



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

March 14, 2025

Dear Education Stakeholders,

Earlier this week, the Department of Education enacted a reduction in force in line with President Trump's commitment to return education to you, 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 critical functions for elementary and secondary education will not be impacted by these cuts. The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) employees who oversee the allocation, monitoring, and management of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's (ESEA) title formula funding and discretionary grant programs were not impacted by the reduction in force. These funds will continue to flow normally, and program functions will not be disrupted. Supporting states in implementing and strengthening these programs continues to be a top priority for this Department.

OESE employees who oversee temporary COVID pandemic relief funds were impacted by the reduction in force. Most of these employees were term appointments or had accepted voluntary resignation opportunities. Many states are still liquidating these funds, and those reimbursements will proceed, under the Department's new February 2025 guidance.¹ I understand the importance of states receiving requested reimbursements in a timely manner and staff are working to provide an update to states on what to expect for reimbursements moving forward. Information on this transition and where states can direct questions is forthcoming.

The Office of English Language Acquisition and management of ESEA's Title III will return to OESE, where it previously resided until December 2023. The Department is committed to fulfilling its statutory obligation to prepare English learners attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English.

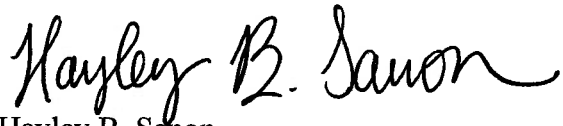
Like OESE, the reduction in force will also not affect the Department's critical work supporting individuals with disabilities and their families. No employees in the Office of Special Education Programs or the Rehabilitation Services Administration were part of the reductions in force. The Department is committed to ensuring uninterrupted services to meet the needs and develop the potential of children and youth with disabilities, while also supporting states and other agencies in providing vocational rehabilitation and other services. The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) employees impacted by the reduction were those involved in policy, operations, and administrative functions that were either duplicative or can be reassigned to create a more efficient and accountable organizational structure.

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

These reforms are the first step in removing bureaucratic excesses from the Department. Eliminating the red tape and bureaucratic barriers imposed by the Department will provide more flexibility for state and local education agencies to best serve their students. An effective and deliberate transfer of educational oversight to the states will mean more autonomy for local communities. Teachers, too, will benefit from less micromanagement in the classroom—enabling them to get back to basics and focus their attention on students.

You all will play a critical role in achieving this vision. I look forward to working with you to find ways to get the federal bureaucracy out of your way so you can give parents more choices, improve academic achievement, and ensure students reach their God-given potential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hayley B. Sanon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "H" and "S".

Hayley B. Sanon
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and
Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education