

## **Appendix F**

# **Letters and Contacting Materials**

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**Note: The materials included in this appendix reference the field test study to be conducted in 2011. These materials will also be used for the full-scale study. Materials will be updated to reflect full-scale sample sizes and dates.**

**Student  
Letters and Contacting Materials**

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For assistance with completing the NPSAS interview, please contact the help desk or visit the study website:

**NPSAS Help Desk**  
**1-877-NPSAS NOW**  
**(1-877-677-2766)**

[npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org)

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

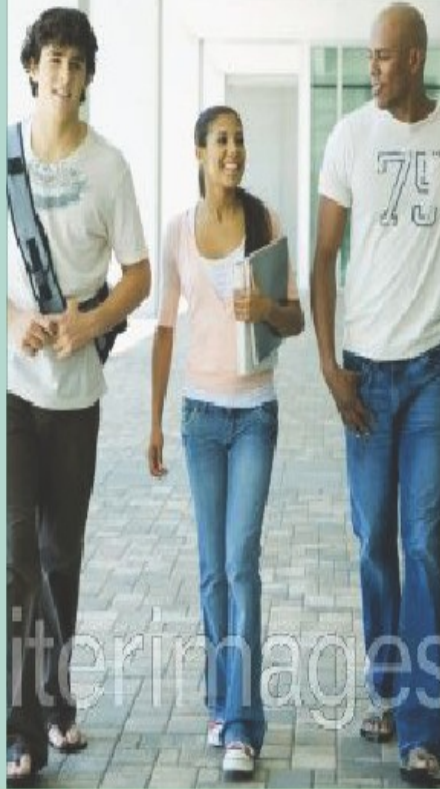
If you have questions or concerns about the study, please contact:

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
 NPSAS Project Director (RTI)  
[jennifer@rti.org](mailto:jennifer@rti.org)  
 877-225-8470

Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
 NPSAS Project Officer (NCES)  
[tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov](mailto:tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov)  
 1-202-502-7438

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please call RTI's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 1-888-214-2043, or send an e-mail message to [orpe@rti.org](mailto:orpe@rti.org) regarding IRB number 12550.

## 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Field Test



### The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

**NPSAS is a national survey of undergraduate and graduate students, with a special focus on how they pay for their education at different types of institutions.**

Information is collected from students like you to obtain a national picture of the enrollment status, education goals, employment, and background of students continuing their education after high school. In addition to your survey responses, we collect financial aid, student records and related information from your institution and sources such as student loan databases and admissions testing agencies.

Students who are attending college for the first time in the 2010-11 school year may be part of a special follow-up study in later years. Their experiences since they first began college, trade or vocational school, including education

progress and experience in the workforce, will help us learn more about beginning students' paths in education, employment, and other experiences.

**NPSAS results are used by the U.S. Department of Education and Congress to better understand the impact of federal aid programs in helping students and their families pay for postsecondary education.**

NPSAS is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. NPSAS is conducted under contract by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina.

NPSAS consists of a sample of about 117,000 students randomly selected from enrollment lists at about 1,700 institutions in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

*You are one of a select group of only 4,500 students from 300 schools chosen as part of an initial 2011 pretest sample. As such, your participation is very important, and your feedback is vital to the success of NPSAS.*



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



Institute of Education Sciences

NCES 2011-xxx

*Your participation in NPSAS is important.*

While there are no specific benefits to you for participating in NPSAS, your participation will help policymakers better understand and meet the financial needs of about 20 million students who are continuing their education beyond high school.

Your only risk of participation in NPSAS relates to data security. Given the strict confidentiality and security procedures in place, risks of participation are minimal.

Although participation in NPSAS is voluntary, there is no substitute for your responses.

*Your survey won't take long.*

On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes. Your time will vary depending on your answers and internet connection speed, if completing on the online.

*You can access NPSAS results.*

You can access publications from previous studies; they are currently available from the NCES website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/>. Results from the current study are scheduled to be released in 2013 and will be posted on the NCES website as soon as they are available.

*Your answers will remain confidential.*

Your privacy is protected under federal law. Your responses and student record information may be used only for statistical purposes and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, except as required by law.

Confidentiality procedures are reviewed and approved by RTI's Institutional Review Board in the Office of Research Protection. 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.

The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study is conducted under the authority of the Higher Education Opportunities Act (HEOA) of 2008 (20 U.S.C. § 1015) and the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) of 2002 (20 U.S.C. § 9512), which authorizes NCES 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. All individually identifiable information supplied by individuals or institutions to a federal agency 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 (20 U.S.C. § 9573).



*You can participate in one of two ways.*

**1. Online**

Go to the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>

Then, simply enter your Study ID number and password and select login.

**2. By telephone**

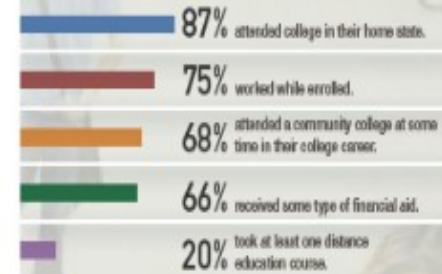
If you prefer to complete the NPSAS interview by telephone, call the NPSAS Help Desk at **1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** to speak with a professionally trained interviewer.

If you need assistance, call the NPSAS Help Desk at **1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** or contact us via e-mail at [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org).

