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 begins with the *Strategic Plan*, which serves as the foundation for establishing and implementing priorities, highlighting performance goals and objectives, and developing performance indicators to gauge progress and outcomes. Progress toward the Department's strategic goals and its two-year Agency Priority Goals (APGs) are measured using data-driven review and analysis. Additional information on performance management is available in the *Annual Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports*.[2]

The *FY 2022–26 Strategic Plan* is comprised of five Strategic Goals and three FY 2022 and FY 2023 APGs. The *Strategic Plan* aims to address administration priorities, such as recovering from the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic; ensuring high-quality, equitable secondary and postsecondary education; and providing diverse learning environments for all students, especially underserved ones. Each supporting strategic objective has corresponding performance indicators to assess the Department's progress on achieving the Strategic Goals and objectives. For additional information about Performance Management at the Department, visit **ED Strategic Plans and Annual Reports** or email **PIO@ed.gov**.

FY 2022–26 Strategic Goals and Strategic Objectives

Strategic Goal 1: Promote equity in student access to educational resources, opportunities, and inclusive environments.	
Strategic Objective 1.1	Prioritize the equitable and adequate distribution of resources to communities of concentrated poverty, in an effort to provide underserved students with high-quality educational opportunities.
Strategic Objective 1.2	Ensure all students have access to well-rounded, rigorous, engaging, and diverse learning opportunities and environments to support their success in school.
Strategic Objective 1.3	Support states, school districts, and institutions of higher education to promote and protect students' nondiscriminatory and equal access to education, as provided by Federal civil rights laws.
Strategic Objective 1.4	Promote greater access and supports for youth and adults to engage in learning, succeed in postsecondary education, and increase their employability in high-demand occupations.

Strategic Goal 1 focuses on outcomes related to improving and promoting educational equities for all students through adequate resources, opportunities, and supports. In FY 2023, $54.1 billion was appropriated to the Department in support of Strategic Goal 1.

To thrive academically and be globally competitive, students require access to a broad and challenging education that provides equal opportunities to build deep knowledge and useful life skills across many disciplines. However, access to a comprehensive and rigorous

---

1   *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010* amends the Government Performance and *Results Act of 1993* (GPRA).
2   The FY 2023 Statement of Net Cost and related notes align with the FY 2022–26 Strategic Plan.

education is not equitable across all students and communities. Research shows that when students have access to rich learning experiences across the spectrum of education, they are more likely to be engaged in school, get better grades, attend school more, and graduate on time.

In support of Strategic Goal 1, the Department continued to work with state and local leaders to expand access to high-quality early learning, rigorous science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and arts programming; protect students' civil rights in schools; support students' financial literacy; and emphasize the importance of focusing teaching and learning on the instructional core. In FY 2023, the Department hosted "YOU Belong in STEM" National Coordinating Conference in Washington, D.C. as a key initiative. The Raise the Bar: STEM Excellence for All Students initiative is designed to strengthen STEM education nationwide. This new initiative helps implement and scale equitable, high-quality STEM education for all students from PreK to higher education—regardless of background—to ensure their 21st century career readiness and global competitiveness.

The devastating and adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated previously documented gaps in educational opportunity. Supporting urgent and wise investing has been a major focus of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) State and Grantee Relations team's work on the COVID-relief programs. Additionally, ensuring compliance with major fiscal equity provisions further supports student recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. In FY 2023, OESE monitored states' compliance with the Maintenance of Effort and Maintenance of Equity provisions of the COVID-relief acts. The Department is committed to bring student learning beyond pre-pandemic levels and to help close underlying opportunity and achievement gaps by ensuring states and districts deploy federal pandemic relief funds in evidence-based ways, promoting promising practices, and providing technical assistance and opportunities for new or continued grant funding.

