FSA ID FAQs from Help Functional Specification and other Guides

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### **“Using a****n FSA ID to correct your FAFSA”**

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| You must enter your FSA ID to correct your FAFSA. Your FSA ID verifies your identity before your FAFSA information is displayed on the screen.  When you are finished correcting your FAFSA, you must electronically sign with your FSA ID. If you are a dependent student and corrected your parents’ information, a parent must also sign your corrected FAFSA. Your parent can sign electronically with his or her FSA ID, or he or she can print, sign, and mail in a signature page. |

**“Can my parent and I share the same** **FSA ID?”**

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| No. You and your parent cannot share the same FSA ID. You must apply for an FSA ID and your parent must apply for an FSA ID. An FSA ID serves as part of a person’s identification, as well as their electronic signature, and should only be used by that individual. |

**“Do I need a****n FSA ID?”**

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| You are not required to have an FSA ID to complete and submit a *FAFSA on the Web* application. However, it is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed. It is also the only way to access your data online. |

**“How do I** **create a****n FSA ID?”**

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| You can create an FSA ID when logging into certain ED websites, such as FAFSA.gov. At the “Login” page of *FAFSA on the Web*, select the “Enter your student’s FSA ID”. Select the link “Create an FSA ID".  The FSA ID process consists of three main steps:   1. Enter your log-in information.    * Provide your e-mail address, a unique username, and password, and verify that you are at least 13 years old. 2. Enter your personal information.    * Provide your Social Security number, name, and date of birth.    * Include your mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number, and language preference.    * For security purposes, provide answers to five challenge questions. 3. Submit your FSA ID information.    * Agree to the terms and conditions.    * Verify your e-mail address. (Note: By verifying your e-mail address, you can use your e-mail address as your username when logging into certain ED websites. This verification also allows you to retrieve your username or reset your password without answering challenge questions.)   Note: The password must be between 8 to 30 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers, uppercase and lowercase letters, and / or special characters. |

**“How can I use my** **FSA ID?”**

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| An FSA ID can be used for many federal student aid activities, such as to:   * Electronically sign a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) * Renew your FAFSA (if you applied last year) * Make corrections to a processed FAFSA * View and Print your electronic Student Aid Report (SAR) * Transfer your tax return information into your FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool * Access the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) at [www.nslds.ed.gov](http://www.nslds.ed.gov) to view your financial aid information, if you have previously received student financial aid * Access the Direct Loan Consolidation Web site at [www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov](http://www.loanconsolidation.ed.gov) * Complete Entrance Counseling at www.studentloans.gov * Complete Exit Counseling at www.nslds.ed.gov * Complete the PLUS Request Process at www.studentloans.gov * Electronically sign a Master Promissory Note at www.studentloans.gov * Electronically sign a TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve at www.teach-ats.ed.gov |

**“What is the difference between my** **FSA ID and my Data Release Number (DRN)?”**

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| Your Data Release Number (DRN) displays on your Student Aid Report (SAR), as well as on your confirmation page. The DRN allows you to contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center to make corrections to your mailing address or school list. It also allows you to release your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) information to schools you did not list on your original FAFSA.  Your FSA ID is issued separately from your SAR. It allows you to access your FAFSA data and to electronically sign your FAFSA.  The DRN and the FSA ID serve two different purposes. Your DRN can be shared with customer service representatives or school financial aid officers to authorize them to access your information. Your FSA ID should not be shared with anyone. Your FSA ID should be used only by you to access your personal information and provide electronic signatures. |

**“What should I do if my last name has changed?”**

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| You should change your last name at the Social Security Administration (SSA), and, when that change is processed, you must update your FSA ID using your new last name.  You should also change your name on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). |

**“Who is eligible for a****n FSA ID?”**

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| You **must** have a Social Security number in order to create an FSA ID that can be used with the FAFSA. You also must be at least 13 years old. |

