



Resources: [NCAN](#), [DeptofEd](#)

Hello all: Here are some things to know and information that you could send to families. Please feel free to copy and tweak whatever suits your needs. Thank you for your amazing support; we know this is not ideal and not easy!

#### For Families:

Dear Class of 2024 students and families,

As you may have heard, Federal Student Aid has released a new timeline that will impact when students will receive college award packages. Right now, it is anticipated that colleges will not receive the FAFSA data until mid-March, therefore they will not be able to send financial aid packages until late March or early April. We know that this may cause you to delay your final decisions for next school year. We have been hearing from various colleges and universities and they recognize the impact that this may have on you and continue to figure out ways to address/support these changes. You may hear from colleges soon. We put together some things you can do while you wait:

1. First, file the FAFSA. Although there is a delay, the sooner you file the sooner you will receive an award letter. Note: FAFSA is running inconsistently on chromebooks. If possible, students/families should use a computer other than a chromebook.
2. Visit colleges that you have been accepted to or that you are interested in. Get a feel for the campus to make sure you have information that will help you with your final decision.
3. Use the [FSA Student Aid Estimator](#) to determine potential aid and compare it to actual college costs ([using net cost calculator](#)) as you begin to think about final college decisions.
4. Research and apply for scholarships: use [this list](#) to find scholarships that you may qualify for. They have varying requirements so you may qualify!
  - a. All scholarship providers should understand that they will not have FAFSA submission summaries until mid-March. They can produce evidence of FAFSA completion if necessary.
5. Attend [virtual webinars](#) about financing college through MiStudentAid to learn more about various opportunities. Register and you will receive the recording even if you are not attending live.
6. If you are having challenges with the FAFSA form, [Live chat](#) and email ([customerservice@studentaid.gov](mailto:customerservice@studentaid.gov)) has been working. Providing screenshots of issues in the email is helpful!

### For Schools/Counselors:

1. Provide the information above to families.
2. Create an internal data tracking system (excel, [google sheets](#) (make a copy to use)). Have students show you their submission page as evidence. The MCAN FAFSA tracker and MISSG portal data will be delayed due to ISIR delay. This tracking system will help you target the students to support and highlight/incentivize them as well.
3. Ensure students/families understand they must select that they consent to the FAFSA pulling their tax information from the IRS. If they decline to consent, the FAFSA will not be processed.
4. Think about using FAFSA Challenge Grant funding to take students on college visits to help them finalize their college choice.
5. Ensure that students file their FAFSA; while the timeline has changed, students will still need to file their FAFSA. The earlier they file, the sooner they will get award packages.
6. Consider supporting students and families with the [Net Cost Calculator](#) through classroom push in lessons or 1:1 support.
7. Anticipate the need for supporting students with college choices/award packaging discussions during May and early summer (summer melt). Use FAFSA Challenge Grant to pay for summer support hours.
8. MCAN will be providing a list of adults who are trained and willing to support with FAFSA completion. This will be provided for counselors to contact in an effort to provide more support to students and families. This list is not to be provided directly to families or students.
9. FAFSA is running inconsistently on chromebooks. If possible, students/families should use a computer other than a chromebook.

### Anticipated Questions from students and families in which we are still awaiting information:

1. What happens if I need to make a decision (early decision), but I do not have an award package yet?
2. What happens if I am required to put down a deposit, but I am hesitant because I do not know how much that college will cost?

### Example Email from a Michigan college

As I'm sure you're aware, the US Department of Education (the FAFSA folks) announced yesterday that processing 24-25 FAFSAs will be delayed until the "first half of March". This means:

- No colleges will receive any FAFSAs until mid-March (so no financial aid letters until after that date)
- Families will not be able to make corrections/changes to already submitted FAFSAs until mid-March.

- Families will not be notified of errors or additional information needed for their FAFSAs until mid-March.

Colleges had no advance warning of this change in processing – we were as surprised as anyone, as we were prepared to start receiving FAFSAs in late January.

We know your students and parents are anxiously awaiting news about financial aid from their colleges, and this is adding additional worry to what's already a stress-filled semester for many students.

Earlier today, we sent the attached letter to all students admitted to Calvin for the 24 Fall semester. We've revised our financial aid dates as follows:

- Mid-March: We expect Federal Student Aid to release FAFSA information to colleges allowing us to continue the evaluation process for your student.
- Mid-March: We will select and notify students receiving named scholarships for the 24-25 academic year. If FAFSA data is received later than expected this process will be adjusted as needed.
- Late March to early April: Students and families will receive their Calvin financial aid package in the mail, presuming timely receipt of FAFSA data.

What we want families to know is that this will not affect their eligibility for financial aid, and they can trust our office of Financial Aid to get them the information they need as soon as possible to make an informed college decision. I'm sure they will be hearing from all of their colleges in coming days with similar updates, as schools react to this news and make adjustments to their own timelines.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if you have any suggestions for how we can best serve your Class of 2024 and their parents.

#### FAFSA Updates/Glitches:

1. Students will not receive submission summaries nor will ISIRS be sent until mid-March. This will push back award packages until April.
2. Updated data tables are released and students will receive a new estimated SAI. Students will not have to re-file; it will be automatically updated. For those who have not yet filed, accurate SAIs will be provided to them beginning after mid-February.
3. FAFSA is running inconsistently on chromebooks. If possible, students/families should use a computer other than a chromebook.
4. Contributors without a SSN still do not have access to the form. We are awaiting further instruction.

5. If contributors need support with FSA ID retrieval, they can call the help desk and request an “FSA Tier 2 Specialist”.
6. [Live chat](#) and email ([customerservice@studentaid.gov](mailto:customerservice@studentaid.gov)) has been working for assistance or for case number information. Providing screenshots of errors/messages is helpful!
7. For parents who are unable to remember their previously created FSA IDs, they can use their state IDs to retrieve it. Follow the steps here:  
<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/help/recover-account>
8. For students who get the notification “SAI not able to be calculated”. This has been because the FAFSA form is dropping a signature of the student after a contributor submits. It is a glitch. Have the student take a screenshot when emailing FSA or can email [jeneen@micollegeaccess.org](mailto:jeneen@micollegeaccess.org). They might just have to go in again.
9. Make sure contributors and students do not put spaces before or after their name (or click space bar). This is also causing glitches.
10. For parents who have a “work” SSN assigned- this has been working for completion.

### Monday Webinar

MCAN will be hosting a webinar on Monday, February 5, 2024, 12pm-1pm. Here is the link to register: [Evolving FAFSA](#) (this is for counselors/advisers not for families)