



Privacy Impact Assessment

For

“Follow Up Evaluation of the Gear Up Program”

Date

December 16, 2005

Contact Point

System Owner:

Dr. David Goodwin

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
U.S. Department of Education

1. What information will be collected for the system?

This system consists of the name, address, and social security number of the study participants as well as demographic information such as race/ethnicity and age; educational background, transcript information, service participation information, high school graduation, and preliminary postsecondary enrollment information; and financial aid application and award.

2. Why is this information being collected?

The information in this system is used for the following purposes: (1) to contribute to the legislatively mandated GEAR UP program evaluation; and (2) generally to identify the educational outcomes of study participants and the extent to which GEAR UP participation is associated with positive outcomes in comparison to the control group.

3. How will the information be used?

Information in this system is obtained from surveys with students who were in middle school in 2000–01 and who participated in the GEAR UP program and from a comparison group of students. Students are to be surveyed in spring 2006 when normal progression would make them seniors in high school. Surveys are being conducted as a source of providing information.

4. Will this information be shared with any other agency or entity? If so, with which agency or agencies/entities?

Information is disclosed internally to administer the program. However, it is not shared externally, except as required by law, or under the routine uses listed in the Privacy Act System of Records notice. These disclosures may be made on a case-by-case basis, or if the Department has complied with the computer matching requirements of the Act, under a computer matching agreement. Such disclosures may include: for litigation purposes, to the Department of Justice for FOIA advice, to contractors conducting Department business, for law enforcement, to a member of Congress at the request of the data subject, or to a consumer reporting agency regarding a valid and overdue claim.

5. Describe the notice or opportunities for consent that would be or are provided to individuals about what information is collected and how that information is shared with other organizations.

There is not notice or opportunities for consent since information is provided voluntarily.

6. How will the information be secured?

All physical access to the Department's site, and the sites of Department contractors where this system of records is maintained, is controlled and monitored by security personnel. The computer system employed by the Department offers a high degree of resistance to tampering and circumvention. This security system limits data access to Department and contract staff on a "need to know" basis, and controls individual users' ability to access and alter records within the system. The contractor, Westat, has established a set of procedures to ensure confidentiality of data. The system ensures that information identifying individuals is in files physically separated from other research data.

Westat will maintain security of the complete set of all master data files and documentation. Access to individually identifiable data will be strictly controlled. All data will be kept in locked file cabinets during nonworking hours, and work on hardcopy data will take place in a single room, except for data entry. Physical security of electronic data will also be maintained.

Security features that protect project data include password-protected accounts that authorize users to use the Westat system but to access only specific network directories and network software; user rights and directory and file attributes that limit those who can use particular directories and files and determine how they can use them; e-mail passwords that authorize the user to access mail services; and additional security features that the network administrator establishes for projects as needed.

7. Is a system of records being created or updated with the collection of this information?

The system is covered under the system of records notice entitled "Follow Up Evaluation of the Gear Up Program", dated December 16, 2005, (70 FR 74792 - 74794).