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FAFSA Changes for 2017–18

On Sept. 14, 2015, President Obama announced significant changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) process that will impact millions of students. We want to inform you—our partners in the college access, planning, and funding process—about these changes and provide you with tools and information you can use.

Changes for the 2017–18 FAFSA®

1. The 2016–17 FAFSA® will be the final FAFSA to launch on January 1. Beginning with the 2017–18 application, the FAFSA will be available to students and families October 1 of the previous year. This means students who need to complete the 2017–18 FAFSA will be able to access and submit the form anytime from Oct. 1, 2016, through June 30, 2018.

2. In addition to changing the launch date for the application cycle, beginning with the 2017–18 FAFSA, we also will change the requirements for reporting income information. Currently, FAFSA applicants are required to provide income information from the "prior year." For example, 2016–17 applicants must report 2015 income information. Beginning with the 2017–18 FAFSA, applicants will be required to provide "prior-prior" year income information. This means that the 2017–18 FAFSA will collect 2015 income information.

The following table provides a summary of key dates as we transition to using the early FAFSA submission timeframe and earlier tax information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN A STUDENT IS ATTENDING COLLEGE (SCHOOL YEAR)</th>
<th>WHEN A STUDENT CAN SUBMIT A FAFSA</th>
<th>WHICH YEAR’S INCOME INFORMATION IS REQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Resources for You and Your Students

To assist you and your students in learning about these changes, the U.S. Department of Education and the White House have prepared several informational pieces:

- [FAFSA Changes Fact Sheet](#) (for students)
- [FAFSA Changes Frequently Asked Questions](#) (for you, the counselor/advisor)
- [White House fact sheet](#) (for the general public)

We will update this site as the 2017–18 FAFSA launch approaches. Keep an eye out in spring 2016 for further resources such as talking points, suggested tweets and Facebook posts, etc.

We hope you will find these resources helpful and, as always, we thank you for everything you do to advance equity in access to higher education for the nation's students.

*September 14, 2015*