



## **The Perkins Loan Program: A Proven Track Record for Students, Institutions, and Taxpayers**

The Perkins Loan Program is the nation's first student loan program. Individual revolving funds have "turned over" several times, meaning the program is literally a strong investment for students, schools, and taxpayers. This investment has delivered significant returns for all stakeholders since 1958. .

- Institutions award Perkins loans to students based on financial need. The median adjusted gross income for Perkins borrowers and/or their families in 2014-15 was just over \$28,000.
- As of 2015-16, **more than 421,000 students nationwide** rely on Perkins Loans to pay for college. It is often the loan of last resort, sometimes filling the gap during financial emergencies like the loss of a parent or layoff, and helping increase student retention and completion.
- The program provides financial aid administrators with the flexibility to meet their students' financial need with extremely low-cost loans, even in the case of emergencies or last minute adjustments. It provides local control and individualized lending, determined by counselors who know the individual borrowers best.
- There is **NO replacement** for Perkins. Private loans require borrowers to pass a credit check and usually require co-signers - two requirements that can be very difficult for borrowers with financial need.
- The program has no origination fees, a low fixed interest rate of 5%, and a nine-month grace period during which interest does not accrue. Aside from Subsidized Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans are the best deal for students among the federal loan programs
- Perkins Loans can be cancelled in full after five years of service (with partial cancellation each year) in a variety of public service fields. Perkins Loan cancellation is more beneficial than Public Service Loan Forgiveness for Direct Loans, which require 120 qualifying payments prior to eligibility.
- Since they are responsible for operating the program, Perkins institutions work directly with their student borrowers, providing them with assistance throughout repayment. This assistance extends beyond Perkins Loans, as campus-based administrators often help their students and borrowers understand other issues, such as Direct Loans or tuition bills.
- The program offers an extended repayment period to borrowers facing financial hardship. Loans may also be consolidated for access to income-driven repayment plans.
- Perkins ensures institutional accountability through requiring "skin-in-the game." Perkins is a risk-sharing program where institutions have contributed approximately one-third of the dollars in their Perkins Funds. This ownership interest greatly contributes to the successful management of this program as well as the availability of additional financial resources for students.

**We need an immediate extension of the Perkins Loans Program, until the future of campus-based programs can be resolved in a full Higher Education Act Reauthorization!**