



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

April 9, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your persistence and patience as we roll out the Better FAFSA.

I know this process has come with a number of setbacks, frustrations, and challenges. Delays with functionality and processing have put some students, families, and schools at a disadvantage—and schools with the fewest resources have been hit particularly hard.

The Department of Education greatly appreciates your extraordinary efforts as we continue to work to get this right—and make sure more students have access to the aid they need. We remain fully committed to providing as much support as possible to allow your schools to package financial aid offers and prepare for the 2024-25 school year.

I write today to share some important updates.

- As of this writing, more than 7 million 2024-25 FAFSA applications have been submitted and sent to colleges. Students who apply and submit a FAFSA form can be confident that their record will arrive to their school within one to three days.
- Thanks to the input we've received from you, along with information from the testing we've done, we now believe we've identified the errors affecting the accurate processing of large numbers of FAFSA forms and have fixed those errors. Going forward, we will continue to quickly identify, communicate about, and resolve any issues that arise.
- Today, we shared an update through a Federal Student Aid [Electronic Announcement](#) about timelines related to student corrections and reprocessing. We are preparing to implement changes that allow students to make corrections to their 2024-25 FAFSA forms and reprocess records affected by known errors; and the announcement outlines options for institutions and states as you work to package and award financial aid.

Our goal is to provide you with the information, support, and assistance that you need to send aid offers to students so that they can make an informed decision. We understand your financial aid offices must work quickly to receive and process student aid data on a compressed timeline. With the information we are providing today and this week, we encourage you to move forward in packaging aid offers for the student records you have received. We stand ready to support and assist you in doing so. Requests for assistance, questions, or general feedback is encouraged by visiting our [customer support center](#).

You previously have shared with us that reducing some of the regular reporting requirements that are typical in the spring would assist in allowing financial aid staff to focus primarily on FAFSA processing. In response, we have suspended new, routine program reviews and significantly reduced certain verification requirements, as [announced](#) earlier this year. We also recently [announced](#) a delay of certain Gainful Employment and transparency deadlines.

We are also committed to communicating regularly with schools and families during this rollout process. We will provide you with regular operational updates, and we will continue to quickly identify, resolve, and communicate about issues, should they arise.

Below are the recent steps we are taking to provide you with information and support as we continue to navigate the Better FAFSA rollout:

1. In addition to Electronic Announcements with technical information needed for processing, we will provide regular updates on our progress, and important developments via blog posts, which can be found [here](#).
2. Last week, we sent data to assist schools and states in identifying FAFSA records for which they can package aid. In the coming days, we will send additional data to help with these analyses, including for records affected by prior issues.
3. The Department will continue to host regular webinars for colleges and financial aid administrators. Webinars and other [resources](#) can be found [here](#).
4. Through our College Support Strategy, we are supporting more than 200 colleges, and our federal liaisons at the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) have met with more than 100 schools in person to better understand needs on the ground and how the Department can be helpful. If you need support, please reach out to our College Support Concierge mailbox at [CollegeSupportStrategy-FAFSA@ed.gov](mailto:CollegeSupportStrategy-FAFSA@ed.gov).
5. We are working with school district superintendents, principals and other school leaders, counselors, and community-based organizations to increase FAFSA completion across the country. Data on completion rates in your state can be found [here](#).

Finally, we know that many states and schools have pushed back their financial aid and enrollment deadlines. These states and schools are helping families that have to make a life-changing decision by giving them the time they need, given the delays. Other schools are proactively communicating with students that they are willing to provide more time and flexibility to allow students to consider all aid offers. I encourage schools that have not yet done so to strongly consider extending your admissions deadlines or, at a minimum, communicate your willingness to provide extensions to students who need them.

Again, we recognize the hardship the delays have caused. We see your tremendous efforts, and we appreciate your patience. We want to help every student and every college that requests it—and we'll continue to do so.

FAFSA is a decades-old system that served students poorly for too long; rolling out a Better FAFSA has proven difficult. But I know that when we get this right, we'll open countless doors of opportunity and transform our student financial aid system for generations to come.

Again, thank you for your steadfast leadership and partnership in this important work.

In Partnership,



Miguel A. Cardona, Ed.D.  
U.S. Secretary of Education