

PostsecData Collaborative and National Skills Coalition Support the Reintroduction of the College Transparency Act

Apr 1, 2019

The [Postsecondary Data Collaborative](#) (PostsecData) and the [National Skills Coalition](#) in cooperation with the undersigned organizations and individuals, applaud Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Tim Scott (R-SC) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Representatives Paul Mitchell (R-MI), Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), Elise Stefanik (R-NY), and Josh Harder (D-CA) for championing transparency through their introduction of the College Transparency Act, which would create a secure, privacy-protected postsecondary data system. This bipartisan, bicameral bill would help students and families, policymakers, institutions and employers to make informed decisions by providing more complete information about college access, success, costs, and outcomes. This information empowers students and families to make well-informed choices about their education, policymakers and institutions to craft evidence-based policies to help students succeed, and employers to navigate the talent pipeline they need to grow the economy. Without complete, representative data that counts all students, equity will be out of reach.

The research is abundantly clear: Investing in a college education pays off.¹ But while college is worth it on average, students, policymakers, institutions and employers cannot answer crucial questions about which postsecondary programs provide an adequate return on investment for which students. Students and taxpayers have a right to know what they can expect in return for their college investment. Yet, existing policies prevent us from answering basic questions, such as:

- What are national completion rates for part-time and transfer students of color?
- How do college access, affordability, and completion vary by race, ethnicity, and income?
- How much do students borrow, and can they repay their loans?
- How many non-completers from a particular college never reenroll, and how many transfer to finish their degree at another institution?
- Which students go on to succeed in the workforce?

Answers to these questions would help students and families choose programs that demonstrate strong outcomes, while helping policymakers and educators to implement policies and practices that help more students succeed. For the marketplace to function effectively, all these stakeholders need access to high-quality information that reflects all types of students and can look at outcomes across state lines. The federal government—with its access to existing data, including on employment and earnings—is uniquely positioned to compile that information, while reducing institutional reporting burdens.

¹ College Board, Education Pays 2016, <https://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/education-pays-2016-full-report.pdf>

The College Transparency Act:

- Overturns the ban on student-level data collection in the Higher Education Act;
- Creates a secure, privacy protected student-level data network within the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) using strong security standards and data governance protocols;
- Accurately reports on student outcomes including enrollment, completion and post-college success across colleges and programs;
- Leverages existing data at federal agencies and institutional data by matching a limited set of data to calculate aggregate information to answer questions critical to understanding and improving student success;
- Protects all students by limiting data disclosures, prohibiting the sale of data, penalizing illegal data use, protecting vulnerable students, prohibiting the use of the data for law enforcement, safeguarding personally identifiable information, and requiring notice to students and regular audits of the system;
- Streamlines burdensome federal reporting requirements for postsecondary institutions;
- Provides information disaggregated by race, ethnicity and Pell Grant receipt status to identify inequities in students' success;
- Requires a user-friendly website to ensure the data are transparent, informative, and accessible for students, parents, policymakers, and employers; and
- Feeds aggregate information back to states and institutions so they can develop and implement targeted, data-informed strategies aimed at supporting student success.

The College Transparency Act represents broad consensus among students, colleges and universities, employers, and policymakers that a secure, privacy-protected postsecondary student data system is the only way to give students the information they need to make informed college choices. That is why we are coming together to urge Congress to pass this bill to provide accurate, timely, and high-quality aggregate data in a user-friendly, transparent way for students and families, policymakers, institutions and employers who have a right to know answers to key questions about student access and success.

