

Appendix D

Letters and Contacting Materials

Chief Administrator Letter

**NPSAS
Endorsed by**

American Association of
Collegiate Registrars and
Admissions Officers

American Association of Community
Colleges

American Association of State
Colleges and Universities

American Council on Education

Association for Institutional Research

Association of American Colleges
and Universities

Association of Catholic Colleges and
Universities

Association of Schools of Allied
Health Professions

Career College Association

The Carnegie Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching

The College Board

Council of Graduate Schools

The Council of Independent Colleges

Hispanic Association of Colleges and
Universities

Midwestern Higher Education
Compact

National Accrediting Commission of
Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

National Association of College and
University Business Officers

National Association for Equal
Opportunity in Higher Education

National Association of Independent
Colleges and Universities

National Association of State
Universities and
Land-Grant Colleges

National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators

New England Board of Higher
Education

Southern Regional Education Board

State Higher Education Executive
Officers

The United Negro College Fund

Western Interstate Commission for
Higher Education

<DATE>
<CHIEF ADMIN NAME>
<ADDR 1>
<ADDR 2>
<CITY STATE ZIP>

Your IPEDS UNITID:

Your PASSWORD:

Dear <NAME>:

<INSTITUTION NAME> has been selected to participate in the field test of the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08). The Higher Education Act (Sec. 131 (d) as amended in 1998) mandates that the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) periodically gather information from students and institutions on how students and their families finance education beyond high school.

In response to the continuing need for these data, NPSAS collected information from students and institutions in 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 2000, and 2004. NPSAS:08 is being conducted for NCES by RTI International, a not-for-profit research organization. Additional information about our plans for NPSAS:08 is provided in the enclosed NPSAS brochure.

The purpose of the field test is to evaluate survey instruments and procedures so that the full-scale study is as effective as possible. Your institution's participation is crucial to the success of the field test. Institutions selected for the field test will not be selected for the full-scale study.

I am writing to request that you appoint a NPSAS coordinator, who will be asked to send a data file of the students enrolled at your institution. Once a small sample of students has been selected from your institution, the NPSAS coordinator will be asked to provide additional information on the enrollment status, the demographic characteristics, and the financial assistance provided for each sampled student. The sampled students will also be asked to complete a questionnaire on the Internet.

All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law. The enclosed brochure details our data collection procedures and provides a full description of the laws and procedures safeguarding the confidentiality of questionnaire responses, contact information, and other data collected. Additional information, including reports based on data from previous NPSAS studies, is available on the NPSAS website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>.

We are aware that you and the staff at your institution are confronted with many competing demands for your time. Therefore, we are providing you—and the coordinator you designate—with this advance notice of the study to allow you adequate time to plan for this data collection effort and, if needed, to contact us for more information prior to the start of student list collection in winter 2007. Once designated, an RTI representative will contact your coordinator to discuss the study timeline and the information needed from your institution.

If you have any questions about the study or procedures involved, please contact the RTI Project Coordinator, Brian Kuhr, at 1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-2741) or via e-mail at NPSASschool@rti.org. You may also direct questions to NCES by contacting James Griffith at 1-202-502-7387 (e-mail address: James.Griffith@ed.gov) .

At your earliest convenience, please complete the *NPSAS Designate a Coordinator* form online at the NPSAS website, using the IPEDS UNITID and password printed on the first page of this letter.

We look forward to your participation in this important study. Thank you for your cooperation and prompt completion of the *NPSAS Designate a Coordinator* form.

Sincerely,



Mark Schneider
Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

Enclosures

The NPSAS *Designate a Coordinator* form may be completed online at

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>

To access the online form, enter the user name (which is your IPEDS UNITID) and password printed on the first page of this letter.

**NPSAS
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Association of Catholic Colleges and
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Association of Schools of Allied Health
Professions

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National Association of State
Universities and
Land-Grant Colleges

National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators

New England Board of Higher
Education

Southern Regional Education Board

State Higher Education Executive
Officers

The United Negro College Fund

Western Interstate Commission for
Higher Education

Institution Coordinator Early Contacting Letter

<DATE>

<COORD NAME>

<ADDR 1>

<ADDR 2>

<CITY STATE ZIP>

Your IPEDS UNITID:

Your PASSWORD:

Dear <NAME>

<INSTITUTION NAME> has been selected to participate in the field test of the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08). The Higher Education Act (Sec. 131 (d) as amended in 1998) mandates that the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) periodically gather information from students and institutions on how students and their families finance education beyond high school.