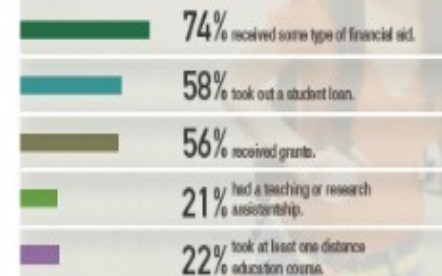
**Snapshot of Results from the 2007-08 NPSAS**

The last NPSAS was conducted during the 2007-08 academic year and involved 114,000 undergraduates and 14,000 graduate and first-professional students enrolled in approximately 1,600 postsecondary institutions.

**Undergraduate Students**



**Graduate Students**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

To see more results, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/pubstudies/2009/2009166.pdf>

## STUDENT LEAD 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 Public and  
Land-Grant Universities

Association of Schools of Allied  
Health Professions

Association of Private Sector  
Colleges and Universities  
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 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

&lt;&lt;date&gt;&gt; «fname» «mname» «lname» «suffix»

«addr1»

«addr2»

«city», «state» «zip»

Study ID: «caseid»

«panelinfo»

Dear «fname» «lname»:

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 survey online. On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes to complete.

When you access the survey online, you will be asked questions about how you paid for your school expenses during the 2010-11 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 field test of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). Your responses, along with those of 4,500 other students selected for the field test, will represent responses of all students enrolled in postsecondary education. Therefore, your participation in this study is critical.

To complete the survey online:

1. Go to: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.
2. Type the Study ID and password (provided below) on the Home/Login page.
3. Click "Login" to begin the survey.

RTI International, an independent, nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina, is conducting the study for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To express our appreciation for your participation, a \$«inc\_amt» check will be mailed to you if you complete the survey by «EarlyIncDate». If you are unable to complete the survey by that date, an RTI interviewer will call you to complete the survey by telephone.

Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits you receive.

The enclosed brochure 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 the study web site at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>, call the NPSAS help desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766), or send an e-mail to [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org).

I thank you in advance for your participation in this important study. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics  
Enclosures

Go to:

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

Your Study ID: «caseid»

Your password: «password»m

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary

Information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

NPSAS  
Endorsed by

## STUDENT LEAD LETTER - ED Video

American Association of  
Collegiate Registrars and  
Admissions Officers

<<date>>

American Association of Community  
Colleges

«fname» «mname» «lname» «suffix»

Study ID: «caseid»

American Association of State  
Colleges and Universities

«addr1»

«panelinfo»

American Council on Education

«addr2»

«city», «state» «zip»

Association for Institutional  
Research

Dear «fname» «lname»:

Association of American Colleges  
and Universities

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 survey online. On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes to complete.

Association of Catholic Colleges and  
Universities

When you access the survey online, you will be asked questions about how you paid for your school expenses during the 2010-11 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. **Please watch our informational YouTube video featuring ED to learn more about NPSAS: <<videolink>>.**

Association of Public and  
Land-Grant Universities

Association of Schools of Allied  
Health Professions

Association of Private Sector  
Colleges and Universities

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 field test of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). Your responses, along with those of 4,500 other students selected for the field test, will represent responses of all students enrolled in postsecondary education. Therefore, your participation in this study is critical.

To complete the survey online:

1. Go to: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.
2. Type the Study ID and password (provided below) on the Home/Login page.
3. Click "Login" to begin the survey.

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

RTI International, an independent nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina, is conducting the study for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. To express our appreciation for your participation, a \$<<inc\_amt>> check will be mailed to you if you complete the survey by «EarlyIncDate». If you are unable to complete the survey by that date, an RTI interviewer will call you to complete the survey by telephone.

Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits you receive.

National Association of Student  
Financial Aid Administrators

New England Board of Higher  
Education

The enclosed brochure 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/>, call the NPSAS help desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766), or send an e-mail to [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org).

Southern Regional Education Board

I thank you in advance for your participation in this important study. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

State Higher Education Executive  
Officers

Sincerely,



Jack Buckley  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics  
Enclosures

The United Negro College Fund

Western Interstate Commission for  
Higher Education

Go to:

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

Your Study ID: «caseid»

Your password: «password»m

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

## PARENT CONSENT LETTER

<<date>>

Parent or Guardian of «fname» «lname»  
 «addr1»  
 «addr2»  
 «city», «state» «zip»

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are pleased to inform you that your student, «fname» «lname», has been selected to participate in an education study sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in the U. S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The purpose of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is to provide Congress, researchers, and policymakers with information about financial aid in postsecondary education. However, because «fname» is less than 18 years old, we need your permission for «fname» to participate.

Approximately 4,500 students from approximately 300 schools across the nation have been selected to participate in the NPSAS field test. Students are being asked to complete a 35 minute web or telephone survey about their enrollment during the 2010-11 academic year, including questions about degree, field of study, financial aid, employment while enrolled, educational experiences, and background characteristics. Once the survey is completed, «fname» will receive a \$«inc\_amt» check as a token of our appreciation.

NCES is authorized by federal law (Public Law 107-279) to conduct NPSAS. RTI International, an independent nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina, is conducting the study for NCES. Responses and student record information may be used only for statistical purposes and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, except as required by law. Data will be combined to produce statistical reports for Congress and others. No individual data (e.g., names or addresses) will be reported.

Participation is voluntary. «fname» may withdraw from the study at any point. However, I do need your help. «fname» was selected to represent many other students. «fname»'s responses are necessary to make the results of this important study accurate and timely. «fname» may refuse to answer any particular question. While there are neither significant risks nor direct benefits to «fname» for participating, the survey may benefit the nation's college students by providing timely data relevant to educational policymaking.