Strategic Goal 2: Support a diverse and talented educator workforce and professional growth to strengthen student learning.	
Strategic Objective 2.1	Strengthen and diversify the educator pipeline and workforce.
Strategic Objective 2.2	Identify and promote evidence-based practices or strategies that support diverse districts (including rural districts) with high rates of poverty in recruiting, selecting, preparing, and retaining well-qualified (including in-field fully certified) and effective teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, and specialized instructional support personnel.
Strategic Objective 2.3	Support the professional growth, retention, and advancement of talented, experienced educators and other school personnel and their capacity to meet the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of underserved students.

Strategic Goal 2 focuses on outcomes related to supporting and increasing diversity and talent in the educator workforce and professional growth. Every student should have access to outstanding, well-prepared, well-supported educators who reflect the diversity of the students they serve. In FY 2023, $20.4 billion was appropriated to the Department in support of Strategic Goal 2.

Due to the pandemic, from February to May 2020, the economy lost an estimated 730,000 local public education jobs. As of March 2023, public education recovered 600,000 of those jobs (82 percent). However, there are still 130,000 fewer people working in local public education than before the pandemic, and schools were already experiencing shortages before the pandemic began, with disproportionate impacts on students of

color, students with disabilities, and English learners. The Department is committed to working with state and local leaders to elevate the teaching profession by investing in and scaling up high-quality and affordable pathways to teaching. The Department also is supporting efforts to better prepare, develop, and retain talented and diverse educators in America's schools.

In support of Strategic Goal 2, the Department launched a partnership with Department of Labor to expand the number of registered apprenticeship programs for teachers. The registered apprenticeship programs allow teachers to gain robust experience in the classroom and make becoming a teacher more affordable. States with Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Programs have increased from 2 to 25 since the launch, and enrollees in these programs total more than 1,000.

In FY 2023, the Department announced first-ever awards, totaling over $15 million, for the Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program (Hawkins Program) grants to increase high-quality teacher preparation programs for teachers of color, strengthen the diversity of our teacher pipeline, and address teacher shortages. The Hawkins Program, named for Augustus F. Hawkins, the first Black politician elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from west of the Mississippi River, supports comprehensive, high-quality teacher preparation programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, and Minority Serving Institutions.

Strategic Goal 3: Meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs.	
Strategic Objective 3.1	Support the development and implementation of multitiered systems of supports to increase students' engagement; social, emotional, and mental health; well-being; and academic success.
Strategic Objective 3.2	Foster supportive, inclusive, and identity-safe learning environments and ensure the individual needs of underserved students are met through appropriately designed instruction, evidence-based practices, and related supports and services.
Strategic Objective 3.3	Strengthen learning environments, support professional development, and improve educator credentialing for emergent bilingual students and multilingual learners.

Strategic Goal 3 focuses on meeting students' social, emotional, and academic needs. Learning and development across a student's life span are influenced by several interrelated factors, including the individual's social, emotional, academic, and career development. In FY 2023, $26.0 billion was appropriated to the Department in support of Strategic Goal 3.

When students feel connected to school, their mental health and academic performance improve; however, the consequences of the pandemic—social isolation, illness, and family hardship among them—have led to decreased feelings of connectedness for students. For example, approximately 1 in 3 high school students have experienced poor mental health amid the pandemic, and rates of poor mental health have been higher for historically marginalized groups of students. For students to thrive in school, they need a strong foundation of overall wellness. The Department is committed to working with parents, families, educators, and others to meet students' mental health needs.

In support of Strategic Goal 3, the Department announced awards of more than $188 million across 170 grantees in over 30 states to increase access to school-based mental health services and to strengthen the pipeline of mental health professionals in high-needs districts. With funding provided by the *Bipartisan Safer Communities Act* (BSCA), these investments help advance the President's Mental Health Strategy, which

directly implements his Unity Agenda priority to tackle the mental health crisis in our school communities. These grants enable communities to hire approximately 5,400 school-based mental health professionals and train an estimated 5,500 more to build a diverse pipeline of mental health providers in schools.

To support multilingualism, in FY 2023, the Office of English Language Acquisition announced awards of nearly $120 million over five years under the National Professional Development Program (NPD) to support educators of English learner students. The NPD program provides grants to eligible Institutions of Higher Education and public or private entities with relevant experience and capacity, in consortia with states or districts, to implement professional development activities that will improve instruction for English Learners.

