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# Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Annual Report

February 15, 2021



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**About the Minnesota Office of Higher Education**

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is a cabinet-level state agency providing students with financial aid programs and information to help them gain access to postsecondary education. The agency also serves as the state's clearinghouse for data, research and analysis on postsecondary enrollment, financial aid, finance and trends.

The Minnesota State Grant Program is the largest financial aid program administered by the Office of Higher Education, awarding more than \$207 million in need-based grants to Minnesota residents attending accredited institutions in Minnesota. The agency oversees tuition reciprocity programs, a student loan program, Minnesota's 529 College Savings Plan, licensing and early college awareness programs for youth.

**About This Report**

This is a legislative-mandated report. As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197, this report cost approximately \$907.41 to prepare, including staff time.

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# Content

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Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
Appropriation	3
Program	4
Postsecondary Institution Eligibility	4
Student Eligibility	4
Application Process	5
Award Process and Formula	5
Awards	7
Overview	7
Fiscal Year 2019	8
Fiscal Year 2020	8
Fiscal Year 2021	8
Demographics	11
Testimony	13
Bethel University, Saint Paul	13
Ridgewater Community College, Willmar	15
Recommendations	17
Appendix A	19
Minnesota Statutes Governing Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	19
Appendix B	20
Federal Regulations Governing Financial Assistance for Students with Intellectual Disabilities	20
Appendix C	21
Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium 2020 Annual Report	21
Appendix D	25
Data Suppression Policy for Student Information	25

# Executive Summary

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Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID Grant) provide financial assistance to eligible Minnesota resident students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who attend eligible Minnesota postsecondary institutions. The grant program was established in fiscal year 2018 and has received \$800,000 total in state appropriations with no allocation for administrative costs. Despite having access to grant resources of ID Grant, Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, Institutional Aid, and Other Government Aid, ID Grant students had more than \$125,000 in unmet tuition and fee costs during fiscal year 2020. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education recommends the following for the program:

- Increase appropriation
- Add an income cap to eligibility requirements
- Expand allowable expenses
- Include appropriation for Office of Higher Education administration
- Incentivize institutions to develop more Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary programs

# Introduction

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Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID Grant) was established by the 2017 Minnesota Legislature (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/136A.1215>) to provide financial assistance toward tuition and fees to postsecondary students with intellectual and developmental disabilities enrolled in a Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary (CTP) program at an eligible Minnesota postsecondary institution ([Appendix A](#)). Programs at three institutions qualified for the ID Grant during fiscal years 2019 through 2021:

- Bethel University – Saint Paul
  - Bethel University Inclusive Learning and Development (BUILD) Program
- Central Lakes College – Brainerd
  - Occupational Skills Program (OSP)
- Ridgewater Community College – Willmar
  - Occupational Skills Program (OSP)

The Office of Higher Education (OHE) is responsible for issuing program guidance and providing funding awards to institutions. Institutions are responsible for meeting program deadlines set by OHE, identifying students, calculating awards, distributing award notifications, disbursing awards, adjusting awards, and refunding excess funds to OHE.

Per statute requirements, OHE submits this report annually by February 15 to legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education finance and policy. The report includes, at minimum: (1) the number of students receiving an award; (2) the average and total award amounts; and (3) summary demographic data on award recipients.

# Appropriation

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The total ID Grant appropriation for biennial years 2020 and 2021 is \$400,000. The appropriation does not include funds for administrative costs. Total ID Grant disbursements to institutions for fiscal year 2020 were \$194,107.80. Currently, the total ID Grant disbursed to institutions for fiscal year 2021 is \$102,944. Institutions are still processing awards for spring 2021, so OHE has not disbursed funds for the term. OHE anticipates disbursing all available funds to institutions. The annual report submitted in 2022 will reflect final fiscal year 2021 data.

Similarly to biennial years 2020 and 2021, the total ID Grant appropriation for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 was \$400,000. The appropriation did not include funds for administrative costs. In fiscal year 2019, OHE disbursed \$378,377.85 in ID Grants to institutions. During fiscal year 2018, OHE worked with eligible institutions to establish policies and procedures for the program both at OHE and on campus; therefore, no grant funds were disbursed in fiscal year 2018.

# Program

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## Postsecondary Institution Eligibility

To be eligible to award an ID Grant, an institution must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be located in Minnesota
- Offer a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) program (degree, certificate, non-degree, or non-certificate program), as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 668.231 ([Appendix B](#))
- Meet the definition of eligible institution, as defined in Minnesota Statute 136A. 103 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/136A.103>)
- Have the necessary administrative computing capability to administer the program on campus and electronically report student data records to OHE
- Provide student-level data to OHE, including information on student financial aid from federal, state, and institutional sources

## Student Eligibility

To be eligible for an ID Grant, a student must meet all of the following conditions:

- Have an intellectual disability, as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 668.231:
  - Cognitive impairment characterized by significant limitations in:
    - Intellectual and cognitive functioning
    - Adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills
  - Currently, or was formerly, eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including a student who was determined eligible for special education or related services under the IDEA but was home-schooled or attended a private school
- Be enrolled in and attend a CTP program at an eligible Minnesota postsecondary institution
- Apply using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Minnesota state financial aid application
- Have tuition and fees not covered by the Federal Pell Grant, State Grant, or institutional aid
- Be a Minnesota resident as defined in Minnesota Statutes 136A.101, Subd. 8 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/136A.101>)



- Be a graduate of a secondary school/GED recipient or be at least 17 years of age at the time of disbursement (high school students enrolled in postsecondary courses prior to receiving their high school diploma are not eligible for an ID Grant)
- Not be in default on a student educational loan
- Not be more than 30 days in arrears for child support payments owed to a public child support enforcement agency unless the student is complying with a written repayment plan

## Application Process

A student applies for an ID Grant by completing the FAFSA (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>). A student who is not a United States citizen or eligible non-citizen may apply for an ID Grant by completing the Minnesota state financial aid application (<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2056>).

To ensure available funds are distributed among eligible students in a timely manner, FAFSA and Minnesota state financial aid applications receive priority when completed prior to July 1 of the upcoming academic year. For example, an application completed prior to July 1, 2020 for academic year 2020 – 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) would receive priority in the awarding process. Students with incomplete applications prior to or on July 1, or applications started on or after July 1, may be added to an institutional wait list as determined by the postsecondary institution.

## Award Process and Formula

On July 1 of each academic year, institutions submit the demographic and financial data of eligible students to OHE including, but not limited to:

- Student name
- Cost of attendance (COA)
- Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
- Tuition and fees
- Pell Grant
- Minnesota State Grant
- Institutional aid
- Other government aid

ID Grant funds cannot be used for books, supplies, transportation, housing, or other educational expenses. ID Grant awards are calculated based on the student's remaining need in the following calculation. A student must have remaining need of at least \$50 in order to receive an award.