**Please fill out the enclosed form and return it as soon as possible in the postage-paid envelope provided.**

The enclosed brochure provides more information about the study. If you have any questions about NPSAS or «fname»'s participation in the study, please call the NPSAS Help Desk 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.

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

Sincerely,



Jack Buckley  
 Commissioner  
 National Center for Education Statistics  
 Enclosures

Go to: <a href="https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/">https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/</a> Your Stdy ID: «caseid» Your passord: «pssword»m
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### The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

Please check the line that indicates your decision about «fname» «lname»'s participation in the NPSAS 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 «fname» to participate in the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

**Or**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION** for «fname» to participate in the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

Signature of parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Name of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area code Telephone number

**Student First and Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: [CASEID]

## REMINDER/THANK-YOU POSTCARD



**2011-12  
National  
Postsecondary  
Student  
Aid  
Study**

P.O. Box 12194  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194  
RTI Project #212353.100.002.236

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

«fname» «mname» «lname»  
«Addr1»  
«Addr2»  
«City», «state» «zip»



**2011-12  
National Postsecondary  
Aid  
Study**

Recently, we sent you information on how to complete the survey for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test. RTI International is conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. If you have already completed the survey, we would like to thank you. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

If you have not yet completed your survey, we would like to remind you that if you complete the survey by «IncentiveDt», you will receive «incentive» as a token of our appreciation. To complete a web survey over our secure website, log on to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

If you have any questions or problems completing your web survey, or would like to complete the survey over the telephone with a professionally trained interviewer, please contact the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-677-2766.

**Thank you.**



According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

## REMINDER FOLDED POSTCARD

## 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Field Test

«fname»,  
complete a 35 minute survey  
and receive  
**\$«<inc\_amt>»** for your time!



→ To complete the **web survey** over our secure website, log on to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>

Your Study ID is: «caseid»  
Your Password is: «password»t

→ To complete the **telephone survey** with a professional interviewer, or for help completing the web survey, please call **1-877- NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)**.

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study is being conducted by RTI International for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. By completing the survey, you will make an important contribution to research that will help determine how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school. If you complete your NPSAS survey soon, you will **receive a \$«<inc\_amt>» check as a token of our appreciation**.

To access the survey on the Web, log on to our secure website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> using the Study ID and password provided below. The survey takes about 35 minutes to complete, on average.

**Study ID** = «caseid»  
**Password** = «password»t

Please enter uppercase and lowercase letters as they appear.

*Your responses 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. Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or any other benefits you receive. If you have questions or problems completing the survey online, or would like to complete it over the telephone with a professional interviewer, simply call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-677-2766, or you can e-mail us at [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org).*

**Thank you in advance for making NPSAS a success.**

NPSAS «<panelinfo>»

Study ID «<caseid>»



According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.



**2011-12 National  
Postsecondary Student  
Aid Study**

PO Box 12194  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194  
RTI Project #212353.100.002.236

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

«Pretty\_name»  
«Addr1»  
«Addr2»  
«City», «state» «zip»

**REMINDER LETTER**

&lt;&lt;date&gt;&gt;

«stu\_name» Study ID: «caseid»  
 «stu\_addr1» «panelinfo»  
 «stu\_addr2»  
 «stu\_city», «stu\_state» «stu\_zip»

Dear «stu\_name»:

We are writing to ask that you take a few moments to complete your survey for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test, conducted by RTI International for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. By completing the survey, you will make an important contribution to research that will help determine how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school.

Please note that once you complete the survey, we will mail you a check for \$<<inc\_amt>>. You may call us at **1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** to complete the survey with one of our professional telephone interviewers. Interviewers are available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 11:00 pm Eastern time, Friday from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm Eastern time, Saturday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Eastern time, and Sunday from 1:30 pm to 9:30 pm Eastern time. You can also complete the survey at any time via the NPSAS website:

1. Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>
2. Enter your Study ID: «caseid»
3. Enter your password: «password»q
4. Click "Login" to begin the survey

The survey only takes about 35 minutes, on average. Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits you receive. If you have questions about the study, you can visit the NPSAS website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>, or you can e-mail us at [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org). If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call RTI's Office of Research Protection at 1-866-214-2043.

Thank you in advance for making NPSAS a success.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
 Project Director, NPSAS  
 RTI International



Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
 Project Officer, NPSAS  
 National Center for Education Statistics

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.



**FINAL LETTER**

&lt;&lt;date&gt;&gt;

«stu\_name»  
 «stu\_addr1»  
 «stu\_addr2»  
 «stu\_city», «stu\_state» «stu\_zip»

Study ID: «caseid»  
 «panelinfo»

Dear «stu\_name»:

We have been trying to contact you in recent weeks to ask you to complete an survey for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test, conducted by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. NPSAS collects information on how students and their families pay for their education beyond high school.

Time is running out. Data collection for NPSAS ends on **June 30, 2011**. If you complete the survey before then, **you will receive a check for \$«inc\_amt»**. On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes to complete.

You may call us at **1-877-677-2766** to complete the survey with one of our telephone interviewers. Or, you can complete the survey at any time via the NPSAS website:

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

Enter your study ID: «caseid»  
 Enter your password: «password»s

Please enter uppercase and lowercase letters as they appear.

Your responses will 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. If you have questions about the study, you can visit the NPSAS website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>, or e-mail us at [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org). If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call RTI's Office of Research Protection toll-free at 1-866-214-2043.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study. With input from individuals like you, we can improve our ability to help others receive an education beyond high school.



