

Proposed USED/DOL Merger Will Compound Harmful Federal Education Mandates



USPIE opposes all efforts to convert American education into a workforce development system and opposes enabling massive data collection of citizens, especially children, facilitated and coordinated by the Federal government. USPIE believes the effort to make this dramatic conversion through government schools is misunderstood by most Americans and nearly all elected officials.

The mission of USPIE is to close the US Department of Education (USED) and end all Federal education mandates. The merger proposed by President Trump's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to combine the Federal Education and Labor Departments directly contradicts USPIE's primary goal. USPIE recognizes the intended goals of the merger -- smaller government, streamlining, and saving taxpayers' money -- are all positive efforts. However, USPIE cannot support the merger because it moves the ball in the wrong direction for ending workforce development-based education and the collection of data from children. In fact, the proposed streamlining could make these troubling Federal education mandates more entrenched, more powerful and more destructive. Despite departmental staffing and cost reduction efforts, USED continues to usurp local and parental control in the heavy-handed oversight of ESSA State Plans, and by over-ruling State laws protecting parental rights. Likewise, State ESSA Plans impose Common Core-aligned standards and tests on all schools without local school board approval.

The Executive Order initiating the OMB Reform Plan, which recommends the merger, says the plan; "shall include, as appropriate, recommendations to eliminate unnecessary agencies, components of agencies, and agency programs, and merge functions;" and "shall consider... whether some or all the functions of an agency, a component, or a program are appropriate for the Federal Government or would be better left to State or local governments or to the private sector through free enterprise..."

USPIE firmly believes education is best left to States, local communities and parents.

OMB utterly neglected the opportunity provided by the Executive Order to at least begin this process.

Moreover, the OMB Reform Plan itself says:

"It is no longer appropriate to avoid having foundational discussions about services that might be better served by direct State, local, or even private-sector stewardship."

USPIE welcomes the opportunity presented by the merger proposal to engage elected officials and the American public in a discussion about workforce development education and massive data collection of children mandated by the Federal government through both USED and the Department of Labor.

If the goal of President Trump's merger is to save tax payers money, and if President Trump is still interested in ending Common Core and returning control of education to parents and communities, following the USPIE Blueprint to close the Department of Education is a much better plan and one that has the support of many American parents who want to make American education great again!