



# REPORT TO THE WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND GIRLS



**U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**  
*Agency Report*  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. Integral to achieving this mission is ensuring that women and girls have the opportunity to participate fully in departmental programs. As an employer, ED is also committed to ensuring that it provides opportunities for its employees to balance work and family and contribute productively to achieving our overall mission.

On March 16, 2009, President Obama issued Executive Order (EO) 13506 establishing the White House Council on Women and Girls (Council) for the purpose of providing a “coordinated Federal response to issues that particularly impact the lives of women and girls ... [and] to ensure that Federal programs and policies address and take into account the distinctive concerns of women and girls, including women of color and women with disabilities.” As a member agency of the Council, ED is pleased to submit this report highlighting our ongoing efforts that address these distinctive concerns through employee programs and policies, enforcement of civil rights laws, and implementation of grant programs.

Though the majority of ED’s programs and policies are intended to support all people, this report provides overviews of those that address the persistent challenges faced by America’s women and girls. The report describes key internal programs for employees to promote a healthy work-life balance, including flexible work schedules and leave options, family care and accommodations, health benefits, and employment opportunities. The report also highlights laws enforced and implemented by ED to ensure that all women and girls have equal access to educational opportunities, and describes several grant programs and projects that benefit women and girls around the country. Finally, the report discusses the next steps for ED to take to further support women in the workplace, as well as for expanding its efforts to address barriers to success for women and girls in education across the nation.

# INTERNAL PROGRAMS THAT IMPROVE THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN OUR WORKFORCE

ED's Office of Management (OM) implements a variety of policies to support work-life balance, health and wellness, and the development of a diverse and well-trained workforce for the 4,723 employees in the Department's headquarters and ten regional offices. OM partners with the Office of Communications and Outreach to provide accessible information for employees on the policies and benefits via *ConnectED*, ED's internal website, and a weekly internal e-mail publication called *ED Notebook*. Additionally, all offices contain free publications on ED's work-life policies on balancing work, family, personal, and community obligations. This section highlights key employee policies that most directly affect the lives of women in our workforce.

## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

In order to allow employees to work to their full potential and to care for their families, ED offers employees individualized work arrangements to help manage their varied responsibilities. Work-life balance is further promoted by the availability of flexible work arrangements that encourage employees to participate in the education of their children and others by providing leave for parent-teacher conferences and volunteer work such as tutoring or chaperoning. ED also provides eldercare and childcare resources. Many of ED's female employees take advantage of these initiatives.

### **A. Work Schedule Arrangements**

ED offers a number of different arrangements to provide employees the flexibility to maintain a healthy work-life balance, to assist with the cost of commuting to and from work, and to accommodate individuals with disabilities or medical issues. Most employees are eligible for the listed programs, with some exceptions for Senior Executive Service (SES) supervisors.

#### **i. Telework**

Teleworking allows employees to work away from the traditional office. Telework locations may include an employee's home, a satellite facility, or a telecenter. This voluntary program is available to all ED employees, with supervisory approval. While Telework is not a substitute for childcare or eldercare, it may help some employees more effectively balance the demands of work and family by providing flexibility in scheduling and commuting.

*Relevant Statistics:* As of February 2010, 763 of the 4,190 eligible ED employees were using the Telework programs on a regular basis. Of those using the programs, 56 employees were teleworking at least 3 days per week, 263 employees were teleworking 1-2 days per week, and 444 employees were teleworking at least once per month. Most of ED's offices have employees participating in the Telework programs.

#### **ii. Alternative Work Schedule**

Similar in intent to the Telework programs, the alternative work schedule policy aids in the work-family balance by allowing both full- and part-time employees to work non-standard hours, or to work compressed work schedules. This allows employees more control over their time for their

work, families, volunteer activities, and educational opportunities. Alternative work schedules also allow for more flexibility in making commuting and childcare arrangements.

ED offers its employees four types of alternative work schedules— two compressed schedules and two flexible schedules. Compressed Work Schedules meet to the basic work requirement of 80 working hours per two-week pay period, but the work is scheduled for less than 10 workdays. Employees who work Compressed Work Schedules have fixed schedules with set reporting times for each day and may not earn credit hours. Employees have the option of working either the 5-4-9 schedule (Work 9 ½ hours for 8 days and 8 ½ hours for 1 day with the remaining day off) or the 4-10 schedule (Work 10 ½ hours for 4 days each week with 1 day off each week).

Flexible Work Schedules are 8½-hour days where employees may select a starting and stopping time each day. Employees on Flexible Work Schedules can earn credit hours<sup>1</sup> for time worked in excess of the basic eight and a half hour day. Credit hours may be used for time off and are a great way for more junior employees to accrue time for leave.

*Relevant Statistics:* As of June 2010, 1,309 ED employees worked a Compressed Work Schedule (905 women and 404 men); 3,017 employees worked Flexible Work Schedules (1,756 women and 1,261 men). Thus, the majority of employees in the Department, at all pay grades, use some form of alternative work schedule.

### **iii. Part-Time Schedules and Job-Sharing**

ED permits employees to work a part-time schedule or job-share as another way to allow career flexibility and retain productive employees. Generally, employees on a part-time schedule do not work more than 32 hours/week, but this number varies among offices.

*Relevant Statistics:* As of June 2010, 104 ED employees (86 women and 18 men) were working on a part-time schedule.

## **B. Flexible Leave Options**

### **i. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

In 1999, ED instituted an excused absence program to allow its employees to attend parent-teacher conferences or meetings with school counselors without affecting their leave balance. This program allows parents and guardians up to three hours of excused absence time per conference, and up to 12 hours per calendar year, thus encouraging employees to be actively involved in their children's education.

