

III. CORRECTIONS AND UPDATES

The first steps in the application process are sending a student's application information into the Central Processing System, and receiving that student's processed application data back from the system. When data must be updated, under the limited circumstances allowed by regulation, or must be corrected, additional steps are required.

In EDEExpress, changes (corrections or updating) can be made to any student's record regardless of whether it originally entered the system as a paper or an electronic application. Both updates and corrections are referred to as correction transactions. The electronic correction process requires that signed correction documentation be maintained by the school that inputs the new information. Documentation can be a paper SAR or other documents such as tax returns, a verification worksheet, or a change-of-address form. The FAA enters the changes on the EDEExpress screen, transmits them to the CPS, and receives an ISIR containing the new processed data. In this situation, when the input is electronic, the student receives a SAR Information Acknowledgement.

The SAR is a vehicle for corrections in the paper system and for students who file using FAFSA Express or FAFSA on the Web. Students may use the SAR to correct and update their application information, and mail the SAR to the FAFSA processor for data entry. Using their PIN (see page 24), students may also make their corrections electronically through Corrections on the Web. After the corrections are processed, the student receives a new SAR if the corrections were made using a SAR, or a SAR Information Acknowledgement if the corrections were made using Corrections on the Web. In both cases, the school receives an ISIR.

As mentioned previously, when corrections

need to be made to data reported on the SAR Information Acknowledgement, the student may have corrections transmitted electronically through EDEExpress at a school, the student may request a duplicate SAR and send corrections or updates to the FAFSA processor using the SAR, or the student may make the corrections using Corrections on the Web.

SAR Corrections

The "YOU TOLD US" column on the SAR shows a shortened version of each numbered item that corresponds to a question on the FAFSA, and has printed beneath it the student's response to that question. The second column, "WRITE IN INFORMATION FOR NEW OR CORRECTED ITEMS ONLY" has boxes and ovals that resemble the answer fields on the FAFSA, and allows the student to indicate or write in a corrected answer, if necessary.

Items that are highlighted (printed in boldface type) require special attention. Highlighting means the CPS identified the responses as questionable or inconsistent with other answers. The CPS may assume answers to certain questions by comparing them with other information on the application. Answers might be assumed when the question was left blank, or a positive number might be assumed when the answer to an income question was given as a negative number.

When the CPS assumes an answer, both the value reported by the applicant and the assumed value are printed on the SAR. The word "ASSUMED" will appear in parentheses with the assumed value. Assumed values are used by the CPS in performing the calculation and should always be reviewed carefully. If the assumed values are correct, the student does not need to change them on the SAR.

Fields that show assumed values or that trigger

certain edits are identified on the ISIR. The fields will have an “h” printed next to the questioned item and the assumed items are designated with an asterisk (i.e., *).

The student can always correct other items, if necessary, whether or not they are highlighted.

If the record has been rejected, an arrow will print in the “YOU TOLD US” column pointing to the response field for the questioned item.

This indicates that the student must provide a new answer because the original response was blank or illegible, and the item is necessary to perform an EFC calculation. The student may also correct other items, if necessary, even if they are not highlighted.

At the top of the SAR are instructions to the student explaining the meaning of the arrows, and the proper way to verify an answer, fill in an oval, or to delete an answer. To verify a previously reported answer, the student must rewrite the same value in the answer fields and return the SAR.

Sometimes students are caught in a reject “loop” because they don’t respond to all of the highlighted and arrowed items to turn off the reject, or because they provide new information that the edit check still considers to be inconsistent or questionable.

Parent Information for Independent Students

The SARs for dependent students and for independent students contain exactly the same sections and numbered items as the FAFSA. Parent information will be printed in the parent section for an independent student if the student provided it on the FAFSA, although the EFC calculation will not include parent data. Students in certain health profession programs are advised that they may have to provide parental data, because the data are required by many health profession schools to award Title VII aid.

Parental data provided by independent students will not be subject to any edits, but the data will appear on the SAR and on ISIRs and be carried forward on all transactions.

Parental data are always required for dependent students and will be edited and used in the EFC calculation.

Signatures for SAR Corrections

On the last page of the SAR, a message in the left column shows the address where SAR corrections should be mailed.

In the right column of the same page, the student is asked to certify that any corrections made on the SAR are accurate and complete. This statement must be signed by the student. For a dependent student, one parent must also sign.

Reject 16 SARs—Signatures and Certifications

SARs with Reject 16 are mailed to students who submitted their applications via FAFSA Express or FAFSA on the Web, but did *not* follow up with a signed Signature/Certification page, or the page was incomplete and could not be processed. If the record indicates that a printer was not available to the student, the CPS processes the application immediately and mails a Reject 16 SAR. If the record indicates that a printer was available, the CPS holds the transmission for up to 14 calendar days while waiting for a Signature Page. If a signature is not received in 14 days, the CPS processes the record and sends a Reject 16 SAR. A Reject 16 SAR will not have a calculated EFC and will contain the full Certification Statement that appears on the FAFSA.

