

EDUCATION

Trump demands \$1 billion from Harvard as a prolonged standoff appears to deepen



People take photos near a John Harvard statue, left, on the Harvard University campus, Jan. 2, 2024, in Cambridge.

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BY **COLLIN BINKLEY**

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is demanding a \$1 billion payment from Harvard University to end his [prolonged standoff](#) with the Ivy League campus, doubling the amount he sought previously as both sides appear to move further from reaching a deal.

The president raised the stakes on social media Monday night, saying Harvard has been “behaving very badly.” He said the university must pay the government directly as part of any deal — something

Harvard has opposed — and that his administration wants “nothing further to do” with Harvard in the future.

Trump's comments on Truth Social came in response to a New York Times report saying the president had dropped his demand for a financial payment, lowering the bar for a deal. Trump denied he was backing down.

Harvard officials did not immediately comment.

Trump's outburst appears to leave both sides firmly entrenched in a conflict that Trump previously said was nearing an end.



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Last June, Trump said a deal was just days away and that Harvard had acted “extremely appropriately” during negotiations. He later said [an agreement was being finalized](#) that would require Harvard to put \$500 million toward the creation of a “series of trade schools” rather than a payment to the government.

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That deal appears to have fallen apart entirely. In his social media post, Trump said the trade school proposal had been turned down because it was “convoluted” and “wholly inadequate.”

Harvard has long been Trump’s top target in his administration’s campaign to bring the nation’s most prestigious universities to heel. His officials have cut billions of dollars in Harvard’s federal research funding and attempted to block it from [enrolling foreign students](#) after the campus rebuffed a series of government demands last April.

The White House has said it’s punishing Harvard for tolerating anti-Jewish bias on campus.



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In a pair of lawsuits, Harvard said it's being unfairly penalized for refusing to adopt the administration's views. A federal judge agreed in December, [reversing the funding cuts](#) and calling the antisemitism argument a "smokescreen."

Trump's latest escalation comes as other parts of his higher education campaign are teetering.

Last fall, the White House invited nine universities to join a "compact" that offered funding priority in exchange for adopting Trump's agenda. None of the schools accepted. In January, the administration [abandoned its legal defense](#) of an Education Department document threatening to cut schools' funding over diversity, equity and inclusion policies.

When he took office for his second term, Trump made it a priority to go after elite universities that he said had been overrun by liberal thinking and anti-Jewish bias. His officials have frozen huge sums of research funding, which colleges have come to rely on for scientific and medical research.

Several universities have reached agreements with the White House to restore funding. Some deals have included direct payments to the government, including \$200 million from Columbia University. Brown University agreed to pay \$50 million toward state workforce development groups.

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COLLIN BINKLEY

Binkley covers the U.S. Education Department and federal education policy for The Associated Press, along with a wide range of issues from K-12 through higher education.



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