### **ii. Education Volunteer Initiative**

Under this initiative, ED matches up to four hours of leave per pay period for employees to volunteer in schools, adult education programs, or youth activities, including their own children's activities.

## **C. Voluntary Leave Transfer Program**

ED's voluntary leave transfer program allows employees to transfer unused annual leave to another federal employee with a qualifying personal or family medical emergency. The program can be used for medical circumstances such as maternity leave or caring for a sick family member.

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<sup>1</sup> Credit hours, per the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, are hours that an employee elects to work, with supervisory approval, in excess of the employees basic work requirement under a flexible work schedule. (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/aws/index.htm>)

*Relevant Statistics:* Currently, 37 ED employees, 32 of whom are women, are active recipients of leave in the voluntary leave transfer program.

#### **D. Eldercare**

ED provides assistance to employees caring for elderly family members through seminars, information dissemination, and caregiver support groups. The seminars and support groups are specifically designed to provide a confidential “safe space” for caregivers to discuss balancing the demands of the workplace with the needs of their families.

#### **E. Childcare**

ED offers subsidies for weekly childcare at licensed centers to employees whose family adjusted gross income is at or below \$50,000. ED provides an online application, supporting information, and a contact for assistance with additional questions about the program.

In collaboration with the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), ED offers a daycare center in a Federal building near the ED main headquarters building. The daycare center is open to all ED employees, subject to availability, and costs approximately \$1,000-\$1,300 per month per child.

Additionally, ED reserves up to two rooms for lactation purposes at the Federal Occupation Health Center (FOHC) in the ED main headquarters building. The FOHC nurse at headquarters has access to a lactation consultant via telephone. Other ED buildings in the Washington, D.C. area have lactation rooms available as well.

*Relevant Statistics:* Currently, four female ED employees participate in the childcare subsidy program. ED does not currently maintain data on the use of the joint HHS-ED childcare center.

### **WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT**

ED strives to attract, hire, and retain a diverse, high-quality workforce equipped with the skills necessary to accomplish the departmental mission. ED workforce practices that benefit women cover three areas: equal employment opportunity, targeted recruitment and outreach, and leadership development for employees at all levels. The result is a well-trained staff in which women comprise a high number of managers and supervisors.

#### **A. Equal Employment Opportunity Services**

ED is committed to a workplace in which employees and applicants for employment are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect in all personnel actions taken on behalf ED, including promotions, details, awards, training, assignments, discipline, transfers, and benefits. OM’s Equal Employment Opportunity Services ensures compliance with laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, and develops and administers policies and programs to support all employees, including women, minorities, and persons with disabilities, in the workplace.

The following laws provide the basis for ED’s policies that prohibit discrimination against female employees:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits discrimination and harassment in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and contains protections against reprisal or retaliation.
- The Pregnancy Discrimination Act (an amendment to Title VII), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against an employee or applicant based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.
- The Equal Pay Act of 1963, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the payment of wages or benefits where men and women perform work of similar skill, effort, and responsibility for the same employer under similar working conditions.

One example of the implementation of these Equal Opportunity practices is the presence of Special Emphasis Programs to address the unique concerns of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. The Federal Women's Program, governed by Executive Order 11375 and Executive Order 11478, is one such program. Its overall objective is to ensure that women have an equal opportunity to compete fairly in all aspects and at all levels of Federal employment in areas such as recruitment, training, upward mobility, career counseling, developmental details, promotions, and retention. Managers of this program assist supervisors in identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices and barriers to the employment and advancement of female employees and applicants. They also conduct outreach efforts, including recruiting at career fairs, and process formal complaints.

## **B. Recruitment and Outreach**

To ensure that people with the right knowledge and skills are working to fulfill the mission, ED performs outreach to recruit a diverse and highly qualified workforce. ED's outreach to female applicants, among others, is performed through targeted recruitment strategies, internship programs, and outreach at career fairs.

### **i. The Corporate Recruitment Program**

More than 25 ED employees in headquarters and in the regional offices represent ED at public career fairs and connect with campus affinity groups as part of the Corporate Recruitment Team. The Department participates in various outreach efforts to increase the quality and numbers of women in its applicant pool. In 2009, the Corporate Recruitment Team participated in numerous job fairs and events. These considerable efforts increased the applicant pool numbers and diversity related to women. These recruitment efforts included participation in outreach at conferences sponsored by Federally Employed Women, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, League of United Latin American Citizens, and the National Council of Negro Women; the Disabled Career Expo; and the OPM-sponsored Federal Career Day.

### **ii. Internship Programs**

ED also operates an extensive internship program that exposes students and professionals to careers in education. Interns are recruited at career fairs and through established partnerships at a diverse array of universities. Both paid and unpaid internships are available for undergraduate and graduate students.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, ED had 154 student interns onboard, 88 of whom were female. Of the female student interns, 55 were paid interns, and 33 were unpaid volunteer interns.

## C. Leadership Development

Through OM's Training and Development Staff, ED offers its employees access to a wide variety of leadership training and professional development opportunities. Some of these programs are available government-wide, while others are unique to the agency. The various training opportunities available include both online and instructor-led courses. Courses include "The Secrets of Female Leaders," "Women in Leadership: Becoming a Leader," and "Women in Leadership: Developing a Leadership Path."

### i. Government-Wide Programs

Female employees at ED are taking advantage of professional development opportunities offered by the Federal government to all employees. All programs listed below require an application and involve a competitive process for selecting participants.