Sincerely,  
 Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
 Project Director, NPSAS  
 RTI International



Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
 Project Officer, NPSAS  
 National Center for Education Statistics

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0666. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 38 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this survey, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4537. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, write directly to: The 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

## THANK-YOU/INCENTIVE LETTER

<<date>>

«name»

Study ID: «CaseID»

«address»

NP12 «panelinfo»

«address2»

«city\_state» «zip»

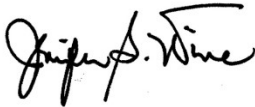
Dear «name»:

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and the staff of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test, I would like to thank you for completing your NPSAS survey. Your participation in this study is very important to its success. Enclosed you will find a check for \$«inc\_amount» as a token of our appreciation for your time completing the survey.

Please do not hesitate to contact us directly at 1-877-677-2766 if we can provide any additional information or assistance.

Again, thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International



Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
Project Officer, NPSAS  
National Center for Education Statistics

## NPSAS DATA COLLECTION ANNOUNCEMENT E-MAIL

Dear <FNAME>,

Surveys for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test are now being conducted. The survey will take about 35 minutes to complete. The data collected from it will help educators, researchers, and policymakers better understand how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school.

To access the web survey, log in to our secure website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> using the Study ID and password provided below.

The password is case sensitive; you will need to enter it exactly as it appears here.

**Study ID** = <CASEID>  
**Password** = <PASSWORD>e

If you have questions or problems completing your survey online, please call the **NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** or visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

**If you complete your NPSAS survey by <<incent date>>, you will receive a check for \$<<inc\_amt>> as a token of our appreciation.**

Your participation, while voluntary, is critical to the study's success. To ensure confidentiality, your responses will be secured behind firewalls and will be encrypted during internet transmission. Federal law requires that we protect your privacy. Your responses will be used only for statistical purposes and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, except as required by law.

RTI International is conducting NPSAS on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. Please contact us at the information listed below if you have any questions about the study.

Thank you for helping to make NPSAS a success.



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International  
[jennifer@rti.org](mailto:jennifer@rti.org)  
877-225-8470



Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
Project Officer, NPSAS  
National Center for Education Statistics  
[tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov](mailto:tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov)  
202-502-7438

## NPSAS DATA COLLECTION ANNOUNCEMENT E-MAIL - ED VIDEO

Dear <FNAME>,

Surveys for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test are now being conducted. The survey will take about 35 minutes to complete. The data collected from it will help educators, researchers, and policymakers better understand how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school. You can learn more about NPSAS by watching our brief informational video, featuring ED, on YouTube: <<videolink>>.

To access the web survey, log in to our secure website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> using the Study ID and password provided below.

The password is case sensitive; you will need to enter it exactly as it appears here.

**Study ID** = <CASEID>

**Password** = <PASSWORD>e

If you have questions or problems completing your survey online, please call the **NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** or visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>.

**If you complete your NPSAS survey by <<incent date>>, you will receive a check for \$<<inc\_amt>> as a token of our appreciation.**

Your participation, while voluntary, is critical to the study's success. To ensure confidentiality, your responses will be secured behind firewalls and will be encrypted during internet transmission. Federal law requires that we protect your privacy. Your responses will be used only for statistical purposes and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, except as required by law.

RTI International is conducting NPSAS on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. Please contact us at the information listed below if you have any questions about the study.

Thank you for helping to make NPSAS a success.



Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International  
[jennifer@rti.org](mailto:jennifer@rti.org)  
877-225-8470



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.

Project Officer, NPSAS  
National Center for Education Statistics  
[tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov](mailto:tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov)  
202-502-7438

Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.

## PSAS DATA COLLECTION REMINDER E-MAIL

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME]:

Surveys for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test are now being conducted. To express our appreciation, a \$[INC\_AMT] check will be mailed to you if you complete the survey by [INCENT\_DATE].

To access the survey online, log in to our secure website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/> using the Study ID and password provided below.

Study ID = [CASEID]  
Password = [PASSWORD]a (upper/lower case letters must be entered exactly as they appear)

Your responses 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. If you have questions or problems completing your survey online, simply call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-677-2766.

If you have questions about the study, you can visit our website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>, you can call toll-free at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766), or send an e-mail to [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org).

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



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International

## NPSAS DATA COLLECTION PROMPT E-MAIL

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME]:

I am writing to ask that you take a few moments to complete your survey for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test, conducted by RTI International for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. By completing the survey, you will make an important contribution to research that will help determine how students and their families meet the cost of education beyond high school. Please note that once you complete the survey, we will mail you a check for \$[INC\_AMT] as a token of our appreciation.

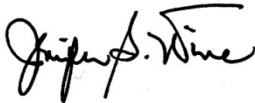
You may call **1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766)** to complete the survey with one of our professional telephone interviewers. Interviewers are available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 11:00 pm Eastern time, Friday from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm Eastern time, Saturday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Eastern time, and Sunday from 1:30 pm to 9:30 pm Eastern time. You can also complete the survey at any time via the NPSAS website:

1. Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>
2. Enter your Study ID: [CASEID]
3. Enter your password: [PASSWORD]k
4. Click "Login" to begin the survey

Please enter uppercase and lowercase letters as they appear.

The survey only takes about 35 minutes, on average. Participation in this study is voluntary and will not affect any aid or any benefits you receive. If you have any questions about the study, you can visit the NPSAS website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>, or send an e-mail to [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org). If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call RTI's Office of Research Protection at 1-866-214-2043.

Thank you in advance for making NPSAS a success.