**“How do I update my** **FSA ID e-mail or mailing address?”**

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| It is important to keep your information up-to-date. When updating your FSA ID, you can change your FSA ID e-mail or mailing address.  The FSA ID and the FAFSA each ask for an e-mail address. If you change your e-mail address in one, be sure to check to see if you need to change it for the other. |

### “**How can I change schools on my Student Aid Report?”**

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **If** | **Then** | | You have an FSA ID and the application is processed. | Click **Login** on the home page and log in to *FAFSA on the Web*. You will be given the option to **Make FAFSA Corrections**. You may add or remove colleges, and then submit the corrections for processing. | | You do not have an FSA ID, but have a Student Aid Report. | Find the Data Release Number (DRN) on the first page in the upper right corner of your Student Aid Report, or on your confirmation page, and call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at **1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243**to make the changes over the phone. | | You do not have an FSA ID and do not have a Student Aid Report (SAR). | You must call [the](file:///Q:\Help_Text\fafsa\Web%20Development\web\fotw0405\help\cs.htm) Federal Student Aid Information Center at **1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243** and request a copy of your Student Aid Report. | |

### **“If I submitted a paper FAFSA, can I use *FAFSA on the Web* to make corrections?”**

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| Yes. *FAFSA on the Web* allows you to correct your processed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), regardless of the type of application you filed. Use your FSA ID to log in to *FAFSA on the Web* to make a correction. |

**“Who needs to sign when I correct my FAFSA?”**

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| Your signature is always required. When making corrections to your FAFSA online, you must sign electronically with your FSA ID.  If you are a dependent student and you **do** **not** correct any of your parents’ information, then a parent is not required to sign your corrected FAFSA.  If you are a dependent student and you **do** correct your parents’ information, then a parent is required to sign your corrected FAFSA.  If your parent’s signature is required and he or she did not already sign your corrected FAFSA, you can do the following:   * Click **Login** on the home page to log in to *FAFSA on the Web*. * Click **Provide Signatures.**   Your parent should follow the instructions provided on the page to sign your corrected FAFSA with an FSA ID. If your parent chooses to sign with an FSA ID and does not already have an FSA ID, he or she can create an FSA ID. Your parent **must** have a Social Security number to get an FSA ID.  If your parent chooses not to apply for an FSA ID, he or she can print a signature page, sign it, and mail it to the address provided. |

**What if my application gets rejected for missing signatures?**

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| You can supply missing signatures in one of the following ways:   * Click Login on the home page to log in to FAFSA on the Web. Click Provide Signatures, and follow the instructions provided on the page to sign your FAFSA with an FSA ID. (If you choose to sign with an FSA ID and do not already have an FSA ID, you can create an FSA ID.) If you choose not to create an FSA ID, you can print a signature page, sign it, and mail it to the address provided. * Talk to the financial aid office at your college to see if they can correct the situation electronically.   If you need further assistance, view available Help options. |

**What is a signature page?**

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| The signature page is a document that is generated by FAFSA on the Web. It includes your student ID, name, address, the type of application you completed, and a randomly generated identification number.  You can sign your FAFSA by printing, signing, and mailing a signature page. However, the application process is faster if you use your FSA ID to sign your FAFSA electronically, and you must use an FSA ID to sign a Renewal FAFSA or corrections to a FAFSA. You may also call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243 to request a copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR) which can also be used to process a signature.  When a parent signature is required, your parent can print, sign, and mail a signature page if he or she does not want to sign electronically with an FSA ID.  For the 2014-2015 school year, the signature page should be mailed to:  Federal Student Aid Programs  P.O. Box 4696  Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0066  For the 2015-2016 school year, the signature page should be mailed to:  Federal Student Aid Programs  P.O. Box 7006  Mt. Vernon, IL 62864-0076  By signing and submitting the signature page, you agree, if asked, to provide information that verifies the accuracy of your completed FAFSA. This information may include a copy of your U.S. or state income tax form. Do not mail income tax forms with the signature page.  By signing the signature page, you also certify that:   * You will use federal student aid funds received during the award year covered by this application solely for educational expenses related to attendance during that year at the institution of higher education that determined eligibility for those funds; * You are not in default on a federal educational loan, or have repaid or made satisfactory arrangements to repay the loan if you are in default; * You do not owe an overpayment on a federal educational grant, or you have made satisfactory arrangements to repay that overpayment; * You will notify your school if you do owe an overpayment or are in default; and * You understand that the Secretary of Education has the authority to verify income reported on this application with the Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies.   If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined up to $20,000, sent to prison, or both. |

