

Trump administration reshuffles Federal Student Aid office

By Michael Stratford, POLITICO

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The Trump administration is planning a major reorganization of the leadership of the Education Department office that oversees student financial aid.

The department will significantly reduce the number of senior officials who serve on the Federal Student Aid executive committee and report directly to the head of the office, according to a plan presented during a staff meeting on Tuesday and reviewed by POLITICO.

The changes were described in the presentation as an effort to improve efficiency and reduce complexity at the roughly 1,200-person office, which manages the department's nearly \$1.5 trillion student loan portfolio and regulates colleges and universities.

The student aid office had until now largely been untouched by other, more sweeping Education Department [reorganization efforts](#) during the Trump administration, though there had been some minor [organizational changes](#).

Senior officials began developing the Federal Student Aid reorganization in October, and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos signed off on the plan last week, according to the presentation slides.

Under the plan, fewer senior officials will report directly to Mark Brown, the new chief operating officer [whom DeVos appointed](#) last month. Brown is the [fourth person to lead](#) the office since the beginning of the Trump administration.

The 18-member executive committee of senior leaders will be reduced to eight members, including Brown, to make it "a smaller, decision-focused body," according to the presentation slides obtained by POLITICO.

The executive committee will consist of four new deputy chief operating officers: A. Wayne Johnson, deputy for strategy, innovation, and transformation; Michael Dean, deputy for strategic measures and outcomes; Robin Minor, deputy for partner participation and oversight; and Chris Greene, deputy for customer experience.

It will also include senior advisers John Kane and Julian Schmoke Jr. Until earlier this year, Schmoke [served](#) as the department's chief enforcement officer and the head of the Student Aid Enforcement Unit, [drawing the ire](#) of congressional Democrats because of his previous work at a for-profit college.

In addition, the executive committee will have a spot for a new chief of staff, who has yet to be hired. The current chief of staff, Marianna O'Brien, will become director of strategic communications, according to the presentation.

Another change described in the presentation is the formation of new "cross-functional teams" led by project managers who would be "responsible for completely implementing critical solutions." The teams would consist of resources and experts from across the office.