

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 16-16
	DATE November 16, 2016

TO: State Workforce Agencies
State Workforce Liaisons
State Apprenticeship Agency Directors
State Unemployment Insurance Directors
State Workforce Investment Boards and Staff
Local Workforce Investment Boards and Staff
Office of Apprenticeship Field Staff
Office of Apprenticeship State and Regional Directors
American Job Centers

FROM: PORTIA WU 
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Supporting Students and Employees Impacted by School Closures

1. **Purpose.** This notice is to inform the public workforce system about the information and services available both to students and to employees who have been displaced as the result of a postsecondary institution closure.
2. **Background.** There have been postsecondary institution closures recently, and in the event of additional closures in the future, displaced students and employees may need assistance identifying their next steps.
3. **Resources for Students.** Educational information for students affected by the closure of postsecondary institutions is available at studentaid.gov/closures.

The U.S. Department of Education recently joined Beyond 12 (<http://www.beyond12.org/>) and National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) (<https://www.nasfaa.org/>) in announcing the launch of a new online package of supports to aid students affected by college closures. The resources, available at <https://nextstepsedu.org> will match students with experienced financial aid and academic counselors throughout the country who can provide critical guidance as they determine how best to continue their studies.

Beyond 12 helps students pursue their higher education dreams by tracking student progress, connecting them with resources and supports and providing individualized, virtual coaching. With a network of K-12, college and non-profit partners, Beyond 12 is currently tracking the postsecondary progress of more than 40,000 students and coaching nearly 2,000 students nationally. With roughly 2,500 postsecondary member institutions nationwide, NASFAA is an active network of nearly 20,000 financial aid professionals dedicated to the principle that

no student should be denied access to a quality postsecondary education for lack of financial resources.

The Department of Education also has developed a resource hub designed for financial aid and other training professionals on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) (<https://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/itt.html>) website. There, financial aid professionals and other partners, including Next Steps EDU advisors, can assist former students by, accessing resources such as state-specific tuition refund guidance and credit transfer policies for accreditors nationwide. The Department will continue updating this hub with new FAQs, additional federal or state-specific resources.

Information for students affected by the recent closure of ITT Technical Institute (ITT), which had over 130 locations across the country, is available at studentaid.gov/ITT. For example, in the case of students who were attending ITT Technical Institute (ITT) when it announced its closure on Sept. 6, 2016, or who withdrew from an ITT location on or after May 6, 2016, the Department of Education has stated that these students may: (a) apply for a closed school loan discharge; or (b) transfer earned credits to another institution to continue their education in a comparable program. On October 28, 2016 the Department also announced plans to restore semesters of Pell Grant eligibility for eligible students who were unable to complete their programs because their institution closed. The Department of Education also has developed a resource hub designed for colleges and counselors supporting ITT students. There, financial aid professionals and other partners can access resources to aid in their efforts to assist former students, such as data on the programs of study by ITT location and the contact information for accreditors nationwide. The Department of Education will continue updating this hub, available at ifap.ed.gov/SupportITTStudents with additional information and resources.

Students interested in comparing their options for continuing their education at another institution may wish to consult the College Scorecard or the GI Bill Comparison Tool.

4. **Services for Displaced School Employees.** States and local workforce areas should: 1) provide employees affected by the closure of an institution of postsecondary education with the full range of career and training services for which they are eligible; and 2) ensure that all appropriate Rapid Response activities, including layoff aversion approaches, as described at Section 682.300 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) final rules, are made available to adversely affected employees upon announcement of closures or layoffs. Affected employees should also be offered appropriate services available through the American Job Center system, such as career counseling and job search assistance; resume preparation and interviewing skills workshops; local labor market information provision; and education and training opportunities, as well as supportive services, unemployment insurance, and other services where applicable.
5. **Action Requested.** States, Workforce Development Boards, American Job Centers, and other public workforce system stakeholders are requested to:

- Become familiar with the information and resources available through various education-related websites;
- Post and share information in this TEN with displaced students and employees;
- Disseminate the information available at various education websites to area colleges, counselors, and other workforce system stakeholders;
- Contact the president of a local community college(s) and other training providers to obtain information about college initiatives and programs for displaced students and opportunities for displaced employees;
- Conduct outreach to alert former students and displaced employees of career counseling and resources available to them;
- Provide career counseling to former students and displaced employees to help them choose among their options resulting from a school's closure, and refer them as appropriate, based upon their decisions, to continued education, training or employment;
- Find alternative training programs as quickly as possible for any participant in Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) approved training who is impacted by a school's closure. This includes alternatives such as distance learning/online training programs. Once appropriate training is located, please modify the participants' training plan accordingly to accommodate those changes. Please direct any questions that you may have to your Regional Coordinators.
- Ensure that former students are aware of the full range of training opportunities available to them, including Registered Apprenticeships, YouthBuild, and the Job Corps program. Eligibility information about the Job Corps program is available at: <https://recruiting.jobcorps.gov/>.
- Collaborate with state authorizers of higher education and institutions of higher education in supporting former students and displaced employees.
- Engage local press to help disseminate information and alert the public of supports available for former students and displaced employees; and
- Share success stories of former students navigating their next steps by engaging local press and emailing examples and press clips to press@ed.gov.

Inquiries. Questions from ETA grantees about the issuance of this TEN should be directed to the appropriate ETA regional office. Questions about the content of this TEN related to ITT students should be directed to the Department of Education emailing supportITTstudents@ed.gov. Answers to frequently asked questions are available at studentaid.gov/ITT, ifap.ed.gov/SupportITTStudents, and studentaid.gov/closures. If you have further questions, feel free to call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).