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International

## NPSAS CATI-REQUESTED E-MAIL

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME]:

Per your request, we are providing you with more information on the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test that is now being conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. An example of the brochure that provides a brief description of NPSAS, findings from prior NPSAS studies, and confidentiality procedures can be found at [https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/pdf/NPSAS\\_student\\_brochure.pdf](https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/pdf/NPSAS_student_brochure.pdf).

To make the process as easy as possible, you may either complete the survey on the Web or over the telephone with one of our professionally trained interviewers.

Please call us at 1-877-677-2766 to complete the survey by phone or, if you wish to complete the survey on our secure website, log on to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>. You will need the Study ID and password provided below to access the survey online.

Study ID = [CASEID]

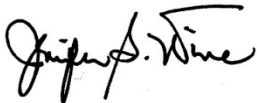
Password = [PASSWORD]c

Please enter upper/lower case letters as they appear.

You can be assured that your answers will be kept confidential and protected to the fullest extent allowable under law.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 1-877-225-8470 or by e-mail at [jennifer@rti.org](mailto:jennifer@rti.org) if I can provide any additional information about the study.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International



## NPSAS FINAL E-MAIL

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME]:

We have been trying to contact you in recent weeks to ask you to complete a survey for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test, conducted by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. NPSAS collects information on how students and their families pay for their education beyond high school.

Time is running out. Data collection for NPSAS ends on **June 30, 2011**. If you complete the survey before then, **you will receive a check for \$[INC\_AMT]**. On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes to complete.

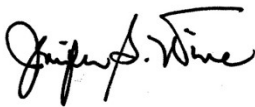
You may call us at **1-877-677-2766** to complete the survey with one of our telephone interviewers. Or, you can complete the survey at any time via the NPSAS website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas/>

Enter your study ID: [CASEID]

Enter your password: [PASSWORD]f

Please enter uppercase and lowercase letters as they appear. Your responses will 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. If you have questions about the study, you can visit the NPSAS website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/npsas>, or e-mail us at [npsas@rti.org](mailto:npsas@rti.org). If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call RTI's Office of Research Protection toll-free at 1-866-214-2043.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study. With input from individuals like you, we can improve our ability to help others receive an education beyond high school.



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International

**SCRIPT FOR THE NPSAS:12 VIDEO**  
**1/14/10**

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Script for NPSAS:12 Lego Video

Text in [brackets] describes scenes:

[Sample member (SM) goes to the mailbox and gets out a letter]

SM: "The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study? What do they need me for? This is going in the trash..."

[Helicopter with Ed on the side]

"Ed: Sounds like I'm needed!"

[Ed lowers into view, starts conversation with SM]

Ed: "Before you throw that away, I've got a few things I'd like to tell you."

SM: "Who are you?"

Ed: "I'm Ed, from the U.S. Department of Education. We want you to complete our survey so we can learn more about how students and their families finance their education."

SM: "What kind of things will you ask me?"

Ed: "We're interested in your education after high school [student throwing mortarboard]."

The kind of degree or certificate you are studying for. [classroom scene with teacher]

Whether or not you received scholarships, loans, or help from family to pay for school. [show a Lego figure hand and arm holding a Financial Aid Form]

Whether you are working while you're in school? [Lego figure working as a cashier]

The number of people in your household? [scene of one Lego figure, then several others appear]

We can offer you \$30 to thank you for your time. [Lego character with money appearing in his hand]

[Scene back in front of house]

SM: "Well, I'm pretty busy..."

Ed: "We make it easy for you. You can complete the survey by phone [Lego character using phone], or on the web using your own computer. [Lego character at computer] It won't take long.

[Scene back in front of house]

SM: "OK, but one more question. How do I know my answers will stay confidential?"

Ed: "Federal law requires that we protect all data collected. Protecting your data is our number one concern." [Lego policeman closes a vault/safe]

[Scene back in front of house]

SM: "That sounds pretty good. I'll do it!"

[Ed turns and talks to the camera]

Ed: "You, too, can help us make the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study a success!"

[Lego people appearing, holding hands, and swaying back and forth]

Ed: You're in a special position to provide us vital information on your experiences attending school and paying for your education. With your participation this study will help Congress evaluate federal aid policies and programs to help students like you find success in college and beyond.

[Back in front of house]

SM: "Thanks, ED!!"

Ed: "Thank you for taking our surveyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy!"

Display contact screen:

ED (speaking over the final "credit" slide with the info below typed on it):

"Call us toll free at 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX to complete your interview today! "

"And don't forget to check your e-mail for more information about your participation in this study."



## NPSAS CATI INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPTS

Recently, we sent you material about a study we are conducting for the U.S. Department of Education about how students and their families pay for education beyond high school. The material explains that your participation is critical to the study's success and, as a token of our appreciation, you will receive a <initialize2\_inc\_fill> check once you complete the survey. Have you had a chance to read the material?

### {If minor:}

Recently, we sent material to you and your parents about a study we are conducting for the U.S. Department of Education about how students and their families pay for education beyond high school. The material explains that your participation is critical to the study's success and as a token of our appreciation you will receive a <initialize2\_inc\_fill> check once you complete the survey. Your parents have reviewed the material and given permission for you to participate in this study. Have you had a chance to read the material?

### **If yes, received material:**

(Ok great.) On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes. This call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes. You may decline to answer any questions or stop the survey at any time. May we begin the survey now?

(If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the study's director, Dr. Jennifer Wine, or for questions about your rights as a study participant, you may contact RTI's Office of Research Protection. If you would like their contact information I can give it to you. To contact Dr. Wine, call toll free at 1-877-225-8470; to contact RTI's Office of Research Protection, call toll free at 1-866-214-2043.)