### **“If I submitted a paper FAFSA, can I use *FAFSA on the Web* to make corrections?”**

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| Yes. *FAFSA on the Web* allows you to correct your processed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), regardless of the type of application you filed. Use your FSA ID to log in to *FAFSA on the Web* to make a correction. |

### **“Signing the FAFSA with a****n FSA ID”**

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| Federal Student Aid is required to collect signatures from you and a parent (if applicable) to verify the information entered on your *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA).  There are three ways to sign:   * Electronically with an FSA ID * By printing, signing, and mailing a signature page after you submit the FAFSA * By signing your Student Aid Report (SAR) and returning it in the mail   TIP: The application process *is faster* if you use your FSA ID to sign your application electronically.  If you already have an FSA ID you can use it to sign your FAFSA from one year to the next.  If you do not already have an FSA ID, you can create an FSA ID.  If you have an FSA ID but do not remember your username, click “Forgot Username”.  If you have an FSA ID but do not remember your password, click “Forgot Password”.  Note: The password must be between 8 to 30 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers, uppercase and lowercase letters, and / or special characters.  If you are dependent, one of your parents will also need an FSA ID. If your parent does not already have an FSA ID, they can create an FSA ID.  Keep in mind that you only have to create an FSA ID once. You can use the same FSA ID each year, speeding up the time it takes for your FAFSA to be processed. Your parents (if you are a dependent student) can use their FSA ID each year, too, and can even use their FSA ID to sign FAFSAs for your siblings.  **If you do not have a printer or a****n FSA ID** you can select the signature option **Submit Without Signatures** and submit your FAFSA. Your application will be partially processed without signatures. If you provide a valid e-mail address, you will receive an e-mail reminding you to return to the FAFSA and sign your application electronically using your FSA ID. If you do not provide a valid e-mail address, you will receive a SAR in the mail, within 7 to 10 days. The signatures required will be noted on the SAR. Return the SAR with the signatures to complete the application. |

### **“What happens after I submit the application?”**

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| After you submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), we will send you a **Student Aid Report (SAR)**.   * If we have a valid e-mail address on file for you, we will send you an e-mail, within 3 to 5 days, with instructions on how to access an online copy of your SAR.   If the e-mailed link for your SAR does not work, try this:   * Copy the full URL link from the e-mail we sent you, * Paste it into the address or location line of your Web browser, * Hit Enter.   TIP: Make sure you copy and paste the entire link; this may display as multiple lines in your e-mail.   * If we do not have a valid e-mail address on file, your SAR will be mailed to you via postal mail within 7 to 10 days. * The colleges that you listed on your FAFSA will have access to your information electronically one day after it is processed. However, depending on their own process and workload, they might not retrieve your information immediately. * If your application is complete, an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) will display on your SAR. If your application is incomplete, your SAR will not include an EFC, but it will display text that specifies any issues that need to be resolved. * **If your FAFSA is incomplete:** * Make corrections to your FAFSA by clicking **Login** on the home page to log in to *FAFSA on the Web* using your FSA ID. Click **Make FAFSA Corrections**, and add or correct the information that caused your FAFSA to be incomplete. Submit your corrections. * Add or correct information on your paper SAR, sign it, and mail it to the address provided. * **If your FAFSA is complete:** * The EFC that displays on your SAR is a calculation based on the information that you reported on your FAFSA. * Your college uses the EFC to determine the amount of federal grants, work-study, and loans for which you may be eligible. * Your college will send you a financial aid award letter that details the financial aid you are eligible to receive.   Your EFC is **not** the amount of money your family will have to pay for college **nor** is it the amount of federal student aid you will receive. It is a number used by your school to calculate the amount of federal student aid you are eligible to receive.  **\*\***Your school, your state, or Federal Student Aid may ask you to verify the accuracy of the information you provide on the FAFSA. |

