' Visas
- U.S Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice Announce Title IX Special Investigations Team

➤ 2 Powerful Perspectives

- Quote by Dr. Michael Roth, Wesleyan University President
- Quote by Dr. Wendy Hensel, University of Hawaii President

➤ 1 Call to Action

- Sign up for our Center for Strategic and Inclusive Governance updates

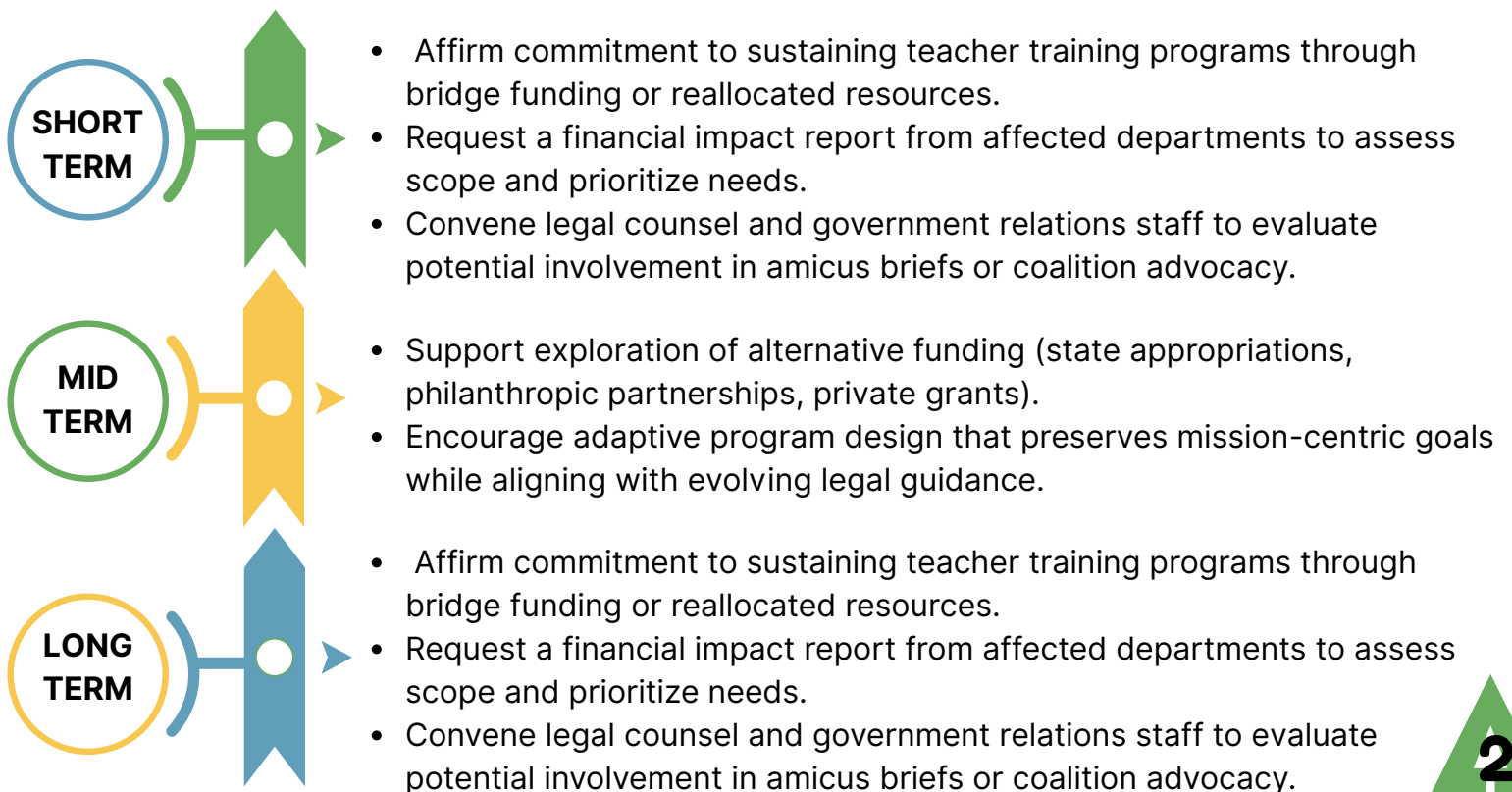
Supreme Court Ruling on Federal Teacher Training Grants

