



## **ALI Statement on the U.S. Department of Education's March 11 Reduction in Force**

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Yesterday, the U.S. Department of Education laid off 1,315 employees through a “reduction-in-force” process, including almost all of the employees at the Institute of Education Sciences, the Department’s research arm. This is a nearly 50 percent staffing cut, prompting major concerns about the agency’s ability to carry out its valuable, Congressionally-required work on behalf of America’s 50+ million students.

Without the staff to enable Congressionally-required data collection, research, knowledge mobilization, and support for state and local implementation, IES’s ability to fulfill its mission is severely hamstrung.

IES was [established by Congress](#) with a mission to “provide national leadership in expanding fundamental knowledge and understanding of education from early childhood through postsecondary study, in order to provide parents, educators, students, researchers, policymakers, and the general public with reliable information” about education in the U.S. It has a clear and valuable role in America’s educational ecosystem.

To fulfill its Congressionally-mandated mission, IES engages in critical work that empowers states and districts to make informed, evidence-backed decisions on behalf of students in their communities. It directs investments in what works and builds an evidence base for foundational research areas, such as the science of reading and the science of math. IES publicly shares information and best practices so states can learn from one another. Through regional hubs, it helps states implement research-backed practices with fidelity.

To lay the foundation for rigorous research, IES facilitates critical data collection. This allows educators, policymakers, and the public to compare the state of U.S. education across schools, districts, and states throughout the country – and with other countries. It administers the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the only nationally normed test to show how students are faring within a state and across the nation to hold states to a high bar for achievement. IES supports state longitudinal data systems, enabling state and local

stakeholders to assess what is working and what isn't, and to determine the return on investment of specific programs and interventions.

IES, in partnership with the private sector, has an important role to play in taking risks and developing cutting-edge tools and products that advance the education field. As the world changes and artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into the fabric of society, IES invests in bold research that explores the frontiers of emerging technologies and how they can spur innovation in America's classrooms. It's carrying out DARPA-inspired, interdisciplinary research and development to solve the biggest challenges in education. These are the types of investments the U.S. relies on to remain at the leading edge of innovation and secure our strength among rising nations around the globe.

The education students in the U.S. receive will be compromised by all that is lost when IES is effectively gutted – nonpartisan data collection, analysis, and reporting; rigorous research to solve the nation's steepest challenges in education; the evaluation of what works, where, and for whom; and the research infrastructure that enables educational discovery and innovation.

Supporting students is bipartisan. Let's focus on what really matters in this moment: the next generation of American leaders and innovators. The [Alliance for Learning Innovation](#) will continue to stand up for students, and the data-driven, evidence-based, innovative education they deserve.