



F E D E R A L
S T U D E N T A I D

We Help Put America Through School

FSA Technology Infrastructure Blueprint

Version 4.2

Business Technology Alignment

09/04

Document Revision History

Version No.	Date	Author	Revisions Made
4.1	12/17/03	Denise Hill W. Terry Hardgrave Deb White Amy L. Rosenberg	Revamped entire T.I.B. and organized it by system instead of project. Updated diagrams.
4.2	3/17/04	Denise Hill W. Terry Hardgrave Deb White Amy L. Rosenberg	Made changes to CSB, FSAIC, CPS, PIN Requests, FAA Access to CPS Online, CSB, servicing, Training for Financial Aid Professionals, FSA University, added Glossary; FSA Communications has changed to Communications Management Services. 'Other' category has been changed to Workforce Support Services. Remodeled server diagrams and added process flow diagrams. Added data from business cases where appropriate.

1.0 Introduction

Overview

The U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) manages and administers student financial assistance programs authorized under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. These programs include the William D. Ford Direct Loan Program, the Federal Family Education Loan Program, the Federal Pell Grant Program, and campus-based programs (the Federal Work-Study Program, the Federal Perkins Loan Program, and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program are administered jointly by FSA and postsecondary institutions).

In 2004 FSA provided more than \$61 billion, nearly 70% of postsecondary student financial aid in the United States, to more than 8.7 million students and their families. These programs involve 6,000 postsecondary institutions authorized to participate in the title IV program, 4,800 lenders, and 35 guaranty organizations.

In addition, each year FSA tracks 93 million student loans and collects more than \$150 million in outstanding loans.

FSA's customers include students and parents, postsecondary institutions, lenders and guaranty organizations, state education agencies, financial aid administrators, and teachers.

Monitoring these programs effectively is a challenge. Over time, FSA's services had become disjointed and uncoordinated, leaving it vulnerable to losses due to fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement. Therefore, in 1998 Congress amended the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish FSA as the government's first performance-based organization (PBO).

Legislative objectives include:

- Improving service
- Reducing administrative costs
- Increasing accountability
- Providing greater management flexibility
- Integrating information systems
- Implementing a common, integrated delivery system
- Developing a system containing complete, accurate and timely data to ensure program integrity.

To achieve these objectives, FSA developed three strategic goals. These are to increase customer satisfaction, increase employee satisfaction, and reduce unit cost. (See U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan 2002 – 2007.)

To improve its performance and increase coordination among its activities, FSA reorganized into channels, each focusing on one of FSA's customer groups: students, schools, and financial partners (lenders and guaranty agencies).

FSA also created departments, called enterprise units, that support the channels by focusing on internal customer and stakeholder needs with activities such as analysis, communications and human resources.

FSA's support organizations of the chief financial officer (CFO) and chief information officer (CIO) are responsible for technical and financial management practices and infrastructure.

FSA also devised an enterprise-wide system architecture to integrate the student financial aid information and delivery systems. It also adopted a new approach, called system consolidation that uses a variety of techniques, including middleware tools, to provide a more complete and integrated view of the information contained in multiple databases.

Document Abstract

The FSA Technology Infrastructure Blueprint (TIB) describes the common, enterprise-wide technology infrastructure supporting FSA's activities. In addition, it contains:

- A set of technology models and statements that guide FSA toward a consistent, compatible technology infrastructure based on FSA defined standards (see *FSA Technology Policies, Standards & Products Guide*) and supporting FSA's modernization vision;
- High-level design illustrations, via server diagrams, of the essential components of the FSA technology infrastructure;
- A description of the technology infrastructure that is the foundation for each FSA application defined by the Target Architecture (TA); and
- Points of contact for each system within the FSA technology infrastructure, provided in an Appendix at the end of this document.

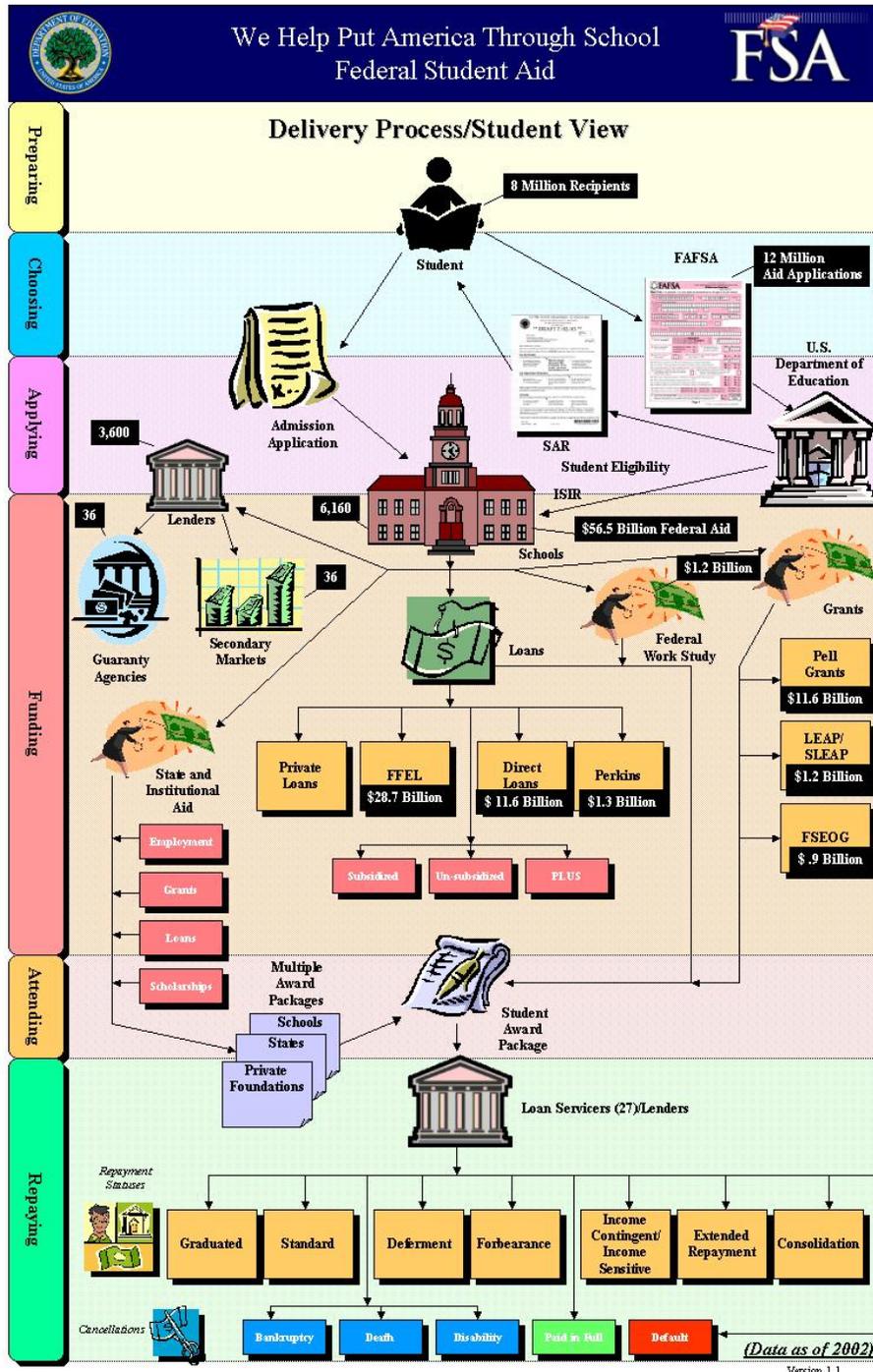
It is a companion to the *FSA Technology Policies, Standards & Products Guide, Version 4.0*, available on FSANet.

This document is updated quarterly and published annually, at a minimum, through the Business Technology Alignment (BTA) process.

Also, this version of the TIB is based on information collected through August 2004. These updated server and process diagrams, as Visio files, will be available for download on FSANET (<http://fsanet.ed.gov>).

1.1 FSA Vision

This figure illustrates the current FSA delivery process. A subsequent version of this document will include a diagram describing the vision for consolidating of FSA’s business processes and systems.



1.2 Enumeration of FSA Subsystems

This section describes the following FSA subsystems:

- Students
- Borrowers
- Schools
- Financial Partners Service
- Ombudsman
- FSA University
- Chief Information Officer (CIO)
- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Communications Management Services
- Other

This list of FSA subsystems is not the same as a list of FSA's channels, enterprise units and support organizations. Instead, it groups the technology into a structure that alleviates redundancy.

In addition, some subsystems may incorporate more than one project.

1.2.1 Students

A student is defined as an individual seeking to study at an institution of higher learning and wants to receive some type of Federal student aid.

The financial aid process begins when a student completes the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). The information reported on the FAFSA is used to calculate the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is the measure of a family's financial strength.

The student submits the FAFSA either via the Internet or by mail. ED's Central Processing System (CPS) processes the FAFSA and sends the student a Student Aid Report (SAR) (or a SAR Information Acknowledgement if the student applied via the Internet) for review. The SAR confirms the information the student reported on the FAFSA and lists the student's EFC.

The financial aid administrator (FAA) uses the EFC to determine the amount of Federal student aid that the student is qualified for. The FAA then prepares a financial aid package for the student.

1.2.2 Borrowers

FSA's loan programs are a large source of the aid that undergraduates and parents and graduate students borrow to pay education expenses.

The William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program and the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program consist of Stafford Loans (for undergraduate and graduate students) and PLUS Loans (for parents of dependent undergraduates).

Through the Direct Loan Program, eligible students and parents borrow directly from the federal government through participating schools. Direct Loans include Direct Stafford Loans, Direct PLUS Loans, and Direct Consolidation Loans. The student repays a Direct Loan to ED.

Through the FFEL Program, private lenders, such as banks, credit unions and other lenders, provide federally guaranteed funds. FFELs include FFEL Stafford Loans, FFEL PLUS Loans, and FFEL Consolidation Loans. The student repays the FFEL to the private lender that made the loan.

Through the Federal Perkins Loan Program, the student borrows from the school. The loan consists of government funds and school funds. The student repays this loan to the school.

1.2.3 Schools

A school wishing to participate in FSA programs must demonstrate that it is eligible to participate before it can be certified for participation. A school must apply for and receive approval from ED of its eligibility to participate.

A school is eligible to participate in all FSA programs provided the school offers the appropriate type of eligible program.

Some schools apply only for a designation as an eligible institution (they do not seek to participate) so that students attending the school may receive deferments on FSA program loans or be eligible for the HOPE/Lifetime Learning Scholarship tax credit, or so the school may apply to participate in federal HEA programs.

Institutional eligibility regulations define three types of eligible institutions: institutions of higher education, proprietary institutions of higher education, and postsecondary vocational institutions.

The criteria for the types of institutions differ somewhat; however, the definitions are not mutually exclusive. That is, a public or private nonprofit school may meet the definition of more than one type of eligible institution. Also, a foreign school can participate in the FFEL programs if it is comparable to a U.S. institution of higher education and has been approved by ED.

1.2.4 Financial Partners Service (FPS)

Financial Partners Services (FPS) is responsible for business services to its financial aid partners, including guaranty agencies, lenders, servicers, trade associations, trustees, schools, and secondary markets. FPS maintains a network of customers and guarantee agencies. It also works with state grant agencies on the LEAP/SLEAP grant program.

FPS ensures students can access Federal student loans, particularly the FFEL program.

In addition, FPS has two non-organizational functions: Financial Analysis and State Agency Liaison.

The FPS portal links to FSA's Financial Management System (FMS), Financial Partners Data Mart, and National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

1.2.5 Ombudsman

In 1998, Congress directed ED to appoint a student loan Ombudsman. Despite numerous improvements in lending money to students, there was little improvement in repayment services to students. Both students and advocates reported that there was massive confusion in the student lending programs. The Ombudsman is the last resort to resolve repayment problems. After all other avenues are exhausted, the Office of The Ombudsman intervenes to try to solve the problem.

1.2.6 FSA Extranet

FSA Extranet gives FSA's operating partners access to strategic plans and initiatives in progress. It also links to FSA's CIO, Enterprise Performance Management Services, FSA University, FSA's Ombudsman, Schools Channel, and Students Channel.

1.2.7 Chief Information Officer (CIO)

The FSA Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for promoting the effective use of technology to achieve FSA's strategic objectives. The CIO advocates sound technology planning and investments, integrated technology architectures and standards, effective systems development and production support.

CIO business functions and processes are:

- ***Application Development Group*** is responsible for lifecycle development of FSA's mainframe and distributed applications in support of the channels and functional areas.
- ***Enterprise IT Management Group*** is responsible for FSA's enterprise-wide technology planning and oversight, development and maintenance of technology architecture, development and promulgation of technology standards, and the processes and discipline that ensure that FSA is investing in and using information technology wisely.

- **Enterprise IT Services Group** is responsible for planning, managing, operating, and maintaining FSA’s development, test, and production environment technical infrastructure, including the Virtual Data Center and the internet and intranet infrastructure.

1.2.8 Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is the financial advisor to the FSA Chief Operating Officer (COO). The FSA CFO partners with ED’s Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) to develop and implement FSA’s financial management policies, procedures, systems and program controls that strengthen FSA’s internal controls and report to Congress and other constituents about FSA grant, loan, and operational activities.

The Financial Management System (FMS) is FSA’s centralized financial accounting system.

FMS facilitates the FSA transformation by giving the CFO the ability to report information across loan and grant programs, consolidate redundant processes, and account for FSA Title IV funds.

1.2.9 Communications Management Services

Communications Management Services (formerly *FSA Communications*) provides FSA staff with internal documentation and enterprise-wide information. It has three functions:

- **FSA Communications External Relations:** Informs ED colleagues, the higher education community, Congress, and the public about FSA, financial aid programs, and FSA’s progress as a PBO.
- **Internal Relations:** Informs staff and operating partners about FSA’s modernization projects, office-wide initiatives, and PBO status.
- **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) & Privacy Act:** Responds to requests for information from the public under the Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act.

1.2.10 Workforce Support Services

This category consists of those entities that do not fit in any other subsystem in this document, such as the **FSA Homepage** and the **FSA Intern Program**.

2.0 Students

Overview

This section describes the systems required for a student to apply for and receive Federal student aid.

A student applies for aid by submitting a completed and signed *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) on paper or via FAFSA on the Web (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>).

A school's financial aid administrator (FAA) can also submit an application using *FAA Access to CPS Online* at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/FAA/faa.htm>. To sign and correct web-based FAFSAs, a student uses a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

FSA's Central Processing System (CPS) processes the application and sends the student a *Student Aid Report* (SAR) or a SAR Information Acknowledgement (if the student applied via the FAFSA on the Web). The SAR confirms the information the student reported on the FAFSA and lists the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is the measure of the family's financial strength.

Once the student notifies a school's FAA of the interest in attending the institution, the FAA reviews the student's SAR and determines a student's financial need by using the equation: $\text{Cost of Attendance} - \text{EFC} = \text{Financial Need}$

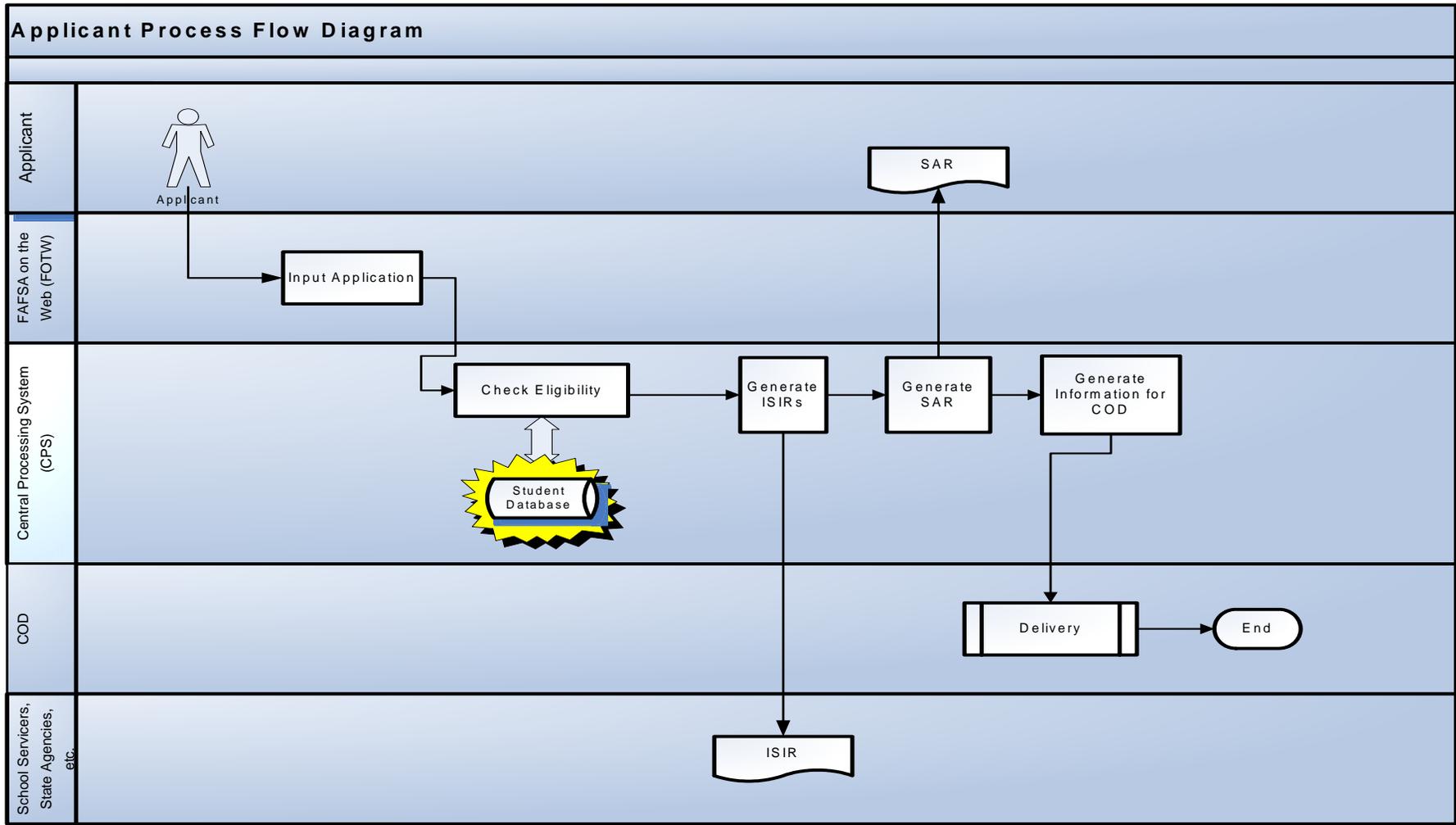
The FAA prepares a financial aid package outlining the amount of aid (from all sources) the school will offer the student.

To increase awareness of its student financial aid products and services, FSA publishes numerous publications each year.



See the next page for an illustration of the business process that is behind an student applicant's bid for federal student aid.

This diagram illustrates the entire, high-level process from an applicant and business perspective.



2.1 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Description

A student applies for Federal student aid by completing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) or Renewal FAFSA. A student can apply

- Using a paper application
- vVa *FAFSA on the Web* (FOTW) at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>
- Via a school's access to *FAA Access to CPS Online* at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/FAA/faa.htm>

Using FOTW, students can file FAFSAs, Renewal FAFSAs, correction applications, or access the Spanish version of the FAFSA. They can also check on corrections to their previously filed FAFSAs, register for Personal Identification Numbers (PINs), print their Student Aid Reports (SARs), and more. FOTW is the fastest growing FSA offering. More detail is given below.

Renewal FAFSA Applications

A student who applied for financial aid the previous school year can probably file a Renewal FAFSA. The Renewal FAFSA is available either online or on paper and has prefilled information from the previous year's application. The applicant only needs to update information that has changed and answer only a few questions. A student who applied on paper will receive a Renewal FAFSA by mail, but also has the option of filling out a Renewal FAFSA online. Students who apply online do not receive a Renewal FAFSA in the mail.

For example, a student applied for aid using *FAFSA on the Web* in 2003-2004. For 2004-2005, ED sends the student a reminder through regular mail or e-mail (depending on whether the student provided an e-mail address) that it is time to reapply for federal student aid. The reminder includes the applicant's Personal Identification Number (PIN), which is required for the student to complete and sign a *Renewal FAFSA on the Web*.

2.1.1 FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)

FAFSA on the Web (FOTW), at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>, is the fastest growing FSA product with at least 70% of applications now filed online.

Using FOTW, students can

- File FAFSAs and Renewal FAFSA
- Correct applications
- Access the Spanish version of the FAFSA
- Check the status of their applications and corrections
- Register for Personal Identification Numbers (PINs)
- Print their Student Aid Reports (SARs)

The benefits for using FOTW include:

- FAFSA on the Web is faster than applying via paper.
- Students answer fewer questions than required on the paper application because FAFSA on the Web uses skip logic based on each student's particular information.
- Applications have less chance of being rejected by the processor due to missing or conflicting information because FAFSA on the Web checks the answers before each application is submitted.
- Students can draft and save application information and complete and transmit it at a later time.
- Students do not need to install any software on their personal computers.
- FAFSA on the Web is more convenient because students can access FAFSA on the Web from any computer that has Internet access.
- FAFSA on the Web supports an unlimited number of users, allowing thousands of students to apply at once.

2.1.2 FAA Access to CPS Online

An electronic FAFSA begins with a completed and signed paper FAFSA. This process differs from FOTW in that the student fills out a paper FAFSA and brings it to the school financial aid administrator (FAA) for submission.

The FAA enters the student's data into *FAA Access to CPS Online*, exports it to a file, formats it, and transmits it via ED's Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) to the CPS for processing.

An FAA accesses FOTW via FAA Access to CPS Online in order to fill out a FAFSA on behalf of the student. Authorized sites may also pre-populate some fields on the FOTW application with student data.

The FAA can view processed data for any student who has included the school's code on an application.

The FAA also uses FAA Access to CPS Online to receive Institutional Student Information Records (ISIRs), which contain the processed application data for students who have applied to the school.

FAFSA on the Web's Architecture

FOTW uses an N-tier architecture which separates business and presentation logic. See the diagram in Section 2.2.3.

FAFSA on the Web Customer Service

FOTW Customer Service merged with the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC). Callers who encounter difficulties using FOTW or have questions about the items on the FAFSA or eligibility issues, can call a 1-800 number; a TTY line for the hearing impaired is also available.

Students can also e-mail customer service at fafsaweb@ncs.com, or select the Contact Us option on the FOTW Web site. FOTW also has a live chat option on its Web site so applicants can get assistance in real time.

More information about the FSAIC is detailed later in this document.

2.1.3. Fiscal Year 2005 Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Baseline customer service surveys were conducted in Fiscal Years 2003, 2004, and 2005 to measure FSA's progress and indicate those areas where the most effective actions were required to improve it. The objectives for conducting these surveys include

- Modernizing and integrating FSA systems
- Improving products and services
- Delivering student aid effectively and accurately

FSA will use the results of these surveys to investigate methods to streamline its systems, identify data collection methods that could improve program oversight, and establish program performance and productivity metrics.

2.2 The Central Processing System (CPS)

Description

The Central Processing System (CPS) processes Federal Student Aid (FSA) applicant data and sends the results to students, schools, state agencies, and the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The CPS is located at the Virtual Data Center (VDC). Pearson Government Solutions prints the Student Aid Reports (SARs).

CPS consists of several phases:

- FAFSA
- Electronic Edits
- Agency Matches
- Eligibility Calculation
- SAR/ISIR Generation

Eligibility Calculation

ELECTRONIC EDITS

CPS performs edit checks for incomplete or inconsistent data.

AGENCY MATCHES

Selected records are sent out to various external matching agencies such as Social Security Administration (SSA), Veteran's Administration (VA), Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS), National Direct Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and Selective Service Agency (SS).

ELIGIBILITY CALCULATION

CPS calculates the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for FAFSAs that successfully pass the computer edits. (The EFC is an index of need that a financial aid administrator uses to determine the amount of Federal student aid that students qualify for.)

SAR/ISIR Generation

CPS generates several different outputs, such as Institutional Student Information Reports (ISIRs), which are sent to the institution that the student has indicated on the application (paper or electronic). An ISIR is also sent to organizations and state agencies listed on the student's application (of which participate in ED's Electronic Data Exchange).

Students who provide an e-mail address, either via the Web application or on the paper application, receive the SAR via an e-mail notification and access to a secure Web site. For those students who do not provide an e-mail address, CPS prints and sends a SAR to the applicant's mailing address.

2.3 Personal Identification Number (PIN) Requests

Description

A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is an electronic access code number that serves as an identifier, which in turn allows students (and parents of dependent students) to access their personal Federal student aid information online within various ED systems. (These systems include FAFSA on the Web, NSLDS, Direct Loan Servicing, Direct Loan Consolidation, and the Direct Loan/Master Promissory Note Web site.)

The FSA PIN works much like the personal identification number one receives from a bank. Whether a student completes a paper FAFSA or files an application using FAFSA on the Web, the student receives a PIN. Also, the PIN allows users to electronically sign their master promissory notes, make corrections to their application information, and access their student loan history. Also, once students receive their PINs, they may use them in future award years.

Schools can request that PINs be sent to eligible applicants instead of paper Renewal FAFSAs. PINs allow students to access their electronic Renewal FAFSA data on the Web.

Note! Anyone who has a valid Social Security Number (SSN) and is a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen may apply for a PIN.

2.3.1 Renewal PIN Request

Process

Schools have two options to request that a PIN be sent to a student instead of the paper Renewal FAFSA:

1. Request a PIN via the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site.
2. Request a PIN via a Type 2 Individual PIN Request. This request is sent via the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG).

Participation

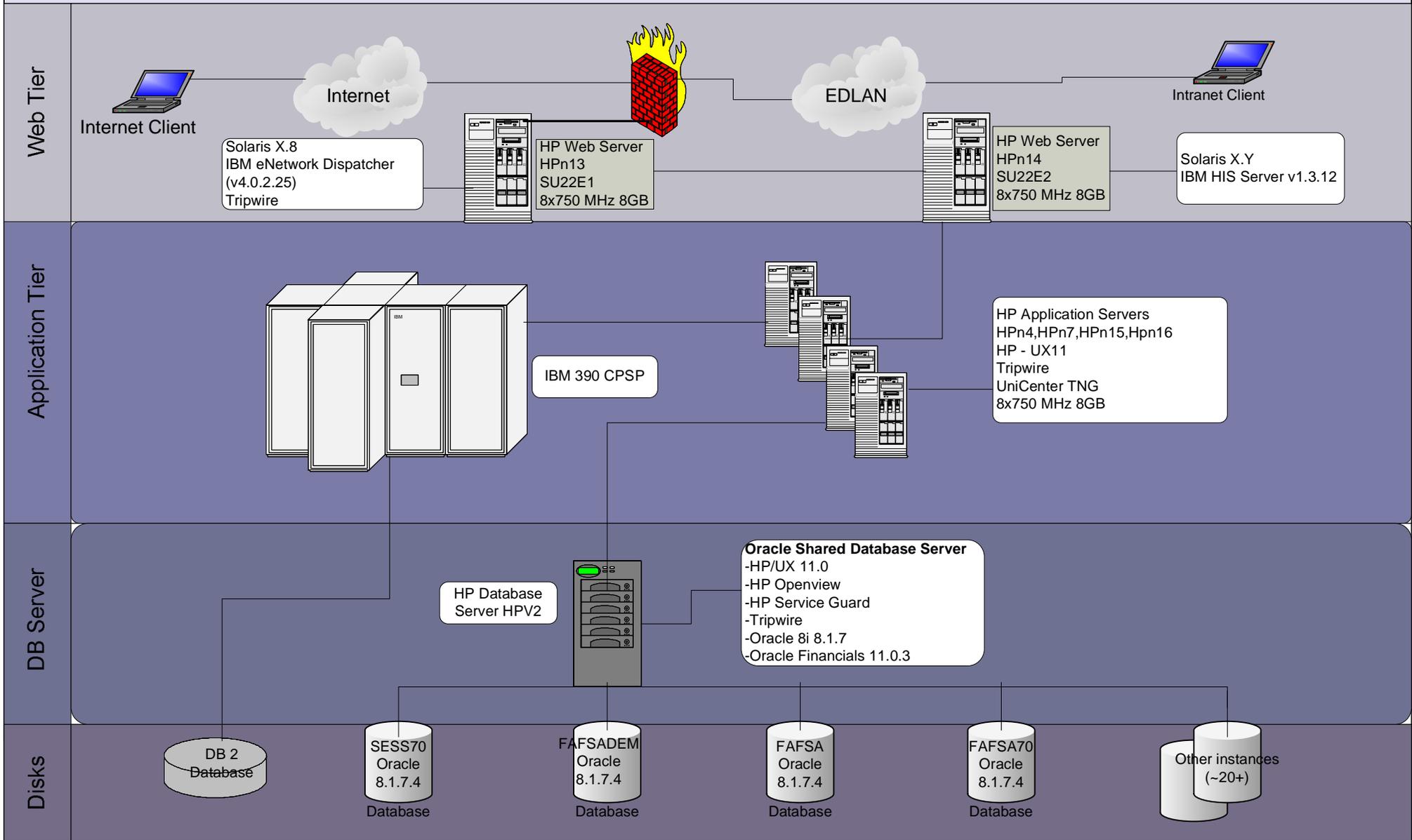
To participate in the PIN Request process via the FAA Access to CPS Online site or Type 2 requests via SAIG, the school must have:

- Completed and filed a SAIG Enrollment Form that requests specific services for an EDE process (such as receiving electronic automatic ISIRs). The SAIG Enrollment process can be completed at <http://www.FSAWebEnroll.ed.gov>;
- An active enrollment status for their Federal School Code, which means they have correctly indicated on their SAIG Enrollment Form the Federal School Code they plan to use to perform the specific processes;
- Ensure their Federal School Code has an active enrollment status for Renewal Applications. Their enrollment status is designated on their schools' SAIG Enrollment Form with CPS/WAN Technical Support; *and*
- Be set up to receive electronic automatic ISIRs for the current academic year for the destination number (TG#) they use to submit their PIN Request. If the school is not properly enrolled for Renewal Applications, they cannot make PIN requests. If they attempt to do so, they will receive error messages or rejected batches (or both) when they submit a PIN Request. If schools want to verify or update their statuses for electronic automatic ISIRs or Renewal Applications, they may contact CPS/WAN Technical Support at 800/330-5947.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for FAFSA on the Web and CPS.

FAFSA on the Web (FOTW) & CPS



2.4 FSA Students Portal

Description

In Fiscal Year 2002 (FY02), FSA invested in the initial development of a single Web channel with student-specific views. The Students Portal is quickly establishing a track record for slashing costs through the implementation of modern technologies and practices, such as:

- FAFSA on the Web Redesigned
- Printing Costs Reduced
- Electronic Loan Consolidations Increase
- New Direct Loan e-Servicing Features Online
- Repayments on Defaulted Loans Increase
- Premier of the Students Portal
- Direct Loan Servicing System awards
- FAFSA on the Web awards

The Student Aid on the Web provides information and productivity tools necessary for FSA's customers to make informed financial aid decisions.

Architecture

This portal also creates a common architecture standard that utilizes FSA's integrated technical architecture (ITA) to enable FSA to integrate its existing Web sites (e.g., *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA), National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and Direct Loan Servicing System {DLSS} etc.) and external sites (Mapping-your-future.com, finaid.org etc.) into the portals. The second release of Student Aid on the Web was deployed in November 2003.

FSA Students Portal Process Flow Diagram



A future release of this document will include a process flow diagram that will illustrate the entire, high-level Students Portal process from a business standpoint.

2.5 Student Aid Awareness (Call Centers)

Description

One FSA goal is to create a greater awareness of FSA's student financial aid products and services. Outreach efforts include

- Partnering with federal, state, local, private, faith and community-based and other organizations that have established relations with the targeted groups.
- Distributing student aid information at college fairs and college night presentations at high schools, conducting train-the-trainer sessions with an organization's staff, and promoting information exchange and collaboration among community groups to disseminate financial aid information.

Informational materials include publications for high school students, high school counselors, postsecondary students and parents. Last year more than 100,000 students who contacted FSA call centers received informational materials; many more received information from FSA partners. Publications can be ordered via ED Pubs, ED's publications warehouse, or viewed online.

2.5.1 Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)

Description

Information specialists at the FSAIC provide students and the general public with information about Federal student aid. Specifically, information specialists assist people with questions about:

- FAFSA completion (either electronic or paper);
- Personal Identification Numbers (PINs);
- Corrections to Student Aid Reports (SARs);
- Schools participating in the Federal student aid programs;
- Federal student aid eligibility requirements and federal loans
- Process of determining financial need and awarding aid;
- Application information to be sent to a specific school;
- Receipt of federal student aid publications; and,

In addition, the FSAIC has an automated response system so that students can ascertain whether their FAFSAs have been processed. They may also request copies of their Student Aid Reports (SARs). The FSAIC has a toll-free number, a toll number, and also a number for the hearing impaired.

3.0 Borrowers

Overview

This section describes the systems required to administer student financial aid programs.

The U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) administers the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program.

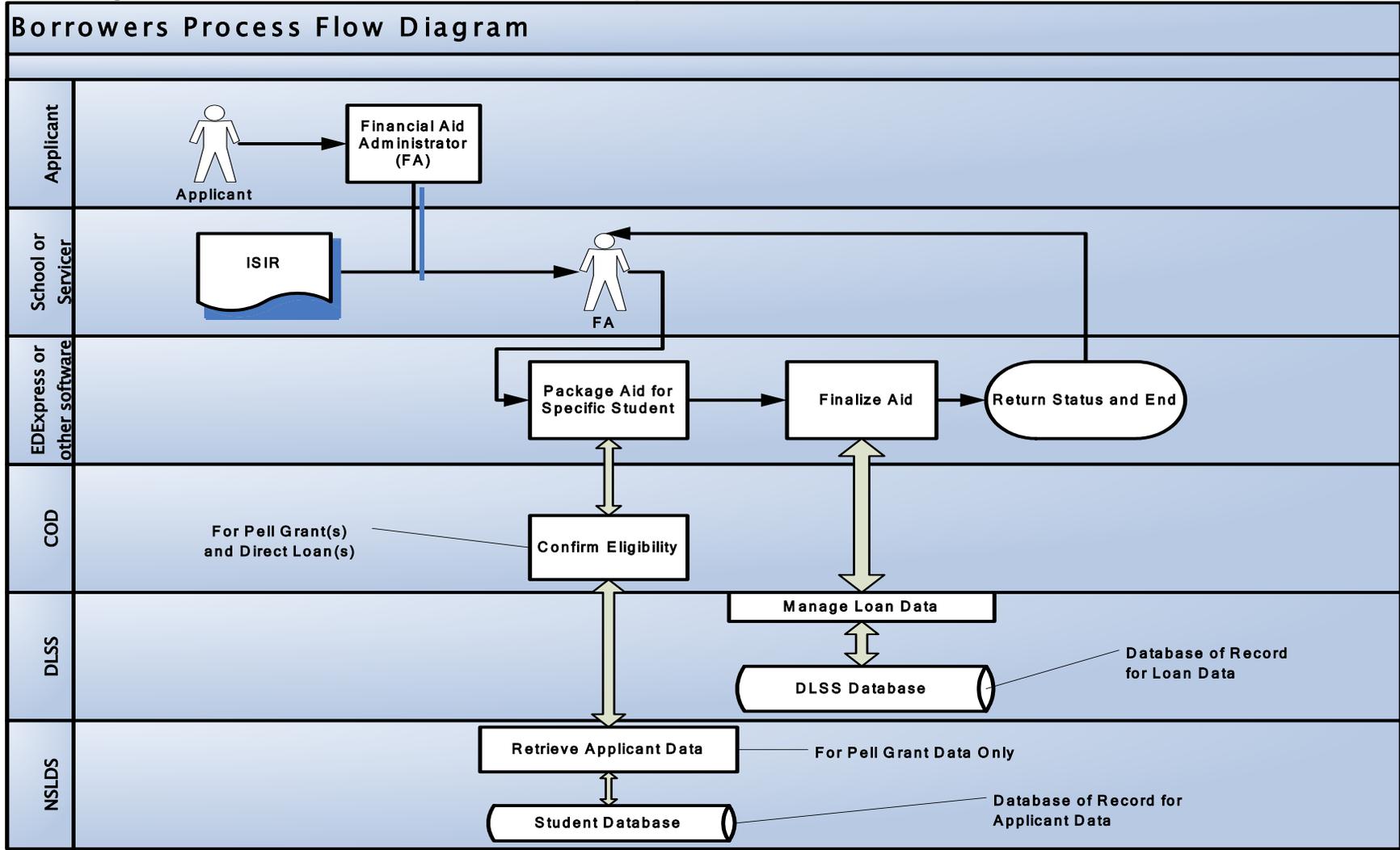
The FFEL and Direct Loan programs consist of Stafford Loans, for undergraduates and graduate students, and PLUS Loans, for the parents of dependent undergraduates. Eligibility rules and loan amounts are identical, but the repayment plans differ. The main difference is that student borrowers receive FFEL funds from private lenders, such as banks, credit unions, or other lenders that participate in the FFEL Program. In the Direct Loan program, the Federal government provides the funding that the schools disburse to borrowers.

Stafford Loans, in addition, are subsidized or unsubsidized. A subsidized loan is awarded on the basis of financial need and the borrower is not charged any interest prior to repayment. An unsubsidized loan is not awarded on the basis of need and the borrower is charged interest from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full.



See the next page for an illustration of the business process that is behind an student applicant's bid for federal student aid.

The diagram below illustrates the business process flow for borrowers.



3.1 Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS)

Web site

Description

Direct Loans are part of the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program that Congress implemented in 1994 to provide student loan borrowers an alternative to the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFEL).

In the Direct Loan program ED sends funds to participating schools, which then disburse the loans to the students.

Students can receive both FFELs and Direct Loans, but not both types for the same period of enrollment at the same school.

Services

Direct Loan Servicing Online (DLSS) Web site, at <http://www.dlsonline.com/index.asp> services Direct Loans while borrowers are in school, during a grace period, and in repayment.

DLSS receives “booked” student loans from the Direct Loan Origination System (DLOS) and/or the Common Origination & Disbursement (COD) system, and maintains them throughout their repayment period.

DLSS functions include:

- Placing the loan into repayment at the proper time
- Billing the borrower
- Tracking and posting payments
- Applying deferments and forbearances
- Resolving delinquencies
- Retiring the loan when paid in full, discharged, or defaulted

DLSS provides the following services to borrowers:

- Maintains participant and loan information
- Counsels borrowers on selection of repayment plans
- Processes billing information and handles request for billing documents and statuses
- Processes loan payments
- Manages aid status
- Collects Direct Loans in delinquent status (less than 270 days)
- Reports Direct Loan information to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Note!! The DLSS was incorporated into the Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) solicitation, which was awarded in December 2003. That is, DLSS will be retired when CSB becomes operational.

3.2 eServicing

Description

Direct Loan eServicing provides Internet billing and payment, online correspondence, and an enhanced Customer Management System.

The integration of these three components makes it possible for borrowers to experience a uniform, high-quality customer service experience regardless of how they choose to interact with DLSS, via the Internet, the Voice Response Unit (VRU), or Customer Service Representatives (CSRs).

Borrowers must complete an entrance counseling session before receiving a student loan. Borrowers must also complete an exit counseling session prior to graduating or leaving college. Entrance Counseling and Exit Counseling are also available online.

eServicing Server Diagram



A future release of this document will include a business process diagram for eServicing.

3.3 Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS) PIN Request

Description

Each borrower and parent of a dependent borrower must have a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access DLSS and make online payments, view account balances and payment histories, and change billing options.

Borrowers may request a new or duplicate PIN. To receive a PIN, the system first validates that the individual is currently in the system as a Direct Loan borrower and has a valid address on file. Once validated, the system instructs the borrower to enter the Social Security Number (SSN), date of birth, and Zip code. A PIN is then assigned and mailed to the address on file. A borrower with a valid e-mail address on file may choose to receive the PIN by either regular mail or e-mail.

DLSS instructs a borrower who believes that DLSS does not have the current address to call the Direct Loan Servicing Center's toll-free number, 1-800-848-0979, to confirm the address or request a change of address.

Also, before borrowers can request a PIN on the DLSS, the system first validates that they are currently in the system as a Direct Loan borrower with a valid address. The PIN is then mailed to the address that is on file. If the borrower has a valid email available in the system, he or she may choose to receive their PIN either by regular mail or e-mail. Also, if the borrower believes the DLSS does not have the most current address on file, the borrower is instructed to contact the Direct Loan Servicing Center at their toll-free number to confirm or request a change of address.

3.4 Direct Loans Master Promissory Note (MPN)

Description

The Master Promissory Note (MPN) is a loan borrower's promise to pay a specified amount on demand or at a certain time. Direct loans has two types of MPNs: one for student loans and one for parent PLUS loans.

Previously, MPNs were paper-based. Using an ED-issued PIN, borrowers can complete and sign an electronic MPN on the Direct Loans Master Promissory Note Web site, at <https://lo-online.ed.gov/empn/unsecure/index.jsp>.

Borrowers who do not have a PIN can request one from the PIN site, <http://www.pin.ed.gov/PINWebApp/pinindex.jsp>.

3.5 Common Origination & Disbursement (COD)

Description

The Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) system is a streamlined method for processing Pell Grant and Direct Loan financial aid data. The COD system integrates the origination and disbursement processes for Pell Grants and Direct Loans that were previously performed by the Recipient Financial Management System (RFMS) and the Direct Loan Origination System (DLOS). The COD System for all Pell Grant and Direct Loan student level records was deployed in April 2002.

Architecture

COD migrates program-centric systems to a student-centric system. FSA's system architecture was built over a period of years using a variety of software products and platforms; each system was built to support a single student aid program. The COD system integrates the Pell Grant and Direct Loan student-level origination and disbursement functions into one system. As a result, it streamlines data collection, eliminates data redundancy, and creates a more student-centric process.

The COD system is just one piece of FSA's overall system modernization initiative to integrate student aid delivery systems. It is also key to improving FSA's services to schools and aid efforts to improve financial integrity by ensuring that Title IV funds are properly managed.

Financial Controls and Tools

The COD process provides financial controls and tools to monitor schools' adherence to the regulatory 30-day reporting requirements. These tools are Web-based views about student and batch level origination and disbursement data, information about funds drawn, funds available for draw, and several reports to help schools reconcile and correct data.

Schools can also submit and correct data using the COD Web site. The COD Web site is the single entry point into the COD data repository of origination and disbursement data. It is used by the financial aid community, FSA staff, and COD customer service.

The URL is <https://cod.ed.gov/cod/LoginPage>.

Benefits of the COD Process

COD was the first large systems integration initiative that FSA undertook to satisfy the Performance-Based Organization (PBO) mandate by the Higher Education Amendment of 1998, to modernize the delivery of student financial aid.

As one of the main objectives of this legislation, Congress mandated that FSA implement a common, open, integrated system for student financial aid delivery. The COD system became the first step to comply with that mandate because it integrates the origination and disbursement process for two of FSA's largest student financial aid programs, Pell Grants and Direct Loans.

The COD system establishes processing parameters that meet individual school needs. The benefits of the COD process for schools are:

- *Student-centric view:* All schools can access student financial aid history online via a secure Internet accessible Web site. Schools can view Pell Grant and Direct Loan data for a single student on one COD Web screen.
- *Less data to report:* Schools who are Full Participants use the XML Common Record that requires only student identifier information to match a student to the student's record and the data required to process the business requirement. Full Participant schools no longer have to submit an entire fixed length record to update a data element.

The COD Platform

The COD system is a common IT platform using XML and middleware technologies and an integrated process. Functionality is being added so that institutions can report student-level origination and disbursement information.

The COD system also has a large Help Desk and Customer Service center to assist schools with processing their data and managing their Pell Grant and Direct Loan administration.

The COD system facility processes and stores paper Direct Loan promissory notes, has a web-enabled Direct Loan electronic promissory note capability and has a Direct Loan bulk promissory note and publication fulfillment center.

State of the Art Technologies

FSA has incorporated a variety of technologies that speed transaction processing and provide other enhancements to schools. Highlights include:

- *XML*: Extensible Markup Language (XML) is the computer language COD uses for processing the Common Record and for its Web applications. XML uses COBOL, BASIC, and other computer languages, but XML is more flexible and efficient. Therefore, schools need to send only the minimum amount of data elements required for a business action; in the past they had to send an entire fixed-length record.
- *Middleware/Electronic Application Interface (EAI BUS)*: The EAI BUS is a bridge between schools, interfacing systems, and the COD system. The EAI BUS is considered middleware because it transmits information from a school's SAIG mailbox to COD, and vice versa.

COD Interfaces with Other Systems

SCHOOL INPUT (STUDENT AID INTERNET GATEWAY)

A school sends records to the COD system to report the Pell Grant and Direct Loans it awarded students.

A school does not send records directly to the COD system; it sends batches of records to a mailbox via the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG). The EAI Bus sweeps this mailbox frequently and passes the batches to COD.

A school can also send individual student records to the mailbox via the COD Web site.

RESPONSES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS VIA THE STUDENT AID INTERNET GATEWAY (SAIG)

After the COD Front-End software has processed the records, COD sends the results back to the school.

For Phase-in Participants, the processing results are called Acknowledgement records. For Full Participants, the processing results are called a Common Record Response documents

Full Participant schools have the option of receiving a batch response record via SAIG for activity that they perform on the COD website.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM (PEPS)

When COD receives a record, the Front-End software performs a series of edits. Every night, COD receives from the Post Secondary Education System (PEPS) a school file that contains information which COD then edits to ensure that the data is from an eligible institution.

