

College Transparency Act Connecting Data to Understand Student Success

The College Transparency Act is a bipartisan bill in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives. Under this proposed legislation, the U.S. Department of Education would provide students, colleges, employers, policy leaders, and the public with information about what programs are helping students to earn credentials and get good jobs.

To produce that information, the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) would create a postsecondary student-level data network, replacing the student components of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

Colleges would submit basic student information to NCES, such as:

- First-time or transfer student
- Credential level sought
- Program of study
- Credit accumulation and completion
- Full-time or part-time
- Race/ethnicity, sex, age intervals
- Institutional grants and loans
- Military or Veteran status

The proposed legislation directs NCES to match that student-level information with existing data from other federal agencies. The bill requires rigorous standards to ensure the privacy and security of the data, and would only match the data elements outlined below to generate aggregate data that answer important questions about student success. Data matching can also ease burden on institutions, which would no longer need to continue collecting and reporting aggregate counts for these data points.

Agency and Relevant Data	Important Data Points	Purpose of Information
<p>Office of Federal Student Aid, Department of Education National Student Loan Data System; Central Processing System; Common Origination and Disbursement System; Postsecondary Education Participants System.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal grant, work-study, and loan amounts • Repayment plan type • Loan payment amounts • Repayment status • Default status • Cumulative student debt • Federal Pell Grant recipient status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reveal equity gaps in loan requests and receipt, and progress toward repayment. • Show outcomes for students who receive Pell grants and federal student loans, including progress and success. • Answer questions about student debt and loan repayment.
<p>Department of Treasury IRS earnings, W-2 & self-employment tax data; 1098T tuition statement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual earnings for tax filers • Employment • Tuition billed and paid annually • Financial aid received, annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show annual employment and wage outcomes nationwide for all taxpayers, including federal employees, military, and self-employed. • Show financial investments made by students and provide more clarity about net price of postsecondary education.

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<p>Department of Defense Recruiter forms on those entering military and Tuition Assistance Program data for active duty military members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military or Veteran status • Receipt and amount of Tuition Assistance Program funding 	<p>Show progress and outcomes of members of the military receiving Tuition Assistance, and evaluate educational opportunities for service members.</p>
<p>Department of Veterans Affairs Data from application/receipt of GI Bill and other education benefits for Veterans and/or their family members to whom benefits are assigned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military or Veteran status • Receipt and amount of GI Bill education benefits 	<p>Show progress and outcomes of GI Bill recipient groups at particular institutions.</p>
<p>Social Security Administration W-2 and self-employment tax data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual earnings for tax filers • Employment 	<p>Show annual employment and wage outcomes nationwide for all taxpayers, including federal employees, military, and self-employed.</p>
<p>Census Bureau, Department of Commerce Data from Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics program that includes information from state Unemployment Insurance wage records produced quarterly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly earnings from Unemployment Insurance wage records. • Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show quarterly employment and wage information for non-federal, non-self-employed in almost all states. • Show employment and wages by industry.

If you have questions or suggestions about this linkages guide sheet, please contact Christina Peña, christinap@workforcedqc.org.