To receive an EFC calculation, the student must sign the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor’s address indicated on the SAR. The

student can also make other corrections to the Reject 16 SAR at the same time, if necessary. By signing and returning the certification statement along with the application data, the student completes the application process. Note that Reject 16 may appear with other rejects or highlighted data requiring correction or verification.

A student who has a PIN may also sign their record electronically on the Web as well as make other corrections using Corrections on the Web. As another option, schools may obtain the necessary documentation and submit the student signature using the EDExpress software.

Reject 15 SARs —Renewal FAFSA on the Web

As explained in 2001-2002 Action Letter #1 (GEN-99-18) and Action Letter #4 (GEN-99-25), students who receive a paper Renewal FAFSA from their schools or from the Department may be able to apply using Renewal FAFSA on the Web. A student must reside at the address that is currently in the applicant database to request a PIN at the Department's web site: <http://www.pin.ed.gov>. With the PIN, a student may access his or her 2000-2001 application information, respond to the required Renewal FAFSA questions, update or correct any of the previous information, and transmit the 2001-2002 Renewal Application over the web.

For an independent student, the PIN serves as signature and certification, eliminating the need to print and mail a signature page to complete the application process. For a dependent student, the PIN serves as the student's signature and certification, but the parents must also provide a parent's signature, either on a signature page or electronically with a PIN, to complete the process.

If a printer is available, the dependent student may print out a Signature Page, obtain the parent's signature, and mail it to the Processor. The transmitted application is held up to 14 days while waiting for a Signature Page. If a signature is not received in 14 days, the CPS processes the record and sends a Reject 15 SAR (Reject 15 is used when the parent signature is required, but missing from an application or SAR). The dependent student's parent must sign and return the Reject 15 SAR to complete the process for Renewal FAFSA on the Web.

If a printer is not available, the student will indicate this on the electronic transmission. The CPS will process the record immediately and send a Reject 15 SAR.

Reject 14 SARs

New for 2001-2002, SARs with Reject 14 will be mailed to students who submitted paper FAFSAs or SARs without a student signature. To receive an EFC calculation, the student must sign the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor's address indicated on the SAR. The student can also make other corrections to the Reject 14 SAR at the same time, if necessary. By signing and returning the certification statement along with the application data, the student completes the application process. Note that Reject 14 may appear with other rejects or highlighted data requiring correction or verification.

A student who has a PIN may also sign their record electronically on the Web as well as make other corrections using Corrections on the Web. As another option, schools may obtain the necessary documentation and submit the student signature using the EDExpress software.

School Code Corrections

There are a number of ways students can correct

the school codes listed on their record to replace, add, or remove additional schools. On the SAR, the student can correct any of the six school code fields and the new code will be added in the position in which it was entered on the SAR. If the student chooses a position that already has a school code in it, the previous code will be replaced by the new school code. The school with the previous code that was removed will not receive ISIRs for the student. The same results will occur if the school correction is made using EDEExpress or if the request is made over the telephone through the Federal Student Aid Information Center. However, if the correction is made using EDEExpress, the processing system will not process a change that will eliminate the school that transmitted the correction from the student's record.

If the student makes a school code change by writing a letter and sending it to the MDE, only the schools listed on the letter will appear on the resulting SAR/ISIR. All of the previous schools will be deleted.

School Use Only Box

An aid administrator can perform a dependency override from dependent to independent on the SAR by using the "School Use Only" box at the end of the SAR. This box is designated "Professional Judgment" to identify the two types of professional judgment actions a financial aid administrator may perform on a SAR: a dependency override or FAA Adjustment.

To perform a dependency override, the FAA fills in the oval marked "1" on the line labeled D/O (Dependency Override), fills in the school's six-character Federal School Code, and signs in the signature space. Dependency overrides can be performed on the SAR as well as on the FAFSA or Renewal Application. The SAR also allows an FAA to cancel a dependency override by filling in oval "2" in the D/O section, and

providing the Federal School Code and a signature.

As previously discussed, the Dependency Override indicator in the FAA Information section will contain this information: a "Y" if an override from dependent to independent was performed (comment 164 is triggered); an "N" if a dependency override was cancelled (comment 165 is triggered); and "blank" if no action was taken.

Dependency Status Changes in EDEExpress

The EDEExpress software provides a dialogue box following the student status questions, and asks whether a dependency override will be performed. At this stage, an FAA may enter the code to perform the override from dependent to independent and subsequent screens will bring up only those questions the independent student must answer.

Professional Judgment

The other type of Professional Judgment that may be performed using the School Use Box is a professional judgment adjustment indicating that the FAA used professional judgment to make changes to one or more data elements. To indicate the adjustment, the FAA would fill in the oval marked "FAA Adjustment," provide the Federal School Code and a signature.

When a professional judgment request is processed, the resulting SAR or ISIR carries a flag of "Y" in the "FAA Adjustment Request" location and a comment (#27) stating that the record resulted from a professional judgment action. The School Use Box on a rejected SAR does not allow this type of professional judgment adjustment because the student has not received an EFC.