

NCER-NPSAS Grant Study
Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA)
2017: Testing the Effectiveness of FAFSA
Interventions on College Outcomes

Appendix A
Intervention Materials

OMB # 1850-0931 v.2
The content of this Appendix was Approved under
OMB# 1850-0931 v.1

Submitted by
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education

October 2016
revised December 2016

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Summary of Intervention and Survey Communications

| Appendix A – Intervention Communication Materials (to be conducted January 2017 through May 2017) | | | | | |
|--|---|---|------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Intervention</i> | <i>Intervention Group</i> | <i>Title of Intervention Communication</i> | | | <i>Frequency</i> |
| A | Has not submitted 2017-18 FAFSA (as of Jan 13, 2017) | Intervention <i>Neutral Framing</i> | A1: Submitted 2016-17 | Letter Email | Up to 4 contacts over a five month period |
| | | | A2: Not submit 2016-17 | Letter Email | |
| B | | Intervention <i>Positive Framing</i> | B1: Submitted 2016-17 | Letter Email | |
| | | | B2: Not submit 2016-17 | Letter Email | |
| C | | Intervention <i>Negative Framing</i> | C1: Submitted 2016-17 | Letter Email | |
| | | | C2: Not submit 2016-17 | Letter Email | |
| D | Already submitted 2017-18 FAFSA | Intervention <i>Neutral Framing of Next Steps</i> | | Letter Email | 2 contacts over a five month period |
| Appendix B - Survey Communication Materials (to be surveyed October 2017 through December 2017) | | | | | |
| <i>Contact Number</i> | <i>Contact Group</i> | <i>Title of Survey Communication</i> | | <i>Order of Contact</i> | |
| B-1 | All sample members | Data Collection Announcement Letter | | 1 | |
| B-2 | | Data Collection Announcement E-mail | | 2 | |
| B-3 | Survey non-respondents | Reminder E-mail 1 | | 3 | |
| B-4 | | Reminder Postcard 1 | | 4 | |
| B-5 | | Reminder E-mail 2 | | 5 | |
| B-6 | | Reminder E-mail 3 | | 6 | |
| B-7 | | Reminder Postcard 2 | | 7 | |
| B-8 | | Reminder E-mail 4 | | 8 | |
| B-9 | Survey respondents who opt to receive incentive via check | Thank You/Incentive Letter | | Varies | |

* Note: The intervention emails will be the same as the letters except the graphic in the letters will be text instead, and the emails do not include the QR code.

NCER-NPSAS Grant Study
Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) 2017:
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Appendix A
Intervention Communication Materials

OMB # 1850-New v.1

Submitted by
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education

October 2016



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Dear <<STUDENT FIRST_NAME>>,

We notice that as of <<INSERT DATE>>, you have not yet applied for financial aid for next year. Because you applied for aid last year, the process this year is simple, but **don't delay**. You must apply for financial aid each year to continue receiving financial aid. Here is information that will help you with the process.

To get financial aid, you must complete the FAFSA, which is the **F**ree **A**pplication for **F**ederal **S**tudent **A**id. Some students think they shouldn't bother, but you should know the facts.

Don't let these myths stop you!



The reality is EVERYONE must complete the FAFSA to get financial aid.

It is FREE to complete, FREE to submit, and the sooner you complete the form, the more aid you could receive from the federal government, state, and your college. Many state and college aid programs have a preferred deadline of March 1st so be sure to start today.

Did you know **you could get more financial aid if you take more courses?** *This could help you finish your studies sooner.* As shown below, students who attend full-time could receive **twice as much financial aid** with a Pell Grant, which is free money that does not need to be repaid.

| Credits Taken per Term | Maximum Pell Grant |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 3 | \$0 |
| 6 | Up to \$2,910 |
| 9 | Up to \$4,440 |
| 12 | Up to \$5,920 |

There are a number of FREE resources available to help you get the money you need. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/x8vYc> or scan this code to get information from the U.S. Department of Education. We have also enclosed a guide to help.



Remember, the FAFSA is FREE. If someone asks you to pay to fill it out, then you're not working with the official FAFSA, your link to get financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education.

Still have questions? Visit the website listed above or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). You can also go to your college's financial aid office for help.

Submit the FAFSA, and get help paying for college.

Sincerely,

<<SIGNATURE>>

You are being contacted because you agreed to participate in an external research project when you responded to the 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16). For more information go to: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/grant/CSFA>.

