

**Establishing the College Dashboard through the  
Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act**  
December 2017

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On December 1, 2017, Chairwoman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC) introduced a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965. [The Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform \(PROSPER\) Act \(H.R.4508\)](#) proposes to “support students in completing an affordable postsecondary education that will prepare them to enter the workforce with the skills they need for lifelong success.”<sup>1</sup> This memo provides an overview of the main components of the PROSPER Act related to postsecondary education data, specifically the creation of the College Dashboard.

### **The College Dashboard**

The PROSPER Act seeks to empower students and families to make informed decisions by improving available information through the creation of a College Dashboard website that would display key information about colleges and universities, including enrollment, completion, cost, and financial aid measures. The College Dashboard was previously proposed in the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress (H.R. 4983) and again in 114<sup>th</sup> Congress (H.R. 3178).

The College Dashboard website outlined in the PROSPER Act mirrors previous versions, with the notable addition of program-level data on the percentage of graduates who borrowed federal student loans, the average debt of borrowers at graduation, and the median earnings of students who received federal financial aid both five and ten years after graduation. These data are not currently available by program of study, so the College Dashboard could provide more nuanced insight into students’ post-college outcomes. However, limiting earnings data to only those students who receive Title IV federal financial aid omits 30 percent of students and does not provide a wholly accurate account of the return on investment students can expect from their degree.<sup>2</sup>

### **Measures and Metrics**

**Appendix A** describes the College Dashboard’s proposed measures and metrics, and compares them with two existing federal consumer information tools: [College Navigator](#) and the [College Scorecard](#). The PROSPER Act would eliminate College Navigator upon launch of the College Dashboard website, but does not directly address the future of the College Scorecard. The College Dashboard website would include the following information for each Title IV-participating college and university:

- A link to the institution’s website
- The institution’s sector and level
- The number of students enrolled, disaggregated by undergraduate/graduate status
- The student-faculty ratio
- 100%, 150%, and 200% graduation rates for all degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates

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<sup>1</sup> Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform Act, H.R. 4508, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017), page 1. Retrieved from: [https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/prosper\\_act\\_bill\\_text.pdf](https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/prosper_act_bill_text.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Roberson, A.J., Rorison, J., & Voight, M. A Blueprint for Better Information: Recommendations for a Federal Postsecondary Student-Level Data Network. October 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.ihep.org/blueprint>.

- The average net price by income level and dependency status for all federal Title IV aid recipients
- A link to the net price calculator for the institution
- The percentage of undergraduate degree/certificate completers who borrowed federal student loans for each program of study
- The average federal student loan debt incurred by undergraduate degree/certificate completers for each program of study
- The median earnings of undergraduate degree/certificate completers who received federal financial aid five and ten years after graduation for each program of study
- A link to the institution’s webpage that contains campus safety data<sup>3</sup>

All other measures identified in the bill, including disaggregated enrollment, completion, cost, and financial aid data, would be published on, “websites that are linked to through the College Dashboard website.”<sup>4</sup> The College Dashboard website is also required to include a method for users to easily compare institutions.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the bill protects data privacy by requiring full compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).<sup>6</sup>

## Conclusion

While the PROSPER Act underscores the important role that data play in helping students and their families make informed decisions about college, it falls short of providing education stakeholders with data that reflect the experiences of all students. The inclusion of additional program-level outcome metrics is a step in the right direction, however the College Dashboard website largely replicates current transparency tools without filling current gaps in higher education data systems.

Implementing a well-designed and secure student-level data network (SLDN) would provide more robust and useful information on college access, cost, and outcomes. [Broad support](#) for the [College Transparency Act](#)<sup>7</sup>—a bipartisan solution that overturns the current federal ban on a student-level data system that was introduced in both the House and Senate in May 2017—reinforces that a SLDN is the most transparent, efficient, and complete way to give education stakeholders the information they need. The PROSPER Act instead leaves the student unit record ban intact, preventing the creation of a SLDN and limiting the availability and quality of enrollment, affordability, and outcomes data for all students.

<sup>3</sup> Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform Act, H.R. 4508, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017), pages 44–48. Retrieved from: [https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/prosper\\_act\\_bill\\_text](https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/prosper_act_bill_text).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 48, lines 21–22.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 54–55.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pp. 57.

<sup>7</sup> The College Transparency Act, S. 1121, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017). Retrieved from: <https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s1121/BILLS-115s1121is.pdf>.