Strategic Goal 4: Increase postsecondary value by focusing on equity-conscious strategies to address access to high-quality institutions, affordability, completion, post-enrollment success, and support for inclusive institutions.	
Strategic Objective 4.1	Support educational institutions and state systems in efforts to raise academic quality and college completion for all students, especially for underserved students, such as first-generation students, students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, and students with disabilities.
Strategic Objective 4.2	Improve the administration of student aid programs to help eligible students receive aid; support borrowers in successfully repaying their loans, claiming loan forgiveness benefits, and mitigating student loan default; and hold contractors accountable.
Strategic Objective 4.3	Increase equitable access to secondary and postsecondary programs that have clear on-ramps to both high-quality jobs and additional high-quality postsecondary educational opportunities.
Strategic Objective 4.4	Improve the alignment across secondary, postsecondary, and career and technical education programs, including through transparent and effective transition processes, inclusive pathways, and clear credentialing requirements.

Strategic Goal 4 focuses on increasing the value of postsecondary education by addressing access, affordability, and degree and credential completion. This includes aligning our education and workforce systems to create college and career pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials and opportunities to secure in-demand jobs. In FY 2023, $104.6 billion was appropriated to support Goal 4.

In support of Goal 4, the Department provided over $30 million to colleges and universities from five competitive grant programs of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), which aims to improve higher education opportunities and outcomes for students from underrepresented communities. The five grant programs that target critical needs in our higher education system include: Postsecondary Student Success Program, Basic Needs for Postsecondary Students Program, Open Textbooks Program, Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program, and the Transitioning Gang-Involved Youth to Higher Education Program.

The Department has made a concerted effort to fix persistent problems in the student loan forgiveness and discharge process through regulatory changes and making investments in system and customer service upgrades. As of the end of FY 2023, 730,000 student loan borrowers were approved for Public Service Loan Forgiveness, compared to only 7,000 applications that had been approved in total prior to 2021. As of July 2023, more than 3.4 million borrowers qualified for automatic discharges, Public Service Loan Forgiveness benefits, total and permanent disability discharges, and closed school court settlements.

The Department is committed to supporting efforts to dramatically increase the number of Americans who possess postsecondary industry-recognized credentials. Education programs that incorporate the opportunity to earn an industry-sought credential can give students a successful onramp to the workforce when they graduate from high school. The Department aims to expand access to work-based learning programs and initiatives by helping states and districts identify workforce credentials that have value in the labor market, expand opportunities for students to earn these credentials, and eliminate barriers to credential attainment. In FY 2023, $1.46 billion was appropriated for Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

Strategic Goal 5: Enhance the Department's internal capacity to optimize the delivery of its mission.	
Strategic Objective 5.1	Manage information technology as a strategic resource and driver to promote the advancement of the missions executed by the Department's 21st-century workforce.
Strategic Objective 5.2	Strengthen agency-wide data governance and build capacity to improve data access, data management, and enterprise data analytics in support of agency goals.
Strategic Objective 5.3	Recruit, retain, and develop the workforce needed to meet the Department's mission now and into the future.
Strategic Objective 5.4	Deliver mission outcomes and value for taxpayers through efficient acquisition management and proactive industry partnerships while promoting small businesses.

Strategic Goal 5 is focused on continuously improving agency operations as the Department manages, engages, and empowers the workforce; purchases products and services; enhances and secures information technology resources; and leverages data to support evidence-based decision-making. In FY 2023, $72 million was appropriated to support Goal 5.

Information technology security was identified as a top management challenge in 2023, and the Department has made great strides in strengthening cybersecurity, reliability, and privacy protections. In 2023, the Department received an overall *Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014* (FISMA) assessment of "Effective," or a Level 4 Cybersecurity Maturity Level. This score was the highest achieved by the Department since the scoring metrics were established in 2014.

The Department was the first cabinet-level Department to receive funding from the Technology Modernization Fund (TMF) and successfully adopted a secure access service edge (SASE) solution in support of advancing its Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) capabilities in support of federal requirements as outlined in OMB Memorandum M-22-09.

