

In March 2025, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) [initiated a reduction-in-force](#) (RIF¹), alongside broader federal actions and proposals that signaled major potential changes to ED’s staffing and operations. During the same period, ED staffing levels and capacity were also shaped by other dynamics beyond RIFs, including the transition to a new presidential administration and ED leadership in January 2025, the government-wide federal hiring freeze issued on January 20, 2025, voluntary departures, including resignations and retirements; participation in OPM’s Deferred Resignation Program (DRP), and subsequent operational shifts such as regional office closures and the reallocation of certain ED functions through interagency agreements.

In response, NASFAA conducted [two membership surveys](#) to understand how these developments affected institutional operations, staffing, and student service. To complement our member-reported impacts, NASFAA’s Research Department analyzed [U.S. Office of Personnel Management](#) (OPM) workforce data to examine net changes in ED headcount and workforce composition between December 2024 and December 2025, and to consider how staffing shifts at ED may affect members in both the near and long term. This report utilizes findings from that analysis and the [OPM Workforce Changes Dashboard](#), covering January 20, 2025 - December 2025².

Key Findings

Staffing Changes, from January 20, 2025, to December 2025

- The [OPM Workforce Changes Dashboard](#) indicates that the number of federal employees has decreased by 242,260 from January 20, 2025, to December 2025. At ED, there has been a net loss of 1,859 federal employees (Table 1). Disaggregating the nearly 1,900 net reductions by subagency, Federal Student Aid (FSA) saw a decrease of 689 employees, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) saw a decrease of 166, and the Office for Postsecondary Education (OPE) saw a decrease of 55 (Table 1).
- To better understand the implications for each subagency’s workforce, NASFAA compared the raw federal employment data from December 2024 to December 2025. This analysis (Table 2) found the most significant net percentage declines among subagencies most relevant to student aid and postsecondary policy were in IES (headcount change: -163; percentage of workforce change: -85%), FSA (headcount change: -660; percentage of workforce change: -46%), and OPE (headcount change: -57; percentage of workforce change: -31%).

Reason for Departure and Departure Types, from January 20, 2025, to December 2025

- The OPM Workforce Changes Dashboard reports that from January 20, 2025, to December 2025, there were 2,045 total separations of any type and 186 total accessions of any type³ within ED (Table 1).
- A deeper dive into the data reveals more about the reasons for departure and the types of departure across subagencies in ED. OPM’s Workforce Changes dashboard distinguishes between separations processed through the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP)⁴ (Table 3a) and non-DRP separations (Table 3b). OPM guidance indicates

¹ In this report NASFAA uses the term RIF as shorthand for the overall workforce reductions.

² This report focuses on staffing changes during calendar year 2025. Some OPM dashboard visuals are presented on a fiscal year basis (Oct–Sep) and therefore do not align to a calendar-year analysis; those views are not used for this report.

³ Personnel actions are grouped into accessions (individuals entering federal service) and separations, (individuals leaving federal service) by OPM.

⁴ Under DRP, employees agreed to separate from federal service by September 30, 2025 (or up to December 31, 2025 if retirement-eligible) and were generally placed on paid administrative leave during the deferred-resignation period. [OPM Federal Workforce Data, Separations and accessions since January 20, 2025](#)

employees were not expected to work during that time⁵. Put simply, a DRP can reduce working capacity faster than it reduces payroll headcount. If someone is on paid administrative leave, that's an immediate loss of staff capacity even though the person may still appear in employment counts until the separation date.

- When examining separations data by subagency, 10% of separations in ED during 2025 were DRP-related, with the largest reason for DRP separation being Resignation (51%) (Table 3a). Across all separations (DRP and non-DRP) the most common reason for separation was retirement (37%), and then Reduction in Force (RIF), 34% (Table 3c).

