



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Inspector General

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023–2028



Office of Inspector General
Sandra D. Bruce
Inspector General

August 2022

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The Office of Inspector General’s Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023–2028 is available on the ED OIG website at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/strategicplansperformancereports.html>.

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Message from the Inspector General

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (Department) Office of Inspector General (OIG), I am pleased to present our Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2023 through 2028. This plan represents who we are, what we do, and our planned direction as an organization for FYs 2023–2028. It continues our 40-plus year commitment

to our mission to promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department’s programs and operations, and to identify and help prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. It provides a framework for how the OIG can help the Department best meet its statutory mission, while delivering results and value to our stakeholders—the Department, the Congress, and America’s taxpayers and students.

In the pages of this plan, we define our goals and the key strategies that will enable us to reach and exceed those goals. Our plan will allow us to quickly address new or unforeseen challenges and capitalize on new opportunities to enhance and expand our work. This includes leveraging technology, tools, processes, and people. We will use risk-based and impact-based project selection to ensure our work provides the greatest value to our stakeholders. We will optimize analytic resources to detect, deter, and disrupt new and emerging threats to Department programs, operations, and funding. We will mature our enterprise risk management program by integrating relevant risk management strategies into our operations and activities and ensuring accountability over critical areas. In addition, we will continue to keep our stakeholders apprised of our work by regularly providing information on our priorities, work products, issues, and results. Finally, our plan prioritizes our most important asset—our people. We will continue to implement activities that develop a highly-skilled and diverse workforce; foster an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace; and establish the OIG as a premier oversight entity within the Federal government.

To ensure that our work identifies and responds to emerging threats to the Department’s programs and operations, will we continue our activities to assess risk and consult with the Department, Congress, and other stakeholders during our annual work plan process. We will also continue to communicate, collaborate, and share best practices with our IG and law enforcement partners on civil and criminal investigative matters. These activities help us to consistently improve, deliver high-quality products and services, and maximize the effectiveness of our efforts and resources.

Production of this plan was a collaborative process conducted by a diverse group of OIG staff from all OIG components, grade levels, backgrounds, and expertise. It represents our knowledge of the Department, its programs and operations and the challenges it faces, as well as our commitment to and understanding of our statutory role and responsibilities. Our plan reflects the people-focused values that inspire our work and aims to ensure that we produce and deliver products and services that are accessible to the diverse public we serve. Lastly and perhaps best of all, it presents a positive outlook for our future, and our desire for constant improvement not only in Department programs and operations, but within the OIG itself.

In closing, I would like to thank the OIG staff for their thoughtful efforts in developing this plan. It is a testament to their commitment to our shared mission and to one another. I would also like to thank the Department, the Congress, and all of our stakeholders for their ongoing support for and interest in our efforts. Working together, I am confident that we will successfully meet the goals presented here and best ensure that the Department’s programs, operations, and funding achieve the desired goals and reach the intended recipients—our nation’s students.

Sandra D. Bruce
Inspector General

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Vision

To be a dynamic, high-performing oversight organization with a diverse, inclusive, engaged, and skilled workforce that drives continuous improvement in Federal education programs.



Mission

To promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department’s programs and operations through independent and objective audits, investigations, inspections, and other activities.



Core Values

Our core values guide our professional actions and decisions. They answer the question, “What do we stand for?” Our core values align with our CARE for each other, our mission, and our work.



COLLABORATION

We communicate and share knowledge and expertise openly, consistently, and constructively, building mutual trust with associates and stakeholders.



ACCOUNTABILITY

As an independent entity within the Department, we act in the public interest; adhere to the highest ethical principles; and perform our work in an objective, transparent, impartial, and trustworthy manner. We accept responsibility for and take ownership of our decisions and actions.



RESPECT

We cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce and an accessible workplace to create a sense of belonging. We empower, respect, and appreciate one another; meaningfully recognize outstanding efforts; and consider all perspectives when making decisions that affect our workforce.



EXCELLENCE

We continuously deliver high-quality, useful, and timely work products; find new and innovative ways to accomplish our work; identify top risks and challenges; and develop our employees.



Goals

The following are our four strategic goals for FYs 2023–2028.

Maximize Our Value to Stakeholders

1

Promote effectiveness in the Department's programs and operations by delivering relevant and timely information to our stakeholders.