On April 4, 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5–4 decision, lifted a lower court's block on the Trump administration's decision to halt over \$600 million in federal grants for teacher training programs, including the Teacher Quality Partnerships (TQP) and Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) programs. These grants, previously awarded to various universities and nonprofits, aimed to address teacher shortages and has historically supported key education initiatives at universities nationwide. This decision enables the administration to withhold the funds while litigation continues, posing near-and long-term challenges to educator preparation programs and institutional priorities around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Board Impact and Institutional Relevance

Financial Disruption	Threat to Teacher Pipeline	Mission-Centric Vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The loss of projected grant funding will immediately impact teacher residency, mentorship, and faculty development programs.➤ Departments may require short-term budget reallocation to maintain program continuity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ These programs have played a critical role in recruiting, preparing, and retaining high-quality educators—especially in high-need areas.➤ Interruptions could exacerbate regional teacher shortages and harm K–12 partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The ruling challenges the institution's commitment to mission-centric teacher preparation.➤ Legal and political scrutiny of DEI-aligned content may increase, requiring careful evaluation of program language and goals.

Strategies for Boards to Consider



Federal Termination of International Students' Visas

In recent days, the Trump administration has revoked visas for over 800 international students at various U.S. universities. While some cases involve minor infractions, the move appears linked to a broader initiative targeting individuals involved in pro-Palestinian activism. Universities such as Harvard, Stanford, UCLA, Michigan, and Ohio State have reported instances of visa cancellations without prior notice or clear justification. The Department of Homeland Security reportedly offered little communication or justification, leaving universities to learn of the revocations through routine federal database checks.

Board Impact and Institutional Relevance

Campus Climate	Academic Programs and Research	Reputational Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ These actions may foster uncertainty among students, affecting campus climate, mental health, and well-being.➤ Visa revocations impact current international students and recent alumni, potentially reducing future international enrollment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ International students play key roles in research; their absence could disrupt projects and collaborations.➤ Reductions in international students may also impact faculty recruitment and retention in departments heavily reliant on international scholars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Board responses will be scrutinized and shape public perception and may impact future student, staff, and faculty applications.➤ Decisions could also strain ties with alumni, especially those connected to affected students.

Strategies for Boards to Consider



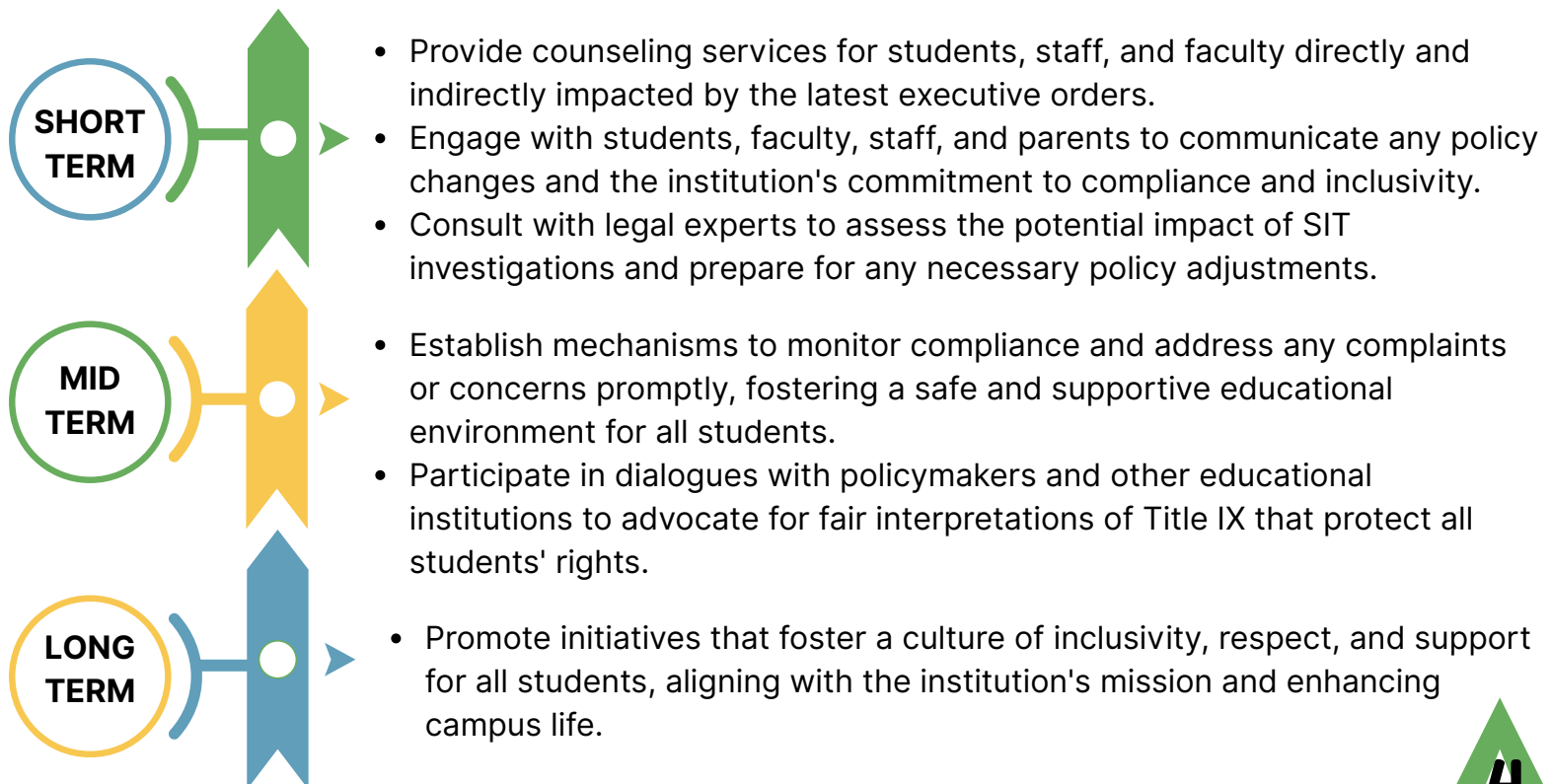
U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice Announce Title IX Special Investigations Team

