

ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The U.S. Department of Education (the Department) continued to enhance the content quality, report layout, and public accessibility of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Agency Financial Report (AFR) by improving graphics and providing more useful, balanced, and easily understood information about the Department's loan programs, including additional cost and risk information. Additionally, we augmented information provided in the body of the AFR with relevant web content to provide users with additional information about the Department's operations and performance. To take advantage of the hyperlinks embedded in the report, the Department recommends reading it **on the Internet**. To help us continue to improve the quality and usefulness of information provided in our AFR, we encourage our public and other stakeholders to provide feedback and suggestions at AFRComments@ed.gov.

This section highlights information on the Department's performance, financial statements, systems and controls, compliance with laws and regulations, and actions taken or planned to address select challenges.

MISSION AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section provides information about the Department's mission, an overview of its history, and its structure. The active links include the organization chart and principal offices and a link to the full list of **Department offices** with a description of selected offices by function.

THE DEPARTMENT'S APPROACH TO PERFORMANCE

This section provides a brief summary of the Department's performance goals and results for FY 2018. Since the Department has chosen to produce separate financial and performance reports, a detailed discussion of performance information for FY 2018 will be provided in the Department's *Annual Performance Report* to be released online at the same time as the President's FY 2020 Budget in February 2019. For more information, prior-year performance reports can be found on the

Department's website. We also urge readers to seek programmatic data as it is reported in the Congressional Budget Justification, as well as on the web pages of individual programs. Any questions or comments about the Department's performance reporting should be e-mailed to PIO@ed.gov. For more details on performance, please refer to the Department's budget and performance web page at www.Performance.gov.

FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION

The Forward-Looking Information section describes the challenges that the Department aims to address to achieve progress on Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), Direct Loans, Next Gen FSA, Technology Business Management Solutions (TBMS), and Shared Services.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Department expends a substantial portion of its budgetary resources and cash on multiple loan and grant programs intended to support state and local efforts to improve learning outcomes for all prekindergarten through 12th grade (P-12) students in every community and to expand postsecondary education options and improve outcomes to foster economic opportunity and informed, thoughtful, and productive citizens. Accordingly, the Department included more high-level details about sources and uses of the federal funds received and net costs by program.

ANALYSIS OF SYSTEMS, CONTROLS, AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE

The Department's internal control framework and its assessment of controls, in accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control*, provide assurance to Department leadership and external stakeholders that financial data produced by the Department's business and financial processes and systems are complete, accurate, and reliable.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

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.*

Who We Are. 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 1980. Today, the Department supports programs in every area and level of education from preschool through postdoctoral research.

The **Department** makes funds and information available to individuals pursuing education, colleges and universities, state education agencies, and school districts by engaging in four major types of activities:

- establishing policies related to federal education funding, including distributing 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 promoting equal access and prohibiting discrimination in programs that receive federal funds.

Our Public Benefit. The Department executes the laws passed by Congress to promote student academic achievement and preparation for global competitiveness.

The Department works with students, parents, educational institutions, school districts, and states to foster educational excellence and to ensure equal access to a high quality education for all students. While recognizing the primary role of states and school districts in providing high quality education, the Department is committed to helping ensure students throughout the nation develop skills to succeed in school, pursue postsecondary options, and transition to the workforce. The Department's vision is to improve educational outcomes for all students.

Many of the Department's programs involve awarding grants to state and local educational agencies and providing grants and loans to postsecondary students. The Department's largest outlays are for its portfolio of student loans (see the **Financial Highlights** and **Notes** sections). Grant programs constitute the second-largest driver of outlays. The grant programs include: student aid to help pay for college through Pell Grants, Work Study, and other campus-based programs; grants awarded based on statutory formulas mostly for elementary and secondary education; and competitive grant programs to promote innovation. The Department also supports research, collects education statistics, and enforces civil rights statutes. We manage and spend financial resources on programs designed to support parents, teachers, principals, school leadership, institutions, and states in the pursuit of instilling knowledge and transferring skills to students.

OUR ORGANIZATION IN FISCAL YEAR 2018

This chart reflects the coordinating structure of the U.S. Department of Education. **Interactive** and **text versions** of the FY 2018 coordinating structure of the Department are available.