**“Reapplying for federal student aid”**

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| You must apply for federal student aid for every school year that you attend. To reapply, you should submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If you submitted a FAFSA last year, and you are eligible to complete a Renewal FAFSA, you may choose to have most of the questions pre-filled with the information you provided. Simply updating the information for the new school year on a Renewal FAFSA may be faster. However, the Renewal FAFSA is available solely for your convenience. If you prefer to start fresh with a new FAFSA, you are free to do so.  To reapply, click **Login** on the home page to log in to *FAFSA on the Web*, and then click **FAFSA Renewal**.  **Note:** If you are eligible to complete a Renewal FAFSA, you will be asked to provide your FSA ID, as well as answers to income, asset, and tax questions. You must also update any information that has changed since last year.  You can reapply for financial aid through your college’s financial aid office if the school participates in Electronic Data Exchange (EDE). You should contact the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend for more information. |

### **“The identifiers you entered did not match a FAFSA record”**

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| **If you submitted your FAFSA using the Web and have a confirmation number**, you may re-enter your identifiers and try again. If the identifiers you re-entered do not match a FAFSA record, you can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center for assistance. Refer to the Help page for contact information.  **If you do not have a confirmation number, you will need to start a new FAFSA.**  **If you submitted a paper FAFSA**, it may not have arrived at Federal Student Aid for processing yet. Paper FAFSAs are typically processed within 7 to 10 business days of being mailed. We recommend you check your application status again in a few days. |

**“Can I save my application information?”**

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| Yes. You can save your information at any point in the application. To save the application, click **Save** at the bottom of any Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) page. **Do not** use the Save commands that are built into the browser.  **Note:** To retrieve your saved application, you must provide either your FSA ID or your first name, last name, Social Security Number, date of birth, and the Save Key entered when you began your initial FAFSA.  If you are disconnected from the *FAFSA on the Web* site at any time, your application will be automatically saved and you can retrieve it after **45 minutes.**  If you do not remember your Save Key, you can reset it by clicking “I Forgot My Save Key”or contact customer service.  Saved applications are automatically deleted after 45 days or after the federal application / correction deadline date. (Click **Deadlines** on the home page to see the federal application / correction deadline dates). |

**“Print Signature Page”**

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| If your application is missing a signature and you do not have an FSA ID, you can print a signature page by clicking **Print Signature Page**.  **Note:** You **must** mail your signature page to the address listed. |

**“Provide Signatures”**

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| If your application is missing your and / or your parent’s signature and you and / or your parent have an FSA ID, you and / or your parent can provide your signature by clicking **Provide Signatures**. |

**“Make FAFSA Corrections”**

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| If you need to make a correction to your FAFSA, you must login using your FSA ID, then click **Make FAFSA Corrections**.  Once your correction is submitted and you receive a confirmation number, the correction will be processed in 3-5 days. |

### **“More information for students without a Social Security Number”**

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| An FSA ID can be used to access personal records as well as to electronically sign a FAFSA. Your FSA ID must be associated to a valid Social Security Number (SSN) in order to access personal records and to sign a FAFSA electronically.  Without a valid SSN, you will receive a paper Student Aid Report (SAR) when your FAFSA is processed (7-10 days).  If your FAFSA is missing a signature, you or your parent may sign it by printing a signature page or signing your SAR. You **must** mail the signature to Federal Student Aid for processing using the mailing address on the signature page.  If you need to correct your FAFSA, you must enter corrections on your paper SAR, or contact the financial aid office at your college for assistance. |