Demographic Shifts Among ED Employees from December 2024 - December 2025

- Educational attainment declined sharply in absolute terms across ED's workforce between December 2024 and December 2025. Losses occurred in every education category, with the largest numeric declines among employees with a bachelor's degree (-530) and those with graduate (non-doctoral) degrees (-452). Additional notable declines included professional degrees (-241), doctoral degrees (-196), and high school/GED (-190). (Table 5)
- Despite these across-the-board reductions, percentage shares were generally more stable than headcounts would suggest, and most shifts were modest. The most notable compositional change was an increase in the share of employees with graduate (non-doctoral) degrees, which rose from 30.7% to 33.8% (+3.1 percentage points) even as that group declined in headcount—indicating that losses were comparatively larger in other education categories. Shares declined slightly for several groups, including bachelor's (28.0% to 27.2%; -0.8 points) and high school/GED (9.3% to 8.5%; -0.8 points), while professional degree remained essentially stable (+0.1 points) and doctoral declined modestly (-0.7 points). (Table 5)
- Tenure distribution shifted between December 2024 and December 2025. The largest single headcount decline occurred among employees with 1-4 years of service (-481), indicating substantial reductions among relatively early-tenure staff. At the same time, ED also experienced notable losses among long-tenured employees: headcount for staff with 20 or more years of service declined by 635 (about 35% of the overall net reduction), a pattern that may have implications for institutional knowledge, continuity, and specialized expertise. (Table 6)

Impact on Financial Aid Administrators: The federal workforce data and NASFAA's member surveys provide complementary perspectives on the same developments. While the surveys document operational and student-facing disruptions reported by institutions, the federal staffing data illustrate the scale and distribution of workforce reductions that may help explain those disruptions. In OPM's workforce snapshots, ED experienced a net loss of nearly 1,900 employees from January 20, 2025 - December 2025, including a 689-employee decline in Federal Student Aid (FSA), alongside reductions in other offices relevant to postsecondary policy and student aid operations. The workforce analysis also shows a reduction of 635 employees with 20 or more years of service, consistent with a greater loss among longer-tenured staff and potential impacts on institutional knowledge and continuity.

These workforce capacity reductions correspond with what institutions reported in [NASFAA's surveys](#): the percentage of institutions reporting disruptions to FSA responsiveness, communication, or processing timelines rose from 59% in May 2025 to 72% in July 2025. Institutions also reported weakened support structures, with 47% indicating their FSA regional office had closed in May, and growing student-facing consequences — student confusion or concern rising from 47% in May to 51% in July, while student inquiries remained elevated (60% in May and 57% in July reporting more than typical volumes).

⁵ [OPM DRP Frequently Asked Question across all education categories](#)

Table 1. Total Workforce Change by Subagency, from January 20, 2025 - December 2025

Subagency	Separations	Accessions	Workforce Change
EDEN - FEDERAL STUDENT AID	-738	49	-689
EDEC - OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	-231	7	-224
EDER - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	-171	5	-166
EDEK - OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	-154	10	-144
EDES - OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	-122	8	-114
EDEG - OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	-106	17	-89
EDEA - IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-48	40	-8
EDEP - OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	-64	9	-55
EDEO - OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	-61	8	-53
EDED - OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	-58	4	-54
EDEH - OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	-56	4	-52
EDEB - OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-49	5	-44
EDEI - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	-51	0	-51
EDEF - OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	-49	1	-48
EDEV - OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	-35	2	-33
EDEE - OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	-17	8	-9
EDEJ - OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	-12	8	-4
EDET - OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	-17	1	-16
EDEZ - NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	-6	0	-6
<i>n</i>	-2045	186	-1859

Source: NASFAA Calculation of [OPM Federal Workforce Data Dashboard](#)

Table 2. Distribution of Employees at ED, by Subagency, from December 2024 to December 2025

	December 2024		December 2025		Change from December 2024 to December 2025	
	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount Change	Percent Change
FEDERAL STUDENT AID	1,441	33.7	781	31.8	-660	-46%
IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	74	1.7	59	2.4	-15	-20%
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	191	4.5	28	1.1	-163	-85%
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	35	0.8	29	1.2	-6	-17%
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	605	14.2	403	16.4	-202	-33%
OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	61	1.4	30	1.2	-31	-51%
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	82	1.9	24	1.0	-58	-71%
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	316	7.4	180	7.3	-136	-43%
OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	17	0.4	-	-	-	-
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	414	9.7	301	12.3	-113	-27%
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	203	4.8	152	6.2	-51	-25%
OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	21	0.5	18	0.7	-3	-14%
OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	127	3	81	3.3	-46	-36%
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	183	4.3	126	5.1	-57	-31%
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	181	4.2	129	5.3	-52	-29%
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	99	2.3	39	1.6	-60	-61%
OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	79	1.8	28	1.1	-51	-65%
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	125	2.9	35	1.4	-90	-72%
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	19	0.4	10	0.4	-9	-47%
<i>n</i>	4,273	100	2,453	100	-1,820	-43%

