

Analysis of the Impact of a 500 Enrollment Threshold

Because the Department has limited data on distance education, we reviewed data from NC-SARA for a sample of years to estimate the impact of a 500 enrollment threshold on institutions and students.¹

Based on our analysis, a 500 enrollment threshold would have the following impacts on NC-SARA institutions and students:

- More than half of the more than 1.5 million out-of-state distance education students at NC-SARA institutions would now be covered by direct State approval.
- Meanwhile, this would affect fewer than 5 percent of the more than 2,000 NC-SARA institutions (64 institutions in one year, 70 institutions in another year).
- More than a third of the impacted institutions would only need approval from 1 additional State.
- More than 70 percent of the impacted institutions would be required to obtain approval from 10 States or fewer.
- Fewer than 20 percent of the schools that are subject to any direct authorization requirements would be required to obtain approval from more than 25 States.
- However, those schools enroll more than two thirds of the students who would now be covered by direct State approval.
- This highlights the balance between achieving the goals of reciprocity to reduce cost and burden for institutions enrolling relatively few students in a given State.

¹ See: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/nc.sara/viz/InstitutionsbyTotalEDEE/6_3InsbyTotalEnr