




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents, Public Schools
Public School Leaders
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FROM: Christopher Fernando, Director of Postsecondary Access, Support, and Success


SUBJECT: Verification of Postsecondary Financial Aid Form Completion or Waiver

DATE: October 1, 2024

At the July 2024 Board of Regents meeting, the Board approved as an emergency adoption the [amendment of Section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education](#) relating to completion of federal and state financial aid applications by seniors enrolled in school districts.

This amendment relates to a provision in the Enacted State Budget for the 2024-25 fiscal year (Part C of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2024), which requires that each school district shall ensure verification from the parent or guardian of a student who is a senior (or from the student where the student is 18 years of age or older or legally emancipated) that the student either: (1) completed the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or, if applicable the Jose Peralta New York State Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act application; or (2) completed a Waiver indicating that the parent or guardian (or student, as applicable), understands what the FAFSA or, if applicable, the DREAM Act application are, and has chosen not to file an such application. The waiver form is [available online](#) and as an attachment.

It is important to note that this legislation prohibits students from being penalized or punished if their parent or guardian does not comply with the above requirements.

School districts must also notify each high school senior enrolled in such school district, no less than two times during each school year, of the state-sponsored scholarships, financial aid and assistance available to students attending college or post-secondary education. Additionally, school districts must provide referrals for support or assistance to complete the FAFSA or, if applicable, the DREAM ACT application.

Finally, on and after July 1, 2025, each school district must annually report to the Department certain data for all seniors enrolled in such district, aggregated by high school. This data includes: (1) the total number of students that have completed either the FAFSA or, if applicable, the DREAM Act application; (2) the number of students who completed a waiver; and (3) the total number of seniors enrolled.

There are a number of resources and initiatives available to students and families seeking assistance in completing the FAFSA and other financial aid applications, such as HESC's [FAFSA Ready](#) page which includes training events and webinars, toolkits, and counselor resources. There is also information on the [FAFSA Completion Initiative](#) which enables HESC to share specific, limited information regarding FAFSA and TAP form completions with high schools and school districts across New York, providing customized reports critical for measuring students' progress in completing these forms

There are also a number of innovative training resources and workshops provided by local community-based college counseling organizations, and at [SUNY](#), [CUNY](#), and [independent colleges](#) across NYS.

The Department will send detailed guidance during the school year about data reporting protocol related to these requirements.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to the [Office of Postsecondary Access, Support, and Success](#) at (518) 474-3719 or kiap@nysed.gov.