- The Aspiring Leader Program: a six-month leadership development program for Federal employees at the GS 5-7<sup>2</sup> grade levels that focuses on leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Graduate School sponsors this program.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2008, three female ED employees graduated from the Aspiring Leader Program. In FY 2009, one female ED employee participated in the program. In FY 2010, three female ED employees participated in the program.
- The New Leaders Program: a six-month USDA Graduate School program for Federal employees at the GS 7-11 grade levels who have recently assumed leadership positions or have a high potential for leadership. The program provides assessment, experiential learning, and individual development opportunities.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2008, four female ED employees graduated from the New Leaders Program. In FY 2009, two female ED employees participated in the program. In FY 2010, one female ED employee participated in the program.
- The Executive Leadership Program: a nine-month USDA Graduate School program for individuals at the GS 11-13 level with little or no supervisory experience. The program provides residential training, developmental work experience, needs assessment, and career planning to aid participants in moving into positions of more responsibility.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2008, five female ED employees graduated from the Executive Leadership Program. In FY 2009, no female ED employees enrolled in the program, but in FY 2010, four female ED employees participated.
- The Executive Potential Program: a twelve-month USDA Graduate School competency-based leadership program designed to develop GS 13-15 public service employees seeking to become more effective leaders and to enhance their qualifications for future entrance into the Senior Executive Service.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2008, two female ED employees graduated from the Executive Potential Program. In FY 2009, four female ED employees participated in the program. In FY 2010, four female ED employees participated in the program.
- SES Continuing Development Program: a USDA Graduate School leadership-based program designed primarily for the Senior Executive Service (SES) employees to provide continuous developmental education.

<sup>2</sup> The General Schedule, the symbol for which is GS, is the basic classification and compensation system for white collar occupations in the Federal Government (5 USC 51). The General Schedule is divided into grades of difficulty and responsibility from GS 1 to GS 15.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, 19 female ED employees participated in the program. ED did not offer this program in FY 2010.

- Federal Executive Institute: a four-week residential program hosted by The Leadership for a Democratic Society in Charlottesville, VA that brings together managers and executives from 25-30 agencies for a unique learning experience.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, four female ED employees participated in the program. In FY 2010, two female ED employees participated.

- SES Forums: forums developed and delivered by the Department of the Interior to SES members of the Executive Branch. The SES Forums cover a wide range of topics relevant to the major missions and programs of Federal departments and agencies.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, nineteen female ED employees participated in the program. In FY 2010, thirteen female ED employees have participated to date.

## ii. Agency-Run Programs

ED also supports participation in a number of professional development programs developed and delivered by ED for its employees. Again, female employees at ED are taking advantage of the opportunities.

### *Leadership Development*

- Pathways to Leadership Program: a program initiated in FY 2009 for employees at the GS 11-13 grade levels who aspire to move positions that require supervising, managing, or leading others. The program's goal is to develop ED's leadership pipeline of employees to support internal succession management initiatives.

*Relevant Statistics:* During FY 2009 and 2010, 16 female employees participated in this program, which overlaps fiscal years.

- Executive Coaching: a program that provides one-on-one coaching sessions to assist SES members in enhancing their unique strengths and to help them acquire necessary competencies for success.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, eight female employees participated in this program. ED did not offer this program in FY 2010.

- Institute for Management Studies: a series of one-day seminars on management topics in Washington, DC and all of ED's regions. Each seminar is an interactive workshop on a different business topic presented by a different speaker and attended normally by mid-level and senior managers from the Federal government and large corporations.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, no female employees participated in this one-day seminar. In FY 2010, fifteen female ED employees have participated to date.

- Mentoring @ ED: a program for seasoned employees to share their knowledge, experiences, and expertise with less seasoned employees with interest in developing their skills.

*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2010, 33 female mentors and mentees participated in the program.

### *Employee Education*

- **Tuition Funding Program:** a program for career employees and interns that allows employees to complete undergraduate or graduate-level coursework related to their field.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, 30 female ED employees participated in the program. In FY 2010, 55 female ED employees participated in the program.
- **HR Essentials Training for Supervisors:** a mandatory quarterly training that provides ED's supervisors with the opportunity to develop and refresh skills in equal employment opportunity, work-life programs, leave policies, and other programs that help them be productive members of the ED workforce.  
*Relevant Statistics:* In FY 2009, 14 female ED employees participated in this program. In FY 2010, 14 female ED employees have participated to date.

#### **D. Presence of Women in Leadership Positions**

Women make up a substantial number of the managers and supervisors at ED.

*Relevant Statistics:* As of June 16, 2010, ED's total workforce was 4,723 (4,336 in the permanent workforce, 387 in the temporary workforce). Women constituted 61.7 percent (2915) of ED's overall workforce while men constituted 38.3 percent (1,808) of the workforce. The percentages of women represented in the higher levels of the organization are as follows:

- GS-13: 64.1 percent [ 309 White, 311 Black, 48 Hispanic, 38 Asian, 1 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NH/PI), 3 American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN), 9 Two Or More Races (TOMR)]
- GS-14: 58.8 percent [341White, 172 Black, 17 Hispanic, 31 Asian, 1PI, 3 AI/AN, 9 TOMR]
- GS-15: 51.7 percent [211 White, 75 Black, 9 Hispanic, 9 Asian, 4 AI/AN, 2 TOMR]
- SES Career: 37.3 percent [ 19 White, 5 Black, 1 Asian, ]
- SES Non-Career: 40 percent [5White, 1 Asian]
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From 2007 to 2009, women accounted for approximately 60 percent of new hires and 67 percent of the promotions at the Department.