In response to the continuing need for these data, NPSAS collected information from students and institutions in 1987, 1990, 1993, 1996, 2000, and 2004.

The purpose of the field test is to evaluate survey forms and procedures so that the full-scale study is as effective as possible. Your institution's participation is crucial to the success of the field test. Institutions selected for the field test will not be asked to participate in the full-scale study.

Additional information about our plans for NPSAS:08 is provided in the enclosed brochure and project timeline.

The chief administrative officer of your institution has selected you as your institution's coordinator for NPSAS:08. You will have three primary responsibilities for NPSAS:08:

- Complete the *Institution Registration Page* online at the NPSAS website, within the next few weeks, using the UNITID and password printed at the top of this letter. We will schedule data collection for your institution based on the information you provide. (This can also be done by telephone, if you prefer.)
- Oversee the preparation of an enrollment list of students at your institution. These data files will be used to draw a small sample of students from your institution for participation in NPSAS:08. Sampled students will be asked to complete a questionnaire on the Internet.
- Complete a separate web-based program requiring institution record information on such things as enrollment status, demographic characteristics, and financial assistance provided for the sampled students.

Complete instructions for your institution's participation will be sent directly to you in advance of your institution's due date. This date is tailored to your institution's term structure. (Your student enrollment list is due 2 weeks after the start of the last term at your institution that includes April 30, 2007.) **In the meantime**, please review the enclosed materials at your earliest convenience.

We are aware that you and other staff at your institution are confronted with many competing demands for your time. We hope that giving you this advance notice of the study will provide you with ample time to plan for your school's participation in NPSAS:08. A project representative will call you in the next few days to ensure that you have received this notification and to answer any questions that you may have. You may also call the NPSAS Help Desk directly at 1-888-NPSAS411(1-888-677-2741).

All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law. The enclosed materials detail our data collection procedures and provide a detailed description of the laws and procedures safeguarding the confidentiality of questionnaire responses, contact information, and demographic data collected. Additional information, including reports based on data from previous NPSAS studies, is available on the NPSAS website:
<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>.

RTI International, the contractor for the study, is a not-for-profit research organization based in North Carolina. If you have questions about the study or procedures, please contact the RTI NPSAS Project Coordinator, Brian Kuhr, at 1-888-677-2741 or via e-mail at NPSASschool@rti.org. You may also direct questions to NCES by contacting James Griffith at 1-202-502-7387 (e-mail address: James.Griffith@ed.gov).

At your earliest convenience, please complete the *Institution Registration Page* online at the NPSAS website, using the IPEDS UNITID and password printed on the first page of this letter.

We look forward to your participation in this important study.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Mark Schneider
Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

Enclosures

The NPSAS *Coordinator Response Form* may be completed online at

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>

To access the online form, enter the IPEDS UNITID and password printed on the first page of this letter.

NPSAS:08
Endorsed by

Parent Letter¹

American Association of
Collegiate Registrars and
Admissions Officers

<DATE>

American Association of Community
Colleges

<ADDRESS 1>

<ADDRESS 2>

American Association of State
Colleges and Universities

<CITY, STATE ZIP>

American Council on Education

Dear parent or guardian of <SM NAME>,

Association for Institutional Research

Association of American Colleges and
Universities

I am writing to inform you that your child, <Name>, has been selected to participate in an important study that will help determine how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school. We would like <Name> to complete a questionnaire that will take about 25 minutes to complete and will allow the U.S. Department of Education to get a national picture of the background of students, their educational costs, amount of family support, types of financial aid, student loan debt, and earnings from jobs.

Association of Catholic Colleges and
Universities

Association of Schools of Allied
Health Professions

Career College Association

The Carnegie Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching

The College Board

Council of Graduate Schools

The Council of Independent Colleges

Students from all types of institutions and all financial situations have been randomly selected to participate in the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study. Your child's responses along with those of other selected students will represent responses of all students enrolled in postsecondary education. Therefore, your child's participation in this study is critical. However, because <Fname> is less than 18 years old, we need your permission for <pronoun> to participate.

Hispanic Association of Colleges and
Universities

NCES is authorized by federal law (Public Law 107-279) to conduct NPSAS:08. RTI International (RTI) is a non-profit research organization in North Carolina that has been contracted by NCES to collect all data for NPSAS:08. All information collected will be kept confidential and will be protected to the fullest extent allowable under law. By law, researchers may use the data for statistical purposes only. Data from student interviews and student record information (e.g. enrollment characteristics and financial aid data) will be combined to produce statistical reports for Congress and others. No individual data (e.g., names or addresses) will be reported.