Combat Program Fraud and Cyber Threats

2

Conduct timely, high-quality investigations and digital analyses to detect and deter fraud, waste, abuse, and other criminal activity involving Department programs and operations.

Invest in the OIG Workforce and Workplace

3

Cultivate a talented and diverse workforce and an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace that inspires engagement, creativity, and excellence.

Innovate and Collaborate

4

Implement innovative and collaborative internal processes that leverage technology, foster strategic thinking, and advance organizational effectiveness.



Key Strategies

In the following pages, we present the key strategies we will employ to reach each of our strategic goals. These strategies provide a framework for the activities that we will perform to achieve our goals. Our plan also includes examples of the performance measures that we will use to assess how well we are achieving our desired objectives. We will detail all performance measures and share our progress related thereto in our annual performance results reports.





Maximize Our Value to Stakeholders

Promote effectiveness in the Department's programs and operations by delivering relevant and timely information to our stakeholders.

Strategy 1. Focus Work on High-Risk and High-Impact Areas

Assess risk and significance to select discretionary projects that have the greatest impact and usefulness to stakeholders.

Strategy 2. Perform the Highest Quality of Work

Apply sound analysis to draw balanced conclusions based on sufficient, appropriate, and reliable evidence that adheres to professional standards and rigorous quality control standards.

Strategy 3. Present Value-Added Recommendations

Enhance the Department's performance by making impactful and actionable recommendations that address the root causes of weaknesses.

Strategy 4. Deliver Results Efficiently

Refine and implement processes to deliver high-quality products that are timely, cost-effective, and accessible to the diverse public we serve.

Examples of How We Will Evaluate Our Progress

- Audit-related work products are aligned with top management challenges or departmental risks.
- Teams complete audit work and issue reports within agreed-on timeframes.
- Report recommendations are accepted by the Department and corrective action plans are agreed to by OIG management.



Combat Program Fraud and Cyber Threats

Conduct timely, high-quality investigations and digital analyses to detect and deter fraud, waste, abuse, and other criminal activity involving Department programs and operations.

Strategy 1. Conduct Objective and Timely Investigations

Deliver high-quality internal and external criminal, civil, and administrative investigations, and investigative products in accordance with professional standards.

Strategy 2. Leverage Technology and Data Analytic Resources

Execute timely, reliable, expert data collection and analysis to detect, deter, and disrupt threats impacting Department programs and operations.

Strategy 3. Enhance Fraud Awareness and Outreach Efforts

Improve and expand our outreach efforts to stakeholders and the general public on identifying, preventing, and reporting fraud to the OIG, and keeping stakeholders apprised of emerging fraud areas and investigative results.

Strategy 4. Collaborate with OIG Community and Law Enforcement Partners

Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of OIG criminal, civil, and administrative investigative efforts through information sharing and collaboration with the OIG community and with our law enforcement partners.

Examples of How We Will Evaluate Our Progress

- Investigations are initiated in accordance with policy and focused on areas of significant risk to Department programs, operations, and funding.
- Hotline complaints, preliminary investigations, formal investigations, and requests for forensic and analytical assistance are processed timely in accordance with policy and within established deadlines.
- National outreach efforts and promotion of fraud identification, awareness, reporting, and prevention are optimized.



Invest in the OIG Workforce and Workplace

Cultivate a talented and diverse workforce and an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace that inspires engagement, creativity, and excellence.

Strategy 1. Cultivate Workforce Excellence

Recruit, develop, engage, and retain an inspired, motivated, diverse workforce with the skills to meet and exceed current and emerging mission requirements.

Strategy 2. Promote an Inclusive and Equitable Culture

Foster an environment of open communication, respect for others, and a sense of belonging, where access to opportunity is available for all.

Strategy 3. Recognize Achievement

Maintain a culture of accountability and excellence through performance management and meaningful and objective awards programs.

Strategy 4. Build a Premier 21st Century Workplace

Build and maintain an accessible, collaborative, and cohesive workplace with the technology and related resources necessary to support an accessible, hybrid work environment.

Examples of How We Will Evaluate Our Progress

- Results reported through employee satisfaction feedback mechanisms are tracked, methods to identify areas where enhancement is needed are developed, and activities to improve results are implemented.
- Performance targets in the OIG Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan are achieved.
- A performance management system is maintained, resulting in timely development of performance plans, timely and meaningful performance feedback, recognition, and awards to employees for their contributions to products and services that help accomplish the OIG's mission.



