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NCSE's Ann Reid and Glenn Branch [contributed](#) [4] "Will education secretary pick Betsy DeVos dilute science instruction in schools?" to Stat (January 18, 2017), a new national publication specializing in health, medicine, and scientific discovery.

"A few loud voices dismissing science can be enough to intimidate teachers into diluting their treatment of evolution and climate change, permanently short-changing a generation of science learners," they warned.

Although Reid and Branch acknowledged that DeVos "hasn't taken strong positions on either evolution or climate change," they noted that during Senate hearings, when asked whether she would side with students or with purveyors of junk science," she evaded answering the question — "but conspicuously used the 'critical thinking' catchphrase beloved by creationists and climate change deniers alike."

The federal government's influence over curriculum and instruction is slight. But Reid and Branch warned, "Science teachers will find their jobs more challenging if our political leaders dismiss scientific findings and question the motives of scientists and research agencies."

They concluded, "It will be up to all of us to let science teachers know that we recognize, support, and applaud them for the crucial and difficult role they play in equipping the next generation to understand the power of scientific thinking."

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