Midwestern Higher Education
Compact

National Accrediting Commission of
Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

National Association of College and
University Business Officers

National Association for Equal
Opportunity in Higher Education

National Association of Independent
Colleges and Universities

National Association of State
Universities and
Land-Grant Colleges

National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators

New England Board of Higher
Education

Participation is voluntary. Even if you consent to your child's participation in this study, he or she may still decline to participate, without any penalty to you or your child. Your child may withdraw from the study at any point. However, we do need your help. Your child was selected to represent many others. His/her responses are necessary to make the results of this important study accurate and timely. Your child may refuse to answer any question that makes him/her feel uncomfortable. While there are neither significant risks nor direct benefits to your child for participating, the survey may benefit all of the nation's students by providing timely data relevant to educational policy making.

Southern Regional Education Board

We hope that you will allow your child to participate in this important study. If for any reason you object to your son's or daughter's participation, you may simply deny permission. Please fill out the enclosed form to indicate whether or not you consent to your child's participation and return it as soon as possible in the postage paid envelope provided.

State Higher Education Executive
Officers

The United Negro College Fund

Western Interstate Commission for
Higher Education

¹ The parental notification letter and consent form will be sent to parents of students identified as minors. There will be two separate sheets for the letter and consent form so parents can sign and return the consent form but keep a copy of the notification letter.

The enclosed brochure gives more information about the study, including information on the risks and benefits of participation and the security measures in place to protect your child's confidentiality. If you have any questions about NPSAS:08 or your son's or daughter's participation in the survey, please call the NPSAS Helpdesk toll-free at 1-877-677-2766. If you have questions about the rights of study participants, you may call RTI's Office for Research Protection toll-free at 1-866-214-2043.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this important research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Schneider". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mark Schneider
Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
Enclosures

Parent Consent Form

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Please check the line that indicates your decision about your teenager's participation in the NPSAS:08 study and complete the rest of the form.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE POSTAGE PAID ENVELOPE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Please check only one:

_____ **I GIVE PERMISSION** for _____ to participate in the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Or

_____ **I DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION** for _____ to participate in the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Signature of parent or guardian: _____ (Date)

PLEASE PRINT:

Name of Parent or Guardian: _____

(_____) _____
Area code Telephone number

Student name: _____

School Name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: _____

NPSAS:08
Endorsed by

Student Letter

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
 American Association of Community Colleges
 American Association of State Colleges and Universities
 American Council on Education
 Association for Institutional Research
 Association of American Colleges and Universities
 Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
 Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions
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 National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
 National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
 National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
 New England Board of Higher Education
 Southern Regional Education Board
 State Higher Education Executive Officers
 The United Negro College Fund
 Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

<DATE>
 <SM NAME>
 <ADDRESS 1>
 <ADDRESS 2>
 <CITY, STATE ZIP>

Dear <SM NAME>:

I am writing to ask you to participate in an important study that will help determine how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school. For your participation, I would like for you to complete a questionnaire over the Internet. On average, the questionnaire takes about 25 minutes to complete.

When you access the questionnaire on the Internet, you will be asked questions about how you paid for your school expenses during the 2006–2007 school year, including whether you received financial aid. If you received financial aid, you will be asked whether the amount of aid was enough to meet your educational expenses. If you did not receive financial aid, you will be asked about how you met your school expenses.

Students from all types of institutions and all financial situations have been randomly selected to participate in the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study. Your responses along with those of other selected students will represent responses of all students enrolled in postsecondary education. Therefore, your participation in this study is critical.

To complete the questionnaire over the Internet:

Go to: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas>,
 Type the study ID and password (provided below) on the Home/Login page, and Press “Enter” or click “Login” to begin the questionnaire.

RTI International (RTI) of North Carolina is conducting the study for the U.S. Department of Education. To express our appreciation, a **<FILL INC AMT> check will be mailed to you, if you complete the questionnaire by <FILL DATE, 2007.>** If you are unable to complete the survey by that date, an RTI interviewer will call you to complete the questionnaire by telephone.

Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or any benefits you receive. The enclosed pamphlet answers many common questions about the study and contains additional information on laws and procedures that protect the confidentiality of your responses.

If you have questions about the study, you can visit our website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas>, you can call us toll-free at 1-877-NPSASNOW (1-877-677- 2766), or you can e-mail us at npsas@rti.org. Persons who are hearing or speech-impaired can call us at 1-877-212-7230 (TDD).

We sincerely appreciate your participation and thank you in advance for helping us conduct this very important study.

Sincerely,



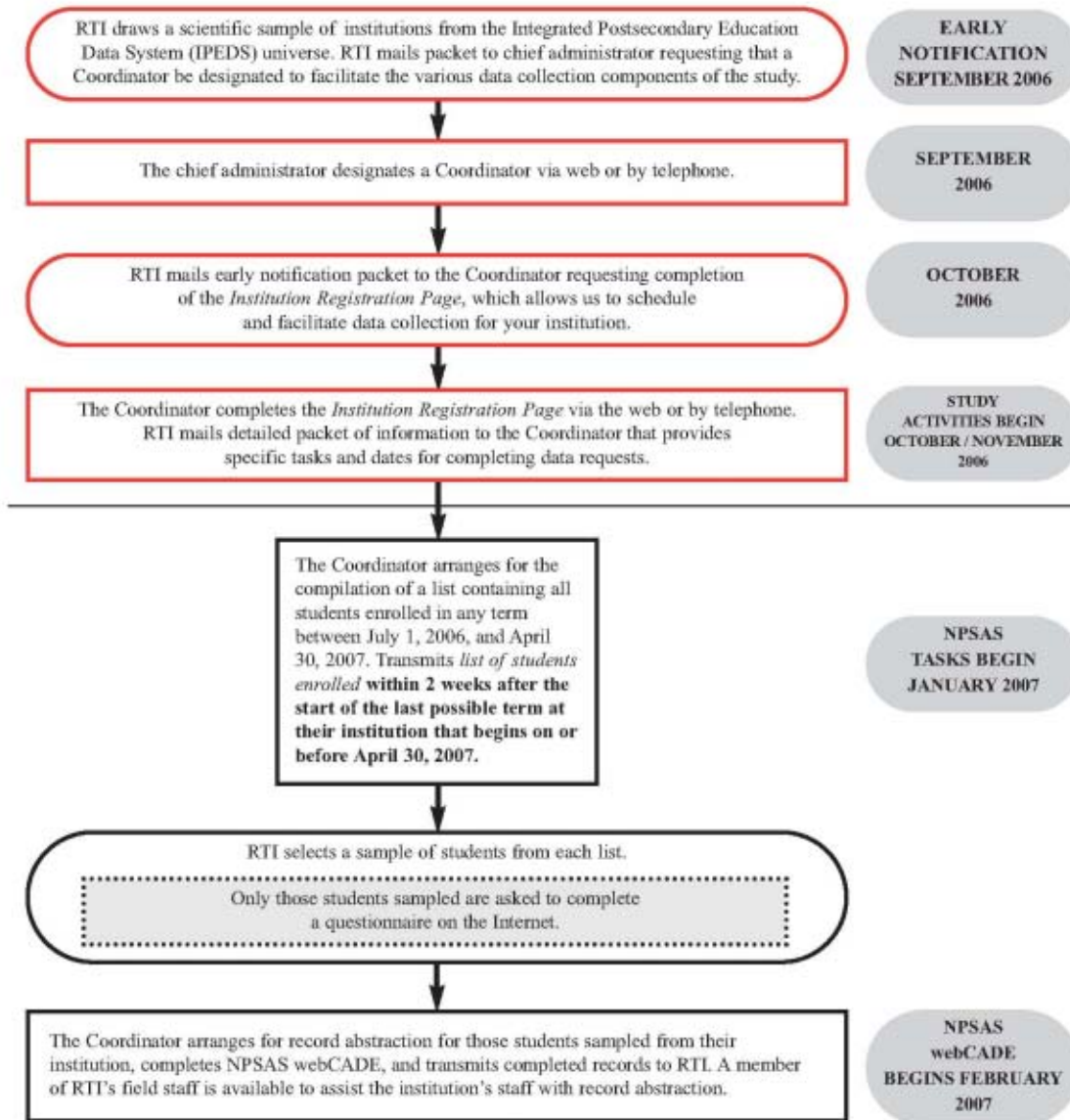
Mark Schneider
 Commissioner
 National Center for Education Statistics
 Enclosures

Go to: https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas Your study ID: <ID FILL> Your password: <PASSWORD FILL>

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Field Test



Overview of NPSAS Activities



Institution Brochure

D-12

SUPPORTING STATEMENT REQUEST FOR OMB REVIEW (SF831)

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Field Test
NPSAS:08


For more information about NPSAS:08, please contact
members of the project team at this number:
1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-7741)

RTI International*
Brian Kule
Project Coordinator
NPSAS@school@rti.org

Dr. John Riebborn
Project Director, NPSAS
jre@rti.org

National Center for Education Statistics
Dr. James Griffith
NCES Project Officer, NPSAS
1-202-507-7387
James.Griffith@ed.gov

Sponsored by



U.S. Department of Education
National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, DC
http://nces.ed.gov
September 2006

* RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute

National Postsecondary Student Aid Study
Field Test

NPSAS

2008

The affordability of education after high school is a vital concern for students and their families. That is why the information gathered by the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08) is so important. This year's study explores how families with varying resources are able to pay for postsecondary education and provides comprehensive data on the enrollment status, education goals, employment, and demographic characteristics of students continuing their education after high school.

Basic Issues

National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

NPSAS data provide information on the cost of postsecondary education, the distribution of financial aid, and the characteristics of both aided and non-aided students and their families. Research questions that can be studied using the data from NPSAS include the following:



- What is the "net price" of education to the student and family?
- How is student "need" for financial aid being met?
- How much are students borrowing?
- How does the distribution of aid differ by major field of study?
- What is the relationship between employment and a student's degree?
- How do aided and non-aided students compare on total resources available for education and other expenses?
- How do costs and financial aid influence students' choices of schools and majors?
- How have costs and financial aid packages changed over the years?
- How long does it take undergraduate students to complete a bachelor's degree program and how is this related to enrollment, demographic, and financial factors?

Data Analysis and Dissemination

To make the data as useful as possible, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) will publish information in several ways:

- Descriptive reports are published by NCES on selected topics. Publications from previous NPSAS studies may be accessed electronically through NCES's websites at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas>.
- Special tabulations are provided on request.
- Data files (without identifying information) are available, and
- Presentations on study findings are made at conferences.

How Will the Study Be Conducted?

The NPSAS:08 field test will sample about 300 institutions that will be asked to provide lists of enrolled students. Over 3,000 postsecondary students will be randomly selected from these lists.

The study will consist of the following stages:

FALL 2006

- Beginning in September 2006, the chief administrative officer (CAO) at each institution will be asked to designate a NPSAS:08 institutional coordinator to work with RTI.
- Beginning in October 2006, RTI will contact the institutional coordinator(s) to clarify the tasks, timeline, and responsibilities. Coordinators will be asked to complete a brief registration at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASchool> that identifies the 2006–2007 terms and types of awards granted by the institution.

WINTER 2007

- Beginning in January 2007, the institutional coordinator for each of the 300 institutions participating in NPSAS will supply RTI with a list of students enrolled at the institution. The list will include contact and basic demographic information for students enrolled at the institution during any term that includes July 1, 2006, through April 30, 2007.
- Beginning mid-February 2007, RTI will select samples of students from each enrollment list received.

SPRING 2007

- Beginning February 2007, the institutional coordinator or other designated staff will provide student record information (for example, enrollment status, major, aid package received) for only those students sampled at the institution through a web-based computer assisted data entry (webCADE) instrument, or by uploading an electronic data file to the secure NPSAS website. RTI field staff will be available to assist with the student record abstraction phase.
- Beginning in February 2007, sampled students will complete web-based or telephone interview.

Web-based data entry and file upload applications have been developed to make participation easier and to minimize the burden on institutional staff in providing the data. The software is user friendly and efficient.

Confidentiality Issues

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study is conducted under the authority of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESPA) (Public Law 107-279) and its predecessor, the National Education Statistics Act (NESA) of 1994, as amended by the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001. Under ESPA, NCES is authorized to collect and disseminate information about education in the United States. Collection is most often done through surveys. NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect the confidentiality of persons in the **collection, reporting, and publication of data**. The *E-Government Act of 2002* requires that all individually identifiable information supplied by individuals or institutions to a federal agency for statistical purposes under the pledge of confidentiality must be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes. NCES adheres to the guidelines issued by the Office of Management and Budget in the *Federal Statistical Order of 1997* for ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of data collected for statistical purposes.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) allows for the release of institutional record information to the Secretary of Education or his agent without prior consent of survey members [20 U.S.C. 1232g(b)(3)]. RTI International, as the contractor for NCES, has been given the authority to collect information from institutional records under federal law.

All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law.

Protection of Electronic Files

All electronic files from institution records and student interviews will be carefully protected. Computer accounts used to access data will be password protected with multilevel access controls to ensure that only those individuals with a need to access confidential information are allowed access to it. For the web-based data collection, proven methods of protection for online sessions and data security over the Internet will be used. Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol will be used to encrypt the data over the Internet. All of the data entry modules on this site will be password protected, which will require the user to log in to the site before accessing confidential data. The system will automatically log the user out after 30 minutes of inactivity on the session, which will prevent unauthorized user access to the site.

Protection of Paper Records

All paper records will be maintained in locked storage cabinets. A unique study identification variable (not the Social Security Number or school ID) will be created and maintained for each survey participant to protect against disclosure of confidential data.

Preparation of Data for Public Release

All data released to the general public (for example, statistical tables) will be designed so that it will not be possible to identify specific individuals.

Violations

All personnel with access to individual data will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and an affidavit of nondisclosure. Anyone who violates the confidentiality provisions of the act when using the data shall be found guilty of a **Class E felony** and can be **imprisoned up to 5 years, and/or fined up to \$250,000**.

Endorsements

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Council on Education

Association for Institutional Research

Association of American Colleges and Universities

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities

Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions

Career College Association

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

The College Board

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The Council of Independent Colleges

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

Midwestern Higher Education Compact

National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences

National Association of College and University Business Officers

National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

New England Board of Higher Education

Southern Regional Education Board

State Higher Education Executive Officers

The United Negro College Fund

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

About the Study

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Field Test NPSAS 08

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, is authorized by federal law to collect, analyze, and publish statistics and other data related to education in the United States and other nations. As part of its mandate, NCES periodically conducts the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)—a comprehensive study to find out how students and their families pay for education beyond high school. Undergraduate, graduate, and first-professional students—including those who receive aid and those who do not—participate in NPSAS.

NPSAS is the only comprehensive, nationally representative survey of student financial aid. No other single national database contains student-level records for students receiving aid from the numerous and disparate programs funded by the federal government, the states, postsecondary institutions, employers, and private organizations. The purpose of NPSAS is to compile a comprehensive research data set containing information about all of these programs, together with demographic and enrollment data. In addition, NPSAS provides vital information about the affordability of postsecondary education and the effectiveness of existing financial aid programs that will inform public policy at all levels. NPSAS not only includes students enrolled at public and private not-for-profit, 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions, it also includes those postsecondary institutions that are less-than-2-year and are private for-profit.

The purpose of the NPSAS 08 field test is to evaluate survey instruments and procedures so that the full-scale study will be as effective as possible. Your institution's participation is crucial to the success of the field test. Institutions selected for the field test will not be asked to participate in the full-scale study.

Student Brochure

Why is the study being conducted?

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is a large national survey of undergraduate and graduate students, with a special focus on how they finance their education at different types of institutions. Information is collected from institutions and students to get a national picture of the background of students, their educational costs, amount of family support, types of financial aid, student loan debt, and earnings from jobs. The NPSAS survey results are widely used by researchers to study whether the current financial aid programs are adequate to meet student needs. These results may also be used by Congress to make changes to the federal student loan and grant programs.

Students who are completing their postsecondary education—earning a baccalaureate degree—will be part of a special follow-up study in subsequent years. This will help us to learn more about the students who complete their postsecondary education and the factors that influence their success.

When?

If you have additional questions or concerns about the study, please contact the NPSAS Project Director at RTI or the NCES Project Officer listed on the back of this pamphlet.

Who?

What?

Where can I get *more information* about NPSAS?

If you have questions about *your rights* as a study participant, please call RTI's Institutional Review Board at 1-866-214-2043 (a toll-free number) or send an e-mail message to orpe@rti.org.

If you have *questions* or concerns about the study, contact the following:

Dr. John Riccobono
RTI NPSAS Project Director
1-877-NPSAS-NOV
1-877-677-2766
npsas@rti.org

James Griffith
NCES Project Officer
1-202-502-7387
James.Griffith@ed.gov

You may complete your interview or simply learn more about NPSAS by visiting our web site at: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

For more information about NPSAS publications and other educational research, visit the NCES web site at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>.



National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences

September 2006



2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study



U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences



Who is conducting the study?

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the Institute of Education Sciences. The study is conducted under contract by RTI International (RTI), a nonprofit research organization located in North Carolina.

