



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of the Deputy Secretary

May 21, 2018

Maria Pulcini
Joint National Committee for Languages
P.O. Box 386
Garret Park, Maryland 20896

Dear Ms. Pulcini:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary DeVos from 18 organizations regarding the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). The Secretary values your dedication and support for our nation's English learners and for OELA and appreciates your feedback regarding the proposed changes to the Organizational Structure of the Department of Education (Department) and the integration of OELA with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

On March 13, 2017, the President of the United States signed Executive Order 13781, the *Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch*, directing each agency to submit a plan to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to reorganize the agency to improve its efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. In response, the Department promptly established a Steering Committee composed of senior career and noncareer leaders to coordinate a response and to solicit reform ideas from external stakeholders. In addition to the public comments provided by OMB, in July 2017, the Steering Committee requested input from external stakeholders on how the Department could best improve its work and used that input to inform potential areas for reform.

The Department submitted its Agency Reform Plan to the Office of Management and Budget in early September 2017 as part of the budget process. In February 2018, following the release of the President's FY19 Budget, Department leaders provided an overview of the Agency Reform Plan to Department employees and external stakeholders.

The Agency Reform Plan has two general purposes. The first purpose is to ensure good stewardship of taxpayer dollars. To this end, the Agency Reform Plan seeks to reduce redundancy; maximize employee and organizational efficiency; break down barriers that artificially separate Department staff serving the same grantees, students, and stakeholders; leverage knowledge and expertise across the Department (including the knowledge and expertise of OELA staff); and support States, districts, schools, educators, and families. The second purpose seeks to align the Department's mission with the Secretary's priorities, such as raising the bar on the quality and timeliness of service to the public, as well as improved policy and program coordination. Once implemented, the Department knows that its proposed changes will enhance Department operations and leverage resources to better serve English learner students and their families.

I want to assure you that we are committed to maintaining an effective OELA, and complying with the laws relevant to OELA, in any future organization of the Department. We commend your advocacy for English learners and all that you do on behalf of the students of our great nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mitchell M. Zais". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Mitchell (Mick) Zais, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Education