



National Association of Federally Impacted Schools

400 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 290 | Washington, DC 20001 | (p) 202.624.5455 | www.NAFISDC.org

October 17, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary McMahon and Director Vought:

On behalf of the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) and the approximately 1,100 federally impacted school districts we represent nationwide, I write to express concern about recent staffing actions within the U.S. Department of Education's Impact Aid office and to urge careful consideration of the program's operational stability.

We understand that on October 10, 2025, in response to a directive from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to consider a reduction in force (RIF), the Department issued 60-day advance RIF notices to 14 employees in the Impact Aid office. We appreciate the Department's clarification that no staff will be separated during this transition period, that duties will be streamlined and shifted to ensure program continuity, and that the program will remain under its current leadership. We also recognize and value the Administration's commitment to Impact Aid, as demonstrated in the President's FY2026 budget request.

Nevertheless, these developments raise serious concerns about the long-term capacity of the Department to effectively administer the Impact Aid program. The dedicated professionals in the Impact Aid office possess deep institutional knowledge and specialized expertise that are essential for processing applications, providing technical assistance, and ensuring the timely and accurate distribution of payments for this complex program. Even temporary uncertainty about staffing and structure can cause disruption for school districts that depend on these payments to fund teachers, special education services, and essential operations.

Impact Aid is not supplemental—it fulfills a statutory obligation to support districts whose local tax base is reduced by the presence of federal property. For 75 years, the program has represented a bipartisan and nonpartisan commitment to military-connected students, Native American students, and children living on or near federal lands. Maintaining stable program operations is vital to upholding that commitment.

NAFIS respectfully urges the Department and OMB to:

1. Reevaluate the planned RIF within the Impact Aid office to ensure that core program operations remain fully staffed and uninterrupted;
2. Provide clear communication to school districts and Congress about how the Department will maintain services and support during and after the 60-day transition period; and
3. Affirm the Administration's long-term commitment to sustaining the Impact Aid program and supporting the communities it serves.

NAFIS appreciates the longstanding partnership between the Department, OMB, and federally impacted school districts. We stand ready to work with you to safeguard the continuity and effectiveness of the Impact Aid program so that it can continue fulfilling its essential purpose for the students, families, and educators who rely on it.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued support of federally connected school districts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Cherise Imai". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cherise Imai
Executive Director
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools