



Federal Student Aid (FSA) Students and Financial Partners Portals

Stabilization and Transition Support Performance Report

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Change Record

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The FSA Students and Financial Partners (FP) Portals provide information and productivity tools relevant to FSA's customers, employees, and partners to make informed financial aid decisions and empower financial partners to assist students. The Portals also provide links to other existing FSA web sites (e.g., FMS, FAFSA on the Web, NSLDS, DLSS, etc.), and external sites (ELM Net, Meteor, etc.).

1.2 Background

In April 2002, FSA launched Release 1.0 of both the Students and FP Portals. In September 2002, Release 1.1 of the Students Portal and Release 2 of the FP Portal were made available with additional information, tools, and links. Release 2 of the Students Portal has been delayed so that the necessary paperwork and postings can take place to meet the Privacy Act requirements for System of Record as well as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements for the Information Collection Clearance process. Specifically, the Portals are organized as follows:

Students Portal

- Student experience/life-cycle
 - Preparing
 - Choosing
 - Applying
 - Funding
 - Attending
 - Repaying
- Site Resources
- Content organized around the Student type (e.g., College, High School, etc.)
- Spanish content
- Links to other FSA systems (e.g., FAFSA on the Web, NSLDS, etc.)
- Search
- Contact Resources

FP Portal

- Links to other FSA Financial systems (e.g., FMS, Data Mart, etc.)
- Publications
- Community members
- Current activities
- Interest rates
- Search
- Contact Resources



1.3 Report Organization

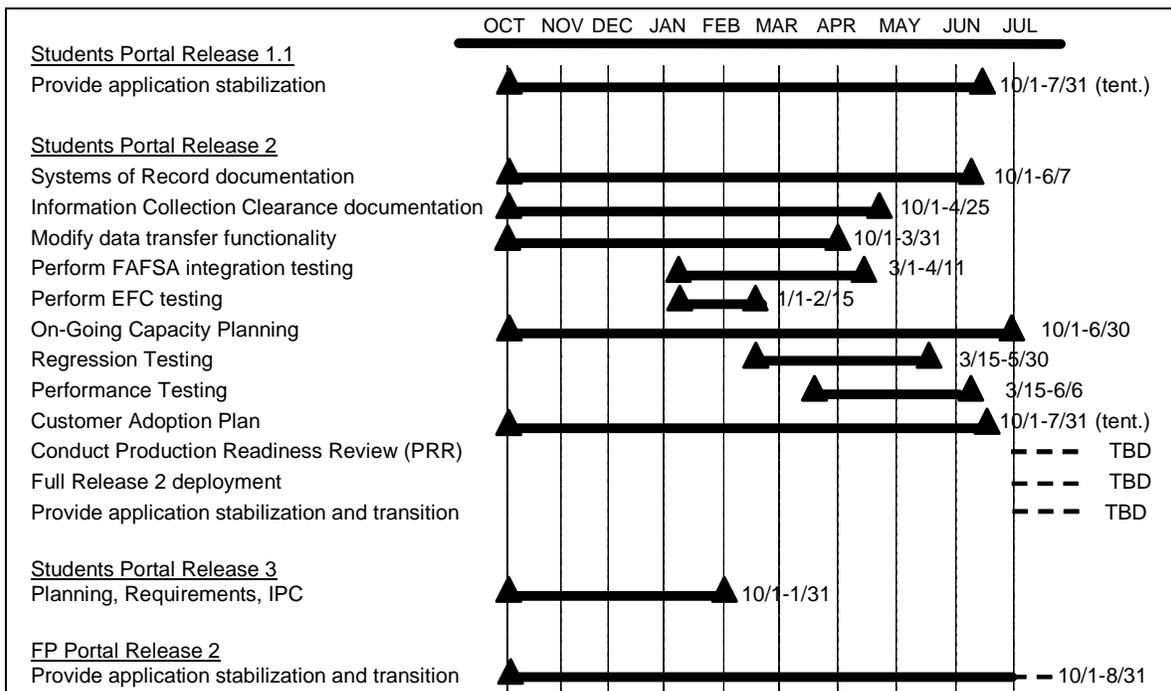
This Stabilization and Transition Support Status Report includes the following:

- Section 2. Students Portal Status. This section provides an update on completed and planned activities for the Students Portal.
- Section 3. Financial Partners Portal Status. This section provides an update on completed and planned activities for the Financial Partners Portal.
- Section 4. Summary. This section provides a summary of the project and production status.

2. Students Portal Status

2.1 Overall Project Schedule

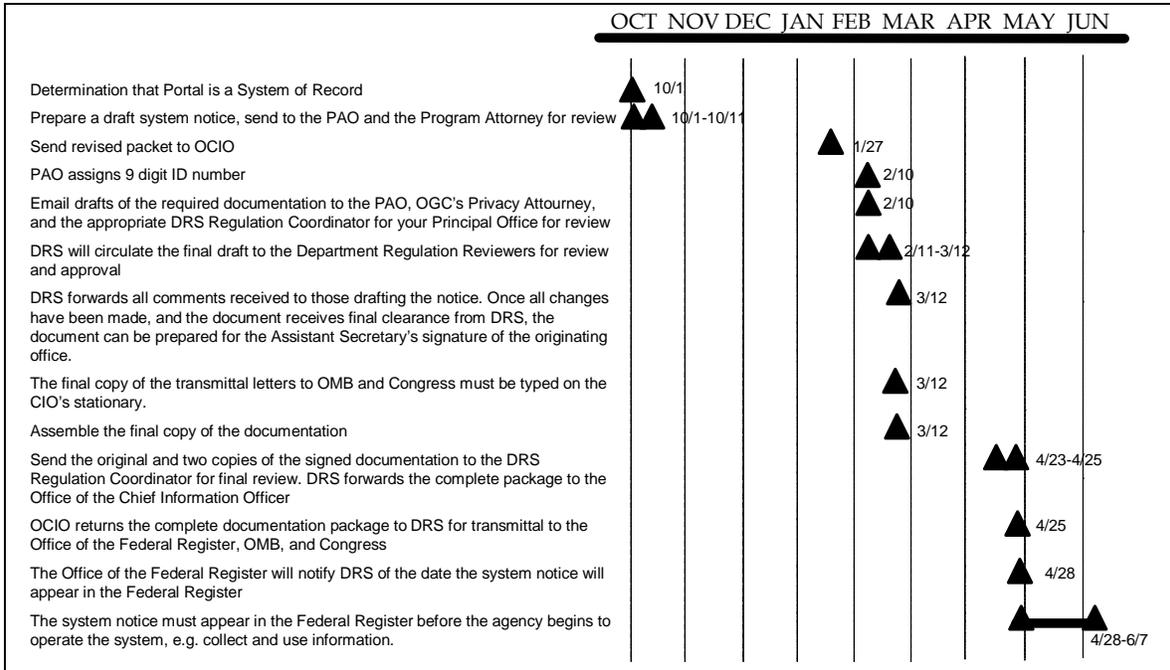
The overall project schedule for the Students and FP Portals is shown below.





2.2 Privacy Act (System of Record) Schedule

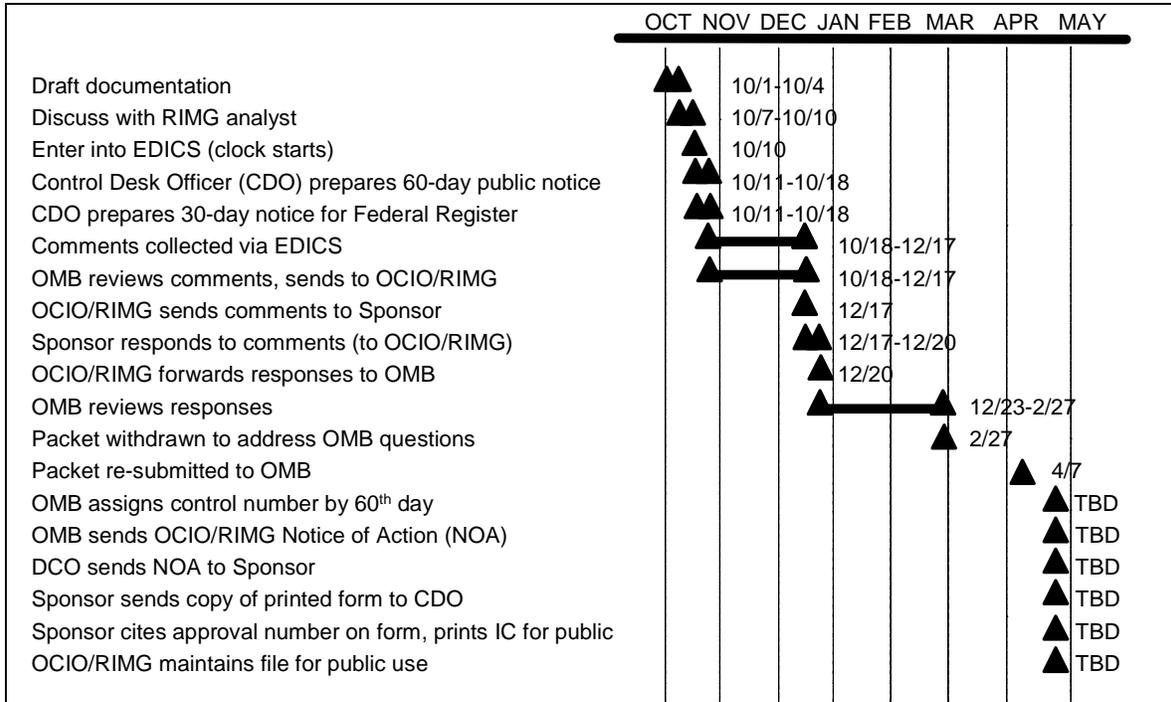
The detailed schedule for the System of Record is shown below.



The System of Record process was completed on June 4, 2003. The packet was posted in the Federal Register (Public Notice) on April 27, 2003. OMB had 40 calendar days to complete their review. We provided responses to two OMB questions during this performance period. Approval of the System of Record packet was received on June 4, 2003.

2.3 Information Collection Clearance (OMB) Schedule

The detailed schedule for the Information Collection Clearance process is shown below.



The Information Collection Clearance (ICC) process is currently on hold. The initial 60-day period passed without any comments from the public. ED/CIO forwarded all documentation to the OMB for their review. A second 30-day public review period has concluded. A meeting was held with the FSA Chief Operating Officer (COO) and a representative from the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) on February 26th to address OMB's questions. Subsequent discussions have been held with the OMB to include additional responses to additional questions. The ICC packet was re-submitted to OMB, but another 60 day review period passed without their approval, so the packet was withdrawn for a second time. The packet will be on hold until all of OMB's questions have been addressed. During OMB's 60-day review period, they provided ED/CIO and FSA with the following questions and action items:

- Updated Business Case
- Certification and Accreditation
- Privacy Impact Assessment
- Public Announcement for other Vendors

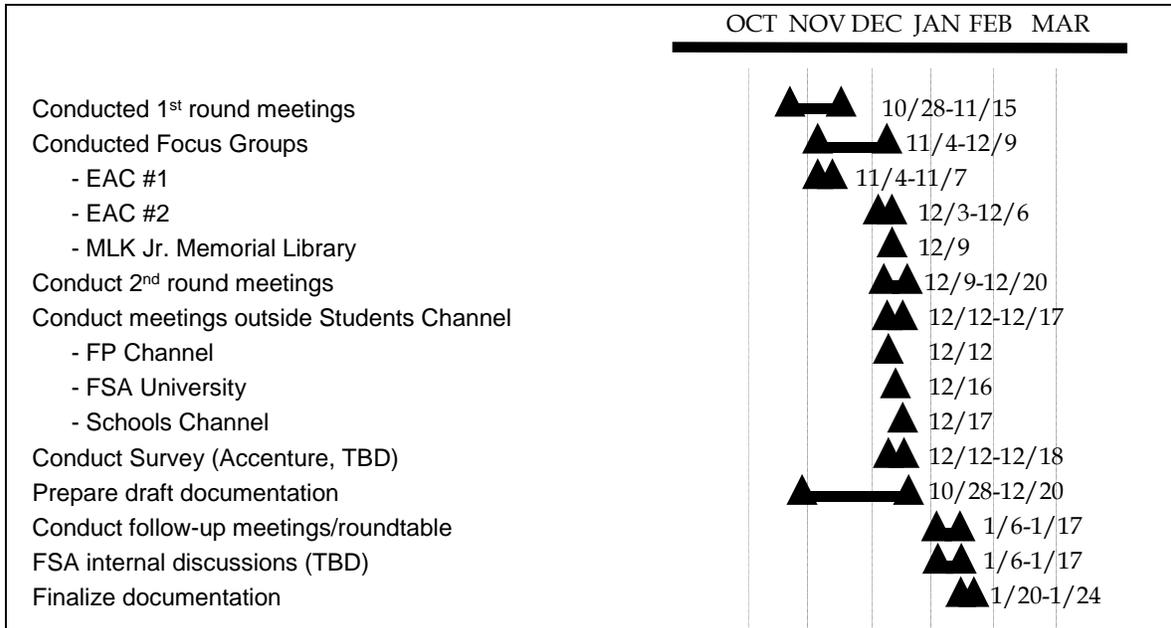
A meeting was held on July 2, 2003. The goal was to address all of OMB's questions at that time while providing them with a demo of Release 2 of the Students Portal. As a result of the meeting, additional issues and action items were presented to the Students Portal team, all of which are currently being addressed. Two additional briefings on the



Students Portal were given – to the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) and the Domestic Policy Council (DPC). During both briefings, the Portal received significant praise and support for the wide array of services related to the college admission and aid processes it would provide for students.

2.4 Release 3 Requirements Schedule

The Students Portal Release 3 Requirements schedule is shown below.



All requirements sessions have been conducted, and a separate Requirements documentation has been delivered to the Students Channel. Business Justification documentation has also been drafted.

2.5 Stabilization Activities

The following stabilization activities have occurred since the last monthly Stabilization and Transition Support status report.

- Provided support for OMB responses as part of the ICC process.
- Provided updated Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) Survey.
- Continued planning for Disaster Recovery testing.
- Continued coordination with integration activities (e.g., Data Strategy, SSIM, Web Usage, etc.).
- Continued drafting marketing/communications approach with FSA Communications and ED Office of Public Affairs (OPA).
- Resolved various TeamSite Templating content updates.



- Provided production support.
- Implemented Students Portal Null Pointer fix in production on 7/27/03.
- TeamSite password change procedures successfully completed.
- Modified the Task Order (extended to 8/31 with two optional deliverables for September and October).

2.6 Capacity Planning

As part of on-going capacity planning and production performance monitoring, WebTrends analysis has been performed with the VDC team. Actual volume for the past month has matched projections. There have been no performance issues. Monthly meetings have been established.

Due to the anticipated volume growth for Release 2 marketing activities, a new solution with Akamai is being investigated. This is being coordinated with the VDC/CSC, and will help mitigate any performance-related risks.

2.7 Open Activities/Issues

In addition to on-going stabilization, capacity planning, and performance monitoring, the following activities/issues are currently in progress.

- Continue monitoring ICC process.
- Conduct Disaster Recovery testing.
- Resolve various TeamSite Templating content updates as needed.
- Provide production support as needed.
- Provide OMB support as needed.
- Assist with preparing the Dear Partner Letter.
- Prepare for and conduct the Production Readiness Review (PRR).
- Merge Production content with Release 2 application/code.
- Deploy Release 2 into Production.
- Continue planning for the Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA) upgrades.
- Begin the Transition to the new Operating Partner.

3. Financial Partners Portal Status

3.1 Stabilization Activities

The following stabilization activities have occurred since the last monthly Stabilization and Transition Support status report.

- Continued planning for Disaster Recovery testing.
- Resolved various TeamSite Templating content updates.



- Provided production support.
- TeamSite password change procedures successfully completed.
- Modified the Task Order (extended to 8/31 with two optional deliverables for September and October).

3.2 Capacity Planning

As part of on-going capacity planning and production performance monitoring, WebTrends analysis is performed. There have been no volume/performance-related issues.

3.3 Open Activities/Issues

In addition to on-going stabilization, capacity planning, and performance monitoring, the following activities/issues are currently in progress.

- Conduct Disaster Recovery testing.
- Resolve various TeamSite Templating content updates as needed.
- Provide production support as needed.
- Continue planning for the Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA) upgrades.
- Provide TeamSite training.
- Begin the Transition to the new Operating Partner.

4. Summary

The Students and FP Portals have both received positive feedback from on-line surveys. Survey summaries are available for FSA to monitor this feedback directly. Summary reports are broken down into statistics based on responses as well as a complete listing of all other comments provided. Capacity planning and performance monitoring are on-going for both Portals. CPU utilization on the application and Web servers continue to be low, and there are no capacity issues at this time.

All planned activities are proceeding. The critical path for Release 2 of the Students Portal is the ICC/Privacy Impact Assessment processes, which is a high risk for when it can be deployed into Production. Workshops, Focus Groups, and Release 3 requirements sessions have been completed. Many activities have been completed and issues resolved.

The Transition to the new Operating Partner will begin during the next performance reporting period. To address any potential performance issues, the team is working with the VDC/CSC to evaluate an Akamai solution.