Program tuition and fees for semester

- Federal Pell Grant (actually received by student)
- Minnesota State Grant (actually received by student)
- Institutional Aid
- = ID Grant ( $\leq$  Maximum ID Grant)

Based on availability of funds for each term, OHE determines a term maximum grant amount. Institutions then award eligible students up to the maximum grant amount or their remaining need, whichever is less. Throughout the term, OHE notifies institutions if there are any excess funds that can be used to make awards to any students on their institutional wait list. If there are excess funds after all eligible students have been awarded for the term, the funds are added to the amount of funds available for the next term.

# Awards

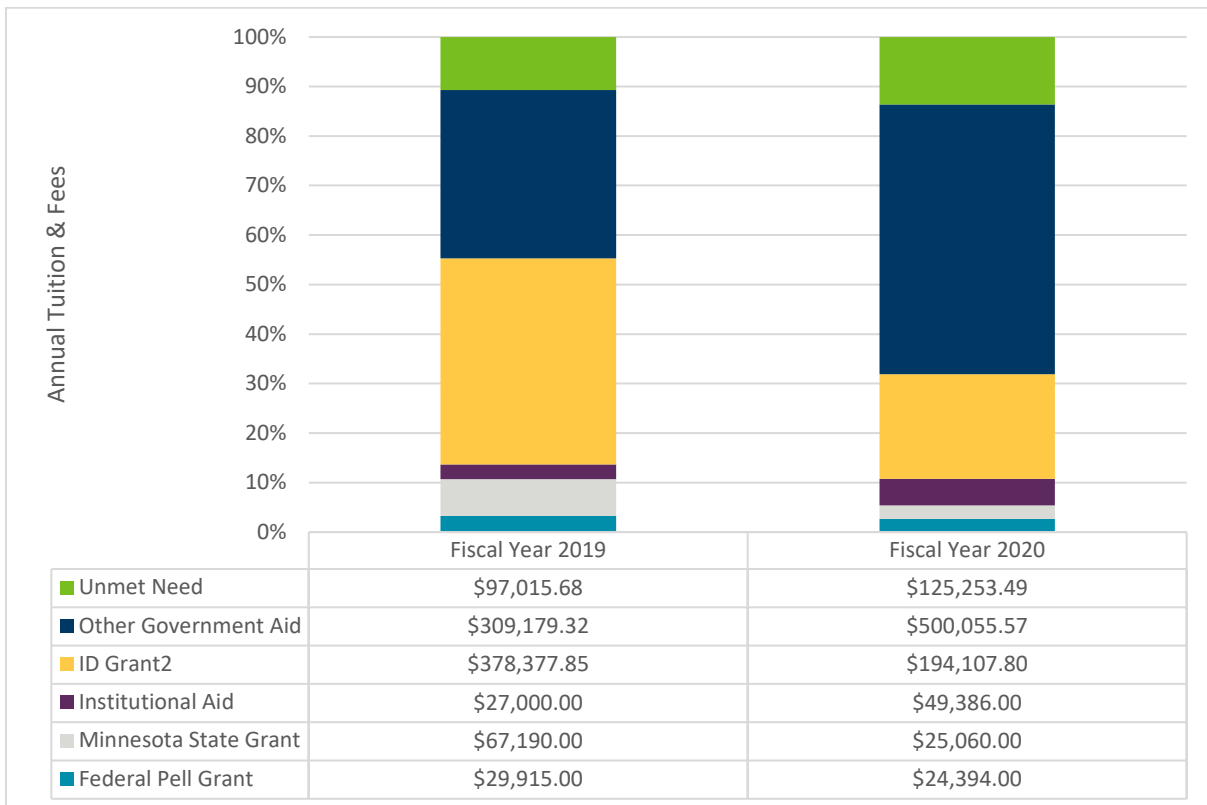
## Overview

Data for the ID Grant is limited because of the brevity of the program’s existence, the small student population, and the annual report deadline shortly after term disbursement deadlines. In addition, the first fiscal year of program administration encompassed funds intended for two fiscal years; therefore, the data may appear skewed at first glance. However, fiscal year 2020 data is complete and available for this report. OHE will continue to collect data resulting in a more comprehensive comparison and analysis for future reports.

ID Grant data is specific to students who receive funding through the program. The data is not a representation of all students who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. For purposes of the ID Grant, OHE does not collect data on students attending CTP programs at the three institutions who are not eligible for the ID Grant. The main reason for ineligibility for a student is Federal Pell Grant and Minnesota State Grant cover all tuition and fees, and there is no remaining need for ID Grant.

The following 100 percent stack column chart provides an overview of sources of aid for ID Grant students:

**Figure 1. Aid Sources - Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**



## Fiscal Year 2021

**\*To Be Updated in 2022 Annual Report\***

Institutions submitted ID Grant rosters to OHE on July 1, 2020. Institutions are scheduled to submit January 1, 2021 rosters later in January due to challenges related to the COVID-19 Emergency. Rosters included data for 32 eligible students during fall 2020.

Based on July 1 roster data of students with financial need during fall 2020, OHE determined a maximum term award of \$3,217 per student. The maximum grant in fiscal year 2021 was \$6,434.

The average ID Grant award for fall was \$3,110.75. The minimum fall ID Grant award was \$744, and the maximum ID Grant award was \$3,217.

Due to the Data Suppression Policy for Student Information ([Appendix D](#)), the total number of students per institution is not reported in the upcoming table.

**Table 1. Fiscal Year 2021 Students and Awards - Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

Postsecondary Institution	Total Students	Fall 2020 Awards	Spring 2021 Awards	Total Awards
Bethel University	≥10	\$67,557.00	TBD	\$67,557.00
Central Lakes College	<10	\$19,077.00	TBD	\$19,077.00
Ridgewater Community College	<10	\$12,910.00	TBD	\$12,910.00
<b>Totals</b>	32	\$99,554.00	TBD	\$99,554.00

*Notes: Awards refer to ID grant amount awarded and disbursed to students as estimated by institutions.*

The fall term tuition and fees charged to ID Grant students for FY2021 was \$445,942.85. The fall term sum of Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, and Institutional Aid was \$35,499. The remaining tuition and fee balance was \$410,443.85. The ID Grant contributed \$99,554 to the need for tuition and fees. Other Government Aid has not yet been calculated for fall term; therefore, OHE cannot determine the remaining tuition and fee charges for the 32 ID Grant students that were not covered by aid sources.

## Fiscal Year 2020

Institutions submitted ID Grant rosters to OHE on July 1, 2019 and January 1, 2020. At the end of the academic year, institutions performed a final review of the rosters and provided confirmation to OHE by August 31, 2020. Rosters included data for 33 eligible students during fall 2019 and 33 eligible students during spring 2020, resulting in 34 total eligible students during the academic year.