### **“MyStudentData Download”**

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| The MyStudentData Download function is an option that enables you to download information from your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to share with interested third parties at your discretion.  When you use the MyStudentData Download function, a portion of your FAFSA information is downloaded to your computer in a machine-readable comma-separated values (CSV) format that you can share with others. The file includes information about your FAFSA and any corrections you have made to your FAFSA.  To download your FAFSA information you must log into *FAFSA on the Web* using your FSA ID. Once you login, click the blue MyStudentData Download button. A dialog box opens in your Web browser enabling you to save the downloaded information to your computer. (If you did not previously enter your FSA ID, you will be taken to the “Enter FSA ID/Save Key” page to do so before you can download your information.)  The MyStudentData Download function is separate from the process of applying for financial aid and is completely optional. The schools you have listed on your FAFSA will receive your financial aid information directly and do not need a copy of your MyStudentData file.  WARNING: The MyStudentData Download file contains your personal information, including your name and any financial information reported on your FAFSA. Do not leave this file on a public computer or in an unsecured location. |

### **“How do I apply for aid?”**

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| To apply for federal student aid, you must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).  By completing and submitting a FAFSA, you will automatically be considered for federal student aid. In addition, your state and college may use your FAFSA information to determine your eligibility for nonfederal aid.  Completing the FAFSA is an easy process, and it’s completely free. We recommend that you submit your FAFSA online using *FAFSA on the Web*, as your application will process within 3-5 days; alternatively, you can submit a paper FAFSA, which processes within 7-10 days.  For help with filling out the FAFSA, you can go to  http://studentaid.ed.gov/resources#free-application-for. |

**“What will I need to fill out the FAFSA?”**

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| To complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you will need:   * Your Social Security Number * Your Alien Registration Number (if you are not a U.S. citizen) * Your most recent federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned. (**Note:** You may be able to transfer your federal tax return information into your FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.) * Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable) * Records of untaxed income (if applicable) * An FSA ID to sign electronically.   If you are a dependent student, then you will also need most of the above information for your parent(s). |

### **“What is a****n FSA ID, and will I need it to complete the FAFSA?”**

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| The FSA ID allows students and parents to identify themselves electronically to access FSA Web sites.  An FSA ID is made up of a username and password and can be used to log into *FAFSA on the Web*.  While you are not required to have an FSA ID to complete and submit a *FAFSA on the Web* application, it is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed. It is also the only way to access or correct your information online, or to pre-fill a *FAFSA on the Web* application with information from your previous year’s FAFSA. |

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### **“What if I forgot my** **FSA ID username and password?”**

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| If you have forgotten your username or password, don't worry. On our log-in pages of all ED websites, you'll find links that give you the option of retrieving your username or password through your verified e-mail address or by successfully answering your challenge questions.  If you have forgotten your username but verified your e-mail address when creating your FSA ID, you can use your e-mail address in place of your username whenever you are logging in with your FSA ID. |

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### **“What if my** **FSA ID is** **locked or disabled?”**

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| If your FSA ID has been locked you can update your FSA ID to unlock your account.  If your FSA ID is disabled you must contact customer service for more information at **1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).** |

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### **“How does the IRS Data Retrieval Tool work?”**

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| The IRS Data Retrieval Tool allows students and parents to access the IRS tax return information needed to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and transfer the data directly into their FAFSA from the IRS Web site.  (**Note:** There are several scenarios in which you might not be given the option to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, including if you are not eligible to use it.)  To use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool within the application on the student or parent finances pages:   1. If you indicated that you recently filed your taxes or have already used the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to transfer your tax return information into your application, then click the “View option to link to the IRS” hyperlink. (**Note:** If you are eligible to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool and have not previously used it to transfer your tax return information into your application, then the “View option to link to the IRS” hyperlink does not display; skip ahead to step 2.) 2. Enter your FSA ID and click **Link To IRS**. (**Note:** Students will not be asked to enter their FSA ID if they entered an FSA ID to begin their FAFSA.) 3. Your FAFSA will be saved and you will be transferred to the IRS Web site. 4. On the IRS Web site,enter the requested information exactly as it appears on your tax return. 5. After the IRS has validated your identification, your IRS tax information will display. You can either transfer your information from the IRS, or choose to return to *FAFSA on the Web*.   If you transfer your IRS tax information, questions that are populated with that tax information will be marked with “Transferred from the IRS.”  **Note:** The person whose tax information is being transferred should enter his or her FSA ID. |