- America Forward
- Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U)
- AccessLex Institute
- AccuRounds
- Achieve Atlanta
- Achieving the Dream
- Advance CTE
- AdvancED
- Alloy Engineering Co. Inc.
- American Association of Community Colleges
- AMT - The Association For Manufacturing Technology
- Ann Majdic
- Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity
- Aspen Institute College Excellence Program

- Association for Career and Technical Education
- Association of Community College Trustees
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- Association of Public Data Users
- Atlanta Regional Workforce Development Board
- Birmingham Prosperity Partnership
- Board of Regents, State of Iowa
- Boston Centerless
- Bottom Line
- Build UP
- California Competes
- California EDGE Coalition
- California State Student Association (CSSA)
- Campaign for College Opportunity
- Center for American Progress
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
- Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition
- Chicago Jobs Council
- Chiefs for Change
- Cobb Chamber of Commerce
- College Now Greater Cleveland
- Colorado Center on Law and Policy
- Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
- Complete College America, Inc.
- Connecticut Association for Human Services
- Connecticut State Colleges and Universities
- Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
- Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
- Custom Plastics and More
- CWA Southern California Council
- Dallas County Community College District
- District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund
- Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc.
- ECPI University
- Edmit
- EducationQuest Foundation
- Employee of Choice Academy
- EmployIndy
- Enlisted Association of the National Guard
- Excelencia in Education
- Fairfield-Suisun Adult School
- Field Crest Care Center
- Five Star Development, Inc.
- Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce

- Georgia Association for Career and Technical Education
- Georgia Department of Education
- Georgia State University Student Government Association
- Global Resource Management Inc.
- Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Philadelphia Healthcare Partnership
- Greater Washington Community Foundation
- GW Institute of Public Policy, George Washington University
- HCM Strategists
- Higher Learning Advocates
- Holder Construction Company
- Indiana Institute for Working Families
- Institute for Higher Education Policy
- James Rutter, CEO RQECG Inc.
- Jersey City Literacy Program
- JEVS Human Services
- Jewish Vocational and Career Counseling Service
- Jewish Vocational Service, Boston
- JMPDX LLC
- Jobs For the Future
- JobTrain
- Kathryn Stege
- Knowledge Alliance
- LeaderQuest Holdings Inc.
- Learn4Life
- Lehman College of The City University of New York
- Louisiana State University
- Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition
- Marlen Perez
- MCCI Medical Group
- Metro Atlanta Chamber
- Muslim Student Association -West
- Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
- NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- National Association for College Admission Counseling
- National Association of Graduate-Professional Students
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
- National Council for Adult Learning
- National Council for Workforce Education
- National Laboratory for Education Transformation
- National Skills Coalition
- Naugatuck Adult Education
- New America
- New Orleans Youth Alliance

- New York Association of Training & Employment Professionals (NYATEP)
- Nexus Research and Policy Center
- NOCTI
- Northwest WI Workforce Investment Board
- Nucleos-PortableCloud
- Office of Institutional Research & Planning, The Ohio State University
- Optimax Systems Inc.
- Orleans Technical College
- Partners for College Affordability and Public Trust
- Partnership for College Completion
- Perfection Spring & Stamping Corp.
- Policy Matters Ohio
- Policy Planning Partners
- Postsecondary Analytics
- Pretty Good Consulting, Inc.
- ProLiteracy
- Pryor Education Insights
- Public Insight Corporation
- Rebuilding America's Middle Class
- Results for America
- Rhode Island Adult Education Professional Development Center
- Richards Industries
- Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
- Scholarship America
- Shenandoah Initiative for Adult Education
- Skills2Compete Colorado
- SkillWorks
- South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)
- Southeast Ministry
- Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board
- Stephen L. DesJardins, Professor, University of Michigan
- StriveTogether
- Student Veterans of America
- TechBirmingham
- The Bell Policy Center
- The Education Trust
- The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)
- The Quality Assurance Commons
- The State University Of New York
- The Veterans Education Project
- Third Way
- Towards Employment
- Transportation Learning Center
- TRC Staffing Services

- Tulsa Regional Chamber
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- uAspire
- United Way of Central Iowa
- United Way of Greater Atlanta
- Urban Alliance
- Veterans Education Success
- Virginia Community College System
- Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians
- Western Nevada College Adult Literacy & Language
- WKBJ Foundation
- Women and Families Center-Open DOHR Employment Training
- Women Employed
- Workforce Career Readiness
- Workforce Data Quality Campaign
- Workforce Development Board of South Central WI, Inc.
- Workforce Partnership, local workforce board serving Kansas City, Kansas area
- Workforce Solutions Group
- World Education Services
- WSP USA
- Wyoming Machine, Inc.
- Young Invincibles