

# Current Issues Impacting Northwood Tech Students

*This living document is intended to inform and empower the Northwood Tech community by tracking current political, economic, and social issues that directly or indirectly impact our students, families, and broader communities. Topics covered include education policy, mental health funding, veterans’ services, healthcare access, disability rights, and support for families and children.*

*As policies shift and new developments arise, this guide will be updated regularly to reflect emerging challenges and opportunities. It is meant to serve as a resource for student advocacy, community awareness, and informed civic engagement.*

*Readers are encouraged to approach these issues with critical thought, compassion, and a commitment to fairness and support for all students.*

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# Education

## **Dismantling the US Department of Education**

*Efforts to dissolve the Department of Education and lay off staff could undermine federal oversight of student loans, civil rights protections, and access to education for low-income students.*

[Trump's Executive Action to Eliminate the Dept of Education - NPR](#)

[Education Department Layoffs Affect Civil Rights and Loan Services - NPR](#)

## **Student Loan Forgiveness, Repayment & Collections**

*Recent federal policy changes resume debt collection and introduce stricter repayment terms, potentially increasing financial burdens for student borrowers, particularly in Wisconsin.*

[Changes to Federal Student Aid and Loan Forgiveness - NPR](#)

[New Repayment Rules May Raise Borrower Costs – Forbes](#)

[Collections and Wage Garnishments Resume in Wisconsin - WPR](#)

## **Affirmative Action & Support for Marginalized Students**

*In response to the Supreme Court's ruling in SFFA v. Harvard, a federal directive warns against race-conscious practices in college programs. Critics argue it misinterprets civil rights law and threatens support for historically underserved students — especially at community colleges.*

[What the February 14 Dear Colleague Letter Means – Community College Daily](#)

[Full Text of the Dear Colleague Letter – U.S. Department of Education \(PDF\)](#)

[Analysis of Civil Rights Concerns - University of Virginia Law](#)

## **Public Broadcasting & Educational Media Cuts:**

*Discusses potential impacts of public broadcasting cuts on iconic educational programming for children and their families.*

[Congressional Push to Defund NPR and PBS - The Hill](#)

[Is Sesame Street Doomed? - Dadchats Substack](#)

# Mental Health

*Federal actions in early 2025 have significantly reduced funding for mental health services across schools, healthcare systems, and veteran programs. These cuts threaten support systems for students, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with addictions, and veterans—groups already at higher risk of mental health challenges.*

[\\$1 Billion in School Mental Health Funding Revoked - NPR](#)

[988 Crisis Hotline for LGBTQ+ Youth at Risk of Defunding - NPR](#)

*Funding reductions target substance use treatment and mental health services nationwide, with severe consequences for underserved populations.*

[\\$11 Billion in Funding Revoked for Mental Health Care - NPR](#)

*Massive staffing reductions within the VA are reducing access to mental health care for veterans across the country.*

[Veterans Affairs Mental Health Cuts - NPR](#)

[VA Patients Feel the Impact of Looming Layoffs - NPR](#)

# Maternal & Infant Care

## **Head Start Child Care Program Closures:**

*Recent federal actions threaten critical services supporting early childhood development and infant health. These cuts impact access to preschool, childcare, and life-saving infant safety programs—especially in low-income and rural communities like many in Wisconsin.*

[Recent Federal Policy Shifts Targets ECE Program for Low-Income Families - Scripps News](#)

[Federal Efforts to Cut Funding for Head Start Program - NPR](#)

[Wisconsin Head Start Faces \\$35 Million in Cuts – Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)

[Federal Office Serving WI Shuts Without Notice – Wisconsin Examiner](#)

## **Trump Cuts Safe Sleep Program Aimed at Preventing SIDS:**

*Federal support was also withdrawn from infant safe sleep education programs aimed at reducing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), removing vital resources for new parents and healthcare providers.*

[Federal Reductions to Safe Sleep Program for SIDS Prevention - NPR](#)

# Veterans

*Recent federal policy shifts are undermining core support systems for veterans, particularly in housing and healthcare. These changes are expected to create widespread instability for those who have served, with particularly harsh consequences for transgender and gender-diverse veterans.*

## **Mortgage Rescue Program Terminated:**

*The end of the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASP) mortgage rescue initiative could leave over 20,000 veterans at risk of foreclosure.*

[VA Mortgage Rescue Program Ends, Thousands of Veterans Face Foreclosure - NPR](#)

## **Healthcare for Gender Nonconforming Veterans Reversed:**

*The Department of Veterans Affairs has reversed protections and access to care for transgender and gender nonconforming veterans, affecting their ability to receive affirming medical services.*

[VA Ends Affirming Care Protection for Transgender Veterans - NPR](#)

[Supreme Court Upholds Ban on Transgender Military Members - NPR](#)

# Gerontology & Aging Populations

*Recent policy changes have raised significant concerns for older adults and retirees. Cuts to essential services like Meals on Wheels and shifts in Social Security funding and administration threaten both daily well-being and long-term financial stability for aging populations.*

## **Meals on Wheels Program at Risk:**

[Federal Administration Proposes Cuts to Meals on Wheels - The Guardian](#)

## **Social Security Disruptions:**

[Workforce Cuts Disrupt Social Security Services - NPR](#)

[Social Security Proposals Cause Retiree Anxiety - USA Today](#)

# Healthcare & Medical Research

*Sweeping federal changes are reshaping healthcare access, affordability, and scientific progress. Funding freezes, data removal, and proposed cuts to Medicaid and Medicare threaten to destabilize both public health infrastructure and the communities—especially rural and low-income ones—that depend on it most.*

## **National Institute of Health Funding Freeze & Impacts:**

[NIH Funding Freeze and Research Impacts - NPR](#)

[Cuts Threaten CDC, Cancer Research in Iowa - NPR](#)

## **Congress Moves to Cut Medicaid:**

*Legislation in Congress seeks to slash Medicaid funding, jeopardizing care for millions of low-income Americans.*

[Congress Moves to Cut Medicaid - Medicare Rights Center](#)

[Amendment Text: H. Con. Res. 14 - Senate Budget Committee \(PDF\)](#)

## **Medicare Pay Cuts – Impact on Rural Communities:**

*Medicare reimbursement reductions may force clinic closures and service reductions in rural areas, where healthcare options are already limited.*

[What Medicare Pay Cuts Mean for Rural America - American Medical Association](#)



## **Disappearing Healthcare Data:**

[What Journalists Should Know About Disappearing  
Federal Health Data - Health Journalism](#)

# Disability Rights

*Recent policy shifts and federal inaction are raising alarms among disability advocates, who warn of rollbacks to hard-won protections in education, employment, and healthcare access. While challenges loom, historical victories offer both precedent and strategy for resistance.*

[With Disability Rights Under Attack, History Offers Hope and a Playbook - NPR](#)

# International Aid for Vulnerable Populations

*The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supports global humanitarian and health initiatives, including disease prevention, maternal care, and food security. Recent defunding efforts threaten these critical programs, with immediate impacts already felt in regions like East Africa.*

[What is USAID? - NPR](#)

[The Impacts of Defunding USAID Already Felt in Africa – San Francisco Chronicle](#)