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### **“How do I sign my FAFSA?”**

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| If you have an FSA ID, then you should use your FSA ID to sign your application electronically. When you sign your application electronically using your FSA ID, your application is processed within 3-5 days.  To sign your application electronically, click the **Login** button on the *FAFSA on the Web* home page to log in, and then click the **Provide Signatures** button.  If you do not already have an FSA ID, you can create an FSA ID.  Alternatively, you can choose one of the following options:   * Print a signature page, sign it, and mail it to the address on the page. Your application will be processed once your signature is received. * Submit your FAFSA without signatures. Your application will be partially processed without signatures, and you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) within 3-5 days. In order for your FAFSA to fully process, you’ll need to return later to sign electronically. |

### **“What is the Student Aid Report (SAR)?”**

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| The Student Aid Report (SAR) is a paper or electronic document that gives you some basic information about your eligibility for federal student aid and lists your answers to the questions on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).  If you provided a valid e-mail address on your FAFSA, you will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to access an online copy of your SAR. If you did not provide a valid e-mail address on your FAFSA, the Social Security Number you included in your FAFSA did not match the one on file for you with the Social Security Administration, or you did not sign your FAFSA, you will receive either a SAR or a SAR Acknowledgement via postal mail. Typically, you will be able to access your SAR within two weeks of filing your FAFSA.  **Note:** Any student with an <link>FSA ID</link> can view or print his/her SAR by clicking **Login** on the *FAFSA on the Web* home page to log in, then selecting **View or Print your Student Aid Report (SAR)** from the “My FAFSA” page.  To determine what type of SAR you should receive and when you should receive it, visit http://studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa/next-steps/student-aid-report#how-and-when. |

### **“Which parent are you?”**

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| This question is used to determine which parent is providing an FSA ID in order to access the IRS Web site. |

### **“What is your (the parent’s) FSA ID Username or Verified E-mail Address?”**

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| Enter your (the parent’s) FSA ID username. If you have verified the e-mail address on file with your FSA ID, you may use it instead of your username to access the IRS Web site and request tax information.  If you (the parent) do not already have an FSA ID, you can create an FSA ID. You **must** have a Social Security number to get an FSA ID.  **Note:** Your FSA ID e-mail address may be different from your FAFSA e-mail address. |

### **“What is your (the parent’s) FSA ID Password?”**

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| A parent **must** enter an FSA ID password to access the IRS Web site and request tax information.  If you (the parent) do not already have an FSA ID, you can create an FSA ID. You **must** have a Social Security number to get an FSA ID.  **Note:** The password must be between 8 to 30 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers, uppercase and lowercase letters, and / or special characters. |

### **“FSA ID Username or Verified E-mail Address”**

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| Enter your FSA ID username. If you have verified the e-mail address on file with your FSA ID, you may use it instead of your username when logging in.  **Note:** Your FSA ID e-mail address may be different from your FAFSA e-mail address.  This field is not case-sensitive. If you have forgotten your username, click “Forgot Username.” |

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### **“Login Options”**

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| The FSA ID, which consists of a user-created username and password, replaced the PIN effective May, 2015. It allows users to electronically access personal information on Federal Student Aid Web sites as well as electronically sign a FAFSA.  Select one:  Enter your FSA ID (only the student should log in with an FSA ID),  **Or**  Enter the student's name, Social Security Number and date of birth. (You may have to enter your FSA ID later in the process). |

**“Historical PII Data Sets”**

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| The FSA ID you entered has multiple identifier sets associated with it. In most cases, this will result from a name change. In rare cases, it can also happen if the Social Security number (SSN) or date of birth on file with the Social Security Administration changes.  To view FAFSA information associated with a different name, SSN, or date of birth, select the radio button next to that set to access the information. |