Source: NASFAA Analysis, Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2024, and Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2025

Table 3a. Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) Separations, by Subagency, from January 20, 2025 - December 2025

Subagency	Resignation (DRP)	Retirement - Early (DRP)	Retirement - Voluntary (DRP)	Retirement - Other (DRP)	Transfer-Out (DRP)	Other Separation (DRP)	Total DRP Separations
EDEN - FEDERAL STUDENT AID	-58	-7	-39	0	0	0	-104
EDEC - OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	-19	-1	-5	0	0	0	-25
EDER - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	-6
EDEK - OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	-9	-3	-3	0	0	0	-15
EDES - OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	-2	0	-4	0	0	0	-6
EDEG - OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	-3	0	0	0	0	0	-3
EDEA - IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	0	0	-2	0	0	0	-2
EDEP - OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	-2	0	-4	0	0	0	-6
EDEO - OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	0	-1	-1	0	0	0	-2
EDED - OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	-2	-3	-1	0	0	0	-6
EDEH - OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	-1	-1	-3	0	0	0	-5
EDEB - OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-1
EDEI - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	-3	0	-6	0	0	0	-9
EDEF - OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	-6	-4	-7	0	0	0	-17
EDEV - OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	-1	-2	-1	0	0	0	-4
EDEE - OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EDEJ - OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EDET - OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	0	0	-1	0	0	0	-1
EDEZ - NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	-1	0	0	0	0	0	-1
<i>Total by Separation by Reason (n)</i>	<i>-109</i>	<i>-24</i>	<i>-80</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-213</i>
<i>Percentage Distribution by Separation Category</i>	<i>51%</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: [OPM Federal Workforce Data Dashboard](#)

Table 3b. Non-Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) Separations, by Subagency, from January 20, 2025 - December 2025

Subagency	Resignation	Retirement - Early	Retirement - Voluntary	Retirement - Other	Transfer-Out	Other Separation	Reduction in Force (RIF)	Total non-DRP Separations
EDEN - FEDERAL STUDENT AID	-64	-51	-153	-63	-12	-8	-283	-634
EDEC - OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	-114	-34	-30	-2	-13	-1	-12	-206
EDER - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	-8	-9	-20	-22	0	-2	-104	-165
EDEK - OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	-12	-7	-33	-27	-16	0	-44	-139
EDES - OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	-22	-14	-13	-7	-2	-3	-55	-116
EDEG - OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	-19	-6	-10	-4	-12	-1	-51	-103
EDEA - IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-32	-2	-1	0	0	-4	-7	-46
EDEP - OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	-5	-5	-13	-10	-1	-8	-16	-58
EDEO - OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	-15	-6	-12	-4	0	-1	-21	-59
EDED - OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	-16	-3	-5	-4	-2	0	-22	-52
EDEH - OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	-13	-8	-8	-4	-1	-1	-16	-51
EDEB - OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-7	-9	-3	-1	-2	-3	-23	-48
EDEI - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	-3	-2	-12	-7	-4	0	-14	-42
EDEF - OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	-4	-5	-15	-1	-5	-2	0	-32
EDEV - OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	-9	-4	-8	0	0	0	-10	-31
EDEE - OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	-11	0	0	0	-1	-3	-2	-17
EDEJ - OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	-9	0	-2	0	-1	0	0	-12
EDET - OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	-3	0	-1	-1	0	0	-11	-16
EDEZ - NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	0	0	-1	0	0	-4	0	-5
<i>Total by Separation by Reason (n)</i>	<i>-366</i>	<i>-165</i>	<i>-340</i>	<i>-157</i>	<i>-72</i>	<i>-41</i>	<i>-691</i>	<i>-1832</i>
<i>Percentage Distribution by Separation Category</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: [OPM Federal Workforce Data Dashboard](#)