In April 2023, the Office of Chief Data Officer staff received the Federal 2023 Chief Data Officers Council Award for Distinguished Achievement for improving data skills and culture at the Department and pioneering work in the federal space through the advancements of the Data Strategy Goal 2: Building Human Capacity to Leverage Data.

Strategic Goal 5 also prioritizes reducing potential procurement barriers and increasing procurement opportunities for small, underserved, and disadvantaged businesses. The Department established Creating and Leveraging Acquisition Small Business Strategies to elevate the Department's small business achievement, which resulted in identifying 124 small business set asides totaling $131 million. The Department also received an "A" on the U.S. Small Business Administration's Federal Scorecard released in July 2023.

The Office of Business Support Services developed a robotic process automation tool or "bot" to automatically close out more than 50 percent of expired but open contracts in the Contracts and Purchasing Support System (CPSS). To date, the bot has closed 57 percent of expired but open contracts, providing approximately $1.15 million in savings to the Department.

The Department's Agency Priority Goals

The Department identified three Agency Priority Goals (APGs) for FY 2022 and FY 2023 to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, effectively manage federal student loans, and reduce disparities in attainment of high-quality degrees and credentials. These current APGs concluded in September 2023, and the status reports are **available online**. The Department will focus on three new APGs in FY 2024 and FY 2025.

APG 1	**Address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, educators, and faculty.** The Department will be a leader and partner in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in educational areas. By September 30, 2023, the Department will respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to continuously provide for high-quality educational environments and capabilities by supporting state educational agencies, local educational agencies, and institutions of higher education to:

- Continue to support schools in maintaining safe, fully in-person instructions for students.

- Utilize COVID-19 relief funds on appropriate, effective, and evidence-based activities to reengage students, address lost instructional time, and improve educational opportunities by offering 300+ Department-led technical assistance engagements.

Related Strategic Objectives	**Strategic Objective 1.1:** Prioritize the equitable and adequate distribution of resources to communities of concentrated poverty in an effort to provide underserved students with high-quality educational opportunities. **Strategic Objective 1.2:** Ensure all students have access to well-rounded, rigorous, engaging, and diverse learning opportunities and environments to support their success in school. **Strategic Objective 3.1:** Support the development and implementation of multitiered systems of supports to increase students' engagement; social, emotional, and mental health; well-being; and academic success. **Strategic Objective 3.2:** Foster supportive, inclusive, and identity-safe learning environments and ensure the individual needs of underserved students are met through appropriately designed instruction, evidence-based practices, and related supports and services.
APG 2	**Effectively manage federal student loans.** The Department will provide effective customer service for borrowers to simplify the student loan repayment process. By September 30, 2023, Federal Student Aid will improve loan servicer quality and accuracy to levels at or above 95 percent, as defined in student loan servicer agreements.
Related Strategic Objective	**Strategic Objective 4.2:** Improve the administration of student aid programs to help eligible students receive aid; support borrowers in successfully repaying their loans, claiming loan forgiveness benefits, and mitigating student loan default; and hold contractors accountable.
APG 3	**Reduce disparities in attainment of high-quality degrees and credentials.** The Department will support institutions and states to assist low-income students and students of color to enroll in and complete high-quality postsecondary education programs, including at community colleges and through career and technical training. By September 30, 2023, the Department will increase the number and diversity of higher education grant applicants from community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally Controlled Colleges or Universities, Minority-Serving Institutions, and public four-year colleges by 5 percent to support and assist low-income students and students of color in attaining improved educational outcomes.
Related Strategic Objectives	**Strategic Objective 4.1:** Support educational institutions and state systems in efforts to raise academic quality and college completion for all students, especially for underserved students, such as first-generation students, students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, and students with disabilities. **Strategic Objective 4.2:** Improve the administration of student aid programs to help eligible students receive aid; support borrowers in successfully repaying their loans, claiming loan forgiveness benefits, and mitigating student loan default; and hold contractors accountable.