Innovate and Collaborate

Implement innovative and collaborative internal processes that leverage technology, foster strategic thinking, and advance organizational effectiveness.

Strategy 1. Leverage Data and Technology

Leverage data and technology to enhance internal management information systems and processes in support of data-driven, strategic allocation of resources that reflect operational needs and priorities.

Strategy 2. Deliver Superior Operational Support

Optimize effectiveness of mission support activities, including human resources, information technology (IT) and security, facilities, budget, legal services, and communications, focusing on quality and customer service.

Strategy 3. Plan for the Future

Institutionalize advance planning processes that anticipate future needs to include strategic planning, IT infrastructure, physical space, and staffing.

Strategy 4. Safeguard the Public Trust

Model stewardship and integrity by maintaining effective quality assurance, enterprise risk management, and internal affairs programs to ensure accountability and transparency in OIG operations and address risks impacting the OIG mission.

Examples of How We Will Evaluate Our Progress

- Products related to the OIG budget are developed and executed in accordance with applicable guidance and delivered to our stakeholders within agreed-on timeframes.
- Enterprise risk management processes ensure that component- and enterprise-level risks are identified and updated, strategies to manage risks are developed, and appropriate corrective actions are implemented.
- Freedom of Information Act responses are processed in accordance with statutory requirements and delivered to requesters within required deadlines.