Table 3c. Total Separations, Any Type, by Subagency, from January 20, 2025 - December 2025

	Resignation	Retirement	Transfer-Out	Other Separation	Reduction in Force (RIF)	Total Separations
EDEN - FEDERAL STUDENT AID	-122	-313	-12	-8	-283	-738
EDEC - OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	-133	-72	-13	-1	-12	-231
EDER - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	-9	-56	0	-2	-104	-171
EDEK - OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	-21	-73	-16	0	-44	-154
EDES - OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	-24	-38	-2	-3	-55	-122
EDEG - OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	-22	-20	-12	-1	-51	-106
EDEA - IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-32	-5	0	-4	-7	-48
EDEP - OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	-7	-32	-1	-8	-16	-64
EDEO - OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	-15	-24	0	-1	-21	-61
EDED - OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	-18	-16	-2	0	-22	-58
EDEH - OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	-14	-24	-1	-1	-16	-56
EDEB - OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	-8	-13	-2	-3	-23	-49
EDEI - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	-6	-27	-4	0	-14	-51
EDEF - OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	-10	-32	-5	-2	0	-49
EDEV - OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	-10	-15	0	0	-10	-35
EDEE - OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	-11	0	-1	-3	-2	-17
EDEJ - OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	-9	-2	-1	0	0	-12
EDET - OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	-3	-3	0	0	-11	-17
EDEZ - NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	-1	-1	0	-4	0	-6
<i>Total by Separation by Reason (n)</i>	<i>-475</i>	<i>-766</i>	<i>-72</i>	<i>-41</i>	<i>-691</i>	<i>-2045</i>
<i>Percentage Distribution by Separation Category</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: [OPM Federal Workforce Data Dashboard](#)

Table 4. Total accessions by Subagency, since January 2025

	New Hire	Transfer-In	Total Accessions
EDEN - FEDERAL STUDENT AID	46	3	49
EDEC - OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS	7	0	7
EDER - INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES	5	0	5
EDEK - OFFICE OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS	7	3	10
EDES - OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	8	0	8
EDEG - OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL	17	0	17
EDEA - IMMEDIATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	40	0	40
EDEP - OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION	9	0	9
EDEO - OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH	8	0	8
EDED - OFFICE OF PLANNING, EVALUATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	4	0	4
EDEH - OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES	4	0	4
EDEB - OFFICE OF THE DUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION	5	0	5
EDEI - OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER	0	0	0
EDEF - OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	1	0	1
EDEV - OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION	2	0	2
EDEE - OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY	8	0	8
EDEJ - OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS	8	0	8
EDET - OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	1	0	1
EDEZ - NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD	0	0	0
<i>Total by Separation or Accessions by Reason (n)</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>186</i>

Source: [OPM Federal Workforce Data Dashboard](#)

Table 5. Education Levels of Employees at ED, from December 2024 to December 2025

Level of Education:	December 2024		December 2025		Change from December 2024 to December 2025	
	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount Change	Percentage Point Change in Share
Less than high school	7	0.20%	4	0.20%	-3	0.00%
High school / GED	398	9.30%	208	8.50%	-190	-0.80%
Some college, no degree	235	5.50%	124	5.10%	-111	-0.40%
Certificate/vocational	41	1%	18	0.70%	-23	-0.30%
Associate	76	1.80%	41	1.70%	-35	-0.10%
Bachelor's	1,196	28%	666	27.20%	-530	-0.80%
Graduate (non-doctoral)	1,312	30.70%	860	33.80%	-452	3.10%
Doctoral	422	9.90%	226	9.20%	-196	-0.70%
Professional degree	569	13.30%	328	13.40%	-241	0.10%
Unknown/Not reported	17	0.40%	8	0.30%	-9	-0.10%
<i>n</i>	4,273	100%	2,496	100%	-1777 ⁶	

Source: NASFAA Analysis, Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2024, and Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2025

⁶ Net change in Table 5 reflects the difference in headcount between December 2024 and December 2025 snapshots from EHRI-based employment data. Workforce change figures shown elsewhere (e.g., from OPM's Workforce Changes Dashboard) are calculated from separations and accessions over a defined period and may not align exactly due to differing measures and date definitions.