#### **E. Political Appointments**

The White House Liaison, housed within ED's Office of the Secretary, works with the White House Presidential Personnel Office to recruit and appoint staff at all levels. The White House Liaison is also committed to equal opportunity in political appointments.

*Relevant Statistics:* As of June 16, 2010, there are 122 political appointees working at ED, 55.7 percent of whom are female. At the Senate-confirmable level, 61.5 percent of the 13 appointees are female. At the non-career Senior Executive Service level, 40 percent of the 15 appointees are female. At the Schedule C level, 57.9 percent of the 107 appointees are female.

### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

ED recognizes the need for a healthy workforce and, thus, offers a comprehensive health program for employees at headquarters and in the regional offices. Qualified health care professionals assure a healthy workforce through the provision of health education, disease prevention screenings, wellness

activities, and a health-profile examination program. Wellness programs provide employees with strategies for maintaining optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being, both on and off the job.

### **A. Free Health Services**

Free services are offered as a wellness benefit for ED employees at on-site Federal Occupational Health Centers in both headquarters and regional buildings, including:

- Walk-in and first-response care;
- Physician-prescribed services such as allergy treatments, blood pressure and blood sugar monitoring, and bed rest;
- Certain immunizations;
- Health awareness programs;
- Computerized health-risk appraisals; and
- Ongoing health screenings such as weight measurement, blood pressure screening, colorectal cancer screening, vision screening, and lipid panel with glucose screening.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, Federal Occupational Health now offers an online health information program called “*HealthyFocus4You*”, that offers a comprehensive menu of services to help employees address health management goals such as identifying health risks, disease prevention, and self care. The website provides pregnancy progress trackers and research reports on conditions including menopause, breast health, and other common health concerns of women.

### **B. Leave for Preventive Health Screenings**

Preventive health screenings are offered to otherwise healthy individuals to help prevent disease, identify the risks for disease, or detect disease in its early, most treatable stages. ED grants its employees up to four hours of leave with pay each calendar year for participation in preventive health screening activities.

### **C. Employee Assistance Program**

When employees are experiencing personal problems, whether emotional, family, relationship, financial, legal, or otherwise, the Employee Assistance Program provides free, confidential, professional counseling to both employees and their family members, available at any hour of any day.

*Relevant Statistics:* During FY 2009, of the 54 ED employees who utilized EAP’s services, 63 percent were women.

### **D. Lunch and Learn Seminars**

ED periodically offers lunchtime seminars for employees on various topics of interest. In the past year, ED offered the following short seminars: Weight Loss, Eating for Energy, Relaxation, Stress Management, and Managing Your Health Care. The FOHC nurse generally oversees or administers these seminars. Most of the attendees at the seminars are women.

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<sup>3</sup> Mammograms are offered at the FOHC, but at a cost to employees.

## **EXTERNAL PROGRAMS THAT IMPROVE THE LIVES OF AMERICA'S WOMEN AND GIRLS**

ED administers various programs and supports research across all educational levels that benefit or address issues of particular concern to women and girls. The following discussion highlights key programs and efforts directed at women and girls, including women and girls of color and women and girls with disabilities.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT**

ED's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for enforcing various civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance from ED. Based in Washington, D.C., OCR is comprised of over 600 attorneys, investigators, and staff in 12 enforcement offices across the nation. OCR's mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. OCR enforces the following Federal civil rights laws, among others:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in Federally funded education programs or activities;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability; and
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

These civil rights laws protect students and employees in all educational institutions in the nation that receive Federal financial assistance, including State Educational Agencies (SEAs), elementary and secondary school systems, colleges and universities, vocational schools, proprietary schools, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, libraries, and museums. The prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and disability generally cover all of the operations of the educational institutions, extending to such areas as admissions, recruitment, financial aid, academic programs, student treatment and services, counseling and guidance, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, extracurricular activities, physical education, athletics, housing, and employment.

In addition to enforcement activities, OCR provides leadership and coordination in issuing regulations implementing its civil rights laws, develops policy guidance interpreting the laws, and distributes information about the civil rights laws broadly. OCR also provides technical assistance to recipients of Federal funds, and information about the civil rights laws to parent groups, community groups, and other entities interested in the enforcement of civil rights.

This year, Secretary Duncan announced a reinvigoration of the Office for Civil Rights and its enforcement of our nation's civil rights laws. As part of this initiative, OCR developed a new strategic plan that will further ensure that schools and higher education institutions are complying with their civil rights responsibilities. Additionally, there will be an increased focus on technical assistance and outreach activities in order to broaden the public's understanding of their rights. OCR will also distribute a number of new Dear Colleague letters to the field that will further explain and notify recipients of their civil rights responsibilities.

*Relevant Statistics:* One of OCR's primary responsibilities is to resolve complaints of discrimination, and in FY 2009, over 6,000 total complaints were filed with OCR. Another key OCR responsibility is compliance reviews, which permit OCR to target resources on compliance problems that may be systemic or acute. In FY 2009, OCR initiated 29 total compliance reviews.

## **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**

OCR's enforcement over the years has greatly benefited girls and women. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the landmark civil rights law protecting against discrimination based on sex in federally-funded education programs and activities, has, and continues to have, an enormous impact on increasing the educational opportunities for women and girls. Through Title IX's protections of gender equity, and the protections of other laws against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, and age, OCR vigorously ensures that women and girls are free from discrimination in our Nation's schools and universities.

