#WhyWeCantWait

A NEW DEAL FOR YOUTH

November 1, 2026

The Honorable Scott Bessent, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Submitted via Federal eRulemaking Portal

Re: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking REG-119986-25, Nondiscrimination in Private Schools [Docket ID IRS-2026-1189]

A New Deal for Youth is glad to provide public comment in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking REG-119986-25, Nondiscrimination in Private Schools, published by the Internal Revenue Service on September 4, 2026.

A New Deal for Youth (ND4Y) is a youth-led effort advocating for the creation of new systems, policies, investments, and structures that reimagine life for young people in America. Our membership comprises young people ages approximately 16-29. We are youth and young adults who embody the diversity of our country and hail from urban, suburban, rural, and tribal communities across the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Most ND4Y members are current students or graduates of community colleges, state universities, and private, nonprofit institutions. These include historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), other minority-serving institutions (MSIs), and predominantly white institutions (PWIs). Our experiences as college and graduate school students inform our opposition to this proposed rule.

The Nondiscrimination in Private Schools rule that the IRS proposes threatens the 501(c)(3) nonprofit status of schools based on a broad and ill-defined set of activities that the current administration believes to be discriminatory. We fundamentally disagree with the administration's unilateral attempt to redefine the concept of discrimination, rejecting both the intention and the precedent of decades of legislation, regulation, and jurisprudence in favor of pursuing a political agenda.

The initiatives that this rule seeks to ban have had innumerable benefits on our college campuses. We want to highlight three examples.

Financial support
One graduate student at a PWI received a scholarship specifically for HBCU alumni, which eased the financial barriers to graduate education, particularly in light of the new Grad PLUS Loan limits. That support gave her the flexibility to engage with the local community beyond the classroom. Rather than taking on extra work to cover educational costs, she can focus on her studies, volunteer, attend community events, and build relationships with families and organizations. This rule would likely leave her with increased financial burden and fewer of the real-life experiences that enhance the learning from her coursework.

Career preparation
Some of us have benefited academically from courses that address social issues, where oppression, marginalization, inequality, and social injustice are the core themes. An undergraduate student studying social work says, “Intersectionality is one of the concepts that has helped me most to understand how individuals are affected in various ways because of the broad categories to which they belong (gender, race, ethnicity, social class, etc.). This concept is essential to my understanding of the individuals and communities who will be central to my work.”

Campus resources
One school's Black Graduate Student Union provides a valuable space for Black graduate students to connect and share resources; it gives them a place to show up as themselves and be understood without having to explain their background first. Community celebrations make graduate school feel less isolating and more like a home base. The union also connects students with faculty from diverse backgrounds, creating space to share concerns and lived experiences with people who understand them and can offer real guidance. Students also have access to funds to attend conferences, which support professional development and are crucial for success in graduate school.

Initiatives like these ensure that young people belonging to oppressed groups have the opportunity to access a quality education and aspire to a better future. It is essential for universities to be able to support their students in ways that celebrate their diverse identities and redress a history of discrimination that continues to place unnecessary obstacles in their paths. The examples above represent a small sample of the benefits that come from the very efforts this rule would prohibit.

Universities must be able to proactively facilitate the success of students of color without running the risk of losing their tax exemption. Decisions based on rules such as the

Nondiscrimination in Private Schools proposal, which pushes a political agenda rather than seeking to improve education for all students, only deepen the social disparities that make these efforts necessary in the first place. For these reasons, we call for the immediate and total withdrawal of this proposed rule from further consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of A New Deal for Youth