

THE DEPARTMENT'S APPROACH TO PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

In accordance with the *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010*¹, the Department's framework for performance management starts with the four-year *Strategic Plan*, including its two-year Agency Priority Goals (APGs), which serve as the foundation for establishing and implementing long-term priorities and performance goals, objectives, and measures by which the Department can gauge achievement of its stated outcomes. Progress towards the Department's strategic goals and its APGs is measured using data-driven review and analysis. Additional information on performance management is available in the *Annual Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports*.

The *FY 2018–22 Strategic Plan* is comprised of four strategic goals and five FY 2019-20 APGs. The *Strategic Plan* aims to align the Administration's yearly budget requests and the Department's legislative agenda, supported by the considerable experience and resources available from its staff. The Department continues to welcome input from Congress, state and local partners, and other education stakeholders about the *Strategic Plan*. Questions or comments about the *Strategic Plan* should be emailed to PIO@ed.gov.

FY 2018–22 Strategic Goals and Strategic Objectives²

Strategic Goal 1: Support state and local efforts to improve learning outcomes for all prekindergarten–grade 12 students in every community.	
Strategic Objective 1.1	Increase high-quality educational options and empower students and parents to choose an education that meets their needs.
Strategic Objective 1.2	Provide all prekindergarten - grade 12 students with equal access to high-quality educational opportunities.
Strategic Objective 1.3	Prepare all students for successful transitions to college and careers by supporting access to dual enrollment, job skills development and high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
Strategic Objective 1.4	Support agencies and institutions in the implementation of evidence-based strategies and practices that build the capacity of school staff and families to support students' academic performance.
Strategic Goal 2: Expand postsecondary educational opportunities, improve outcomes to foster economic opportunity and promote an informed, thoughtful and productive citizenry.	
Strategic Objective 2.1	Support educational institutions, students, parents and communities to increase access and completion of college, lifelong learning and career, technical and adult education.
Strategic Objective 2.2	Support agencies and educational institutions in identifying and using evidence-based strategies or other promising practices to improve educational opportunities and successfully prepare individuals to compete in the global economy.
Strategic Objective 2.3	Support agencies and educational institutions as they create or expand innovative and affordable paths to relevant careers by providing postsecondary credentials or job-ready skills.
Strategic Objective 2.4	Improve quality of service for customers across the entire student aid life cycle.
Strategic Objective 2.5	Enhance students' and parents' ability to repay their federal student loans by providing accurate and timely information, relevant tools and manageable repayment options.
Strategic Goal 3: Strengthen the quality, accessibility and use of education data through better management, increased privacy protections and transparency.	
Strategic Objective 3.1	Improve the Department's data governance, data life cycle management and the capacity to support education data.
Strategic Objective 3.2	Improve privacy protections for, and transparency of, education data both at the Department and in the education community.
Strategic Objective 3.3	Increase access to, and use of, education data to make informed decisions both at the Department and in the education community.
Strategic Goal 4: Reform the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of the Department.	
Strategic Objective 4.1	Provide regulatory relief to educational institutions and reduce burden by identifying time-consuming regulations, processes and policies and working to improve or eliminate them, while continuing to protect taxpayers from waste and abuse.
Strategic Objective 4.2	Identify, assess, monitor and manage enterprise risks.
Strategic Objective 4.3	Strengthen the Department's cybersecurity by enhancing protections for its information technology infrastructure, systems and data.
Strategic Objective 4.4	Improve the engagement and preparation of the Department's workforce using professional development and accountability measures.

¹ GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 amends the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA).

² The FY 2020 Statement of Net Cost and related notes align with the *FY 2018–22 Strategic Plan*.

THE DEPARTMENT'S AGENCY PRIORITY GOALS (APGs)

The Department identified five APGs for FY 2020-2021. Improving education starts with allowing greater decision-making authority at the state and local levels and empowering parents and students with educational options. These goals seek to increase education choices, enhance multiple pathways for student success in career and job ready skills, improve the Department's Federal Student Aid customer service, improve student privacy protection and cybersecurity at institutions of higher education (IHEs), and provide regulatory relief and burden reduction to stakeholders. The effective implementation of the Department's APGs will depend, in part, on the effective use of high-quality and timely data, including evaluations and performance measures. The *Goal Action Plans* and quarterly updates for the APGs are available on <https://www.performance.gov/education/>.