### **If no, did not receive material:**

The survey takes about 35 minutes and may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes. Your responses, combined with student record information, may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in personally identifiable form for any other purpose, unless compelled by law. (You are one of approximately 4,500 students who will be taking part in this study.) In addition to your survey responses, we collect financial aid, student records and related information from your institution and sources such as student loan databases and admissions testing agencies. {DISPLAY IF UNDERGRADUATE AND FTB FLAG = 1} Students who enrolled in college for the first time between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 will also be part of a special follow-up study in future years that will help us learn about their education and employment experiences since this completing this 2011 survey.} Your participation is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits that you may receive. You may decline to answer any question or stop the survey at any time. The risk of participating in this study is small and relates to data security. However, there are strict confidentiality and security procedures in place. If you would like us to re-mail the material to you, please let me know. May we begin the survey now?

(You may contact the study's director, Dr. Jennifer Wine, toll free at 1-877-225-8470. For questions about your rights as a study participant, please contact RTI's Office of Research Protection toll free at 1-866-214-2043.)

## NPSAS WEB INFORMED CONSENT SCRIPTS

Recently, we sent you material about a study we are conducting for the U.S. Department of Education about how students and their families pay for education beyond high school. As a token of our appreciation you will receive a <initialize2\_inc\_fill> check once you complete the survey. Have you had a chance to read the material?

### {If minor:}

Recently, we sent material to you and your parents about a study we are conducting for the U.S. Department of Education about how students and their families pay for education beyond high school. As a token of our appreciation you will receive a <initialize2\_inc\_fill> check once you complete the survey. Your parents have reviewed the material and given permission for you to participate in this study. Have you had a chance to read the material?

### **If yes, received material:**

Great. On average, the survey takes about 35 minutes. You may decline to answer any question or stop the survey at any time.

You may contact the study's director, Dr. Jennifer Wine, toll-free at 1-877-677-2766. For questions about your rights as a study participant, you may contact RTI's Office of Research Protection toll free at 1-866-214-2043.)

[To review the letter that we mailed, click here.](#)

[To review the study brochure, click here.](#)

### **If no, did not receive material:**

The survey takes about 35 minutes. Your responses, combined with student record information, 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. (You are one of approximately 4,500 students who will be taking part in this study.) In addition to your survey responses, we collect financial aid, student records and related information from your institution and sources such as student loan databases and admissions testing agencies.

{DISPLAY IF UNDERGRADUATE AND FTB FLAG = 1} {Students who were enrolled in college for the first time between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 will also be part of a special follow-up study in future years that will help us learn about their education and employment experiences since completing this 2011 survey.} Your participation is voluntary and will not affect any aid or other benefits that you may receive. You may decline to answer any question or stop the survey at any time. The risk of participating in this study is small and relates to data security. However, there are strict confidentiality and security procedures in place. You may contact the study's director, Dr. Jennifer Wine, toll free at 1-866-677-2766. For questions about your rights as a study participant, please contact RTI's Office of Research Protection toll free at 1-866-214-2043.

Please call the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-877-NPSAS-NOW (1-877-677-2766) if you would like to have the materials sent to you.

[To review the letter that we mailed, click here.](#)

To review the study brochure, click here.

[Do you want to begin the survey now?](#)

# Institution Records Letters and Contacting Materials

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## Student Records Request Letter to Institution Coordinator

The text of the letter is also sent in an e-mail.

## 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 Public and Land-  
grant Universities

Association of Schools of Allied  
Health Professions

Association of Private Sector  
Colleges and Universities

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 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>

«salutation» «fname» «lname»

«Title»

«entity\_name»

«phys\_addr1»

«phys\_addr2»

«phys\_city», «phys\_state» «phys\_zip»

Your IPEDS UNITID: «entity\_id»

Your password: «password»

**Student Records Data Due: «expected\_Date\_curr»**

Dear «salutation» «lname»,

Thank you for your continued participation in the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test. We have finished processing the student enrollment file you provided, and have selected a random sample of [# **sampled**] students from your institution for participation in NPSAS. We now need to ask that you provide student record data for your sampled students using the secure Web application developed for NPSAS. Please complete the record abstraction and provide the requested data for these students on or before [**DUE DATE**]. We will send separate correspondence to the sampled students asking that they complete the NPSAS survey either online or by telephone interview.

We have developed an Internet-based NPSAS Student Records System through which you (or someone on your staff) will be able to provide data for your selected students. The Student Records System is located on the same secure website that you have used for prior components of the study: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>.

To assist you with the process of providing student record data, we have enclosed a *Quick Guide to Providing Student Records Data* describing how to access and use the Student Records software. You can find details on what data NPSAS needs to obtain for each sampled student from the Forms/Instructions link on the NPSAS website. A list of your sampled students can be found on the NPSAS website, and you can easily print a hardcopy if you would like one.

There are four different methods available for providing the student data through the NPSAS Student Records System:

- **Case-mode** – enter data for one student at a time.
- **Grid-mode** – enter data for multiple students in a format resembling a spreadsheet.
- **Upload data files created from our template** - download an Excel template, fill in the requested data for all students, and upload the completed files.
- **Upload data files created by an institution programmer** - create and upload data files following the specifications on the Student Records Home page.

Regardless of the method you choose, you will be able to review and edit the provided data on screen in the Student Records System.