As one example of OCR's reinvigorated civil rights strategy, in April 2010, OCR issued policy guidance strengthening Title IX's application to athletics. The new policy withdrew prior guidance that was inconsistent with Title IX's nondiscrimination requirements and clarified the nondiscriminatory assessment methods under Title IX. The new policy makes clear that OCR will look at a variety of factors in determining whether a school or university is adequately assessing the athletic interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex. The prior policy had permitted a school or university to rely on a single survey in order to assess interests and abilities. The policy was released at an event featuring Vice President Joe Biden, Senior Advisor to the President Valerie Jarrett, and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Additionally, the regulations implementing Title IX make clear that discrimination based on pregnancy is a form of sex discrimination. ED has provided schools with policy guidance that helps schools understand the rights afforded to pregnant students under Title IX. For example, in June 2007, ED issued a letter to postsecondary institutions addressing discrimination against pregnant student athletes in the context of athletic scholarships.

Although Title IX may be best known for increasing the opportunities for women and girls to participate in sports, enforcement of Title IX must also be credited with making differences in all areas and at every level of education. Indeed, Title IX has had substantial results in the workforce, including dramatically increasing the number of female doctors and attorneys, since the law was passed. OCR will continue to conduct its initiative to promote compliance with the non-discrimination mandates of Title IX, with particular emphasis on the underrepresentation of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and addressing sexual violence and harassment in schools to ensure that students have a safe and secure educational environment that affords them equal educational opportunities, regardless of their sex. In addition, OCR will initiate compliance reviews, as well as give presentations on the subject to stakeholders, including elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions.

*Relevant Statistics:* Between FY 2005 and FY 2009, OCR resolved approximately 3,322 complaints alleging discrimination under Title IX. The most frequent issues raised included sexual harassment, different treatment or denial of a benefit, retaliation, employment, and athletics. In addition, OCR initiated 85 compliance reviews between FY 2005 and FY 2009 on Title IX issues, focused mostly on athletics and procedural requirements. During that period, OCR also conducted technical assistance presentations on Title IX issues, including on sexual harassment, athletics, the responsibilities of a Title IX coordinator, and the regulations on single-sex classes and schools.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS**

One way ED ensures equal participation in its programs is through Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)<sup>4</sup>. Under Section 427 of GEPA, all applicants for new awards of Federal funds must include in their applications a description of steps they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, their programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age. This requires applicants for Federal funding to address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain beneficiaries to participate fully in the project and to achieve to high standards.

## **ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

ED administers numerous programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), as well as other Federal statutes that provide grants to states and local school districts to support high quality education for our Nation's children. Young women and girls benefit from all of these programs; however, the following programs and initiatives provide support for, or address issues of particular concern to, women and girls.

### **A. Women's Educational Equity Act Program<sup>5</sup>**

The Women's Educational Equity (WEEA) program is funded under Title V, Part D, Subpart 21 of the ESEA. Enacted in 1974, two years after the passage of Title IX, the purpose of WEEA is to promote gender equity in education; to provide funds to meet the requirements of Title IX; and to promote equity in education for women and girls who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination based on sex and race, ethnic origin, disability, limited English proficiency, or age. Funds are available for local implementation of gender equity practices and policies, as well as research and dissemination activities in pre-kindergarten, K-12, postsecondary, vocational, and adult education. Eligible grantees include public agencies; private nonprofits; organizations including community- and faith-based; institutions; student groups; community groups; and individuals.

Under WEEA, projects may focus on a number of authorized activities to promote gender equity in education, including:

- Professional development for teachers and other personnel;
- School-to-work transition programs;
- Programs for pregnant and parenting students to help them remain in school;
- Curriculum and materials development;
- Development of policies and practices to comply with Title IX;
- Replication of exemplary gender equity programs;
- Leadership training for women and girls;

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<sup>4</sup> 20 USC 1228a

<sup>5</sup> 20 USC 7282-7283g

- Programs and policies to address sexual harassment;
- Programs to increase educational opportunities for low-income women, including the underemployed and unemployed; and
- Programs to improve representation of women in educational administration at all levels.

Current projects focus on helping girls and women overcome barriers to obtain proficiency or advanced proficiency in mathematics or science or both. For example, one university-based project is working with local high schools to expose low-income girls to rigorous mathematics, science, and technology classes and careers. Components of the project include tutoring, mentoring, and job shadowing. Another project is working with undergraduate students to encourage the pursuit of study and careers in math and science. A third project provides support to young mothers and pregnant girls in an alternative educational site to keep them in school and expose them to high-level courses. Projects are required to collect pre- and post-intervention test data to assess the effects of their projects on the academic achievement of student participants relative to appropriate comparison or control groups.

The work undertaken by the funded projects reflects the program purposes and authorized activities set forth under the WEEA statute. Projects must be a significant component of a comprehensive plan for education equity and compliance with Title IX at their institution. Projects must also outline how they will implement institutional change strategies that will continue after WEEA funding ends. Under the most recent competition, ED developed program priorities in math and science. For the 37th anniversary of Title IX on June 23, 2009, Secretary Duncan announced 13 new WEEA grantees.

*Relevant Statistics:* Since its inception, WEEA has funded over 800 projects. Currently, there are 24 active grants, 13 of which were funded under the FY 2009 appropriation. Grants range in size from \$125,000-\$225,000 per year for up to four years. Program funding increased from \$1,846,174 in FY 2008 to \$2,423,000 in FY 2009 and FY 2010.

