
Overview

About This Report

The United States Department of Education's (the Department's) *FY 2015 Annual Performance Report* (APR) and *FY 2017 Annual Performance Plan* (APP) provide information relative to the *FY 2014–18 Strategic Plan*.

Again this year, the Department has consolidated its APR and APP in an effort to provide a more complete and meaningful picture of the Department's past performance and plans for the 2017 fiscal year. Because there is typically a delay of at least one year to allow for data collection for many of the Department's performance metrics, annual trend data are not available for all metrics.

About the Agency Financial Report

The [FY 2015 Agency Financial Report](#) (AFR), released in November 2015, provides detailed information on the Department's financial performance and stewardship over its financial resources. Former Secretary Arne Duncan outlined accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and management challenges for the Department in FY 2015 in [his letter published in the AFR](#).

FY 2015 Financial Highlights and Information

The [Financial Highlights](#) section of the AFR provides an overview and analysis of the Department's sources of funds and financial position, including a section on trend analysis, to depict key financial activities for FY 2015 and to identify and explain significant trends.

As an 11-time recipient of the Association of Government Accountants Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting and having earned unmodified¹ (or "clean") audit opinions for 14 consecutive years, the Department remains committed to continuous improvement in its financial management, operations, and reporting.

The AFR also provides a review of the Department's [financial summary and complete financial statements](#), including required supplementary stewardship information and notes to the principal financial statements for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2015, and September 30, 2014.

Analysis of Controls, Systems, and Legal Compliance

The Department is the smallest of 15 cabinet-level agencies in terms of government staff, with approximately 4,100 employees. In contrast, it has the third-largest grant portfolio among the 26 federal grant-making organizations. To demonstrate effective stewardship of these resources, the Department has to implement effective controls over operations, systems, and financial reporting, as described in the [Analysis of Controls, Systems, and Legal Compliance](#) section of the AFR.

For more information regarding compliance with the *Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982* (P.L. 97-255) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, see the [Management Assurances](#) section of the AFR.

¹ "Unmodified" has the same meaning as the previous terminology, "unqualified."