

Decision Partners, Inc.

Independent Financial Literacy Education

Performance-Based Financial Literacy Education: A New Approach for TRIO Programs

By requiring competition-based TRIO proposals, the Department of Education helps to ensure that federal dollars support the programs most likely to demonstrate results.

According to the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE):

“Each TRIO Program operates against specific, measurable outcome objectives as clearly defined in each approved grant proposal. TRIO Program Directors are held accountable and must meet their stated objectives each year if they expect to remain funded and able to help participants in their targeted service area.”

As financial literacy education is now a requirement of all TRIO programs, Decision Partners has developed a list of specific outcomes that may be used in TRIO grant proposals by institutions planning to make Decision Partners courses part of their financial literacy education efforts.

Specific outcome criteria vary slightly between programs (Financial Literacy 101 for college, TuitionEdu for high school), but broadly include the following:

- Student financial knowledge and planning:
 - A personal financial plan including short, medium, and long-term financial goals.
 - A monthly budget that can be referenced on an ongoing basis (includes budget-to-actual capability for financial tracking).
 - A comprehensive financial aid plan, including online comparison of multiple financial aid award letters.
 - Financial self assessment, including stress, spending habits, credit cards, employment, and other factors based on dependent or independent financial aid status (FL101 only).
 - Verifiable course completion, including a 10 or 20 question final exam.
- Reporting – Administrators may export course usage data on a student-by-student basis to an Excel file based on both date range and program (SSS, GEAR UP, etc.). In less than a minute, a file with the year’s usage data may be generated. Includes student name, year in school, course completion code, exam score, dependent or independent status, and email address.
- Survey Data – Administrators may generate an aggregate report of survey data compiled from students on each specific campus – great for determining future programming needs and for quantitatively supporting new program requests.

Traditional financial literacy education tools such as in-person lectures or text-based websites offer no user data and no measurable outcomes. Decision Partners programs automate each step of the financial education process, from testing to course completion verification to results reporting, leaving you more time to concentrate on helping individual students.

For More Information

To learn more about bringing Decision Partners programs to your school or for help in describing Decision Partners services for your grant application, please contact Jim Pfeiffer at jim@decisionpartners.org or by phone at (978) 562-1390.