## **B. Title VI Equity Assistance Centers<sup>6</sup>**

ED's Equity Assistance Centers, authorized under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, provide technical assistance and training, upon request, to school districts and other government agencies in the areas of race, gender, and national origin desegregation. The centers work in the areas of civil rights, equity, and school reform to help schools and communities ensure that equitable education opportunities are available and accessible for all children. The centers also develop materials, strategies, and professional development activities to assist schools and communities in preventing and countering harassment based on ethnicity or gender. Eligible applicants are public agencies (except SEAs or school boards) and private, nonprofit organizations.

*Relevant Statistics:* Currently, 10 centers are funded through cooperative agreements with ED. Awards range from \$609,117-\$856,665. The appropriation for FY 2009 was \$6,989,000.

## **C. Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities: Governors' Grants<sup>7</sup>**

Under the Governors' Grants Program, ED provides support to governors or chief executive officers of a state, through formula grants, for a variety of drug and violence prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youth. Funds may be used to provide support to local school districts, community-based organizations, and other public and private nonprofit entities for drug and violence prevention activities that complement the SEA and Local Educational Agency (LEA) portions of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program. Priority consideration goes to programs focusing on youth and

<sup>6</sup> 20 USC 2000c-2000c-2; 2000c-5

<sup>7</sup> 20 USC 7112

children that are not normally served by SEAs and LEAs, or to programs focusing on youth with special needs such as those in juvenile detention facilities, runaway or homeless youth, pregnant and parenting teenagers, and school dropouts.

Examples of programs funded under the Governor's Grants are:

- The Community School/Passages Program in Camden, Maine serves pregnant and parenting young mothers and fathers between the ages of 14-22 from Knox, Waldo, and Lincoln Counties who have dropped out of school and have few options. Program components focus on substance abuse, high-risk behaviors and independent living, parenting and coping skills.
- The Teen Parents and the Law program in Great Falls, Montana, is a law-related education program developed by Street Law, Inc. The program is designed to strengthen families, lower the incidence of child abuse in the home by empowering teen parents with knowledge about the law, break the cycle of violence, make better citizens and parents of those who are already teen parents, and decrease the percentage of teen parents among the next generation through ability to make better informed decisions. The program is supported by several funding sources, including the Governor's Grants Program, for the purpose of increasing protective factors among teen parents.

*Relevant Statistics:* : In FY 2009, Governor's Grants were 20 percent of the Safe and Drug Free School and Communities allocation, totaling \$58, 951, 800. Awards range from \$121,373 to \$7,032,359.

#### **D. Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative<sup>8</sup>**

Since 1999 ED, HHS, and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) have collaboratively funded and supported the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative. The SS/HS Initiative supports school and community partnerships in their efforts to develop, coordinate, and implement research-based programs, effective policies, and innovative strategies through a comprehensive plan focused on positive mental, emotional, and behavioral health for children and youth.

Eligible applicants are local educational agencies that partner with local public mental health, law enforcement, and juvenile justice agencies to develop and submit a community-specific comprehensive plan that addresses the following five elements:

- Element One: Safe School Environments and Violence Prevention Activities.
- Element Two: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention Activities.
- Element Three: Student Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Supports.
- Element Four: Mental Health Services.
- Element Five: Early Childhood Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

The grantee's SS/HS comprehensive plan is based on community-specific data that identifies needs and gaps related to the five SS/HS elements. The plan's goals, objectives, activities, curricula, programs, services and staff correspond to the community-specific data, thus no two SS/HS projects are the same.

One example of a program funded under this initiative is located at the Hazelwood School District (HSD) in Missouri. HSD holds an annual summer safety symposium and year-round training on sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and mandated reporting for school security officers, school resource officers, teachers and administrators. A student handbook on sexual harassment and sexual misconduct has been developed and parents or guardians are required to review it with their children and sign a form stating they are familiar with its content. Parents are also provided with training on how to help their children respond to sexual harassment.

### **E. The Teen Dating Violence Partnership**

The Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools is an active member of the Federal Interagency Workgroup on Teen Dating Violence. The workgroup was convened in 2006 and meets every 6 weeks; it is comprised of approximately 60 agency representatives with an interest in understanding and preventing teen dating violence from 19 offices within ED, HHS, and DOJ.

One goal of the workgroup is to stay current and informed about teen dating violence efforts and initiatives in each participating agency. Another goal is to develop collaborative projects that encourage the pooling of resources to combat relationship abuse and violence among adolescents. Participating agencies have collaborated on several joint efforts, including a 2008 joint funding agreement between the Departments of Education and Justice for a study on classroom-based curriculum and a school-wide intervention to prevent teen dating violence.

### **F. Interagency Policy Group on Violence Against Women**

ED's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools actively participates in this group, which is facilitated by the Office of the Vice President at the White House.

### **G. The Race to the Top Fund<sup>9</sup>**

The Race to the Top program, a \$4.35 billion fund created under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009<sup>10</sup> (ARRA), is the largest competitive education grant program in U.S. history. It is designed to provide incentives to States to implement large-scale, system-changing reforms that result in improved student achievement, narrowed achievement gaps, and increased graduation and college enrollment rates.

State applications for Race to the Top funds must address four core education reform areas: enhancing standards and assessments, improving the collection and use of data, increasing teacher effectiveness and achieving equity in teacher distribution, and turning around struggling schools.

Additionally, states receive competitive preference for creating high-quality plans to offer rigorous courses in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); work with STEM-capable community partners; and prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM, including by addressing any barriers to these careers for underrepresented groups such as women and girls.<sup>11</sup>

*Relevant Statistics:* The appropriation for FY 2009 was \$4.35 billion for the Race to the Top Fund. The STEM competitive preference priority is worth 15 points (all or nothing), and accounts for three percent of the total possible points.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Referred to in the ARRA as the "State Incentive Grant Fund."

