

§ 1015e. State higher education information system pilot program

(a) Purpose

It is the purpose of this section to carry out a pilot program to assist not more than five States to develop State-level postsecondary student data systems to—

(1) improve the capacity of States and institutions of higher education to generate more comprehensive and comparable data, in order to develop better-informed educational policy at the State level and to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional performance while protecting the confidentiality of students' personally identifiable information; and

(2) identify how to best minimize the data-reporting burden placed on institutions of higher education, particularly smaller institutions, and to maximize and improve the information institutions receive from the data systems, in order to assist institutions in improving educational practice and postsecondary outcomes.

(b) Definition of eligible entity

In this section, the term "eligible entity" means—

(1) a State higher education system; or

(2) a consortium of State higher education systems, or a consortium of individual institutions of higher education, that is broadly representative of institutions in different sectors and geographic locations.

(c) Competitive grants

(1) Grants authorized

The Secretary shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to not more than five eligible entities to enable the eligible entities to—

(A) design, test, and implement systems of postsecondary student data that provide the maximum benefits to States, institutions of higher education, and State policymakers; and

(B) examine the costs and burdens involved in implementing a State-level postsecondary student data system.

(2) Duration

A grant awarded under this section shall be for a period of not more than three years.

(d) Application requirements

An eligible entity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require, including a description of—

(1) how the eligible entity will ensure that student privacy is protected and that individually identifiable information about students, the students' achievements, and the students' families remains confidential in accordance with section 1232g of this title; and

(2) how the activities funded by the grant will be supported after the three-year grant period.

(e) Use of funds

A grant awarded under this section shall be used to—

(1) design, develop, and implement the components of a comprehensive postsecondary student data system with the capacity to transmit student information within a State;

(2) improve the capacity of institutions of higher education to analyze and use student data;

(3) select and define common data elements, data quality, and other elements that will enable the data system to—

(A) serve the needs of institutions of higher education for institutional research and improvement;

(B) provide students and the students' families with useful information for decision-making about postsecondary education; and

(C) provide State policymakers with improved information to monitor and guide efforts to improve student outcomes and success in higher education;

(4) estimate costs and burdens at the institutional level for the reporting system for different types of institutions; and

(5) test the feasibility of protocols and standards for maintaining data privacy and data access.

(f) Evaluation; reports

Not later than six months after the end of the projects funded by grants awarded under this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot program authorized by this section; and

(2) report the Secretary's findings, as well as recommendations regarding the implementation of State-level postsecondary student data systems, to the authorizing committees.

(g) Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009 and each of the five succeeding fiscal years.

(Pub. L. 89-329, title I, § 136, as added Pub. L. 110-315, title I, § 115, Aug. 14, 2008, 122 Stat. 3111.)

§ 1015f. State commitment to affordable college education

(a) Maintenance of effort required

A State shall provide—

(1) for public institutions of higher education in such State for any academic year beginning on or after July 1, 2008, an amount which is equal to or greater than the average amount provided for non-capital and non-direct research and development expenses or costs by such State to such institutions of higher education during the five most recent preceding academic years for which satisfactory data are available; and

(2) for private institutions of higher education in such State for any academic year beginning on or after July 1, 2008, an amount which is equal to or greater than the average amount provided for student financial aid for paying costs associated with postsecondary education by such State to such institutions during the five most recent preceding academic years for which satisfactory data are available.