Data Errata: Entry-Cohort Earnings Calculations

Institution-level, entry-cohort earnings calculations published in 2022 and 2023 were calculated with misaligned cohorts and do not match what was described in previously published data documentation. Misaligned cohorts impact data published in the *merged_2018_19* and *merged 2019_20* data files for calculations measuring earnings in calendar years 1) 2018 combined with 2019 and 2) 2019 combined with 2020. Impacted variables include:

- Median earnings for the institutional aggregate of all federally aided undergraduate students measured 6, 8, and 10 years after enrollment (MD_EARN_WNE_P[6, 8, or 10]), including disaggregation by FAFSA family income (MD_EARN_WNE_INC1_P[6, 8, or 10], MD_EARN_WNE_INC2_P[6, 8, or 10], and MD_EARN_WNE_INC3_P[6, 8, or 10]); by dependent status (for dependents, MD_EARN_WNE_INDEP0 _P[6, 8, or 10]; and for independents, MD_EARN_WNE_INDEP1_P[6, 8, or 10]); and by sex/gender (for female, MD_EARN_WNE_MALE0_P[6, 8, or 10]; and for male, MD_EARN_WNE_MALE1_P[6, 8, or 10]).
- Proportion earning above a threshold (e.g. poverty line, high school earner) measured 6, 8, and 10 years after enrollment (GT_THRESHOLD_P[6, 8, or 10]).

Note that misalignment of earnings did NOT impact earnings calculations based on exit cohorts such as:
- Earnings calculated for individual fields of study post-completion described in the field of study documentation.[1]
- Earnings based on institution-level exit cohorts. For example, MD_EARN_WNE_1YR, MD_EARN_WNE_4YR, and GT_THRESHOLD_4YR.

College Scorecard intended to calculate earnings measured 6, 8, and 10 years after beginning school with exclusions for individuals who went back to school, individuals who were deceased, and individuals who were in military service during the measurement years. However, the actual implementation measured earnings 7, 9, and 11 years after beginning school, and the exclusion measurement years were misaligned with earnings measurement years. Exhibit 1 further illustrates the differences between the intended and actual description.

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[1] See https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/assets/FieldOfStudyDataDocumentation.pdf

Exhibit 1. Prior Description vs Revised Description (CY=Calendar year, Award year=July 1-June 30)							
		Intended			Actual		
Publication YEAR	Calculation (years after entry)	Beginning Cohort Award Year	Exclusions	Measurement Calendar Year	Beginning Cohort Award Year	Exclusions	Measurement Calendar Year
2023		2012-2013	CY2019	CY2019	2011-2012	CY2018	CY2019
	6 YEAR	2013-2014	CY2020	CY2020	2012-2013	CY2019	CY2020
		2010-2011	CY2019	CY2019	2009-2010	CY2018	CY2019
	8 YEAR	2011-2012	CY2020	CY2020	2010-2011	CY2019	CY2020
		2008-2009	CY2019	CY2019	2007-2008	CY2018	CY2019
	10 YEAR	2009-2010	CY2020	CY2020	2008-2009	CY2019	CY2020
2022		2011-2012	CY2018	CY2018	2010-2011	CY2017	CY2018
	6 YEAR	2012-2013	CY2019	CY2019	2011-2012	CY2018	CY2019
		2009-2010	CY2018	CY2018	2008-2009	CY2017	CY2018
	8 YEAR	2010-2011	CY2019	CY2019	2009-2010	CY2018	CY2019
		2007-2008	CY2018	CY2018	2006-2007	CY2017	CY2018
	10 YEAR	2008-2009	CY2019	CY2019	2007-2008	CY2018	CY2019

To assess the impact on misaligned cohorts, exhibits 2, 3, and 4 examine the most recent calculations published in 2024 with the intended alignment of cohorts with the calculation published in 2023 with misaligned cohorts. These exhibits show a high correlation between the two calculations.

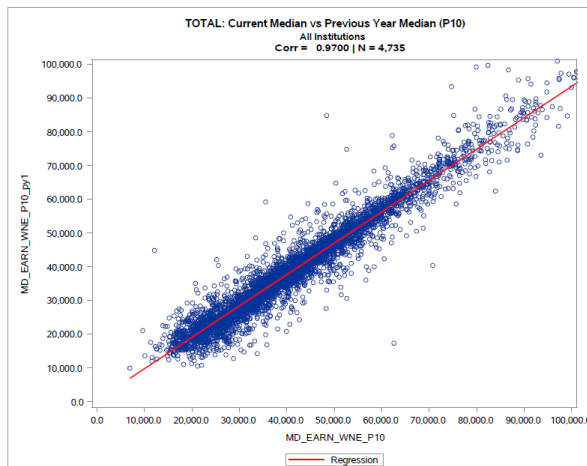### Exhibit 2: 2024 Published Median vs 2023 Median (10-year)

Exhibit 3: 2024 Published Median vs 2023 Median (8-year)

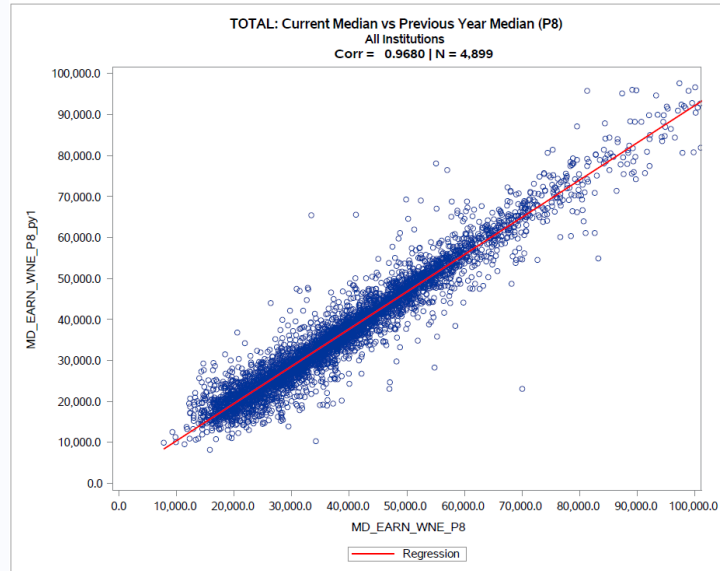TOTAL: Current Median vs Previous Year Median (P8)
All Institutions
Corr = 0.9680 | N = 4,899

Exhibit 4: 2024 Published Median vs 2023 Median (6-year)

TOTAL: Current Median vs Previous Year Median (P6)
All Institutions
Corr = 0.9661 | N = 4,840