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Donald Trump's claim that “education is the civil rights issue of our time” gets an F

This comment in Trump's speech to Congress about education and civil rights earns him a failing grade on both

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TOPICS: CIVIL RIGHTS, DONALD TRUMP, EDUCATION, PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, NEWS, POLITICS NEWS



(Credit: Jeff Malet, maletphoto.com)

I watched **Donald Trump's address to the joint session of Congress** on Tuesday night in its entirety, from his practice round in the limo to the standing ovation at the end, and it was great — if he's considering a post-presidential career as a stand-up comedian. But if this speech is a true preview of his tenure in office, it would be a mistake if he or his followers think he will experience any success as a president.

Watching Vice President Mike Pence and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan behind Trump, dressed as twins in their little blue suits and ties, both blushing like kids on prom night and batting their eyes hard enough to make Melania jealous, and the gutless Republicans, including many who once claimed the title of Never-Trumpers now swooning over every little incomplete idea and unfleshed-out plan, was disgusting. As if Trump, who has spent more time during his first month as president golfing and hanging around **Mar-a-Lago than getting intelligence briefings** and learning to understand foreign relations, said anything intelligent or transformative last night. Give me break.

But rather than focus on his same old lies about jobs that are never coming back, I want to highlight Trump's biggest blunder of the night. "Education is the civil rights issue of our time," he claimed. As if the jobs he's lying about creating won't still use discriminatory hiring practices? As if our neighborhoods aren't planted in the middle of food deserts, and police officers across the country aren't keeping unofficial score on the number of African-Americans *they harass, beat and kill? Black and brown people are being discriminated against in every category, including being arrested at disproportionate rates for the same crimes that white people commit. All these are the civil rights issues of our time.*

But yes, **our education system is clearly broken**, and Betsy DeVos will probably find ways to make it worse. However, education is not *the* civil rights issue of this era. Obtaining complete civil rights is still the civil rights issue of this era — just as it was in the days of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. Trump would know that if he had any black people on his team (and no, **Ben Carson and Omarosa Manigault don't count**).

This was heavily touted as a speech that was meant to unify a divided country. Trump unified nothing. All he offers still is talk and no real solutions.



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