



CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION

Better FAFSA, Better CADAA Bulletin

December 14, 2023

Welcome to the fourth edition of the California Student Aid Commission’s Better FAFSA, Better CA Dream Act Application Bulletin with information, updates, and resources for the upcoming 2024-25 financial aid cycle.

From our Executive Director, Marlene Garcia:

We have almost reached the finish line in our preparations for the new FAFSA changes as well as the CADAA enhancements. While we all remain tuned in to hear when the Better FAFSA will be released later this month, check out “What’s the Latest” for recent updates regarding FAFSA and Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs) and review your action item to learn “What You Can Do Now” for your students and their families. This edition’s “In the Spotlight” provides information about Mixed Status Families FSA IDs and CADAA’s new parent signature process. You will also find upcoming CSAC training information.

Happy Holidays from all of us at CSAC!

What’s the Latest?

FAFSA and ISIR Releases

Federal Student Aid announced on November 15 that the 2024-25 FAFSA will launch by **December 31, 2023**. When the 2024-25 FAFSA is released, the confirmation email with Pell Grant eligibility and Student Aid Index information will be available to students as they complete and submit their FAFSA. By the end of January 2024, students will be able to make corrections and have access to their FAFSA submission summaries; in addition, Colleges and State Higher Education agencies will receive the ISIR. The delay of the ISIRs means that financial aid awards, including Cal Grant notifications, will be completed later than usual.

Action Item:

Review “What you can do now” for students and parents on FSA’s website [Launch of the 2024–25 FAFSA® Form | Federal Student Aid](#)

In the Spotlight:

Better FAFSA: FSA IDs or studentaid.gov accounts for Mixed Status Families?

For FAFSA purposes, “mixed status families” consist of family members with two different immigration statuses: the student who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident and their parents who are undocumented. Starting with the 2024-25 FAFSA, all parents who are contributors will be required to create a [studentaid.gov account](#), formerly known as Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID), even if they do not have a social security number (SSN).

When creating a [studentaid.gov account](#), parents without an SSN will check the box that confirms that they do not have an SSN. They will be asked to create a username and password and provide their email and mailing addresses. The mailing address is required for anyone without an SSN because it is one of the elements needed for verification. Another component for parents without an SSN is to answer knowledge-based verification questions. If parents without an SSN are unable to be verified, they will need to contact the FSA Information Center to continue the verification process. Read here for more information: [Better FAFSA for Mixed-Status Families: Top 10 Things to Know So You Can Prepare - National College Attainment Network \(ncan.org\)](#)

Better CADAA: New Parent Signature Process

Informed by the [Renewing the Dream](#) report, the Commission has enhanced the parental signature process in four specific ways so that beginning with the 2024-25 CADAA, parents will experience a more streamlined and user-friendly process.

- Applicants will no longer be directed to an external CSAC parent signature page. Instead, students will be able to provide a student *and* parent signature in the same section.
- Parents will no longer need a four-digit system-generated PIN to sign their student’s CADAA. Instead, the signature section of the application will ask the student to select only one parent who is able to provide a signature. Like the student, the selected parent will affirm that the information they provided on the application is true and correct to the best of their knowledge to generate an electronic signature.
- For instances where a parent is unable to provide a signature with the student, there will be an option for the student to provide the parent with the link to the external CADAA parent signature page. There they will answer a few basic questions about themselves and their student for our system to match to the student’s record. In this external option, the parent will also *not* need a PIN. As is currently the case, the student’s application will not be considered complete until a parent signature is provided.
- Besides the original submission, a parent signature will only be required when parental information is changed on subsequent CADAA transactions, effectively reducing the frequency that a parent signature is required.

Upcoming CSAC Training: Annual Statewide Financial Aid Workshops Virtual Webinars:

- January 17, 2024 – [FAFSA/CADAA Updates](#) (Zoom)
- February 5, 2024 – [FAFSA/CADAA Updates](#) (Zoom)

Cash for College

Become a Cash for College Community Champion so you can host workshops to help your students and families complete their financial aid applications. Look for one of our [webinars](#) and register today!

Remember, you can find this information and updated resources on our [Better FAFSA, Better CADAA webpage](#).

Key Application Dates to Keep in Mind:

- This year the Better FAFSA, Better CADAA opening is delayed from the traditional October 1 date to **December 2023**. The exact date will be communicated once it has been determined.
- The Cal Grant and Middle Class Scholarship deadline has been extended to **April 2, 2024**, due to the delayed application opening. Many campuses use the March 2 priority deadline to award state institutional aid.

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