Who is included in the study?

NPSAS:08 consists of a sample of 120,000 students randomly selected from enrollment lists at about 1,600 institutions in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

When will the study be conducted?

Institutions were initially contacted beginning in spring 2006 to take part in NPSAS:08. Beginning in spring 2007, sampled students will be contacted to complete the web-based interview. Students may access the interview on the web at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> or by calling the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766).

Why should I participate?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation, however, is essential to making this study a success. By participating, you have the opportunity to help policymakers, researchers, counselors, and others better understand and meet the financial needs of postsecondary students in the United States and Puerto Rico.

How can I Participate?

You may complete the study in one of two ways:

1. Log in to the web site at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

Once at the site, from the *Home/Login* page, enter your study ID and password, which are printed at the bottom of your NPSAS cover letter. If you need assistance with accessing the questionnaire on the web site, please call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766) or contact us via e-mail at npsas@rti.org.

2. Complete the interview over the phone.

We encourage web completion but, if you prefer, you may complete the questionnaire by telephone with a professionally trained interviewer from RTI. You may

choose to complete the interview when our staff call or set an appointment for a later date. We will attempt to identify a convenient time to call. Students may e-mail questions to RTI staff at npsas@rti.org or call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766) with best times to do the interview.

How Long will this take?

On average, you should complete either the self-administered web-based questionnaire or the interviewer-administered telephone interview in about 25 minutes. Web interview time may vary depending on your Internet connection speed. If you do not have access to a computer with a fast connection, you may prefer to call the Help Desk to complete the interview by telephone.

Will my answers be kept Confidential?

Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law. The answers that you provide are compiled with the responses from other students and reported to the general public in statistical form.

The following procedures have been implemented to ensure the confidentiality of your responses:

- Your answers are secured behind firewalls and are encrypted during Internet transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol. All data entry modules are password protected and require the user to log in before accessing confidential data.
- Project staff may be severely fined or imprisoned for disclosure of individual responses.
- Confidentiality procedures are reviewed and approved by RTI's Institutional Review Board (Committee for Protection of Human Subjects).

How can I get a copy of the Results?

Publications from previous studies are currently available from the NCES web site at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/>.

Reports can be downloaded or ordered at no charge. Current titles of interest include the following:

Student Financing of Undergraduate Education 2003–2004 (NCES 2006-186)

Student Financing of Graduate and First-Professional Education 2003–2004 (NCES 2006-185)

What have we learned from prior NPSAS studies?

The following are estimates based on information from 80,000 undergraduates, 11,000 graduates, and 1,000 first-professional students enrolled at approximately 1,400 postsecondary institutions during the 2003–2004 academic year.

- Fifty-five percent of undergraduates (about 9.2 million) received some type of financial aid, averaging \$6,265.
- About two out of five undergraduates (39 percent) received some type of federal aid, averaging \$5,230.

Average amounts of selected types of aid for undergraduates: 2003–2004

- Sixty-three percent of all undergraduates enrolled in the 2003–04 academic year received some type of financial aid (grants, loans, work-study, or other). Those who received aid were awarded an average amount of \$7,300.
- About one-half (51 percent) of undergraduates received grants and about one-third (35 percent) took out student loans in 2003–04. Eight percent of all undergraduates received aid through work-study jobs and 7 percent received other types of aid (federal PLUS loans to parents, veterans' benefits, and job training funds).
- The average amount of grant aid received by undergraduates who were awarded grants was \$4,000 in 2003–04. Among those who took out student loans, the average amount borrowed for the 2003–04 academic year was \$5,800. The average work-study award was \$2,000.
- Three out of four (76 percent) undergraduates who were enrolled full time for the full academic year in 2003–04 received some type of financial aid. The average amount of financial aid received by aided full-time, full-year undergraduates was \$9,900.
- About one-half of full-time, full-year undergraduates took out student loans and 62 percent received grants in 2003–04. The average amount borrowed by full-time, full-year undergraduates for the 2003–04 academic year was \$6,200. The amount of grant aid received by full-time, full-year undergraduates in 2003–04 was \$5,600.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 2005. *2003–04 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study: S/NPSAS:04 Student Financial Aid Estimates for 2003–04* (NCES 2005-188). Washington, DC: 2005.

2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Revised text for Student Brochure

U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences

Who is conducting the study?

The 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the Institute of Education Sciences. The study is conducted under contract by RTI International (RTI), a nonprofit research organization located in North Carolina.