Based on July 1 roster data of students with financial need during fall 2019, OHE determined a maximum term award of \$2,857 per student. For spring 2020, based on student financial need, maximum term awards were increased to \$3,857. The maximum grant in fiscal year 2020 was \$6,714.

The average ID Grant award for fall was \$2,595.78, and the average ID Grant award for spring was \$3,286.27. The average annual ID Grant award was \$5,709.05. The minimum annual ID Grant award was \$813, and the maximum annual ID Grant award was \$6,714.

Due to the Data Suppression Policy for Student Information ([Appendix D](#)), the total number of students per institution is not reported in the upcoming table.

**Table 2. Fiscal Year 2020 Students and Awards - Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

Postsecondary Institution	Total Students	Fall 2019 Awards	Spring 2020 Awards	Total Awards
Bethel University	≥10	\$62,854.00	\$84,250.00	\$147,104.00
Central Lakes College	<10	\$9,406.80	\$9,585.00	\$18,991.80
Ridgewater Community College	<10	\$13,400.00	\$14,612.00	\$28,012.00
<b>Totals</b>	34	\$85,660.80	\$108,447.00	\$194,107.80

*Notes: Awards refer to ID grant amount awarded and disbursed to students as estimated by institutions.*

The annual tuition and fees charged to ID Grant students for FY2020 was \$918,256.86. The annual sum of Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, and Institutional Aid was \$98,840.00. The remaining tuition and fee balance was \$819,416.86. The ID Grant contributed \$194,107.80, and Other Government Aid contributed \$500,055.57 towards to remaining tuition and fee balances. Even after applying all aid sources, the 34 ID Grant students still had \$125,253.49 in tuition and fee charges that were not covered by the aid sources.

## Fiscal Year 2019

Institutions submitted ID Grant rosters to OHE on July 1, 2018 and January 1, 2019. At the end of the academic year, institutions performed a final review of the rosters and provided confirmation to OHE by August 31, 2019. ID Grant rosters included data for 37 eligible students during fall 2018 and 35 eligible students during spring 2019, resulting in 37 total eligible students during the academic year.

Based on July 1 roster data of students with financial need during fall 2018, OHE determined a maximum term award of \$5,405 per student. For spring 2019, based on student financial need, maximum term awards were increased to \$8,433. The maximum grant in fiscal year 2019 was \$13,838.

The average ID Grant award for fall was \$4,395.57, and the average ID Grant award for spring was \$6,164.05. The average annual ID Grant award was \$10,226.43. The minimum annual ID Grant award was \$895.00, and the maximum annual ID Grant award was \$13,838.

Due to the Data Suppression Policy for Student Information ([Appendix D](#)), the total number of students per institution is not reported in the upcoming table.

**Table 3. Fiscal Year 2019 Students and Awards - Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

Postsecondary Institution	Total Students	Fall 2018 Awards	Spring 2019 Awards	Total Awards
Bethel University	≥10	\$124,315.00	\$177,093.00	\$301,408.00
Central Lakes College	<10	\$13,947.00	\$13,367.00	\$27,314.00
Ridgewater Community College	≥10	\$24,374.00	\$25,281.85	\$49,655.85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>\$162,636.00</b>	<b>\$215,741.85</b>	<b>\$378,377.85</b>

*Note: Awards refer to ID grant amounts awarded and disbursed to students as confirmed by institutions.*

The annual tuition and fees charged to ID Grant students for FY2019 was \$908,677.85. The annual sum of Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, and Institutional Aid was \$124,105.00. The remaining tuition and fee balance was \$784,572.85. The ID Grant contributed \$378,377.85, and Other Government Aid contributed \$309,179.32 towards the remaining tuition and fee balance. Even after applying all aid sources, the 37 ID Grant students still had \$97,015.68 in tuition and fee charges that were not covered by aid sources.

# Demographics

The demographics section of this report includes 84 unique ID Grant students from fiscal years 2019 through 2021. Eleven ID Grant students participated in both fiscal years 2019 and 2020, and eight ID Grant students participated in both fiscal years 2020 and 2021. Data from the most recent fiscal year was maintained for each student. This section reflects FAFSA data pertaining to age, dependency status, race and ethnicity, gender, and income group.

The average age of ID Grant students was 21 years. The maximum age was 27 years and minimum age was 18 years. A majority of ID Grant students had FAFSA dependency status of dependent. Dependent students are under the age of 24 years old, single, and are required to provide parent information on the FAFSA.

Due to the Data Suppression Policy for Student Information ([Appendix D](#)), the only race and ethnicity information that can be disclosed is that 57 percent of ID Grant students identified as White with an additional 32 percent identified as unavailable.

As shown in Figure 2, ID Grant students who identified as male exceeded students who identified as female, although data for 27 percent of ID Grant students was unavailable.

**Figure 2. Gender – Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

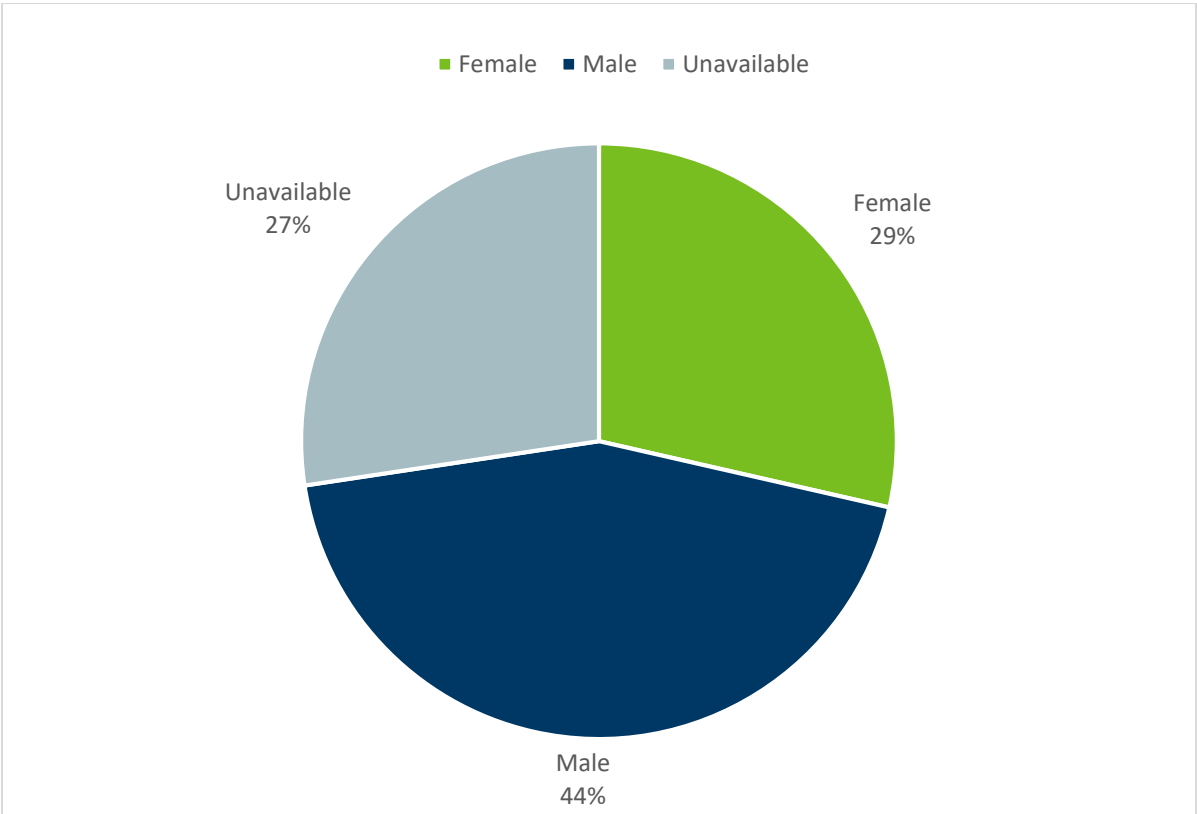
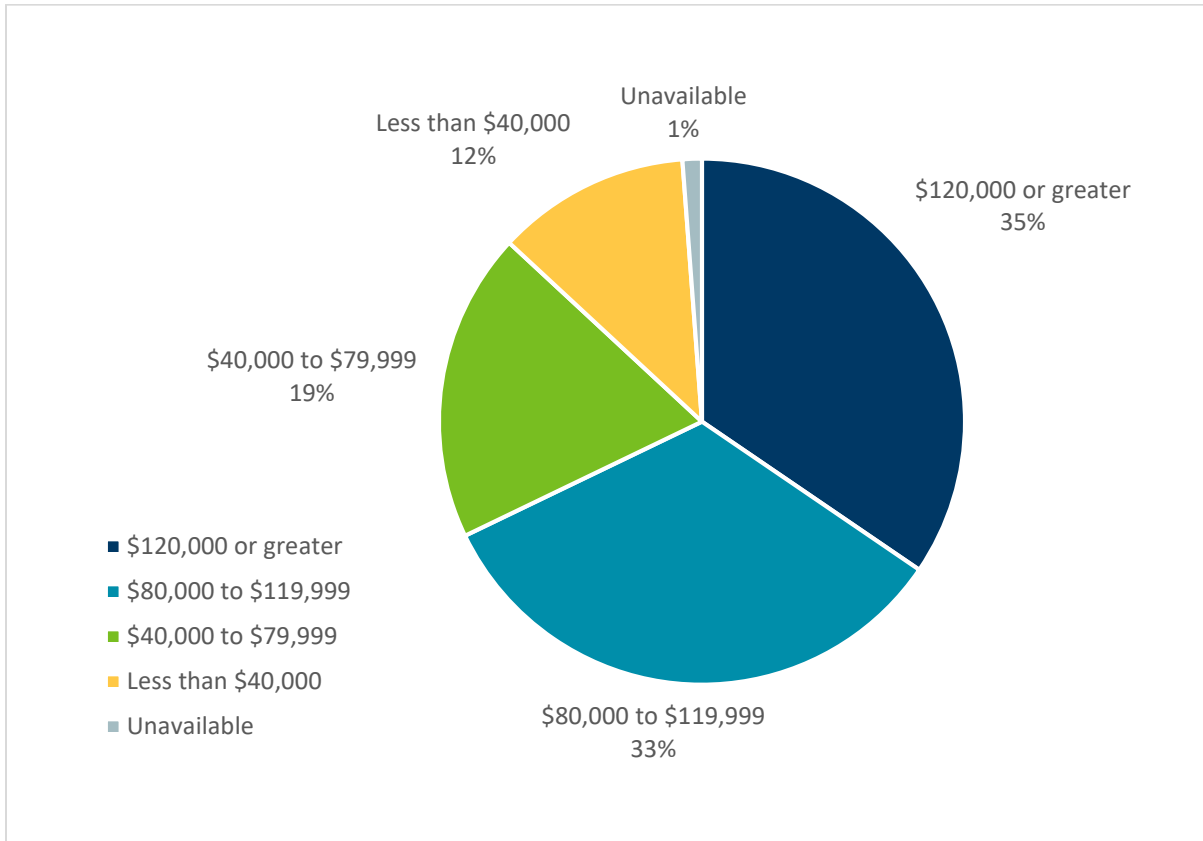


Figure 3 depicts several income groups for ID Grant students. Income group data was based upon parent adjusted gross income for dependent students and student adjusted gross income for independent students. Sixty-eight percent of students receiving ID Grant funds have household adjusted gross incomes of \$80,000 or greater. Only 13 percent of ID Grant students have household adjusted gross incomes of less than \$40,000.

**Figure 3. Income Groups - Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**





# Testimony

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## Bethel University, Saint Paul

### Bethel University Inclusive Learning and Development (BUILD) Program



Written and submitted by the BUILD Program:

The Minnesota Intellectual Disabilities (MN ID) Grant has been empowering support to the students who receive this funding. Comprehensive Transition Programs are often started out of a desire to celebrate and include students of diverse backgrounds. Funding options like the MN ID Grant make it possible to include students with differing levels of financial need as part of this diversity. With the help of the MN ID Grant, we have been able to have students attend the BUILD program who have Expected Family Contributions (EFC) of \$0. This would not have been possible without Minnesota's investment in these young people's education. There are very few options to support students financially in covering the cost of attending a Comprehensive Transition Program as students are not eligible for loans, have very few scholarship options, often have not been able to save for college due to lack of knowledge of options and risk of losing other funding if acquire assets in excess of a specific amount. So not only is the MN ID Grant important because of its rarity but also because it sets Minnesota apart as a state that cares about all of its students having an opportunity to go to college. This college program provides meaningful learning experiences, an opportunity to live away from home to focus on becoming more independent, and has resulted in higher outcomes for graduates with regard to both employment rates and the number of students who are prepared to move away from home after completing the program.

There is power in students being able to share their stories so to help you see what this means to students who have benefited from this funding and how appreciative they are to have this funding as a means to meet their dreams of having a college experience, we have included some student thank-you notes below:

*"I couldn't have returned to the Bethel BUILD program this year without your help. We really struggled to secure waiver funds for my year at Bethel last year, and we even wondered if I would be able to return. But you have given us hope! I'm so thankful that you are supporting me this year and all the other students who really need this program. Bethel is preparing me for a more independent future. I'm learning so much about myself and what I need to become an adult that can do more on my own. I know that I love working with children and that I'm good at it! Bethel has helped me discover more about my gifts and talents. I feel proud of what I'm gaining in my time at Bethel. It feels so good to know that I'll be graduating from college and have a strong future ahead of me!"*

-Cohort 5 Student

*"I have autism and I am very thankful for the opportunity to attend my dream college. At this college, I hope to gain life skills and improve my social skills. My long term goal and dream is to become a Pastor. Since I was in 7th grade, I have envisioned that this dream college of mine will equip, train, and show me through example. Bethel has a legendary legacy of pastors that have gone through the college/seminary experience. I hope and pray I can lead this legacy forward. THANK YOU SO MUCH!"*

-Cohort 6 Student

*"I am hoping to work with children or the elderly. I like my dorm and eating at school. The teachers are nice! Bethel is a good place to learn. Thank you for helping. Bethel is getting me ready to live on my own. I am working to do better at taking care of myself and learning new things."*

-Cohort 5 Student

*"Thank you for helping me with this opportunity. I am so excited to begin this new experience. I would not be able to have this great learning experience without your help. I am 22 years old with a cognitive learning disability. This Build program will help me figure out what I want to do as a career. I will be able to learn more independent skills that I will have for my future. I hope to get help and guidance to be independent. I'm not sure what the future holds for me but I'm excited to find out. Let the learning begin!"*

-Cohort 6 Student

*"Going to the Bethel BUILD program is a great opportunity for me. I am thankful for all of the support so that I can attend. I'm really excited about going to college. I want to learn sign language, take art classes, and learn about journalism. Being part of the Bethel community will help me grow in my faith and help me become independent and productive in our world. I am very social, I am thoughtful, and I have a good sense of humor. I possess a strong work ethic and I am determined to continue learning. Going to Bethel will allow me to continue my dream of going to college, like my two older sisters, and give me more work opportunities. I would like to experience working in an office or working as a journalist writing about plays and fashion. I want to give back to my community who has given me many opportunities. The Bethel BUILD program will help me achieve my dreams."*

-Cohort 6 Student

*"I am thrilled for the opportunity to take part in the BUILD program. Thank you so much for helping to make this happen for me, it is much appreciated. The BUILD program is going to give me a strong base to continue to grow and develop so that I can continue with my education and reach my goal of being involved in athletic training."*

-Cohort 6 Student

*"Thank you for all the support when I needed it the most. I really appreciate all the help. I'm looking forward to seeing where the future takes me. I've learned so much about art and math and finance."*

*I hope I use these skills in the future. I see Bethel impacting my life to live it up to the fullest. I'm always meeting new people almost every day, and they are always really nice to me."*

-Cohort 5 Student

## Ridgewater Community College, Willmar

### Occupational Skills Program (OSP)

Written by Jeff Miller, Dean of Instruction at Ridgewater College, and submitted by the OSP Program:

December 23, 2020

Dear Policy Makers,

Ridgewater College supports the renewal of the ID Grant. The ID grant has been pivotal in the success of students having the opportunity to learn new skills and gain meaningful employment in the field of their choice. The Occupational Skills program at Ridgewater College is not eligible for Federal financial aid because the primary goal is to gain entry-level employment.

The ID grant has made it possible for students who otherwise might not be able to afford to attend college the ability to pursue this higher education opportunity

This current school year, the ID grant has assisted in paying for students to attend Ridgewater College and pursue their goals of earning a higher education diploma. These students have been able to attend internship sites and acquire new work-ready skills. Students in the Occupational Skills program in addition to learning valuable employment skills have also learned skills to be able to transition to adulthood. Students get experience in seeking, gaining, and maintaining employment. Of these five students, four are now exploring further education to attain their employment goals.

Ridgewater College takes pride in offering academic programming for students of all ability levels. The Occupational Skills program provides a venue for students to gain important knowledge, skills, and abilities to enter the workforce or pursue further educational opportunities. The College has a strong commitment to equity and inclusion for all people. Opportunities for students that have a disability have continued to expand in our state.

Renewing the ID Grant would be one big step in continuing to expand the possibilities and goals that students have for their careers and personal lives. Thank you for the work and commitment in past to offer the opportunity for students. We hope this funding source will continue to be available for students.

Sincerely,

Jeff Miller

Dean of Instruction

Ridgewater College

Jeff.Miller@Ridgewater.edu

Written by OSP students and submitted by the OSP Program:

To: Whom it may concern

From: Kaylee Romsdahl

Regarding : ID Grant

My name is Kaylee Romsdahl and I am a student at Ridgewater College. I just completed my first semester in the Occupational Skills Program . In this program I was able to do a paid internship in my preferred field which was working with kids at a daycare. This is something that I have always wanted to try and the OSP gave me that opportunity. I was also hired by this daycare which was super exciting! My plan now is to go to Ridgewater again next year for Early Childhood Education.

My education is paid for by the ID Grant. Without the ID grant I might not have had these opportunities. I hope that this grant is renewed so that other students can have the same opportunity!

Thank you,  
Kaylee Romsdahl  
OSP Student  
Ridgewater College

To: Whom it may concern

From: Veronica Kalsen

Regarding: ID Grant

My name is Veronica and I am a student at Ridgewater College. I just completed my first semester In the Occupational Skill s program. In this program, I was able to do a paid internship in my preferred field, which was custodial work. This is something that I have always wanted to try and the OSP gave me that opportunity. In addition, in class we get to learn about different communication techniques and how to find and keep a job.

My education is paid for by the ID Grant. It is a relief to know that this grant was there for me as it allowed me to focus on my education and not on finances. I would hope that this grant is renewed so that other students can have the same opportunity that I had.

Thanks,  
Veronica Klasen  
OSP Student  
Ridgewater College

# Recommendations

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The Office of Higher Education puts forth recommendations based upon this report and conversations with postsecondary institutions and stakeholder groups.

Recommendation 1: Increase ID Grant appropriation.

Each fiscal year, the combination of ID Grant, Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, Institutional Aid, and Other Government Aid does not meet the tuition and fees need for ID Grant students. During fiscal years 2019 and 2020, about \$100,000 of financial need was unmet each year by the various funding sources. ID Grant students rely mostly on other government aid to support their education. An appropriation increase would lessen the financial burden of tuition and fees for ID Grant students.

Recommendation 2: Add an income cap to the eligibility requirements.

As shown earlier in this report, 68 percent of students receiving ID Grant funds have household adjusted gross incomes of \$80,000 or greater. Fourteen percent of students have household adjusted gross incomes of \$250,000 or greater. An income cap for eligibility would allow funds to serve students with higher financial need, especially with limited appropriation funds.

Recommendation 3: Expand ID Grant allowable expenses.

The ID Grant cannot be applied to educational living expense costs like room and board, meals, and transportation. Financing educational living expenses can be a substantial barrier for students, and the ID Grant does not address that barrier. Recommendation 3 should only be considered, if the Minnesota Legislature implements Recommendations 1 and 2.

Recommendation 4: Include appropriation for Office of Higher Education administration of the ID Grant.

The statute governing the ID Grant does not include an appropriation to the Office of Higher Education for the administration of the program. The Office of Higher Education experiences administrative challenges with no program resources. An appropriation for administration would provide OHE with necessary resources to administer the program and secure the longevity of the ID Grant program.

Recommendation 5: Incentivize institutions to develop more Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary programs.

The state of Minnesota has nearly 200 public and private postsecondary institutions, but only three institutions offer ID Grant eligible programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Conversations with stakeholder groups have indicated that some Minnesota students are seeking CTP programs in nearby states due to limited options in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> Increasing eligible ID Grant institutions

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<sup>1</sup> Currently, Wisconsin has two CTP programs at Edgewood College and University of Wisconsin Whitewater; Iowa has two CTP programs at Northwestern College and University of Iowa; and South Dakota has one CTP program at Augustana University.

in the state will provide students with more financially feasible options for pursuing postsecondary education. In order to achieve this goal, the state may need to develop additional programming to better-incentivize institutions to create programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

One stakeholder group, Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium (MIHEC), strongly advocates for the expansion of postsecondary education opportunities in Minnesota for all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. MIHEC provided OHE with a detailed summary of their recent efforts and future goals (see [Appendix C](#)).

The Office of Higher Education welcomes questions and further discussion regarding the recommendations for Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

# Appendix A

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## Minnesota Statutes Governing Grants for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

### 2019 Minnesota Statutes

#### **136A.1215 GRANTS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.**

**Subdivision 1. Establishment.** A program is established to provide financial assistance to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities that attend a Minnesota postsecondary institution.

**Subd. 2. Eligible students.** A postsecondary student is eligible for a grant under this section if the student:

- 1) meets the eligibility requirements in section [136A.121, subdivision 2](#);
- 2) is a student with an intellectual disability, as defined in Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 668.231, and is enrolled in a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program under that section; and
- 3) attends an eligible institution, as defined in section [136A.101, subdivision 4](#).

**Subd. 3. Application.** To receive a grant under this section, a student must apply in the form and manner specified by the commissioner.

**Subd. 4. Maximum grant amounts.** (a) The amount of a grant under this section equals the tuition and fees at the student's postsecondary institution, minus:

- 1) any Pell or state grants the student receives; and
- 2) any institutional aid the student receives.
- 3) If appropriations are insufficient to provide the full amount calculated under paragraph (a) to all eligible applicants, the commissioner must reduce the maximum grant amount available to recipients.

**Subd. 5. Reporting.** By February 15 of each year, the commissioner of higher education must submit a report on the details of the program under this section to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over higher education finance and policy. The report must include the following information, broken out by postsecondary institution:

- 1) the number of students receiving an award;
- 2) the average and total award amounts; and
- 3) summary demographic data on award recipients.

# Appendix B

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## Federal Regulations Governing Financial Assistance for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

### 2019 Federal Regulations

#### **§ 668.231 Definitions.**

The following definitions apply to this subpart: *Comprehensive transition and postsecondary program* means a degree, certificate, non-degree, or non-certificate program that:

- 1) Is offered by a participating institution;
- 2) Is delivered to students physically attending the institution;
- 3) Is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education in order to prepare for gainful employment;
- 4) Includes an advising and curriculum structure;
- 5) Requires students with intellectual disabilities to have at least one-half of their participation in the program, as determined by the institution, focus on academic components through one or more of the following activities:
  - a. Taking credit-bearing courses with students without disabilities.
  - b. Auditing or otherwise participating in courses with students without disabilities for which the student does not receive regular academic credit.
  - c. Taking non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses with students without disabilities.
  - d. Participating in internships or work-based training in settings with individuals without disabilities; and
- 6) Provides students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to participate in coursework and other activities with students without disabilities.



# Appendix C

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## Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium 2020 Annual Report

The Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium (MIHEC) is a parent-led collaborative group of stakeholders including inclusive higher education institutions, local education agencies, key state agencies, advocates, families, legislators and nonprofits. MIHEC is committed to expanding Minnesota postsecondary education opportunities to all interested youth, young adults and adults with IDD, including students with IDD from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, geographic and socio-economic backgrounds. MIHEC evolved due to poor educational, employment and adult living outcomes for children, youth and young adults with disabilities in Minnesota.

There is an unmet need for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to have access to inclusive postsecondary education options in Minnesota. Currently, there are three Minnesota colleges with a Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)<sup>2</sup> designation. These programs have a combined enrollment capacity for 90 students with IDD. There are approximately 2,000 Minnesota students<sup>3</sup> with IDD completing 12th grade each year. In addition, there are 10,000 college age Minnesotans with IDD between the ages of 18-22. Expanding postsecondary education options for students with IDD creates a pathway to meaningful credentials, competitive integrated employment<sup>4</sup> and independent living with appropriate supports and services. Students with IDD who attend college are twice as likely to be employed, earn \$400 more per month than a peer who did not attend college, rely less on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and achieve a higher level of independent living.<sup>5</sup> Students with IDD who attend postsecondary education are prepared to enter the workforce and talent pool to meet the needs of businesses in Minnesota and contribute to statewide economic growth.

In response to these needs, in 2020 MIHEC formed with the purpose of building collaborative stakeholder relationships and engagement to address postsecondary needs for persons with IDD in Minnesota. A small MIHEC work group pursued a 2020-2025 Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) grant in the amount of \$500,000/yr. for 5 years. TPSID grants from the US

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<sup>2</sup> A Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) is a college program that has been approved through a process created by the US Department of Education. The CTP approval means that students with intellectual disability attending those programs are eligible for federal student aid.

<sup>3</sup> The Student data sourced from the Minnesota Department of Education MARSS Child Count Total December 2019 Report

<sup>4</sup> Competitive integrated employment is work that takes place in inclusive, typical work settings and for which employees, with and without disabilities, receive a competitive wage as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA)

<sup>5</sup> Think College Fast Facts Issue#24 2019 “The Effect of Postsecondary Education on Employment, Income and SSI for People with ID”

Department of Education fund model demonstration projects. The grant funding would have been used to establish MIHEC and fund the expansion of Minnesota inclusive higher education options for students with IDD. The Institute of Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota applied for this grant (Amy Hewitt, Principal Investigator). While the grant submitted was an excellent proposal earning a score of 94/100, MIHEC was not awarded a TPSID grant.

Despite the lack of TPSID grant funding, the MIHEC stakeholders remain committed to expand and improve Minnesota inclusive postsecondary education options for students with IDD. MIHEC initiatives obviously have to be scaled back from the grant proposal, but the stakeholders are committed to forging ahead with the positive momentum gained over the past year. The University of Minnesota ICI has committed to host MIHEC and provide limited administrative funding for staffing to organize MIHEC meetings and support some initial activities. The 2020-2021 MIHEC activities will focus on:

- Develop support materials for various stakeholders:
  - Establish Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Standards based on national standards
  - Update and document how braided funding can work for Minnesota students with IDD
  - Expand and document college pathway for students and families
  - Increase community outreach and awareness
- Plan and host monthly MIHEC learning community training and engagement events
- Develop and maintain a MIHEC website
- Provide staff technical assistance annually to one emerging college option
- Seek alternative funding to support MIHEC activities
- Serve as a resource for policy advocates and policymakers

While there have been a few legislative efforts to expand Minnesota postsecondary education options for students with IDD over the past several years, the efforts have not been successful in significant growth and development of fully inclusive programs. There are key resource and funding barriers that must be addressed in order to see positive movement forward. MIHEC goals include addressing these systems barriers so that expansion of Minnesota inclusive higher education options for students with IDD is possible.

First, MIHEC is establishing a technical assistance resource to support Minnesota colleges and universities to expand their enrollment and welcome students with IDD as part of their campus community. MIHEC maintains a vital link to Think College through relationship building and participation on their various work groups and committees. Think College is the National Coordinating Center based at the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston. The Center is a national technical assistance provider dedicated to developing, expanding, and improving research and practice in inclusive higher education for students with IDD funded by the US Department of Education. MIHEC provides a learning community for Minnesota universities and colleges to gain insight and learn from national experts and one another. Access to the technical assistance, research and expertise to widen college and university enrollment and admission for students with IDD has been a barrier for Minnesota universities and colleges. MIHEC is working to break down those barriers and provide the technical assistance for

Minnesota colleges and universities to successfully plan and open their campus community to include students with IDD.

Second, MIHEC will establish Minnesota inclusive higher education standards of best practice based on the Think College Program Accreditation Standards for Inclusive Higher Education released in late 2020. The standards are necessary to provide quality assurance for institutions of higher education (IHE) and accrediting agencies, as well as students with IDD and their families. The national accreditation standards have been created, vetted, and refined through rigorous field testing, and are ready to be used to validate and strengthen inclusive higher education enrolling students with IDD. The Minnesota inclusive higher education standards will provide a roadmap to Minnesota colleges and universities as they extend enrollment to students with IDD.

Third, MIHEC is collaborating with key state agencies through existing inter-agency partnerships to address funding barriers. Minnesota colleges and universities struggle to plan for and expand college enrollment for students with IDD without initial funding. One solution for sustainable inclusive higher education initiatives is braided funding. Braided funding is one common way that other states have tackled the funding barrier. Braided funding identifies and utilizes existing funding that a student with IDD may access. With the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014 and the September 17, 2019 Comprehensive Guidance Question & Answer “Increasing Postsecondary Opportunities and Success for Students and Youth with Disabilities” issued by the US Department of Education<sup>6</sup>, there is confirmation that postsecondary education expenses are eligible expenses through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Vocational Rehabilitation funding. Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) funding is another existing funding source that may be used for postsecondary education expenses. MIHEC and inter-agency members are addressing this evolving area by reviewing the current policy and practice to identify any potential gaps and opportunities to clarify and establish a Minnesota braided funding pathway for sustainable inclusive higher education options for students with IDD. MIHEC and its partners strive to update existing state agency funding policy and practices for IDEA, HCBS and vocational rehabilitation funding, and to improve access and awareness of what are possible funding options. Today it is challenging for interested students and their families to access and understand what funding options are available and what is allowable. MIHEC hopes to advise and collaborate with the state agencies to refresh Minnesota policy and practices and provide access to clear information for all stakeholders through accessible materials that clarify funding options.

Expanding Minnesota options for students with IDD aligns with the State’s efforts to improve access to postsecondary education and increase competitive integrated employment rates and independent living options for Minnesotans with IDD. The Minnesota Olmstead Plan includes specific Lifelong Learning and Education and Employment goals.<sup>7</sup> Students are able to make informed choices through person-directed planning and pursue a postsecondary education, earn meaningful credentials and earn a competitive

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<sup>6</sup> The September 17, 2019 Comprehensive Guidance Document issued by US Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) and the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). The document is titled “Increasing Postsecondary Opportunities and Success for Students and Youth with Disabilities.”

<sup>7</sup>The Olmstead Plan is a broad series of key activities our state must accomplish to ensure people with disabilities are living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated setting.

wage in a career that they choose. All Minnesotans benefit from a student with IDD becoming a credentialed, available employee who contributes to their community and our statewide economy.

MIHEC welcomes the ongoing collaboration with the Office of Higher Education to expand Minnesota inclusive higher education options and funding for students with IDD to pursue a postsecondary education and competitive integrated employment. MIHEC will continue to advocate for and pursue additional funding in order to fully implement the vision of MIHEC to build, enhance and sustain inclusive higher education options for all students with IDD across the state.

# Appendix D

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## Data Suppression Policy for Student Information

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the protection of private data on students when releasing summary data about our institutions and students.

Increased attention to education has led to an expansion in the amount of information on students and institutions reported by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE). Such reports offer a challenge of meeting reporting requirements while also meeting legal requirements to protect each student's personally identifiable information (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA]) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). Recognizing this, subgroup disaggregations of the data may not be published if the results would yield personally identifiable information about an individual student (or if the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information). States are required to define a minimum number of students in a reporting group or subgroup required to publish results consistent with the protection of personally identifiable information (34 CFR § 200.7)

### Scope

This policy applies to all reports generated by OHE, by OHE's contractors and by third parties working on OHE's behalf. This policy does not apply to data shared with employees of OHE or contractors of OHE.

### Policy

OHE may release summary data, including aggregate student counts for all groups including those of less than 10. However, OHE will not release any *other information* regarding the group.

*Other information* is defined as information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school (institution) community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty. Other information may include, but is not limited to: gender, race/ethnicity, disability, citizenship, income and wages, expected contributions and birth date or birthplace information. *Other information* also includes aid awarded for the following programs: Postsecondary Child Care Grants, Minnesota Indian Scholarship Program, Minnesota GI Bill, State Grant Dream Act and Federal GI Bill.

OHE will suppress other information for aggregate student counts of less than 10 in for the following reasons:

- the information could identify an individual,
- the report will be released to an audience that includes recipients other than individuals to whom OHE may disclose personally identifiable information pursuant to federal or state law,
- the number of students in a grouping is 100% of all students, or the number of students in a suppressed cell can be derived from existing information.

Individuals and organizations to which OHE discloses information will be directed that its re-disclosure to anyone who is not authorized to receive that information under state and/or federal law is prohibited. Disclosure of data by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education is subject to Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (34 CFR Part 99.31).

Additionally, any use of education records by another state agency, its employees, agents, or contractors is subject to and shall be consistent with applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) including, but not limited to, FERPA regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 99.32 through 99.35, regarding recordkeeping, re-disclosure, and destruction of education records.