APG	Related Strategic Objective
<p>Education Freedom: Improve awareness of and access to high-quality K-12 education opportunities for students and families. By September 30, 2021, the Department will increase both the number and percentage of total charter school students and total scholarship students nationwide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter school enrollment will increase from 3.29 million to 3.51 million (6.90 percent of all students in public schools). The number of scholarship students, including participants in state-based vouchers, tax-credit scholarship, and education savings account program, will increase from 482,000 to 579,250 (1.10 percent of the total school age population). The number of parents who receive support and engagement through technical assistance and other resources will increase by 5 percent per year. 	<p>Strategic Objective 1.1: Increase high-quality educational options and empower students and parents to choose an education that meets their needs.</p>
<p>Multiple Pathways to Success: Improve nationwide awareness of and access to career pathways that support job skills development and career readiness. By September 30, 2021, the Department will, through programs such as the Career and Technical Education and Adult Education State Grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation and expansion of integrated education and training (IET) programs in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Increase enrollment of participants in IET programs to 56,000. Support the enrollment of Career and Technical Education concentrators in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Increase by 25,000 the number of federal financial aid recipients who earn a postsecondary credential in STEM. 	<p>Strategic Objective 1.3: Prepare all students for successful transitions to college and careers by supporting access to dual enrollment, job skills development and high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).</p> <p>Strategic Objective 2.3: Support agencies and educational institutions as they create or expand innovative and affordable paths to relevant careers by providing postsecondary credentials or job-ready skills.</p>
<p>FSA Customer Service: Leverage the Next Generation Financial Services Environment (Next Gen FSA) to improve and personalize customers' experience with Federal Student Aid (FSA). By September 30, 2021, FSA will transform its relationship with prospective and current customers through deployment of significant components of the Next Gen FSA that result in a personalized experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of individuals submitting a Free Application for Federal Student Aid® (FAFSA®) through a mobile device will increase to 2.6 million. The overall customer satisfaction level throughout the student aid life cycle, as measured by the FSA Customer Satisfaction score¹, will increase. 	<p>Strategic Objective 2.4: Improve quality of service for customers across the entire student aid life cycle.</p>
<p>Student Privacy and Cybersecurity: Improve student privacy and cybersecurity at institutions of higher education (IHEs) through outreach and compliance efforts. By September 30, 2021, the Department will participate in 12 engagements with sector-related non-governmental organizations to inform the development of five best practice programmatic improvements.</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 3.2: Improve privacy protections for, and transparency of, education data both at the Department and in the education community.</p>
<p>Regulatory Reform: Provide regulatory relief to education stakeholders as necessary and appropriate. (Related Strategic Objective: 4.1) By September 30, 2021, the Department will provide regulatory relief for education stakeholders by taking no fewer than eight deregulatory actions, which includes reduction in paperwork burden.</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 4.1: Provide regulatory relief to educational institutions and reduce burden by identifying time-consuming regulations, processes and policies and working to improve or eliminate them, while continuing to protect taxpayers from waste and abuse.</p>

¹ The Federal Student Aid Customer Satisfaction Score is an annual composite metric that measures the overall customer satisfaction level throughout the student aid life cycle for *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*® (FAFSA®) applicants (mobile and FAFSA.gov), Title IV aid recipients in school, and borrowers in repayment. The score is based on the American Customer Satisfaction Index surveys.

Goal 1. Support state and local efforts to improve learning outcomes for all P–12 students in every community.

Strategic Goal 1 focuses on outcomes related to the transition from the *No Child Left Behind Act* to implementation of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* in December 2015. The hallmark of the ESSA is the flexibility it provides for states to do what is best for children while preserving important protections for economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners, and other vulnerable students. The law requires that states take steps to ensure all students have access to excellent teachers and positive, safe learning environments that equip them for college and career success. The Department supports improved learning outcomes by awarding approximately \$40 billion to states, school districts, and nonprofit organizations.

The Department encourages families to be aware of educational opportunities and choices available so that they can make the best choice for their student's needs. Access to high-quality educational opportunities should be afforded to all students. In FY 2020, the Department conducted outreach to states, schools, and other educational organizations to promote school choice. As learning outcomes are not just affected in the classrooms, the Department launched a state information sharing tool on schoolsafety.gov which allows schools to share safety plans, compare policies, and learn from each other in an effort to create safe learning environments.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Equity Assistance Centers funded by the Department developed a set of resources to facilitate equitable learning opportunities in virtual educational environments. In FY 2020, the Department supported P–12 schools impacted by COVID-19 with more than \$13.3 billion in funding. Funding included Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund grants and the Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models Grants.