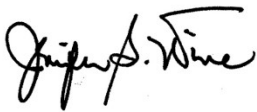
Please be assured that the security of your students' data is of the utmost importance, and the Student Records software has been developed with this in mind. The system encrypts all data, with the latest technologies, before transmitting them over the Internet to

NCES. In addition, access to the list of students (and to the forms used to enter their data) will require authentication using your IPEDS UNITID and unique password. They are printed near the top of this letter for your convenience. Please ensure that access is given only to those at your institution who will provide student records data.

Soon, we will call you to confirm your receipt of this material and the completion date for providing student records data. Help Desk staff will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, to answer any questions you may have about the study or about using the Student Records System. You may contact the NPSAS Help Desk at 1-888-677-2741, toll-free, or via e-mail at [NPSASrecords@rti.org](mailto:NPSASrecords@rti.org).

Again, thank you for your continued participation in this important study.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International  
[jennifer@rti.org](mailto:jennifer@rti.org)  
877-225-8470



Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D.  
Project Officer, NPSAS  
National Center for Education Statistics  
[tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov](mailto:tracy.hunt-white@ed.gov)  
202-502-7438

Your institution's response to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study may be completed online at:

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

To access the NPSAS Student Records System, go to the **Log in** link on the Home page. Then enter the IPEDS UNITID below as your Username and enter the password below.

Your IPEDS UNITID: «entity\_id»

Your password: «password»

## **NPSAS Student Records Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **1. What are the system requirements for using the NPSAS Student Records System?**

To use the Web-based NPSAS Student Records System, your computer must possess (at a minimum):

- An Internet connection (high-speed cable is optimum).
- A web browser, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.5 or higher, Firefox 3.0 or higher, Chrome 3.0 or higher, or Safari 3.0 or higher with the following:
  - 128-bit encryption. You may have to adjust your browser settings or download an update to activate 128-bit encryption.
  - JavaScript enabled. JavaScript is the programming language of the interactive sections of our website and must be enabled for many pages to work properly.
  - Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) enabled. SSL is used to provide additional security for our website and your data.
  - Session cookies enabled. Session cookies are small text files temporarily stored in your RAM until you close your browser. Session cookies are not stored on your hard drive and are automatically removed at the end of the browsing session.

### **2. How confidential is this website?**

For this and all other web-based data collections that are part of NPSAS, proven methods of protection for online sessions and data security over the Internet are being used. Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol is used to encrypt the data over the Internet. The study website is password protected and requires the user to log in to the site before accessing confidential data. The system will automatically log the user out after 20 minutes of inactivity on the session, preventing unauthorized user access to the site.

### **3. What about confidentiality of the data collected?**

Both NCES and RTI follow strict procedures to protect the privacy and confidentiality of study participants. The *Confidentiality Fact Sheet* on the NPSAS website describes our security systems and procedures, and provides more details on how data are maintained. Any data released to the public will be in aggregate form (for example, statistical tables). Restricted use data files (which contain record-level data, but no identifying information) are available only to a limited number of qualified researchers, who must pledge, under penalty of law with severe fines and imprisonment, to maintain the confidentiality of the data.

### **4. Do we need to have the student's permission before providing this information?**

No. The data request for NPSAS fully conforms to the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) [20 United States Code 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99]. FERPA is designed to protect the privacy rights of students and their

families by providing consistent standards for the release of personally identifiable student and family information. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and its agent, RTI International (RTI), are permitted by the provisions of FERPA to obtain student-level data from institutions. These data are subject to strict confidentiality protections, which must be adhered to by both NCES and RTI.

Student or parental consent is not required for release of information to NCES. FERPA explicitly states in 34 CFR 99.31 that an educational institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without prior consent if the disclosure is to authorized representatives of the Secretary of Education or to an organization conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions. A definition of personally identifiable information can be found in 34 CFR 99.3. Personal identifiers, such as Social Security number and student number, are included in the definition. You may review this legislation on the U.S. Department of Education's website: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa>.

**5. By what authority does RTI collect this information?**

Federal law authorizes NPSAS to be conducted every four years. RTI, as contracted by NCES, has been given the authority to collect information from institutional records under the provisions of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA) [Public Law 107-279] which authorizes NCES to collect, acquire, compile, and disseminate full and complete statistics on the condition and progress of education, including postsecondary education. In addition, NPSAS is in compliance with the Federal Statistical Confidentiality Order of 1997 and the Privacy Act of 1974 [5 United States Code 552a].

**6. Where do I go for the information requested?**

The information needed for each of the sampled students is typically collected from three distinct (document or online) sources at your institution: the Admissions or Registrar's Office; the Bursar's or Business Office; and the Financial Aid Office. If you require assistance after reviewing the enclosed *Quick Guide to Providing Student Records Data*, please contact the Help Desk with your questions at 1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-2741), toll-free, or via e-mail at [NPSASrecords@rti.org](mailto:NPSASrecords@rti.org).

**7. How long does it take to collect student records data for NPSAS?**

Because NPSAS needs information from students' files (electronic or hard copy), and institutions have different methods of record keeping, our estimates indicate that providing the requested student records data will take about [if field test]13 / [if full-scale] 20] hours on average. If you have any concerns with the amount of time it is taking you to provide the requested data, please call the Help Desk at 1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-2741), toll-free. RTI will work with you to ensure you have the support needed to successfully complete this data collection effort.

**8. Can I provide a data file instead of using the case-mode or grid-mode data entry options?**

Yes. You can download an Excel template to create the five files we need, or a programmer can create each file according to the specifications available on the Student Records Home page of the NPSAS website. After the files are uploaded, your data can be reviewed and edited online using the NPSAS Student Records System. If you have questions, please contact RTI's Help Desk at 1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-2741) or e-mail [NPSASrecords@rti.org](mailto:NPSASrecords@rti.org).

