

About the Management's Discussion and Analysis

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) continued to enhance the content quality, report layout, and public accessibility of the fiscal year (FY) 2021 *Agency Financial Report* (AFR) by refining graphics and providing more useful, balanced, and easily understood information about the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act*, also known as the CARES Act, and about the Department's loan programs, including additional cost and risk information. The Department also chose relevant web content to provide users with more 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 continue to improve the quality and usefulness of information provided in the AFR, the Department encourages the 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 summary of the Department's performance goals and results for FY 2021. Since the Department has chosen to produce separate financial and performance reports, a detailed discussion of performance information for FY 2021 will be provided in the Department's *FY 2021 Annual Performance Report and FY 2023 Annual Performance Plan* to be released online at the same time as the President's FY 2023 *Budget of the United States Government* (President's Budget) in February 2022. For more information, prior year performance reports can be found on the Department's website. The Department also urges 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 emailed to PIO@ed.gov. For more details on performance, please refer to the Department's budget and performance web page at www.Performance.gov.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

This section provides summarized information and analyses about the Department's assets, liabilities, net position, sources and uses of funds, program costs, and related trend data. It provides a high-level perspective of the detailed information contained in the financial statements and related notes and provides an analysis of key financial statement changes.

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.

FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION

The Forward-Looking Information section describes the challenges that the Department aims to address to achieve progress on Enterprise Risk Management, Direct Loans, Next Generation Federal Student Aid (Next Gen FSA), Leveraging Data as a Strategic Asset, and Technology Business Management Solutions (TBMS).

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 an education, colleges and universities, state education agencies, and school districts by engaging in four major categories of activities:

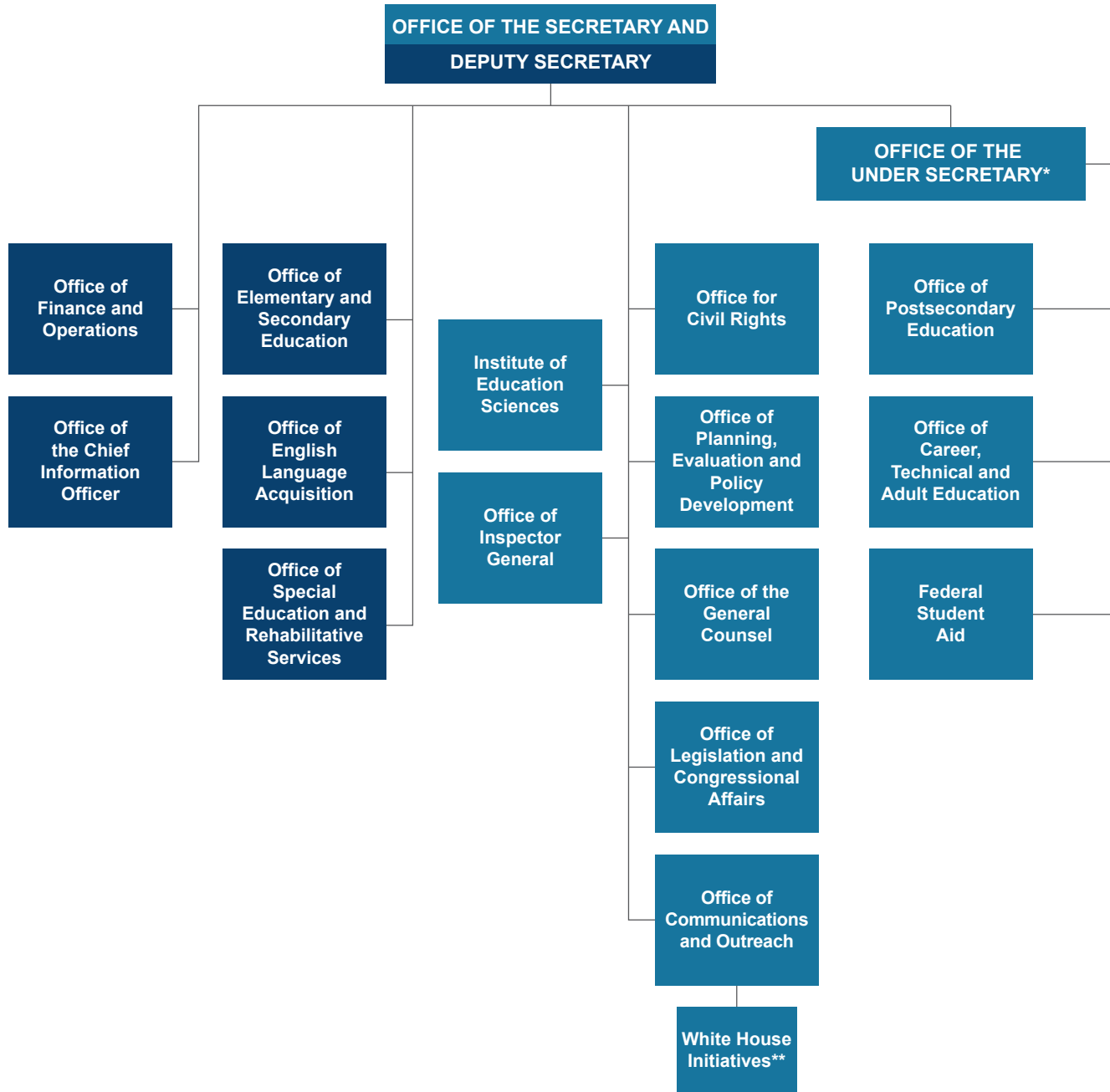
- Establishing policies related to federal education funding, including distributing funds, collecting on student loans, and using data to monitor the use of funds.
- Supporting data collection and research on America's schools.
- Identifying major issues in education and focusing national attention on them.
- 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 laws. The Department manages and spends 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.

The Department in Fiscal Year 2021

This chart reflects the coordinating structure of the U.S. Department of Education. A **text version** of the FY 2021 coordinating structure of the Department is available.



Note: The colors on this chart are for aesthetics only.

* The Office of the Under Secretary is responsible for the administration of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity through Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

** The White House Initiatives are Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives; White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education; White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics; and White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans.