SUBJECT: Announcement of the Common Data Set Exchange (CDSX)

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URL: http://highered.org/cdsx

Since the early 1990s, four major publishers (the College Board, Peterson’s, U.S. News & World Report, and Wintergreen/Orchard House) have collaborated with the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) and the institutional research community in the Common Data Set (CDS) initiative. This effort has culminated in a well-defined set of standard data items and has improved the quality and accuracy of data collection by the publishers. Today, the CDS instrument also has the potential to serve the needs of institutions for collecting comparative data.

Many institutional researchers are encouraging the development of a way to exchange CDS data. In response to this demand, John Milam and HigherEd.org, Inc. have decided to establish and host the Common Data Set Exchange (CDSX) for CDS data sharing among colleges and universities. HigherEd.org is pleased to partner with The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the CDSX. With the permission of participating institutions, selected CDSX data may be used to inform the 2005 Carnegie Classification.

This effort is based on two primary sources. First, a task force of the Higher Education Data Policy Committee of AIR, chaired by Mary Sapp, has been involved since 2001 in discussions about a possible online CDS. Second, the technical expertise for the online data exchange is based on the previous work by John Milam and Tod Massa in an NCES funded pilot study, the Voluntary Institutional On-Line Information Network (VIOLIN).

The CDSX is offered for free to institutions to submit and share their CDS data and use its reporting tools for internal use. It is not intended to serve as a central collection point for the publishers. Current CDSX objectives are to:

1. collect 2002-03 CDS data via Excel spreadsheet upload and/or HTML
2. provide basic reporting tools for viewing and downloading CDS data
3. compile early-release data on Academic Year 2003-04 tuition and fees, which while part of the 2002-03 CDS are not
In the future, a premium membership will be offered with more extensive comparative data exchange, online publication, and analysis. The CDSX is now open for registration, data submission, and data sharing at: http://highered.org/cdsx

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