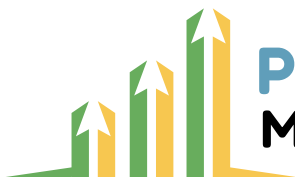
On April 4, 2025, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) jointly announced the establishment of the Title IX Special Investigations Team (SIT). This initiative aims to expedite the resolution of Title IX complaints, particularly those concerning athletes' gender identity and participation in school programs and activities.

Board Impact and Institutional Relevance

Campus Climate	Academic Programs and Research	Reputational Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Policy shifts toward biological definitions may increase anxiety among transgender and nonbinary students.➤ Increased demand for mental health and counseling services.➤ While some may view enforcement as protecting women's sports, others see it as exclusionary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The SIT has initiated investigations into institutions for alleged Title IX violations related to transgender athletes' participation.➤ Non-compliance with Title IX as interpreted by the SIT could result in the loss of federal funding, impacting various programs and services within affected institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Boards must stay informed about ongoing legal developments to navigate potential changes.➤ Boards may need to revisit policies to align with current interpretations of Title IX, while also supporting mission-centric goals of inclusive educational environments for all students.

Strategies for Boards to Consider





POWERFUL PERSPECTIVES:

M.V.P. Quotes of the Week

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“We must not sacrifice academic freedom and a healthy civil society for the short-term gains of anticipatory compliance. We must instead cultivate in our institutions the ability to bring different kinds of people together in common purpose, the will to protect the vulnerable, and the resilience needed for our institutions to successfully pursue their missions. Their missions, not the agenda of whoever controls the powers of the central government.”

Dr. Michael Roth, Wesleyan University President

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“No shift in federal policy can change who we are or our unwavering commitment to ensuring that every member of our campus community is valued and welcomed. We remain deeply committed to anti-discrimination protections, accessible education and academic freedom. These principles define us, and we will stand firm in defending them. You will always be welcomed here regardless of where you come from, who you are, what you believe, or whom you love.”

Dr. Wendy Hensel, University of Hawaii President

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CALL TO ACTION



As Boards navigate the higher education landscape, we encourage you to keep your mission, values, and partners at the forefront of your decision-making.

Sign up for our Center for Strategic and Inclusive Governance updates [here](#)!

Keep up with our latest resources designed for Board members and their strategic partners.