



Student Financial Assistance 2002-2003 Action Letter

Action Letter # 1
August 2001

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SUMMARY: This letter provides information on the major changes to the Renewal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (Renewal FAFSA) process for 2002-2003. It also includes procedures and tips for using SFA's FAA Access on the Web site and record layouts for Type 2 PIN request files.

Dear Partner:

This letter provides a summary of the major changes we have made to the Renewal Application process for the 2002-2003 award year, a schedule of important dates, and specific procedures for the Renewal FAFSA options available to schools for 2002-2003.

Each year the Central Processing System (CPS) prints and mails paper Renewal FAFSAs to students who are eligible to participate in the Renewal Application process. The Renewal FAFSA is a tremendous time-saver for students; it carries forward most of the data provided on the prior cycle's FAFSA. Applicants update information that has changed and complete any new fields.

What's New for 2002-2003?

During discussions with SFA partners this spring, we examined the actual use of electronic RAD files requested by participating schools during 2001-2002 and previous cycles. We found that many schools were requesting and receiving electronic files during RAD request phases; however, few schools were actually submitting electronic Renewal FAFSAs to the CPS.

Through June 3, 2001, the CPS received over 6 million applications, of which less than 2% were electronic Renewal Applications sent via EDE systems. More and more students are using Renewal FAFSA on the Web to apply for Title IV financial aid. This is a positive trend for the Department of Education. We would like schools and servicers to increase the use of our Web-

based applications. These applications reduce effort for schools and students, guarantee greater accuracy, and require fewer corrections to information reported to the CPS.

As a result of this analysis, and in an attempt to reduce costs overall, we have decided to make some major changes to the Renewal FAFSA process for the 2002-2003 cycle. The following changes are outlined in detail in Enclosure B:

- We are eliminating the option to request that the CPS mail pre-printed Renewal FAFSAs directly to your school for distribution to designated groups of students. Instead, the CPS will print and mail paper Renewal FAFSAs directly to students.
- Students can use their PINs to access and sign their 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSAs on the Web. The CPS will automatically send PIN mailers instead of paper Renewal FAFSAs to eligible applicants who are graduate students or who used the Internet to submit a FAFSA or make corrections. In addition, you can continue to use FAA Access on the Web to request that PINs be mailed to your students.
- We are eliminating the option to request that the CPS send a RAD file of specific students to your school so you can print and distribute Renewal FAFSAs. Instead, the CPS will automatically send to all destination points an electronic file that contains a list of eligible 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA applicants and indicates which applicants received a paper Renewal FAFSA and which applicants received a PIN mailer.
- We are removing all Renewal FAFSA functionality from the 2002-2003 EDEExpress software and discontinuing the 2002-2003 version of the stand-alone Renewal Application software. (**NOTE:** Third party or in-house application systems should also eliminate these features from their software.)
- We are phasing out CPS Online Query and its access through EDconnect this fall. Schools may continue to use FAA Access on the Web to request that the CPS send PIN mailers to eligible students who would otherwise receive a paper Renewal FAFSA.

We have provided more information about these and other general changes in Enclosure B. You can use the procedures outlined in the other enclosures if you would like to request that 2002-2003 PIN mailers be sent to your students instead of paper Renewal FAFSAs, for those students who qualified for paper Renewal FAFSAs.

About this Letter

This Dear Partner Letter contains several enclosures that provide important information about the 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA process:

- **Enclosure A** is a schedule of important dates in the 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA process;
- **Enclosure B** provides general information on the Renewal FAFSA process changes;
- **Enclosure C** provides basic information on available Renewal FAFSA request options, responsibilities and obligations for participation, and Technical Support numbers and information;
- **Enclosure D** provides procedures for using the FAA Access on the Web site to submit PIN Mailer requests;
- **Enclosure E** explains how to interpret the new flat ASCII text file listing eligible 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA applicants;
- **Enclosure F** lists helpful hints for creating successful Type 2 (by SSN) PIN Mailer network request files;
- **Enclosure G** defines the PIN Request error codes in the Error file and suggests how to resolve them; and
- **Enclosure H** provides the record layouts for 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA Type 2 PIN Mailer network request files.

If You Need Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this letter or its enclosures, or on the 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA and PIN request processes in general, please contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at 800/330-5947 or via e-mail at cpswan@ncs.com.

You can also post questions regarding this letter on our e-mail listserv, SFATECH. For more information about SFATECH, including how to subscribe, visit the SFA Technical Support Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/sfatech>.

We look forward to working closely with you this fall to ensure another successful processing cycle in 2002-2003.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Douglas
General Manager
Students Channel

- Enclosure A: 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA Schedule
- Enclosure B: 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA Process Changes
- Enclosure C: Questions & Procedures to Request PINs
- Enclosure D: Accessing and Submitting a PIN Request via FAA Access
- Enclosure E: Interpreting the RAPP PIN/Print Notification File
- Enclosure F: Helpful Hints for Type 2 Requests via the Student Aid Internet Gateway
- Enclosure G: Interpreting the EREP03OP (PIN Request Error) File
- Enclosure H: 2002-2003 Renewal FAFSA Type 2 PIN Mailer Record Layouts