

*Impact of a Department of Education on
Federal Science and Technology Activities*

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Department of Education
on Federal Science &
Technology Activities**

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FOREWORD

One of the Office of Technology Assessment's (OTA) primary functions is to anticipate and advise Congress on the potential long-range impacts of technologies, and as a corollary, to anticipate and advise Congress of the long-range impacts on technology of proposed actions. In the latter sense, the proposals to create a Department of Education, which Congress is currently considering, could have significant effects on graduate science and engineering training in this Nation. Therefore, this report examines a range of congressional options available for ensuring that the integrity of the educational process for professional scientists and engineers is maintained in order to preserve this important national resource.

This report reviews how three key elements in the science education process will fare under a new department. These are: the programs of the National Science Foundation's Science Education Directorate; general support programs for graduate science and engineering training across the country; and educational analysis and research which should be the responsibility of an appropriate Federal agency. Key criteria to be utilized in these evaluations are presented for the use of congressional committees. Specific options with regard to higher education in science and engineering and with regard to those educational research and development functions—important for inclusion in the new department—are also presented.

Given the important and far-reaching consequences which could ensue if higher education in science and engineering in this country is not carefully nurtured, OTA is pleased to make this assessment available to the Congress during its deliberations on the proposed Department of Education. .



RUSSELL W. PETERSON
Director
Office of Technology Assessment

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OTA Department of Education Reorganization Project Staff

Ellis R. Mottur, * *R&D Policies and Priorities Program Manager*

Carolee McBee, *Project Leader*

Roslyn Dauber, *Analyst*

Irene Zarechnak, *Clerical Support*

Consultant

Charles V. Kidd, *Professor of Public Policy*
Graduate Program in Science and Public Policy
George Washington University

OTA Publishing Staff

John C. Holmes, *Publishing Officer*

Kathie S. Boss Joanne Heming

*Resigned, effective July 31, 1978, to accept position with Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Smithsonian Institution.

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