



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

March 14, 2025

Dear Education Stakeholders,

Earlier this week, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) enacted a reduction in force (RIF) in line with President Trump's commitment to return education to the states. These reductions are strategic cuts to offices and programs that will not directly impact students and families but rather empower states and localities.

I want to assure you that continuity of operations for Federal Student Aid (FSA) is both a statutory and critical function of the Department. Accordingly, no employees working on core functions of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or student loan servicing were impacted by the RIF.

Although certain regional offices and staff that handle matters impacting institutions of higher education (such as program reviews, changes in ownership, and program participation agreements) were impacted by the RIF, these important functions are being transferred to other offices and experts. FSA intends to provide further updates to the higher education community next week.

Employees within the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) and the Office of Higher Education Programs (HEP), whose divisions oversee funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), community colleges, TRIO programs, and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), were not impacted by the RIF. Funds for these programs will continue to flow normally, and program functions will not be disrupted for current grantees.

The functions of International and Foreign Language Education will be assumed by the qualified HEP staff. The Office of Policy, Planning, and Innovation (PPI) employees, whose division handles accreditation and negotiated rulemaking, were also not impacted by the RIF. Supporting colleges and universities in implementing and strengthening these programs continues to be a top priority for this Department.

Additionally, critical functions for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) are not impacted by these reductions. Employees in the Division of Academic and Technical Education (DATE), which administers career and technical education under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, were not affected by the staffing changes.

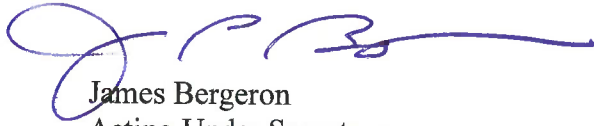
Across the Department, management and operation roles were streamlined to reduce duplicative functions. For instance, human resources functions—such as travel coordinators and timekeepers—that can be more efficiently served by one central office are being consolidated.

These reforms are the first step in removing bureaucratic excesses from the Department. Eliminating red tape and bureaucratic barriers imposed by the Department and decreasing spending on duplicative Department functions will provide more opportunities for state and

institutional leaders to innovate and best serve their students.

If you have any immediate operational impact concerns, please email [fsacases@ed.gov](mailto:fsacases@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. P. B.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Bergeron  
Acting Under Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education