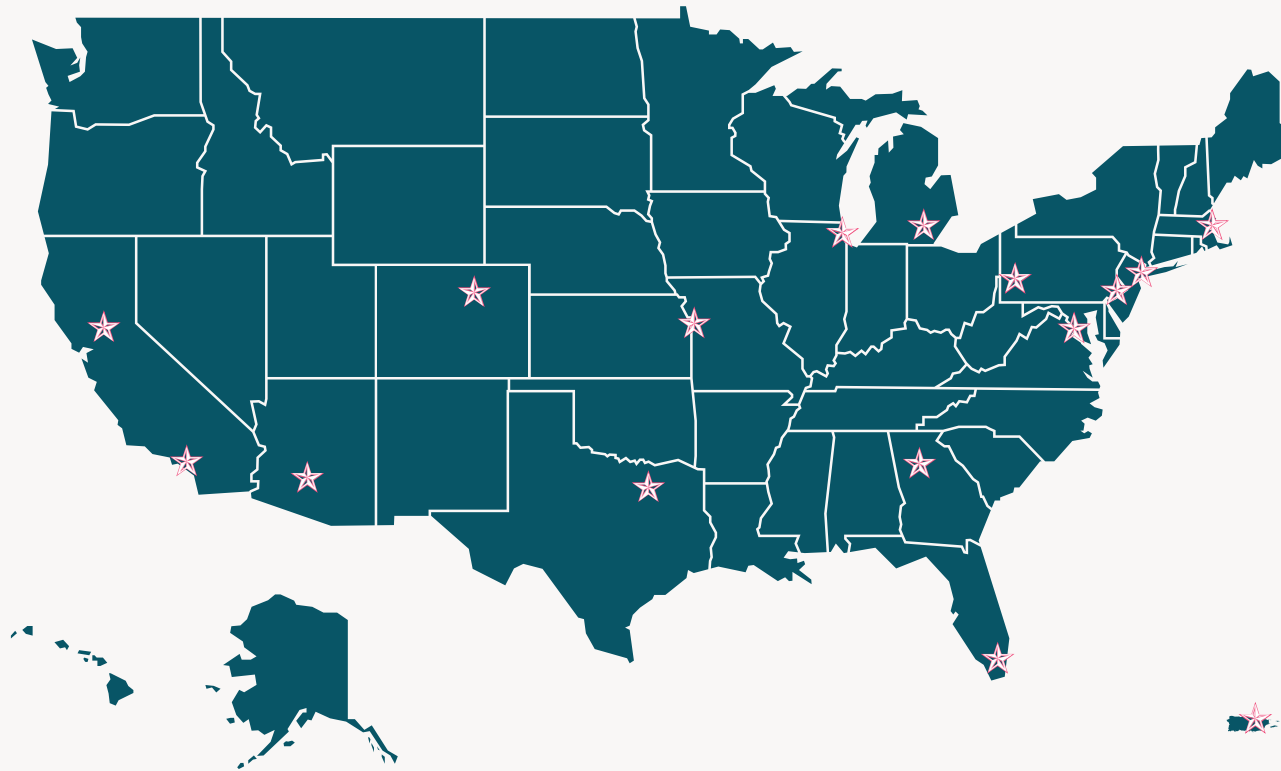
About the OIG

The Department's annual budget is more than \$95 billion—\$73.4 billion in discretionary funding and \$22 billion in mandatory funding. The Department administers more than 100 programs, disburses about \$112 billion in student aid each year, and manages an outstanding loan portfolio of more than \$1.6 trillion. The Department also administers more than \$70 billion in grants each year. This makes the Department one of the largest financial institutions in the country, as well as one of the largest grant-making Federal agencies.

The Department administers its programs with an annual program administration budget of \$2.4 billion with a budgeted workforce of about 3,800 full-time equivalent staff. It also relies heavily on contractor and subcontractor support, particularly in administering the student financial assistance programs. The Department's funding flows out to thousands of eligible entities, including 55 State and territorial educational agencies; 17,000 public school districts; more than 130,000 schools; 6,000 institutions of higher education; and numerous other grantees and subgrantees.

With so many programs, program participants, and contractors, effective oversight and monitoring of its programs, operations, and program participants are critical. This is why the OIG's oversight of Department operations, programs, and funds is so vital. Below you will find more information on the components that conduct the work of the OIG. We encourage you to learn more about the OIG by visiting our website at ed.gov/oig.

Our Office Locations



- Washington, D.C.
(headquarters)
- Phoenix, Arizona
- Denver, Colorado
- Long Beach, California
- Sacramento, California
- Pembroke Pines, Florida
- Atlanta, Georgia
- Chicago, Illinois
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Kansas City, Missouri
- New York, New York
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Nashville, Tennessee
- Dallas, Texas

Our Components

OIG staff align with six components: the Immediate Office, Audit Services, Investigation Services, Technology Services, Legal Services, and Management Services. The following pages provide more information about these components and the work they do.



Immediate Office of the Inspector General

The Immediate Office of the Inspector General is responsible for the coordination and oversight of the OIG’s mission. In addition to providing overall leadership and setting the direction of the OIG, the Immediate Office also provides internal management support; Congressional, media, and public liaison; communications services; oversight of external reporting of activities; and the organization’s diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility efforts. The Immediate Office is composed of the Inspector General, the Deputy Inspector General, and their executive staff; and three direct report offices: Quality and Integrity Group, Congressional and Communications Services, and the Chief Diversity Officer.

Quality and Integrity Group

The Quality and Integrity Group provides internal oversight of the OIG and its employees, ensuring compliance, accountability, and ongoing improvement throughout the organization. Organizationally structured within the Immediate Office, the Quality and Integrity Group is independent of other IG office components. The Quality and Integrity Group conducts internal quality assurance reviews and internal control assessments of OIG activities, conducts internal investigations into allegations of misconduct by OIG personnel, and facilitates the OIG’s enterprise risk management activities.

Congressional and Communications Services

Congressional and Communications Services coordinates communications between the OIG and the Congress, the media, and the public. Congressional and Communications Services produces materials for external and internal audiences, manages the OIG public-facing website and social media accounts ([Facebook/Meta](#) and [Twitter](#)), and produces the OIG’s [Eye on ED podcast](#). Congressional and Communications Services also provides editing, writing, and graphic design services to all OIG components and facilitates OIG internal communications and events.

Chief Diversity Officer

The Chief Diversity Officer leads the OIG’s effort to ensure integration of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into our business processes, building an inclusive workplace environment, and retaining, developing, advancing, and recruiting a diverse and talented OIG team.



Audit Services

Audit Services is responsible for audit-related activities aimed at improving Department programs and operations, including Federal student aid, K–12 schools, charter schools, special education, vocational education, adult education, and more. Audit Services conducts analyses, internal and external audits, inspections, reviews, and special studies designed to improve Department programs and operations. When Audit Services identifies problems, it proposes solutions to help ensure Department programs and operations run as effectively and efficiently as possible. Audit Services also recommends changes needed in Federal laws and the implementation of regulations. The work of Audit Services, often conducted at the request of the Congress, can have a significant impact on some of the most important Federal education laws in the country, including the Higher Education Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.