<sup>10</sup> American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009, Division A, Section 14006, Public Law 111-5, as amended by Public Law 111-8.

<sup>11</sup> Department of Education; Race to the Top Fund; Final Rule, 74 Fed. Reg. 59798.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on the Race to the Top budget, visit <http://www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/budget-guidance.pdf>.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Pursuant to its authority under the Higher Education Act, the Department administers a variety of loan and grant programs to assist students pursuing post-secondary undergraduate and graduate degrees at eligible institutions. The programs discussed below are some of the HEA programs that directly benefit the Nation's women and girls.

### **A. Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program<sup>13</sup>**

Title III Part E of the HEA includes the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (MSEIP). The MSEIP supports the Federal Government's efforts to improve and expand the scientific and technological capacity of the United States, to support its technological and economic competitiveness, and to address barriers that have led to the under-representation of minority students, particularly girls, in STEM fields. The goals of MSEIP are to increase the number of minorities in K-12 schools, particularly girls, that are prepared to enter science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and to also increase the number of minorities, particularly women, who graduate with undergraduate and graduate STEM degrees.

Activities supported by MSEIP include:

- Pre-college programs to increase skills in preparing for STEM fields;
- Tutoring for pre-college and college students in STEM areas;
- faculty development in STEM fields;
- College curriculum development in STEM fields;
- Renovation of STEM labs/classrooms;
- Stipends for eligible program participants; and
- A wide range of activities designed to increase minority STEM graduates, particularly women, in STEM fields.

As part of the 2008 amendments to the HEA, Congress added a new subpart to the MSEIP statutory provisions to support STEM programs with one of the priorities to focus on making appeals to women to enter these programs. Congress has not yet appropriated funds for this new program.

*Relevant Statistics:* The FY 2009 appropriation was \$8,577,000 and supported 16 new awards and 38 continuation awards, ranging in size from \$100,000 to \$299,000.

### **B. Campus-Based Childcare Services<sup>14</sup>**

The Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program is a discretionary, competitive grant program to support low-income parents in postsecondary education through campus-based childcare services. Eligible institutions of higher education may apply and use grants for before and after-school services. In addition, grants may be used to serve the child care needs of the community served by the institution.

*Relevant Statistics:* The FY 2008 appropriation was \$15,533,799 and supported 170 continuation awards, ranging in size from \$10,000-\$300,000. In FY 2009, the program received \$16,034,000 and supported 160 awards of a total of \$15,878,663. For FY 2010, the program received \$16,034,000 and is funding down the FY 2009 slate rather than holding another competition.

<sup>13</sup> 20 USC 1067-1067k

<sup>14</sup> 20 USC 1070e

## C. Student Aid

ED administers several student aid programs:

- Student loan programs, including the Federal Family Education Loan Program<sup>15</sup> and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program<sup>16</sup>;
- Campus-based programs administered directly by school financial aid offices, including Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants<sup>17</sup>, Federal Perkins Loan programs<sup>18</sup>, and Federal Work-Study<sup>19</sup>; and
- Grant programs, such as the Federal Pell Grant Program<sup>20</sup>.

Female students benefit greatly from all of these student aid programs. For example, many recipients of Pell Grants, grants designed to help the neediest undergraduate students, are not the “traditional” students that attend college directly after graduating from high school while being financially supported by parents. Rather, many working mothers or women re-entering the workforce benefit from Pell grants.

*Relevant Statistics:* Of college graduates from the 1999-2000 school year, a larger percentage of Pell grant recipients than non-recipients were women (60 versus 56 percent) and 11.4 percent of the recipients were single parents. In 2008-2009, ED awarded \$18.4 billion in Pell Grants with an average award of approximately \$2,973 to about 6.2 million students.

### **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins Act)<sup>21</sup>, provides an increased focus (compared to previous authorizations of the Perkins Act) on the academic achievement of career and technical education students, strengthening the connections between secondary and postsecondary education, and improving state and local accountability. Perkins Act funds are available to more fully develop the academic, career, and technical skills of secondary and postsecondary students who elect to enroll in career and technical programs. The Perkins Act contains broad provisions addressing gender equality in career and technical education, and employment. It requires States to reserve funds for services that prepare students to enter non-traditional fields (*i.e.*, occupations in which individuals of one gender comprise less than 25 percent of employees in such occupations). States also must support programs for special populations, including women preparing for non-traditional fields, single parents, single pregnant women, and displaced homemakers, that lead to high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations.

*Relevant Statistics:* Of the \$1,271,700,000 total appropriated in FY 2010 for the Perkins Act programs, \$1,141,988,150 are reserved for CTE State Grants.

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<sup>15</sup> 20 USC 1071 *et seq.*

<sup>16</sup> 20 USC 1087a *et seq.*

<sup>17</sup> 20 USC 1070b *et seq.*

<sup>18</sup> 20 USC 1087aa *et seq.*

<sup>19</sup> 42 USC 2751 *et seq.*

<sup>20</sup> 20 USC 1070a *et seq.*

<sup>21</sup> 20 USC 2301 *et seq.*

## **DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH PROJECTS**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Rehabilitation Act) authorizes a variety of grant programs, including vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, independent living, client assistance, and research. The Rehabilitation Act also includes important nondiscrimination provisions of government-wide effect, including "Section 504" for nondiscrimination on the basis of disability, and "Section 508" for electronic equipment accessibility. Title IV of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes an independent Federal agency, the National Council on Disability. Within ED, Rehabilitation Act appropriations support over \$3 billion of formula and discretionary grants administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), as well as the following research activities administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research that focus on issues related to women with disabilities.