Who is included in the study?

NPSAS:08 consists of a sample of 120,000 students randomly selected from enrollment lists at about 1,600 institutions in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. You are one of only 3,000 students from 300 schools selected as part of an initial 2007 field test sample. As such, your participation and feedback are particularly important.

When will the study be conducted?

Institutions were initially contacted beginning in spring 2006 to take part in NPSAS:08. Beginning in spring 2007, sampled students will be contacted to complete the web-based interview. Students may access the interview on the web at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> or by calling the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766).

Why should I participate?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation, however, is essential to making this study a success. By participating, you have the opportunity to help policymakers, researchers, counselors, and others better understand and meet the financial needs of postsecondary students in the United States and Puerto Rico.

How can I participate?

You may complete the study in one of two ways:

1. Log in to the website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.
Once at the site, from the Home/Login page, enter your study ID and password, which are printed at the bottom of your NPSAS cover letter. If you need assistance with accessing the questionnaire on the website, please call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766) or contact us via e-mail at npsas@rti.org.
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Will my answers be kept confidential?

Interview responses, combined with student record information (e.g. enrollment characteristics and financial aid data), may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in personally identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law.

The following procedures have been implemented to ensure the confidentiality of your responses:

- Your answers are secured behind firewalls and are encrypted during Internet transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol. All data entry modules are password protected and require the user to log in before accessing confidential data.
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- Sixty-three percent of all undergraduates enrolled in the 2003–04 academic year received some type of financial aid (grants, loans, work-study, or other). Those who received aid were awarded an average amount of \$7,300.
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Why is the study being conducted?

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is a large national survey of undergraduate and graduate students, with a special focus on how they finance their education at different types of institutions. Information is collected from institutions and students to get a national picture of the background of students, their educational costs, amount of family support, types of financial aid, student loan debt, and earnings from jobs. The NPSAS survey results are widely used by researchers to study whether the current financial aid programs are adequate to meet student needs. These results may also be used by Congress to make changes to the federal student loan and grant programs.

Students who earn a baccalaureate degree prior to {DATE} will be part of a special follow-up study in subsequent years. Their experiences after graduation, including further education and early work experience will help us to learn more about the students who complete their postsecondary education and the factors that influence their success.

If you have additional questions or concerns about the study, please contact the NPSAS Project Director at RTI or the NCES Project Officer listed on the back of this pamphlet.

Are there any risks or benefits to my participation?

The risk of participation in this study relates to data security and is minimal, given the strict confidentiality and security procedures in place.

There are also no known benefits to your participation in NPSAS. However, your participation will help ensure the success of the study and help policy makers better understand and meet the financial needs of postsecondary students.

Where can I get more information about NPSAS?

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please call RTI's Institutional Review Board at 1-866-214-2043 (a toll-free number) or send an e-mail message to orpe@rti.org regarding IRB number 11644.

If you have questions or concerns about the study, contact the following:

Dr. John Riccobono
RTI NPSAS Project Director
1-877-NPSAS-NOW
1-877-677-2766
npsas@rti.org

James Griffith
NCES Project Officer
1-202-502-7387
James.Griffith@ed.gov

You may complete your interview or simply learn more about NPSAS by visiting our website at:
<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

For more information about NPSAS publications and other educational research, visit the NCES website at:
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>.

[logo here]

National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences
November 2006

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 2005. *2003–04 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study: (NPSAS:04) Student Financial Aid Estimates for 2003-04* (NCES 2005-158). Washington, DC: 2005.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE NPSAS:08 QUESTIONNAIRE

To complete the self-directed web questionnaire:

1. Go to: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas>
2. At the login and password prompts, enter your study ID and password.
3. Press “Enter” or click “Login” to begin the questionnaire.

If you need assistance in completing the self-directed web questionnaire or if you would like to complete the questionnaire over the phone, please call our Help Desk at 1-877-NPSASNOW (1-877-677-2766) for assistance.

You may complete the NPSAS web questionnaire at any time during the data collection period. We will also begin making calls asking study participants to complete the questionnaire over the phone starting on March 4, 2007.

For more information about this study visit the website at

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas>

NOTE: The study has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0666. The expiration date is ?/?/??. Public reporting burden for this information request in its entirety is estimated at 25 minutes per response. You may send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, Information Management and Compliance Division, Washington, DC 20202-4651; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project 1850-0608, Washington, DC 20503.