

Policy & Procedure for Students to Opt Out of Postsecondary Data Collections

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

www.education.pa.gov



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

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Introduction

In order to meet federal and state reporting requirements, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) collects unit-level education data in a statewide longitudinal data system called the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

PIMS was developed with the purpose of:

- Allowing PDE to meet federal and state reporting requirements;
- Streamlining the reporting processes from educational institutions to PDE and the U.S. Department of Education;
- Reporting timely and accurate education data through standardized and ad hoc reporting capabilities;
- Improving educational decision-making through the use of high-quality data and decision support tools; and
- Providing longitudinal data on educational progress over time.

Act 24 of 2011 authorizes PDE to collect unit-level data required by state or federal statute or federal regulation.

POSTSECONDARY DATA COLLECTION	LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY
Pennsylvania Statewide Transfer and Articulation System	24 P.S. § 20-C
Community College Annual Report	24 P.S. §§ 19-1918-A
EDFacts State Data Collection	U.S. Department of Education

PDE collects data annually from postsecondary institutions to meet these requirements. Students may opt out of a commonwealth data collection by submitting the electronic [Postsecondary Data Collection Opt-Out Form¹](#) to PDE by June 30 of the academic year being reported. Students are not permitted to opt out of federally-mandated collections.

In accordance with Act 24, PDE has developed the following policy and procedure for students wanting to opt out of a commonwealth postsecondary data collection that includes unit-level data.

Student Opt Out Policy

Postsecondary students may opt out of a commonwealth data collection by completing the electronic [Postsecondary Data Collection Opt-Out Form](#) available on PDE's website by June 30 of the academic year being reported. Students are not permitted to opt out of federally-mandated collections.

PDE collects data from postsecondary institutions in September and October of each year. The collection covers all semesters during the previous academic year (Fall, Intercession, Spring and Summer).

In accordance with Act 24, PDE will notify postsecondary institutions in writing about the unit-level data elements being collected. Upon receiving the notice, the postsecondary institution will

¹ <http://www.education.pa.gov/Postsecondary-Adult/PIMSPostsecondary/Pages/Postsecondary-Data-Collection-Opt-Out.aspx#tab-1>

provide students who are subject to the data request with electronic notice of the Department's request and of the student's ability to opt out of the collection by June 30. The electronic notice shall direct students to a PDE webpage containing a description of the information being collected, the process and timeline for opting out of the collection and the [Postsecondary Data Collection Opt-Out Form](#).

Students are responsible for opting out of the data collection annually by the posted deadline and for identifying the postsecondary institution(s) PDE should notify on their behalf. Students must submit a separate opt-out form for each postsecondary institution attended during the collection year.

Approximately one month prior to the collection date, PDE will provide postsecondary institutions with the names (first and last) and student identification numbers of students from their institutions that have elected not to participate. The postsecondary institution is responsible for excluding those students' information from its data submission. PDE and the postsecondary institutions are not responsible for the sharing of data that may result from a student providing inaccurate information.

Data Collection Opt-Out Process

In accordance with Act 24 and this policy:

1. PDE will notify postsecondary institutions in writing about the unit-level data elements PDE seeks to collect and the date by which students may opt out of the collection.
2. Postsecondary institutions will provide students with an electronic notice of PDE's request for data, and the process and timeline for opting out of a commonwealth data collection.
3. Students may opt out of a commonwealth data collection by submitting the electronic [Postsecondary Data Collection Opt-Out Form](#) to PDE by June 30.
4. Approximately one month prior to the collection, PDE will provide postsecondary institutions with the names (first and last) and student identification numbers of students from their respective institutions that have elected not to participate.
5. The postsecondary institution will exclude those students' information from its data submission to PDE.