FAFSA is Not Enough: How Verification Keeps Students from Entering College

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Welcome!

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Today’s Panel

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Questions & Conversation

• Submit your questions
• Share on social media
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  #FCAN
  #FAFSASChallenge
  #FormYourFuture
  #FAFSA

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This webinar is being recorded; all materials will be available within a week of recording
Florida College Access Network

**Our mission:** To create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college and career readiness, access, and completion for all students.

**Our vision:** At least 60% of working-age Floridians will hold a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential by the year 2025.
Our Work

Local College Access Networks (LCANs)

Research & Policy

Statewide Initiatives

Register at www.floridacollegeacces.org/initiatives
FAFSA Resources

http://floridacollegeaccess.org/initiatives/florida-fafsa-challenge/
http://www.futuremakerscoalition.com/fafsafirst/

• FAFSA Challenge Toolkit
• Top FAFSA Mistakes Students Make
• FAFSA Challenge Data Dashboard
• FAFSA Story Blog Posts
• FAFSA Verification Handout
FAFSA in Florida

- Florida ranks #4 in the nation for number of students eligible for a Pell Grant, but #36 for FAFSA completion
- By June 30, 2018, fewer than 50% of Florida students had completed the FAFSA
FAFSA is Not Enough

• Nearly 10% of FAFSAs submitted in Florida in 2018 were incomplete or incorrect, making Florida the 12th highest in the nation for FAFSA errors
• If every submitted FAFSA in Florida had been completed, we would have exceeded our 5% goal
• 30% of all FAFSA filers are selected for verification; 50% of low-income students
What is Verification?

• A randomly-selected federal audit to ensure the accuracy of information listed on the FAFSA
• Students must work with each school individually to complete verification
• Students who are selected for verification will have an asterisk* next to their Expected Family Contribution (EFC) number on their Student Aid Report (SAR)
• Students selected to verify citizenship will have a C next to their EFC (some students will have both)
VERIFICATION CHALLENGES

- High number of low-income students selected from October-December 2017
- Access methods for tax transcripts
- Non-filing letters
- Varied methods of notification by colleges
- Different processes by different colleges
- Lack of knowledgeable people to assist students
Strategies to Combat Verification

- Track students who have completed the FAFSA
- FAFSA Completion Workshop includes assisting with ordering tax transcripts for students/parents when applicable
- Use the DRT, use the DRT, use the DRT
- Require students to bring SAR to access advisor for review-verification or any other messages
- Track which students were selected
Strategies to Combat Verification

- Keep a tracking document of how colleges notify students regarding verification
- When possible, review verification materials before submitted
- Verify receipt of award letters-no award letter means check with college for missing documents
- Please share strategies from your program
Advocacy Strategy

• Education on Origination
  – Improper Payments
• Numbers speak for themselves
  – Recent Increase
• Comparison to tax returns
• Storytelling
Advocacy Strategy

• 1 Pager Stance
• Small rate of change once verified
  – 95% of EFCs remained the same
• DRT
  – #1 cause of improper payments in 2011
  – 21.2 percent used DRT in 2011
OF 1.8 MILLION LOW-INCOME HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS, 968K WILL SUBMIT A FAFSA. MORE THAN 45% OF LOW-INCOME SENIORS MAY NOT SUBMIT A FAFSA.

PATHWAY OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS THROUGH THE FAFSA PROCESS:
- 817K WILL COMPLETE A FAFSA.
- 409K 50% ARE SELECTED FOR VERIFICATION.
- 90K OR 22% OF THOSE SELECTED FOR VERIFICATION WILL EXPERIENCE "VERIFICATION MELT."
- 728K STUDENTS ARE AWARDED A PELL GRANT.
- 180K OR 25% OF THOSE WHO ARE AWARDED A PELL GRANT WILL EXPERIENCE "SUMMER MELT."

TOP REASONS FOR NOT SUBMITTING A FAFSA:
1: DO NOT KNOW HOW OR THAT THEY COULD
2: ARE DEBT AVERSE OR THINK CREDIT IS TOO LOW
3: ARE NOT PURSUING COLLEGE
4: THE FORM IS TOO COMPLICATED

ONLY 31% OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ENROLL USING A PELL GRANT.
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National: Contact Jack Porter
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Join us for our next webinar

Lost in Translation Part II: Aligning Business and Education to Create More Student Internships

Thursday September 6th, 1 pm

Register at FloridaCollegeAccess.org/tag/upcoming-webinar/
Questions

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