Table 6. Length of Service of Employees at ED, from December 2024 to December 2025

	December 2024		December 2025		Change from December 2024 to December 2025	
	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount	% of Total ED	Headcount Change	Percentage Point Change in Share
<1 year	188	4.4%	120	4.90%	-68	0.50%
1–4 years	872	20.4%	391	15.90%	-481	-4.50%
5–9 years	629	14.7%	472	19.20%	-157	4.50%
10–14 years	691	16.2%	353	14.40%	-338	-1.80%
15–19 years	603	14.1%	462	18.80%	-141	4.70%
20–24 years	392	9.2%	252	10.30%	-140	1.10%
25–29 years	309	7.2%	163	6.60%	-146	-0.60%
30–34 years	273	6.4%	122	5.00%	-151	-1.40%
35–39 years	206	4.8%	82	3.30%	-124	-1.50%
40+ years	110	2.6%	36	1.50%	-74	-1.10%
<i>n</i>	4273	100%	2453	99.90%	-1820	

Source: NASFAA Analysis, Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2024, and Federal Employment Raw Data, December 2025

Methodology

This analysis by NASFAA’s Research Department uses data from the [U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s Data Downloads](#) to compare total staff levels, reasons for departure, and various employee demographics in the U.S. Department of Education from December 2024 to December 2025. Specifically, data from Federal Employment Raw Data and monthly Federal Separations Raw Data were used, as outlined below. It also uses the [OPM Workforce Changes Dashboard](#), as of December 2025.

Information on Federal Employment Raw Data Calculations

This data analysis compares Federal Employment Raw Data from reports in December 2024 to December 2025, extracting only employees whose agency was listed as the “Department of Education.” Some variables were collapsed into larger categories as follows:

Level of Education Variable: Education level was initially reported in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management data files as a detailed string field with 23 distinct values (including “No data reported”). To support more straightforward interpretation and more stable reporting, we collapsed these detailed categories into a smaller set of conceptually aligned attainment groups. Specifically, we recoded the original education labels into ten mutually exclusive categories: Less than high school; High school/GED; Some college, no degree; Certificate/vocational; Associate; Bachelor’s; Graduate (non-doctoral); Professional degree; Doctoral; and Unknown/Not reported. “Unknown/Not reported” includes records coded as “No data reported.” All records were assigned to a collapsed category (i.e., no cases were left unmapped), and subsequent descriptive statistics were produced using the collapsed education variable.

Length of service: This variable was initially measured in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management data files as a continuous variable in years, reported in fine-grained increments (e.g., tenths of a year). For reporting, we collapsed length of service into broader tenure categories to improve interpretability and reduce sparsity in the upper tail. Specifically, we grouped employees into the following bands: <1 year; 1–4; 5–9; 10–14; 15–19; 20–24; 25–29; 30–34; 35–39; and 40+ years (with the top category capturing all values at or above 40 years, extending beyond 50 years in this dataset).

Information on OPE’s Separations Files

This data analysis compiles the Federal Employees Separations Raw Data files, published monthly from January 2025 to December 2025, and extracts only employees whose agency was listed as the “Department of Education”.

Missing/Withheld Data: This analysis uses OPM’s Federal Separations Raw Data from the Federal Workforce Data (FWD) site, which provides de-identified, record-level extracts from Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI) Status/Dynamics feeds. The EHIR Status feeds provide a monthly snapshot of the workforce, and the EHRI Dynamics Feeds provide a personnel actions feed. OPM notes that, although these public files exclude personally identifiable information, some fields are redacted or otherwise suppressed to protect sensitive individual records in compliance with OPM’s data release policy. In addition, OPM explains that workforce “dynamics” data reflect personnel actions submitted by agencies and that late or incomplete submissions can result in missing fields in a given release, with late data incorporated in future releases; OPM also cautions that separations datasets may be considered preliminary while timeliness and quality issues are addressed. Consistent with these published limitations, approximately half of the records in our extracted separations files lack values for `separation_category` and/or `personnel_action_effective_date_YYYYMM`; in tables, these records are retained and reported as Missing/withheld to acknowledge the separation while transparently reflecting suppressed or unavailable fields.