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NAFIS Concerned About Widespread Layoffs at U.S. Department of Education

Reduction in Force could delay vital Impact Aid for schools

Washington, D.C. – March 13, 2025 – The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) is deeply concerned by the recent large Reduction in Force (RIF) at the U.S. Department of Education. We are pleased that the Trump Administration recognized the importance of the Impact Aid Program and spared its staff from this RIF; however, we remain worried that other staffing cuts pose a threat to the timely distribution of Impact Aid funds to school districts.

Impact Aid is a critical K-12 federal education program that partially reimburses school districts for the lost revenue and additional costs associated with the presence of nontaxable federal property, including military installations, Indian trust and treaty lands, federal low-rent housing, national parks, national laboratories, and other federal properties. This program supports the education of more than eight million students across approximately 1,100 school districts.

The Impact Aid Program currently operates very effectively and efficiently. In doing so, it collaborates with various Department offices, including the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which calculates the annual Local Contribution Rates needed for payment determinations. The large-scale layoffs of NCES staff could significantly delay Impact Aid payments in FY 2026 and beyond.

Any delays in Impact Aid payments will have an immediate impact on school districts that rely on these essential funds. Delays could lead to teacher layoffs, larger class sizes, reduced student support services, and postponed infrastructure projects.

“For the past several years, the Impact Aid Program has been running more smoothly and efficiently than ever before, ensuring that payments are finalized quickly so students have access to the opportunities they need to thrive,” said NAFIS Executive Director Nicole Russell. “Actions that hinder the program’s efficiency and delay payments will force school districts to make difficult decisions about cuts to vital programs and services. We urge the Department to fulfill the federal government’s responsibility to federally impacted school districts and the students they serve, and to reconsider the RIF at the Department of Education.”

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The National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) represents approximately 1,100 federally impacted public school districts that together educate more than eight million students across the nation.

Federally impacted school districts are those located on or near nontaxable Federal property—including military installations; Indian Trust, Treaty and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands; Federal low-income housing facilities; and national parks, national laboratories and other Federal buildings and property. These school districts, which are demographically and geographically diverse, receive Impact Aid, a federal education program that reimburses school districts for the lost local revenue and additional costs associated with the presence of Federal property. To learn more, visit www.nafisdc.org.