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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-NEW. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average approximately 15 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this survey, or any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, please write directly to: The Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) Study, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th St., SW, PCP-4007, Washington, DC 20202

<<SUBJECT LINE>> Financial aid is available

<<EMAIL BODY>>



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INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

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Don't let these myths stop you!

"The FAFSA is too hard to fill out!" [**NOT TRUE**]

"I make too much money, so I won't qualify for aid." [**NOT TRUE**]

"Only students with good grades get financial aid." [**NOT TRUE**]

"I'm too old to qualify to financial aid." [**NOT TRUE**]

The reality is EVERYONE must complete the FAFSA to get financial aid.

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Dear <<STUDENT FIRST_NAME>>,

We notice that as of <<INSERT DATE>>, you have not yet applied for financial aid for next year.

It also appears that you did not apply to get financial aid for the current school year. Many students receive financial aid. Here is information that will help you with the process.

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You must apply for financial aid each year to continue receiving financial aid. **Many students can get a Federal Pell Grant up to \$5,920, which does not need to be repaid. That's thousands of dollars to help you pay for college!** Here is information that will help you with the process.

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<<SUBJECT LINE>> Be sure to get your financial aid

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| <i>Credits Taken per Term</i> | <i>Maximum Pell Grant</i> |
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With more financial aid, additional courses might not cost you anything out-of-pocket.

There are a number of FREE resources available to help you get the money you need. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/x8vYc> to get information from the U.S. Department of Education. We have also enclosed a guide to help.

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There is financial aid waiting for you! Submit the FAFSA, and get help paying for college.

Sincerely,

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OMB Control Number: 1850-NEW

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

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Dear <<STUDENT FIRST_NAME>>,

We notice that as of <<INSERT DATE>>, you have not yet applied for financial aid for next year. Because you applied for aid last year, the process this year is simple, but don't delay.

You must apply for financial aid each year or you will lose your support. **Don't lose your chance to get a Pell Grant worth up to \$5,920, which does not need to be repaid. Thousands of dollars are at stake.** Here is information that will help you with the process.

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<<SUBJECT LINE>> Don't miss out on your financial aid

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➤ **Look over your Student Aid Report (SAR)**

After submitting your FAFSA, you should have received your SAR, which is a summary of your information. Be sure this information is correct.

➤ **What if your FAFSA is incomplete or you need to make corrections?**

Log into your account using your FSA ID to make changes or additions to your FAFSA.

➤ **What if you've selected for "verification"?**

Don't worry! Verification is just the process your school uses to confirm that your FAFSA is accurate. Contact your school's financial aid office, and they will help you through the process.

➤ **Check to see if your school needs more information**

Sometimes schools ask for additional paperwork or have other deadlines. Check with your school's financial aid office to learn more.

➤ **Receive your financial aid award letter**

When all of your information is submitted and confirmed, you can expect to receive an award letter from your school. If you have any questions, give them a call!

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<<SUBJECT LINE>> Just a few more steps to get financial aid

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DO YOU NEED MONEY FOR COLLEGE?

Information to help you get the financial aid you need.



DigitalVision/PeopleImages.com/Getty Images

What is student financial aid?

Federal student aid is money from the U.S. Department of Education that helps you pay for college, career school, or graduate school expenses. More than \$150 billion in federal student aid is available through:

- Grants: Aid that does not need to be repaid
- Loan: Aid that must be repaid after leaving college
- Work study: Student job opportunities

Beyond federal aid, many students also get state financial aid and aid from their colleges. You must fill out the FAFSA to get these other sources of aid.

Who gets financial aid?

Many students get some type of student aid, regardless of family income, age, or background. By completing the FAFSA, you will learn exactly what aid is available to you from the government and your college.

How do I apply for student aid?

Go to the Federal Student Aid website to get started:
<http://XXXXXXXXXXXX>.

1. Create an FSA ID.

Your FSA ID is used to confirm your identity and electronically sign your federal aid documents. To create an FSA ID, students and parents should go to the Federal Student Aid website.

2. Complete the FAFSA, the U.S. Department of Education's *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*.

If you need a paper FAFSA, contact ED Publications at www.edpubs.gov or toll-free at 1-877-433-7827.

Completing and submitting the FAFSA is absolutely FREE.

What do I need to complete the FAFSA?

The FAFSA asks for information about you (name, Social Security number, date of birth, address, etc.) and about your financial situation. You may also need to provide information about your parents.

For the 2017- 18 FAFSA, you will report income and tax information from **2015**. That means that if you completed the FAFSA last year, you will use the same information this year!

