

Talking Points: Protecting Our Children, Impact Aid at Risk
Planned Elimination of the U.S. Department of Education's Impact Aid Program Staff
(Updated October 16, 2025)

Background

- 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 U.S. Department of Education issued **60-day advance RIF notices to 14 employees in the Impact Aid office**. No staff will be separated before the end of that 60-day transition period. During that time, duties are being streamlined and shifted among remaining staff to ensure that critical program functions continue.
- The Department has indicated that the **Impact Aid program will remain under its current leadership** and will continue operations during the transition. Officials have stated they are committed to the program and its mission, noting that the **President's FY26 budget request includes support for Impact Aid**.
- When the federal government reopens and funding is restored, the Department may reevaluate the situation.
- These actions leave the program without the personnel needed to function – there is no one to process district applications, answer questions, or ensure timely payments.

Why It Matters to Our District

- While the Department has stated that the program will continue under current leadership, these notices raise serious concerns about the capacity of the office to serve districts effectively in the months ahead.
- Our district serves federally connected students - including military children, Native American students, and all students living on or near federal lands.
- Impact Aid is not supplemental funding; it is essential to our operations.
- Our students, teachers, and community will bear the brunt of this decision.

Potential Consequences for Children and Schools

- If staffing levels are reduced or responsibilities remain unfilled, school districts could face:
 - Delays in processing applications and payments
 - Larger class sizes and fewer teachers
 - Cuts to special education and mental health services
 - Loss of language and cultural programs for Native American students
 - Greater instability for military children
 - Difficulty maintaining payroll or operations in extreme cases

Why This Action Is Wrong

- Impact Aid fulfills a statutory obligation — it is not discretionary.
- The employees who received RIF notices are experienced subject-matter experts essential to running the program accurately and transparently.
- Even the *threat* of losing these staff creates instability for federally connected school districts.
- This uncertainty comes at a time when military families and federal employees are already affected by the shutdown.

- Impact Aid enjoys strong bipartisan support, demonstrated by recent House and Senate resolutions celebrating its 75th anniversary.
- Congress must ensure that the Department of Education retains the staff capacity necessary to operate this critical program.

Our Request of Congress

- Urge the Department of Education to reconsider the planned RIF and ensure continuity of operations in the Impact Aid office.
- Communicate to the Administration that Congress expects Impact Aid to remain fully staffed and functional.
- Work across the aisle to safeguard this program and the districts it supports.
- Stand with the children and families in your communities who rely on Impact Aid.

Localize Your Story (Tips for Districts):

To strengthen your message, insert:

- ***How much Impact Aid your district receives annually*** (e.g., “\$3.2 million in FY25”).
- ***Number of federally connected students you serve*** (e.g., “over 2,000 military-connected students”).
- ***Examples of what the funding covers*** (e.g., teachers, bus routes, special education staff).
- ***Risks if funds are disrupted*** (e.g., “We may not meet payroll in March without timely Impact Aid payments”).
- ***A brief student or family story*** (e.g., a military child adjusting to a new school, or a Native student whose program depends on Impact Aid).