Goal 2. Expand postsecondary educational opportunities, improve outcomes to foster economic opportunity and promote an informed, thoughtful and productive citizenry.

Strategic Goal 2 focuses on expanding the Department's efforts to support innovative and accessible paths to postsecondary credentials and job-ready skills training. In addition to supporting expanded postsecondary opportunities, the Department has a number of initiatives focused on affordability. These initiatives ensure borrowers have the best information available to make postsecondary program selection and associated borrowing decisions. The Department also continues to help students understand their financial aid options and repayment obligations. In FY 2020, \$31.6 billion was appropriated to the Department in support of this Strategic Goal 2. More than 5,000 grants were awarded to support colleges and universities in their efforts to promote and expand access and improvements to postsecondary education that will contribute to the global success of our nation. In addition, funding for Strategic Goal 2 also supports the Department's enhancements to customer service for customers and stakeholders of Federal Student Aid.

The Department continues efforts to help prepare the nation's workforce of tomorrow with the right skills and credentials of today. In FY 2020, the Department conducted a Teaching Skills that Matter symposium with more than 1,000 teachers to help adult education instructors integrate employability skills development with academic instruction. In addition, the Department continued to prioritize workforce preparation during the COVID-19 pandemic through various virtual and technical outreach activities.

In FY 2020, the Department had much success in implementing *CARES Act* provisions. Approximately \$14 billion in funding was appropriated for the *CARES Act* Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Programs. The Department succeeded in distributing 90 percent of the funding to IHEs within 30 days of authorization. The additional 10 percent was distributed within the following

three days. Portions of this funding were used to provide emergency financial aid to students.

The Federal Student Aid office provides more than \$120 billion annually to students and their families. Enhancing the service provided to customers and stakeholders continues to be priority. The Department has made improvements to the **StudentAid.gov** website that enhances customers' individual experience by making information readily available at any time and educating customers on loan repayment. Because the *CARES Act* put student loans in administrative forbearance and eliminated interest, the Federal Student Aid office ensured borrowers were aware of the changes and how the changes impacted their payments and balance.

Goal 3. Strengthen the quality, accessibility and use of education data through better management, increased privacy protections and transparency.

Strategic Goal 3 focuses on strengthening data-driven decision-making in education by focusing on the ways the Department manages and makes available education data, while protecting student privacy. The Department is committed to improving how staff and stakeholders access, use, and share meaningful data on education while protecting privacy. These improvements enable the Department and other stakeholders in the education community to better provide the public with the information necessary to make informed decisions on behalf of their communities, states, and local districts. Approximately \$556 million in discretionary resources was appropriated to support Strategic Goal 3 in FY 2020.

The Department is committed to protecting student's education data both within the Department and at educational institutions. In support of this commitment, in FY 2020, the Department collaborated with IHEs to respond to more than 400 cybersecurity incidents by providing technical assistance to assist with remediation and improving their cybersecurity postures. As the COVID-19 pandemic forced many schools to transition to virtual learning, the Department responded to more

than 750 technical assistance inquiries. The Department was also proactive in its approach to cybersecurity by conducting outreach and meeting with IHEs.

Goal 4. Reform the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of the Department.

Strategic Goal 4 focuses in general on protecting taxpayers from fraud, waste, and abuse. This involves improving internal decision-making and reducing regulatory burden on external stakeholders. In FY 2020, \$623 million was appropriated to support Goal 4.

The Department continually performs comprehensive reviews of the Department's regulations, guidance, and information collections to identify and take appropriate action with regard to those that are overly burdensome, inconsistent with Administration priorities, unnecessary, outdated, or ineffective. In FY 2020, there was savings from burden reduction of \$113.5 million (annualized) and \$1.622 billion (present value), both over a perpetual time horizon.

Strategic Goal 4 also includes the responsibility of the Department to implement Enterprise Risk Management (ERM). The Department uses a coordinated approach to identify, measure, and assess challenges related to mission delivery and resource management. In FY 2020, the Department joined an Office of Management and Budget pilot to test, assess, and validate sections or components of ERM. The Department continues to assess ERM maturity and identify likelihoods and impacts to Department operations and mission.

Strategic Goal 4 also includes the responsibility to ensure the Department's workforce is properly trained and accountable. In FY 2020, the Department implemented a strategy focused on improving employee engagement, performance, and competency development. The Department continues its efforts to provide professional development where gaps in competency have been identified. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department continues to foster employee engagement through virtual platforms as most employees telework.