### **A. Abuse Education and Safety Planning Program**

The University of Montana Rural Institute in Missoula, Montana works in conjunction with an RSA-funded Center for Independent Living (CIL) to develop and evaluate the accessible, consumer-driven Abuse Education and Safety Planning Program for Women with Disabilities. Drawing on both the strengths of traditional community-based domestic violence and sexual assault programs, as well as the cumulative research findings on the dynamics and prevalence of violence against women with disabilities, this program offers an integrated approach for meeting the gender-specific and disability-sensitive prevention needs of women with disabilities. Women with disabilities are recruited from the ten CILs in Montana and then randomly assigned either to a group to participate in CIL services plus the abuse education and safety-planning program; or to a group receiving the on-going CIL services only.

The program for the first group consists of six 2.5-hour weekly sessions using a curriculum that includes topics such as self-advocacy, nature of abuse and violence, safety planning strategies, and healthy relationships. All sessions include self-efficacy training, goal setting, problem-solving, and interactive activities to encourage mutual support. A CIL staff member from each site participates in a comprehensive leader-training program conducted by the project personnel.

Relevant Statistics: The project period is 36 months. The awards are as follows: FY 2007 —\$199,996; FY 2008 —\$199,985; and FY 2009 —\$199,987.

### **B. Depression Group Therapy Intervention**

The Development of a Cognitive Behavioral Group Therapy Intervention for Women with Physical Activity Disabilities Who Experience Depression is a project based out of the Oregon Health and Science University School of Nursing, in Portland, Oregon. The project uses an existing cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention that has demonstrated effectiveness in reducing depressive symptoms in women without disabilities as a starting point to co-create an intervention that addresses the specific needs of women with physical disabilities (WPD). The co-creation process occurs in the context of a partnership between the investigators, WPD in the community, and community-based organizations. The specific aims of this project are to develop a cognitive behavioral group therapy intervention to address the specific needs of WPD who experience depressive symptoms; and to pilot-test the intervention by evaluating its efficacy with 90 participants using a wait list control design. A long-term goal of the project is to increase the capacity of centers for independent living and other community-based organizations across the country to offer a relevant, effective, accessible, and affordable intervention to help women with physical disabilities overcome this debilitating secondary condition.

Relevant Statistics: The project period is 36 months. The awards are as follows: FY 2007—\$198,701; FY 2008—\$199,926; and FY 2009 —\$187,385.

### **C. Self-Esteem Internet-Based Intervention**

The Baylor College of Medicine’s Center for Research on Women with Disabilities in Houston, Texas is developing an internet based self-esteem tool to enhance interventions to women with disabilities. Project objectives include: (1) reviewing and refining previous self-esteem curricula; (2) developing and testing a methodology to teach participants to navigate the technology, called “SecondLife,” and interact with other individuals using real-time voice dialogue; and (3) converting the self-esteem enhancement intervention into a format that uses real-time voice dialogue group interactions in SecondLife, supplemented with on-screen information and illustrations. This Internet-based intervention allows people with disabilities to access secure systematic online health promotion programs designed to increase their ability to self-manage chronic conditions and disabilities, achieve improved health and mental health outcomes, and ultimately achieve full participation in their communities.

Relevant Statistics: The project is for a 36-month period. The awards are as follows: FY 2008—\$200,000; FY 2009—\$200,000; and FY 2010—\$200,000.

## NEXT STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE COUNCIL'S MISSION

ED is very proud of its programs that benefit the women in its workforce, as well as those that support America's women and girls. Our goal is to continuously evaluate program administration methods while exploring ways to expand and improve efforts as needed.

### *Internal Programs that Improve the Lives of Women in Our Workforce*

ED recognizes the need to continuously assess the effectiveness of its workplace programs and ensure that all employees are aware of, and have the opportunity to take advantage of, these programs. Toward that end, ED plans to take the following steps:

- Evaluate whether more access to workplace programs for regional office staff is needed.
- Gather data, disaggregated as needed, on how many employees are taking advantage of its workplace policies.
- Identify alternative approaches to communicating with employees about its workplace policies and obtain feedback on these programs to encourage participation.
- Increase the frequency of Lunch and Learn Seminars.

### *External Programs That Improve the Lives of America's Women and Girls*

ED strives to integrate equity into all that we do. Toward that end, ED plans to take the following steps:

- Continue to implement multi-year reinvigorated civil rights strategy developed by OCR for civil rights enforcement, technical assistance, and outreach.
- Ensure that recipients of ED funds, including recipients of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, are aware of their obligations under civil rights laws.
- Explore how to coordinate and include recent research while working collaboratively across offices within ED, and with other Federal agencies, in order to address barriers to equal access and participation in educational programs.
- Celebrate the achievements made by women and girls across the country, and highlight successful programs and milestones. ED will continue to collaborate with the White House, the Council on Women and Girls, and the public on the release of significant program and policy initiatives, such as the June 2009 Title IX anniversary panel convened by the Council, and the April 2010 release of ED's Dear Colleague letter on Title IX and athletics.

ED is excited to have completed this first step towards developing a coordinated federal response to the issues affecting the lives of women and girls. ED will continue to evaluate its progress towards its short-term goals through periodic meetings, additional research, and vigorous civil rights enforcement. ED welcomes your feedback on this report and looks forward to further contributions to this collaborative effort.