**9. Do I need to supply the student's Social Security Number (SSN) in NPSAS Student Records if we already provided it on the student enrollment list?**

No. If your institution provided each student's SSN on the student enrollment list, it will be displayed in the NPSAS Student Records System so that the user can be sure he/she is entering data for the correct student. Please correct the SSN if needed. The student's SSN is needed to perform file matches to other data sources, including the Central Processing System (CPS).

Additional FAQs can be found on the NPSAS website:  
<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASSchool>.

## **DISCLOSURE NOTICE FOR NPSAS**

Information from student records for this individual has been provided to RTI International, an agent for the U.S. Department of Education. This disclosure statement fulfills the requirement of 34 CFR 99.32(a)(6) pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 [20 United States Code 1232g].

This individual is included in the sample for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test. Strict confidentiality of all information obtained from individuals selected for participation in NPSAS is assured by current federal laws and regulations. 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.

March 2011  
OMB # 1850-0666  
Expiration Date: (insert date)

STUDENT RECORDS FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO INSTITUTION COORDINATOR WHO REQUESTS  
FIELD VISIT

**NPSAS**  
**Endorsed by**

&lt;date&gt;

American Association of  
Collegiate Registrars and  
Admissions Officers

«salutation» «fname» «lname»

«Title»

American Association of  
Community Colleges

«entity\_name»

American Association of State  
Colleges and Universities

«phys\_addr1»

«phys\_addr2»

American Council on Education

«phys\_city», «phys\_state» «phys\_zip»

Association for Institutional  
Research

Your IPEDS UNITID: «entity\_id»

Association of American Colleges  
and Universities

Your password: «password»

Association of Catholic Colleges  
and Universities

Dear «salutation» «lname»,

Association of Public and Land-  
grant Universities

Thank you for your participation in the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test. We finished processing the student enrollment file you provided and have selected a random sample of «tot\_cnt» students from your institution for participation in NPSAS. We now need to collect institutional record data for these students. Our records show that your institution has requested assistance in performing the record abstractions. RTI can send a trained staff member to your institution to enter the student record data for your institution.

Association of Schools of Allied  
Health ProfessionsAssociation of Private Sector  
Colleges and UniversitiesThe Carnegie Foundation for the  
Advancement of Teaching

The College Board

Council of Graduate Schools

The Council of Independent  
CollegesHispanic Association of Colleges  
and UniversitiesMidwestern Higher Education  
CompactNational Accrediting Commission of  
Cosmetology Arts and SciencesNational Association of College and  
University Business OfficersNational Association for Equal  
Opportunity in Higher EducationNational Association of  
Independent Colleges and  
UniversitiesNational Association of Student  
Financial Aid AdministratorsNew 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

Our staff member will be calling you soon to discuss their visit. To help you prepare for this visit and better understand the data requested, we have enclosed a list of the types of data we would like to obtain for each sampled student. The list of sampled students can be found on the secure study website where you can easily print a hardcopy if you would like one: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>. This website is the same one that you have used for prior components of the study.

Please be assured that the security of the data is of the utmost importance, and our study procedures and applications have been developed with this in mind. The software application encrypts all data with the latest technologies, before they are transmitted to RTI. In addition, access to the list of students and the data-collection forms require authentication using a username and password. Access to the list of sampled students and the NPSAS Student Records System on the study website requires user authentication, using your IPEDS UNITID and unique password (listed above for your convenience). Please ensure that access to the list of sampled students is given only to those at your institution who will provide the requested data.

The RTI staff member who contacts you will serve as your point of contact for this activity. If you are ever unable to reach him/her, you may contact the NPSAS Student Records manager, Tiffany Mattox, at 1-800-334-8571 ext. 27791, toll-free, or via e-mail at [tmattox@rti.org](mailto:tmattox@rti.org). You may also direct questions about the study to me at 919-541-6870 ([Jennifer@rti.org](mailto:Jennifer@rti.org)) or to NCES by contacting Tracy Hunt-White, Ph.D. at 202-502-7438 ([Tracy.Hunt-White@ed.gov](mailto:Tracy.Hunt-White@ed.gov)).

STUDENT RECORDS FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO INSTITUTION COORDINATOR WHO REQUESTS FIELD VISIT

Again, thank you for your continued participation in this important study.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International

To access the list of sampled students or the  
NPSAS Student Records System:

1. Go to: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/NPSASschool>
2. Click **Log in** on the Home page.
3. Enter your IPEDS UNITID as your username and your unique password (listed below) and click **Login**.
4. From the Data Entry Tasks menu, click **Provide Student Records Data**.



Student Records Reminder Email to Institution Coordinator

Dear «salutation» «lname»:

I am writing as a follow-up to the package you should have received recently that included a letter from me about NPSAS Student Records data collection, which is the final institutional component of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) field test. The letter requests that you log on to the secure NPSAS website and provide student records data for sampled students through the NPSAS Student Records System. Please find below a link to the NPSAS website as well as the username and password needed to access the site and provide data.

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

Your IPEDS UNITID: «entity\_id»

Your PASSWORD: «password»

NPSAS is being conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education by RTI International, a not-for-profit research organization. The data your institution provides are very important to the success of the study.

If you have any questions about the study or procedures involved, please contact the Help Desk at 1-888-NPSAS411 (1-888-677-2741) or via e-mail at [NPSASrecords@rti.org](mailto:NPSASrecords@rti.org).

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Wine". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jennifer Wine, Ph.D.  
Project Director, NPSAS  
RTI International