## Appendix A – Consumer Information Tools Comparison

	Measure/Metric	College Dashboard	College Navigator	College Scorecard
General Information	Sector, level, and/or degree type	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Student-faculty ratio	Yes	Yes	No
	Number and types of faculty and graduate assistants	No	Yes	No
	Special learning opportunities (e.g. ROTC, teacher certification)	No	Yes	No
	Student services	No	Yes	No
	Institutional and/or specialized accreditation	No	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	Link to institution's website	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Campus safety data or link to webpage containing campus safety data	Yes	Yes	No
Admissions	Number of applicants	No	Yes	No
	Percent applicants admitted	No	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	Percent admitted who enrolled	No	Yes	No
	Admissions considerations (required/recommended)	No	Yes	No
	Number and % submitting SAT/ACT scores	No	Yes	No
	25 <sup>th</sup> and 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile SAT/ACT scores	No	Yes	Yes
Enrollment	Undergraduate enrollment total, disaggregated by:	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Transfer-in enrollment total	No	Yes	No
	% students with disabilities	Yes*	Yes	No
	% male/female	Yes*	Yes	No
	% of full-time and part-time	Yes*	Yes	Yes
	% state residents	Yes*	Yes	No
	% out-of-state	Yes*	Yes	No
	% international students	Yes*	Yes	No
	% by race/ethnicity	Yes*	Yes	Yes
	% receiving a Pell Grant and/or family income	Yes*	Yes	Yes
	% receiving military education benefits	Yes*	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	% receiving federal student loans	Yes*	Yes	Yes
	% adult students <sup>2</sup>	No	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	% by distance education status	No	Yes	No
	Graduate enrollment total, disaggregated by:	Yes	Yes	No
	% full-time and part-time	No	Yes	No
% by distance education status	No	Yes	No	
Varsity athletic teams and number of participants, by gender	No	Yes	No	
Cost of Attendance and Tuition and Fees	Tuition and fees for full-time undergraduates	Yes*	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	Tuition and fees per credit hour for part-time students	Yes*	No	No
	Multi-year tuition calculator	No	Yes	No
	Tuition and fees for graduate students	No	Yes	No
	Alternative tuition plans offered	No	Yes	No
	Cost of Attendance for full-time, on-campus undergraduates (disaggregated by state/district residency status, when applicable)	Yes*	Yes	No
	Cost of Attendance for full-time, off-campus undergraduates (disaggregated by state/district residency status, when applicable)	Yes*	Yes	No

Notes: An asterisk (\*) denotes information published on other webpages and linked to through the College Dashboard. Cells highlighted in orange denote information not currently collected by ED.

	Measure/Metric	College Dashboard	College Navigator	College Scorecard
Price and Financial Aid	Average net price for grant/scholarship recipients	No	Yes	Yes
	Average net price for federal financial aid recipients, by income level	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Changes in net price over time	No	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	Link to net price calculator	Yes*	Yes	Yes
	Percent of undergraduates receiving any type of federal, state or institutional financial aid	Yes*	Yes	No
	Number, percentage, total and average financial aid award received, by aid type	No	Yes	No
	Average annual grant amount per recipient (includes federal, state and institutional grants) for those who receive financial aid	Yes*	Yes	No
	Median total federal student debt amount	No	No	Yes
	Percent of undergraduate degree/certificate completers who borrow federal student loans by program of study	Yes	No	No
	Average federal loan debt for undergraduate degree/certificate completers by program of study	Yes	No	No
	Persistence and Completion	First-to-second year retention rates (full and part-time)	No	Yes
Transfer-out rate		Yes <sup>3</sup>	Yes	No
100%, 150%, 200% graduation rates, disaggregated by:		Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>4</sup>
Pell Grant recipients		Yes*	No	No
Federal student loan recipients		Yes*	No	No
Military education benefit recipients		Yes*	No	No
Gender		No	Yes <sup>4</sup>	No
Race/ethnicity		Yes*	Yes <sup>4</sup>	No
Disability status		Yes*	No	No
Number of completions by program/major		No	Yes	No
Student Outcomes	Loan repayment rate	Yes*	No	Yes
	Cohort default rate	No	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>
	Number in default (numerator of default rate)	No	Yes	No
	Number in repayment (denominator of default rate)	No	Yes	No
	Estimated monthly federal loan payment	No	No	Yes
	Earnings of former undergraduates by program of study	Yes	No	No <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These data are not available via the College Scorecard consumer tool, but are included in the raw data, available for download at <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data/>.

<sup>2</sup> College Navigator disaggregates undergraduate enrollment by student age using the categories 24-years-old and under and 25-years-old and over. The College Dashboard measures the share of undergraduates who are 23-years-old or older at the time of entry.

<sup>3</sup> While transfer-out rate is not specifically listed, the legislation requires that the Commissioner of Education Statistics “ensure that [completion data] includes information with respect to all students at an institution, including students other than first-time, full-time students and students who transfer to another institution, in a manner that the Commissioner considers appropriate.” Retrieved from H.R. 4508, page 54, lines 6-13. The IPEDS Outcome Measures survey, which collects data persistence and completion for full-time, part-time, first-time, and non-first-time students are more inclusive of the variety of attendance and enrollment patterns noted in this legislation.

<sup>4</sup> These measures are only available for 150% (e.g. six-year) graduation rates.

<sup>5</sup> College Scorecard includes institution-level earnings data, but they are not disaggregated by program.

Notes: An asterisk (\*) denotes information published on other webpages and linked to through the College Dashboard. Cells highlighted in orange denote information not currently collected by ED.

Sources: [PROSPER Act](#); [College Navigator](#); [College Scorecard](#).