September 11, 2017

Kate Mullan  
Acting Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington DC 20202

Dear Ms. Mullan:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the 27 undersigned members and partners of the Postsecondary Data Collaborative (PostsecData), in response to the Department of Education’s (ED) comment request notice regarding the 2017–18 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Administrative Collection (NPSAS:18-AC). PostsecData is comprised of organizations committed to the use of high-quality postsecondary data to improve student success and advance educational equity, and the organizations below represent diverse constituents including students, institutions, and states.

We are writing to express our support for the National Center for Education Statistics’ (NCES’) proposed revision to add NPSAS:18-AC to the existing NPSAS study cycle. The nationally representative sample of undergraduate and graduate students across all 50 states will support state and federal policymaker and researcher efforts in answering critical questions related to college affordability and students' financing of postsecondary education. Making NPSAS data available on a biannual basis will enhance the field’s ability to conduct timely analyses. Further, we applaud NCES efforts to release a NPSAS data-set with a larger sample size capable of supporting both national and state-level analyses, providing state representative samples for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico for the first time. The ability to explore state-level estimates of college costs and student aid will be a true value-add, enhancing states' ability to craft and implement data-driven policies.

Postsecondary data that empower policymakers to make evidence-backed decisions and researchers to produce timely analyses are vital to addressing issues of college affordability and improving student outcomes. We value the Department’s dedication to strengthening the postsecondary data infrastructure, and are grateful for its recognition of the need for high-quality data.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revision. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email Mamie Voight, vice president of policy research at the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) at (202) 587-4967 or mvoight@ihep.org.

Sincerely,

Achieving the Dream  
Advance CTE  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
Association of Public & Land-grant Universities  
California EDGE Coalition  
Campaign for College Opportunity  
Center for Law and Social Policy  
Complete College America  
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce  
Higher Learning Advocates  
Institute for Higher Education Policy  
Jobs for the Future  
Knowledge Alliance  
Lehman College of The City University of New York  
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education  
National Association for College Admission Counseling  
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems  
National College Access Network  
New America Education Policy Program  
Postsecondary Analytics  
Public Insight Corporation  
The Bell Policy Center  
The Institute for College Access & Success  
Veterans Education Success  
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education  
Young Invincibles