### **Definitions**

- **Personally identifiable information (PII):** Data that identifies the individual. For the purposes of education records, PII is defined by federal law as information that includes, but is not limited to a student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school (institution) community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; and information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.
- **Summary Data:** Statistical records and reports aggregated from data on individuals in a way that individuals are not identified and from which neither their identities nor any other characteristic that could uniquely identify an individual is ascertainable.

### **Classification of Information**

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13.02, subd. 12 and M.S.136A.162, data on students collected and used by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education are private data on individuals, including data on applicants for

financial assistance collected and used by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education for student financial aid programs administered by that office.

### **Best Practices in Reporting**

Per the U.S. Department of Education's SLDS Technical Brief (NCES-2011-603), *Statistical Methods for Protecting Personally Identifiable Information in Aggregate Reporting*, the following best practices may be used to protect each student's personally identifiable information:

1. Minimize the amount of enrollment details reported in the profile of the school (institution), district (sector), or state in reports of outcome measure results. If possible, use enrollment data for a different date than that of the reported outcome measures and label the different dates (e.g., report enrollment data for a date different from the assessment date, such as fall enrollment for a spring assessment). In so doing, tell the readers that the data on student enrollment by grade and by selected student characteristics are included to provide context for the results presented but should not be assumed to exactly match the student composition at the time the outcome was measured.
  - a) Report the percentage distribution of students by grade at the school (institution), district (sector), or state level in a standalone table without any of the outcome measures or reporting subgroup details.
  - b) Report the percentage distribution of students by reporting subgroup at the school (institution), district (sector), or state level in a standalone table without any of the outcome measures or enrollment by grade details.
  - c) Do not report the details of the enrollment data within each reporting subgroup by individual grades.
2. Use a minimum of 10 students for the reporting subgroup size limitation.
  - a) Suppress results for all reporting groups with 0 to 9 students.
  - b) Suppress results for reporting subgroups with 0 to 9 students and suppress each of the related reporting subgroups regardless of the number of students in the subgroup (i.e., suppress the other subgroup(s) of the set of subgroups that sum to the overall group). In instances with 3 or more subgroups, the subgroups with 0 to 9 students can be combined with each other or with the smallest reportable subgroup to form an aggregated subgroup of 10 or more students to allow for the reporting of data for larger subgroups.
3. Use only whole numbers when reporting the percentage of students for each category of an outcome measure (e.g., the percentage assessed).
4. Do not report the underlying counts for the subgroup or group totals (i.e., the denominators of the percentages); also do not report the underlying counts of students in individual outcome categories (i.e., the numerators).
5. For reporting variables/outcomes measures for subgroups, use the following standards to protect student privacy:

- a) For reporting variables/outcome measures with more than 300 students and no related subgroup with fewer than 200 students, use the following approach:
  - i. Recode categories with values of 99 to 100 percent to greater than or equal to 99 percent ( $\geq 99$  percent).
  - ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 1 percent to less than or equal to 1 percent ( $\leq 1$  percent).
  - iii. Otherwise, report the percentage of students in each category using whole numbers.
  
- b) For reporting variables/outcome measures with 201 to 300 students and no related subgroup with fewer than 200 students, use the following approach:
  - i. Recode categories with values of 98 to 100 percent to greater than or equal to 98 percent ( $\geq 98$  percent).
  - ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 2 percent to less than or equal to 2 percent ( $\leq 2$  percent).
  - iii. Otherwise, report the percentage of students in each category using whole numbers.
  
- c) For reporting variables/outcome measures in which the number of students ranges from 101 to 200, use the following option in this group and all related subgroups with more than 200 students:
  - i. Recode categories with values of 98 to 100 percent to greater than or equal to 98 percent ( $\geq 98$  percent).
  - ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 2 percent to less than or equal to 20 percent ( $\leq 2$  percent).
  - iii. Recode the percentage in each remaining category in all reporting groups or subgroups to intervals as follows (3–4, 5–9, 10–14, 15–19, . . . , 85–89, 90–94, 95–97).
  
- d) For reporting variables/outcome measures in which the number of students in the smallest reporting group or subgroup ranges from 41 to 100, use the following option in that group or subgroup and use option 5c for each related reporting group or subgroup with more than 100 students:
  - i. Recode categories with values of 95 to 100 percent to greater than or equal to 95 percent ( $\geq 95$  percent).
  - ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 5 percent to less than or equal to 5 percent ( $\leq 5$  percent).
  - iii. Recode the percentage in each remaining category in all reporting groups or subgroups to intervals as follows (6–9, 10–14, 15–19, 20–24, . . . , 85–89, 90–94).
  
- e) For reporting variables/outcome measures in which the number of students in the smallest reporting group or subgroup ranges from 21 to 40, use the following option for that group or subgroup, use option 5d for each related reporting group or subgroup with 41 to 100 students, and use option 5c for those with more than 100 students:
  - i. Recode categories with values of 90 to 100 percent to greater than or equal to 90 percent ( $\geq 90$  percent).



- ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 10 percent to less than or equal to 10 percent ( $\leq 10$  percent).
  - iii. Recode the percentage in each remaining category in all reporting groups or subgroups to intervals as follows (11–19, 20–29, . . . , 80–89).
- f) For reporting variables with 10 to 20 students in the smallest subgroup, use the following option for that group or subgroup, use option 5e for each related group or subgroup with 21 to 40 students, use option 5d for those with 41 to 100 students, and use option 5c for those with more than 100 students:
  - i. Collapse all outcome measures to only two categories, using the same collapsing rules across all subgroups for each outcome measure (e.g., assessment results collapsed to below the proficient level and at or above the proficient level by sex, racial and ethnic groups, disability status, etc.).
  - ii. Recode categories with values of 0 to 20 percent to less than or equal to 20 percent ( $\leq 20$  percent), and recode the other category to greater than 80 percent ( $> 80$  percent).
  - iii. If both collapsed categories have percents of 21 to 79 percent, recode the percentage in each collapsed category to intervals as follows (21–29, 30–39, . . . , 70–79).
- 6. For each outcome measure reported at the district (sector) level, if results for a group or subgroup have been collapsed, recoded, or suppressed in only one school (institution) in the district (sector), apply the same collapsing, recoding, or suppression rule for that group or subgroup in a second school (institution) or at the district (sector) level (i.e., for any specific measure and group or subgroup, there must be either no school (institution)-level data suppressed for a specific subgroup or the data for that subgroup must be suppressed for at least 2 schools (institutions) or for one school (institution) and the district (sector)).
- 7. For each outcome measure reported at the state level, if results for a group or subgroup have been collapsed, recoded, or suppressed in only one district (sector) in the state, apply the same collapsing, recoding, or suppression rule for that group or subgroup in a second district (sector) (i.e., for any specific measure and group or subgroup, there must be either no district (sector)-level data suppressed for a specific subgroup or the data for that subgroup must be recoded or suppressed for at least 2 districts (sectors)).



2021