
Mission and Organizational Structure

Our Mission

The U.S. Department of Education's mission is *to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

Overview. In 1867, [the federal government](#) recognized that furthering education was a national priority and created a federal education agency to collect and report statistical data. The Department was established as a cabinet-level agency in 1979. Today, the Department supports programs that touch on every area and level of education. The Department has approximately 4,200 employees and manages a \$65 billion discretionary appropriation. The Department is also setting high expectations for its own employees and working to improve management practices, ensure fiscal integrity, and develop a culture of high performance.

Our Public Benefit. The Department is committed to ensuring that students throughout the nation develop the skills they need to succeed in school, college, and the workforce, while recognizing the primary role of states and school districts in providing a high-quality education, employing highly qualified teachers and administrators, establishing challenging content and achievement standards, and monitoring students' progress against those standards. As a principal office of the Department, Federal Student Aid (FSA) provides billions of dollars in low-interest loans, grants, and work-study funds to cover expenses, such as tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation, which enables millions of students to further their education. The Department's early learning, elementary, and secondary programs annually serve approximately 56 million students in 14,000 school districts attending about 99,000 public and 31,000 private schools and early intervention and preschool programs. Department programs also provide grant, loan, and work-study assistance to approximately 14 million postsecondary students.

What We Do. The [Department](#) engages in four major types of activities: establishing policies related to federal education funding, including the distribution of funds, collecting on student loans, and using data to monitor the use of funds; supporting data collection and research on America's schools; identifying major issues in education and focusing national attention on them; and enforcing federal laws prohibiting discrimination in programs that receive federal funds.

Organizational Structure. Our staff is organized as shown in the organizational chart. Links are provided to Web pages that provide a detailed [description of the principal offices](#) and [overview of the activities of the Department](#) and [its programs](#).

Regional Offices. The [Department has 10 regional offices](#) that provide points of contact and assistance for schools, parents, and citizens. The primary support within the regional offices is that of communications, civil rights enforcement, and federal student aid services to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the programs and operations of the Department. In addition to enforcement offices in federal regions, enforcement offices are located in Washington, D.C. and Cleveland, Ohio.

Web Presence. The Department maintains [a comprehensive website](#) that focuses on most popular searches, latest news and events, and links to social media.

Our Organization

This chart reflects the statutory organizational structure of the U.S. Department of Education. An [interactive and text version of the coordinating structure](#) of the Department is available.