When completing the FAFSA, consider using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, which allows you to copy over your income and tax information.

Do I need to apply for financial aid every year?

Yes! You must reapply for aid every year. Also, if you change schools, your aid doesn't automatically transfer with you. Check with your new school to find out what you need to do to continue receiving financial aid.

What happens after I submit the FAFSA?

After you complete and submit your FAFSA, the U.S. Department of Education will send you your *Student Aid Report* (SAR). Review it and, if necessary, follow instructions to make changes or corrections.

Review award letters, compare the types and amounts of aid you are offered from each school, and contact the school's financial aid office if you have any questions about the aid being offered.

Still have questions?

You never have to pay for help! Free help is available at any time. For online help and answers to common questions, scan this code or go to <http://go.usa.gov/x8vYc>



You can also get free information and help from the financial aid office at your school. Or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800- 433-3243).

NCER-NPSAS Grant Studies Website

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas/grant/>

Create category of Awards or NCER-NPSAS Grant Studies on left frame

- **Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) 2017**

NCER-NPSAS Grant Study

Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) 2017: Testing the Effectiveness of FAFSA Interventions on College Outcomes

Purpose

This NCER- NPSAS Grant Study – *Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) 2017: Testing the Effectiveness of FAFSA Interventions on College Outcomes* investigates whether an intervention that provides financial aid information to college students increases receipt of financial aid, enrollment on a full-time (versus part-time) basis, persistence from semester to semester, and degree completion. This research is being conducted under a grant awarded through the NCER-NPSAS grant opportunity. The primary grantee is Bridget Terry Long, Harvard University (Grant Award #R305A160388) with co-principal investigator Eric Bettinger, Stanford University. Data collection will be led by the contractor, RTI International (RTI). A project description is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=1853>).

NCER-NPSAS Grant Opportunity

In 2010, the National Center for Education Research (NCER) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), both within the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES), began collaborating on an education grant opportunity related to the cross-sectional National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). Under the NCER-NPSAS grant opportunity, researchers could submit applications to the Postsecondary and Adult Education topic within the Education Research Grants program (CFDA 84.305A), under either the Exploration or Efficacy and Replication research goal. Consistent with these two goals, NCER supports research projects using NPSAS to: 1) explore relationships between malleable factors (e.g. information on benefits of financial aid and FAFSA renewal) and postsecondary persistence and completion, as well as the mediators and moderators of those relationships; and 2) evaluate the efficacy of interventions aimed at improving persistence and completion of postsecondary education (e. g. financial aid and FAFSA renewal advice delivered via mail and email). Researchers approved for funding through this program can obtain indirect access to a subsample of the national NPSAS sample (after the study’s student interviews are completed) in order to conduct unique research projects that adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Request for Applications (RFA) for the Education Research Grants Program, as well as guidelines set forth by NCES and the NPSAS program.

On July 1, 2016, two grants were awarded using a subsample of 2015-16 NPSAS sample members:

- *Financial Aid Nudges: A National Experiment to Increase Retention of Financial Aid and College Persistence*. A project description is posted here: <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=1848> , and
- *Could Connecting Students with Financial Aid Lead to Better College Outcomes? A Proposal to Test the Effectiveness of FAFSA Interventions Using the NPSAS Sample* (referred to as “Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) 2017”). A project description is posted here: <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=1853>).

Authority

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to conduct the NCER-NPSAS grant studies by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9543), and to collect students’ education records from educational agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating Federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). Data collected from or about individual students are used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used, in identifiable form, for any other purpose except as required by law (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9573). These data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina.

Confidentiality

Since these NCER-NPSAS grant studies are conducted using a subset of NPSAS:16 sample members, all data collection must be done through NCES and the NPSAS:16 data collection contractor, RTI International. This ensures that the confidentiality of the study participants is protected. Specifically, the grantee will have no access to personally identifiable information and may not have direct contact with sample members. RTI International follows strict procedures to protect the privacy and confidentiality of study participants. All project staff members have signed confidentiality agreements and affidavits of nondisclosure. Any data released to the public will be in aggregate form (e.g., statistical tables, graphs). Information obtained may be used only for statistical or research purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, except as required by law (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. § 9573).

Paperwork Reduction Act

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average approximately 10 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this survey, or any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, please write directly to: The Connecting Students with Financial Aid (CSFA) Study, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th St., SW, PCP-4007, Washington, DC 20202.

OMB Clearance No: 1850-New Expiration Date: ##/##/2020