

U.S. Department of Education Advances Better FAFSA® Implementation for 2024-25



The U.S. Department of Education, under the leadership of U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, has provided updates on its ongoing efforts regarding the 2024-25 Better FAFSA implementation. Secretary Cardona emphasized the Department's commitment to leveraging every available resource to ensure the success of the Better FAFSA initiative, aimed at expanding access to higher education for a greater number of students nationwide.

Enhancing Aid Calculation and Pell Grant Eligibility

In its latest move, the Department has finalized adjustments to the aid calculation process to align fully with the FAFSA Simplification Act. These updates, integrated seamlessly into the Department's schedule, are set to streamline aid distribution without causing delays. As a result, projections indicate an increase in Pell Grant eligibility, with approximately 7.3 million students expected to qualify for these grants in the 2024-25 award year. Since the release of the new 2024-25 FAFSA form at the end of December, over 4.7 million forms have been successfully submitted.

Comprehensive Support Strategy for Colleges

The Department is actively collaborating with colleges and vendors to implement these updates efficiently. Through the FAFSA College Support Strategy, federal personnel will provide technical assistance and allocate \$50 million to aid colleges in adapting to the changes. Additionally, support from the Office of Federal Student Aid and nonprofit organizations will be extended to lower-resourced colleges. These institutions will receive personalized assistance in navigating the FAFSA process, ensuring accurate aid offer packages for students.

Expedited Processing with Test Student Records

To expedite the processing of student records, the Department will distribute system-generated test student records (ISIRs) to schools and vendors. This proactive measure aims to optimize system readiness for the influx of student records expected in March. By providing schools with test ISIRs, the Department enables them to fine-tune their systems for efficient processing, ultimately facilitating smoother aid distribution.

Building on Prior Progress

Today's announcements mark a continuation of the Department's efforts to implement the Better FAFSA form effectively. Earlier initiatives, such as providing test ISIRs and accommodations for FAFSA submissions without Social Security numbers, underscore the Department's commitment to ensuring equitable access to financial aid for all students. Furthermore, a structured process has been outlined to assist students affected by technical issues, allowing them to submit incomplete FAFSA forms while awaiting resolution.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.