



## Office of Inspector General U.S. Small Business Administration

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### External Peer Review Report

March 22, 2022

The Honorable Sandra D. Bruce  
Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Education  
550 12<sup>th</sup> St., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Inspector General Bruce:

This required external peer review was conducted in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) Inspection and Evaluation Committee guidance as contained in the *CIGIE Guide for Conducting External Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General (December 2020)*. The peer review was conducted from November 3, 2021, through March 11, 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the peer review was performed remotely.

The CIGIE External Peer Review Team (Review Team) assessed the extent to which the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General (ED OIG) complied with standards from CIGIE's Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, January 2012 (Blue Book). Specifically, the Review Team assessed Quality Control, Planning, Data Collection and Analysis, Evidence, Records Maintenance, Reporting, and Follow-up. The assessment included a review of ED OIG's internal policies and procedures that implement the seven Blue Book standards. It also included a review of selected inspection and evaluation reports issued between October 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021, to determine whether the reports complied with the applicable Blue Book standards and ED OIG's internal policies and procedures.

### Overall Conclusion

The Review Team determined that ED OIG's policies and procedures generally were consistent with the seven Blue Book standards addressed in the external peer review. Additionally, all three reports reviewed generally met the Blue Book standards and complied with ED OIG internal policies and procedures. Your response to the report is included as an enclosure.

Thank you and your staff for your assistance and professionalism throughout the peer review.

Sincerely,

Hannibal M. Ware  
Inspector General

Enclosures

## **ENCLOSURE 1: Scope and Methodology**

The U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General selected three reports for review, as required for medium-sized organizations. We considered the impact of the report, significance of the subject matter, and geographic location as the basis for selecting the following reports:

- ED-OIG/S20DC0008; Assessment of the Department's Reconstitution Plans Following COVID-19, December 14, 2020
- ED-OIG/I20DC0013; Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund Reporting Requirements, February 26, 2021
- ED-OIG/I06S0001; Federal Student Aid Controls Over the School Verification Process, May 20, 2021

The Review Team reviewed ED OIG's policies and procedures, prior External Peer Review report and Letter of Comment, Quality Assurance Reports, project documentation, and audit follow-up information. We also obtained responses from ED OIG to our written requests for follow-up information.

We followed the processes described in the CIGIE Guide for Conducting External Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General and used the results of Appendix D: Policy and Procedures Review Checklist and Appendix E: Report Review Checklist as the basis for our conclusions.

The peer review was performed remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

March 9, 2022

The Honorable Hannibal M. Ware  
Inspector General  
409 3<sup>rd</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20416

Ref: External Peer Review Draft Report

Dear Mr. Ware:

Thank you for providing the draft report on the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General's (ED OIG) inspection and evaluation organization, conducted in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's (CIGIE) *Guide for Conducting Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspector General*, December 2020. This peer review assessed the extent to which ED OIG complied with standards from CIGIE's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*, January 2012 (Blue Book).

We are pleased that the peer review team concluded that (1) ED OIG's policies and procedures generally were consistent with the seven Blue Book standards addressed in the external peer review and (2) all three reports reviewed generally met the Blue Book standards and complied with ED OIG policies and procedures.

We value the peer review process and consider it an important element of our organization's quality control efforts. We appreciate the efforts of the peer review team in completing this review in a professional and timely manner.

Sincerely,

Sandra D. Bruce  
Inspector General