Affordability, Access and Attainment: Policy and Practice

Florida CAN Access & Success Summit
May 11, 2017
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Setting the Stage
The Federal Update

• Funding the Federal Government
• Higher Education Act
• Department of Education
• Focus on FAFSA
• Advocacy by the College Access Field
Fiscal Year 2017 Funding

• Restores Year-Round Pell Grant
• Removes $1.3 billion from the Pell Grant reserve fund
• Increases TRIO funding $50 million and GEAR UP funding $17 million
• Retains Corporation for National and Community Service
The “Skinny” Budget

• Removes $3.9 billion for Pell Grant reserve fund
• “Reduces Federal Work-Study significantly”
• Cuts TRIO programs 10% and Gear Up 33%
• Eliminates AmeriCorps
• Full budget expected May 22
What Will Congress Do?

• Supposed to pass 12 appropriations bills this summer for fiscal year 2018
• Reactions to Skinny Budget
• House Budget Proposal: Changes Pell Funding
Higher Education Act

• Last reauthorized in 2008
• Most parts of the bill just keep going
  – Except Perkins Loans, ACSFA
• House: New Chair, Rep Foxx of NC, holding hearings
• Senate: Focused on confirmations, possibly healthcare
• General consensus: 2018 at earliest
Department of Education

• Department of Education staffing and priorities
  – No named Under or Deputy secretaries
  – Only handful of 200+ appointments named
  – Likely dozens could be left purposefully vacant

• Actions mostly regulatory in nature
  – Paused student loan portal development
  – Upheld termination of Corinthian college accreditor (ACICS)
  – Continuing with FSA ID improvements
  – Issued verification alternatives in light of IRS DRT outage
Focus on FAFSA: Early FAFSA

Is it working?

– 1.1 million FAFSAs filed by HS seniors by Dec 30, 2016

– April 28, 2017 – 99% to way of total HS FAFSAs for 2016 seniors by graduation

– New baseline data because of change in birthday cut off
Focus on FAFSA: DRT Outage

• Offline March 3
  – 17-18 FAFSA DRT won’t return
  – 18-19 FAFSA DRT on Oct 1
• Income-Driven Repayment application also down – return by early June
• NCAN advocated with NASFAA, NACAC, and TICAS for verification alternatives
• Hold FSA to secure, usable DRT return on October 1, 2017.
Focus on FAFSA: Simplification

Streamlined FAFSA

Pathway One
Low-income families participating in means-tested benefit programs do not need to provide financial information.

Pathway Two
Families with straightforward taxes will see a FAFSA approximately half the length of the current form.

Pathway Three
Families filing tax schedules will answer the most questions – still far fewer than are on the current form. These students answer just two more questions than their middle-income counterparts.

State Page
States will have the option to use a State Page for non-financial questions.
Advocacy by the College Access and Success Field

- Increased in interest in NCAN’s advocacy activities
- Outreach from college access programs increased Congressional involvement in IRS DRT outage
- Informing FAFSA simplification bill from Rep. Doggett
State Policy Agenda

• Financial
  – Focus on need-based financial aid
  – Establish a State Higher Education Funding Strategy

• Supports
  – Preparation (curriculum, test prep, school counselors)
  – Access (data management, deadlines)
  – Success (multiple pathways, transfer)

• Equity as theme throughout

• For more information, see http://www.collegeaccess.org/statepolicy
Resources

• NCAN policy positions:
  – www.collegeaccess.org/policy

• NCAN blog:
  – www.collegeaccess.org/blog

• NCAN membership:
  – http://www.collegeaccess.org/Join_NCAN

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