Investigation Services

Investigation Services is composed of law enforcement professionals who conduct criminal and civil investigations involving Department programs, operations, and funding. Investigation Services' special agents investigate suspected fraudulent activities by Department employees, contractors, grant recipients, school officials—in essence any entity or individual that awards, disburses, or receives Department funds or participates in its programs. Investigation Services also tackles cybercrime affecting and involving the use of Department IT systems. Investigation Services maintains the OIG Hotline, which provides an opportunity for the public to report suspected fraud, waste, and abuse involving Department programs, operations, and funding. It also operates a full-time, state-of-the-art computer laboratory for conducting and coordinating digital forensic analysis and data analysis, and it processes digital evidence. Investigation Services also conducts outreach and fraud awareness briefings with strategic partners, and it collaborates with other OIG components to develop appropriate enforcement actions and to identify programs vulnerable to fraud.



Technology Services

Technology Services leverages technology to provide products and services that enhance and advance the OIG's mission. Technology Services conducts information technology audits and security reviews, such as the OIG's annual Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) audit, which identify risks and offer recommendations to improve the Department's management of its IT systems. Technology Services also provides data analytics in support of OIG audits and investigations, and it maintains the OIG's systems, IT infrastructure, and security posture.



Legal Services

Legal Services manages the OIG's legal and Freedom of Information Act functions. Legal Services' attorneys provide advice and assistance to the Inspector General and OIG staff on a full range of subjects, including Federal education law; administrative, criminal, and civil law and procedure; and the civil False Claims Act. Our attorneys represent the OIG in administrative litigation before the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. OIG attorneys review OIG audit and other reports, administrative subpoenas, memoranda, policy, contracts, agreements, and personnel actions issued or entered into by the OIG for legal sufficiency and compliance with Federal statutes and regulatory requirements. OIG attorneys also provide oral or written legal opinions and guidance to OIG staff on Department programs and OIG operations. They also administer the Federal ethics program for OIG staff and act as liaison to the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney's Office in criminal and civil matters.



Management Services

Management Services provides administrative and management support to the Inspector General and all OIG components. Management Services also formulates, executes, and oversees the OIG budget; develops and maintains administrative and management policy and procedures; performs human resource support activities; performs facilities and properties management duties; and fulfills the OIG's external reporting requirements.

Office of Inspector General Roles and Responsibilities

The Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, established OIGs as independent and objective organizations within Federal departments and agencies. The Inspector General Act authorizes each OIG to

- conduct and supervise audits and investigations relating to its agency's programs and operations;
- provide leadership, coordinate, and recommend policies for activities designed to promote effectiveness and to prevent and detect fraud and abuse in the agency's programs and operations; and
- keep its agency head and Congress fully and currently informed of problems and inefficiencies in the agency's programs and operations and on the status of corrective actions.



When the Inspector General Act was passed in 1978, OIGs were established in 12 agencies. At that time, the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was responsible for administering Federal education programs. In 1979, the Department of Education Organization Act created an independent Department of Education, which began operation in 1980. The Department of Education Organization Act also established an independent OIG within the Department.

In 2023, we mark our 43rd year of service to the Department, Congress, America's students, and taxpayers. Throughout our existence, we have successfully promoted the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department's programs and operations. We have consistently conducted independent and objective audits and investigations and provided other value-added services such as outreach and fraud deterrence efforts.

We provide oversight of the Department's performance and report to Congress and to the Secretary of Education on successes and opportunities for improvement, as well as make recommendations to address any problems or deficiencies we find. Our work consistently identifies methods to use Federal education funds more effectively, and we have worked with the Department to prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. We also investigate fraud, leading to the prosecution of those who try to obtain Federal education funds illegally. This strategic plan provides a roadmap to continue our history of providing effective and objective oversight of the Department's programs and operations.



The OIG's mission, goals, and strategies work to improve U.S. Department of Education programs and operations on behalf of America's taxpayers and students.

Learn more about the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General

[Website](#) [OIG Hotline](#) [Facebook/Meta](#) [Twitter](#)

Anyone knowing of fraud, waste, or abuse involving U.S. Department of Education funds or programs should contact the Office of Inspector General Hotline:

<http://oighotline.ed.gov>

We encourage you to use the automated complaint form on our website; however, you may call toll-free or write the Office of Inspector General.

Inspector General Hotline
1-800-MISUSED
(1-800-647-8733)

Inspector General Hotline
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Inspector General
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

You may make a report anonymously.

<http://www.ed.gov/oig>