



STATEMENT OF LAUREN ASHER
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FAFSA Simplification Plan Will Make It Easier for Students to Get College Aid

“With students and families more worried than ever about how to pay for college, the Obama Administration’s actions to simplify the financial aid process couldn’t have come at a better time. The important changes announced today will help make the federal student aid application a gateway rather than a barrier to college.

“Starting in January of 2010, some students will be able to electronically pre-populate the FAFSA with their own IRS data. The Institute for College Access & Success has long advocated for this practical approach to simplification, which will make the aid application process easier, more accurate, and more secure.

“Students are not the only ones who will benefit from simplification. Colleges currently spend an estimated \$432 million a year verifying the information on completed FAFSAs, including collecting and combing through hard copies of applicants’ tax forms. With IRS pre-population, financial aid offices could spend more time working directly with students and families. .

“We also applaud the other changes to the online FAFSA, which will significantly reduce the number of screens and questions that applicants have to go through to complete the form. Together, these common-sense improvements will make the FAFSA much more user-friendly, but there is still more that can be done. We urge the Administration and Congress to further simplify the process for all students.”

For more about the Institute’s FAFSA simplification recommendations, see
http://ticas.org/program_view.php?id=7.

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An independent, nonprofit organization, the Institute for College Access & Success works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. By conducting and supporting nonpartisan research, analysis, and advocacy, the Institute aims to improve the processes and public policies that can pave the way to successful educational outcomes for students and for society. www.ticas.org