

February 9, 2012

*Memorandum*

TO: Shelly Martinez  
Office of Management and Budget

FROM: Tracy Hunt-White and Matthew Soldner  
National Center for Education Statistics

THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela  
National Center for Education Statistics

RE: 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12) Informed Consent  
Change Request (OMB# 1850-0666 v. 11)

In this memo, NCES requests permission to amend:

- (1) NPSAS:12 informed consent statements communicated to respondents during the student interview, and
- (2) the student interview to allow respondents who are not in the BPS sample to actively consent to be contacted about their participation in future non-NCES-sponsored follow-up activities.

We have revised Appendix G and H from the originally approved clearance package (OMB# 1850-0666 v. 10) to reflect these two changes and are including them in this submittal. There are no burden changes or other changes to the approved clearance package.

*Amendment 1 – NPSAS:12 Informed Consent*

NCES requests permission to amend the statement below, contained in informed consent materials for the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12). The specific passage, located on pages G-37 and G-39 of the clearance package, is read to respondents via telephone interviewer (or viewed by them on screen) if the respondent reports not having received NPSAS contacting materials:

“Some students, such as those who enrolled in college for the first time between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012, and other special groups, may be selected for follow-up studies in later years ~~to that will help us~~ learn more about their education and employment experiences since completing this 2012 survey.”

This change is requested so that verbal and on-screen consent statements match those provided via mail.

*Amendment 2 – Consent to Future Non-NCES-sponsored Studies*

NCES requests permission to add a question to the NPSAS:12 student interview seeking respondents’ active consent to be contacted about their participation in future non-NCES-sponsored studies. (Note that this question pertains only to respondents who are *ineligible* for further follow-up via the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study.)

For NPSAS:12, NCES wanted to provide an opportunity for researchers to rigorously address fundamental research questions through experimental research methodologies using NPSAS’s large sample size. NCES attempted to expand the use of NPSAS through collaboration with the National Center

for Education Research (NCER). The research grant opportunity was announced, and two grant applications were submitted to NCER in 2010, but neither application was funded when the decisions were made in July 2011. Although the NCER grant opportunity did not result in any funded grants to use NPSAS:12, NCES continues to have an interest in providing researchers with an opportunity to conduct follow-up studies using NPSAS sample members. To this end, NCES is proposing a pilot of a program to allow researchers to use funding from an external source to rigorously address fundamental research questions through experimental research methodologies. Researchers would be required to submit their request to use the NPSAS sample to NCES. NCES will approve up to two (2) research projects during this pilot. Like the NCER grant opportunity, under this pilot researchers would have to conduct their data collection through the NPSAS:12 contractor, RTI. In addition, the researchers would never have direct contact with sample members or have access to any direct identifiers of the study participants.

NCES seeks to add the following question to the NPSAS:12 data collection in order to obtain active consent from a non-BPS eligible sample member to be contacted for one of these research studies. Specifically:

N12EXTERNAL. Consent for re-contacting by external researcher

We are almost done with this survey. But first, I want to let you know that some students may be invited to participate in follow-up studies to learn more about their education and employment experiences after completing this survey. These follow-up studies will be led by external researchers not affiliated with the Department of Education. We would like to seek your permission to allow RTI to re-contact you on behalf of one of the external researchers. Your participation in future studies is completely voluntary, but there is no substitute for your response.

Are you willing to be contacted about these future studies?

- Yes  
 No

N12EXTERNAL Help Text

With the permission of NPSAS project staff, qualified external researchers may be permitted to work with RTI to invite some students to participate in future studies to learn more about their experiences after completing this survey. Your responses to the NPSAS survey will always remain confidential, because your privacy is protected by federal law and information we have collected cannot be disclosed or used in identifiable form, except as required by law (20 U.S.C. § 9573).

Your participation in any future studies is completely voluntary, but there is no substitute for your response. It does not affect the token of appreciation you will receive from your participation in the NPSAS study. If you do elect to participate in future studies, their sponsor is required to inform you of the study's purpose, how your data will be used, and how it will be protected.

This change is requested to seek respondents' active consent for re-contacting in the event NCES authorizes a qualified external researcher to invite sample members to participate in a follow-on study.