CENTRAL PROCESSING SYSTEM (CPS)

Nightly, CPS sends COD an Abbreviated Applicant File (AAF), which contains a subset of the information contained in each applicant's ISIR.

COD uses the information in the AAF to edit incoming records to ensure that the students are eligible to receive Title IV aid.

For Pell Grants, COD checks each student's current Social Security Number (SSN), current Date of Birth, and first two characters of each students' current Last Name.

For Direct Loans, COD checks the current SSN and current Date of Birth.

Future Plans

COD will be integrated into a new IT initiative called the Front End Business Integration (FEBI). The FEBI solution will include an integrated information delivery, account maintenance, and financial environment to support origination and disbursement functions.

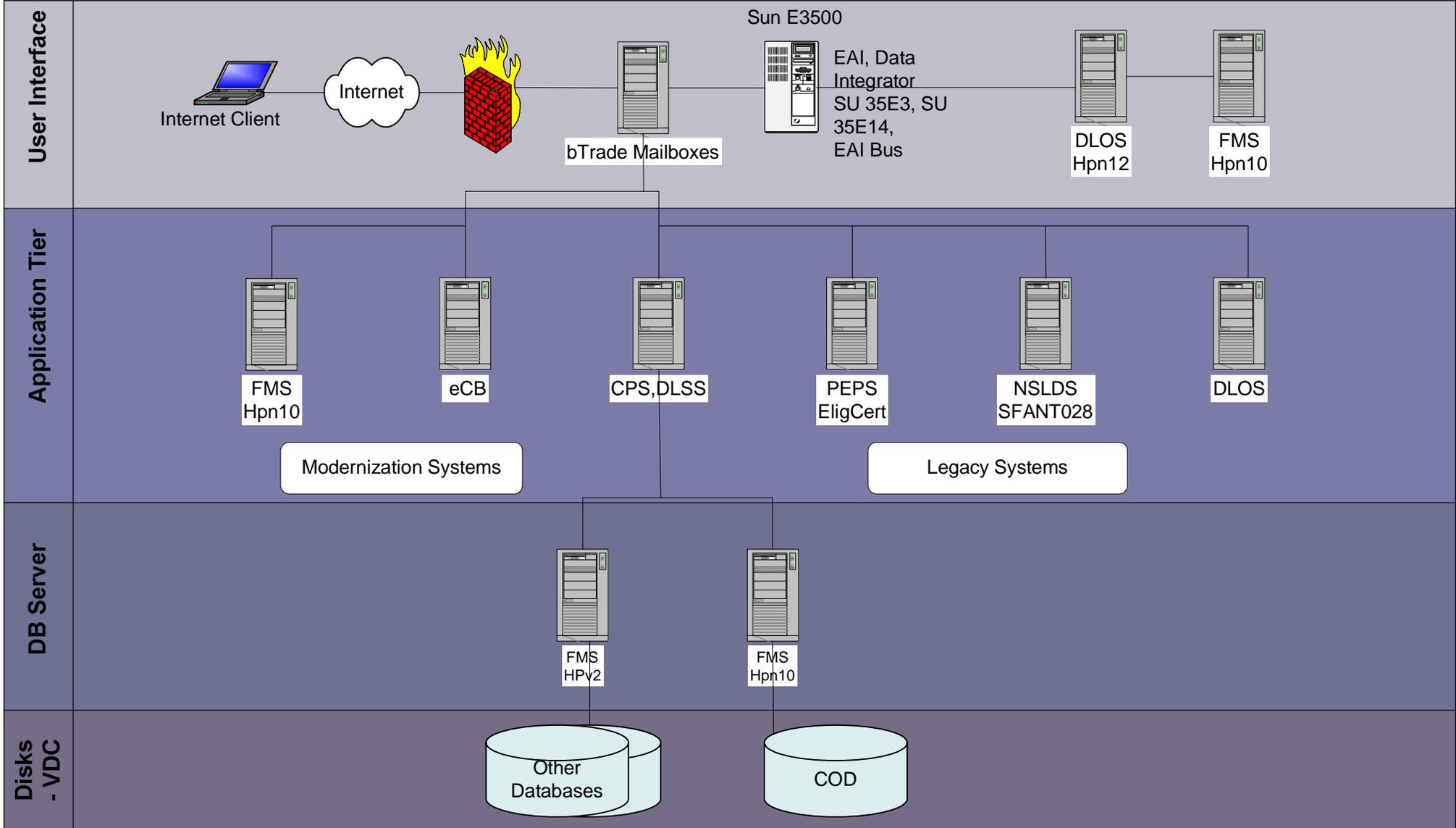
The origination and disbursement functions include:

- The capability of processing and validating origination and disbursement transactions received from institutions of higher education participating in the Federal Pell Grant, Direct Loan, and Campus-Based programs
- Processing of promissory notes, both paper and web-based
- Credit decisions for PLUS loans
- Funds administration for the Pell Grant and Direct Loan programs
- Adherence to Federal financial and accounting standards
- System balancing and reconciliation
- Provision of a web-based interface for schools



See the next page for an illustration of the server configuration that supports COD.

Common Origination & Disbursement (COD)



3.6 Common Services for Borrowers (CSB)

Description

Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) is the result of a challenge by Congress for FSA to integrate its disparate legacy systems, improve service to its customers and employees, reduce its operational costs, and restore integrity to the systems and processes that manage the Federal loan program.

The CSB initiative integrates the Servicing, Consolidation, and Collections business operations and functions. It is managed by FSA's Student Credit Management (SCM) team.

The contract to implement CSB was awarded in November 2003; final deployment is scheduled for late 2005.

CSB enhances FSA's ability to reach its goals to:

- Integrate FSA systems and provide new technology solutions;
- Improve program integrity;
- Reduce program administration costs;
- Improve human capital management; and,
- Improve products and services to provide better customer service.

The CSB Solution

The CSB solution must manage Direct Loans, defaulted debts assigned to ED by the FFEL program and other lenders, rehabilitated loans, and any other type of Title IV student aid obligation.

Reengineering

Reengineering the functions associated with the servicing and collecting of Federal student aid obligations requires reconstructing the back office and front office operations.

Back office operations include:

- Data management
- Transaction processing (including consolidating loans)
- Payment processing
- Fulfillment
- Document management
- Debt recovery and resolution
- Portfolio and risk management
- Performance management
- Program management
- Resources, such as school services and entitlement processing, required to support these activities

Front office operations involve customer relationship management (CRM)/customer interaction activities and interfaces, including:

- Paper Correspondence
- Call Center (Customer Service Representative or CSR) operations
- Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system
- CSB Web site

The CSB solution does *not* include aid awareness, *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) processing, loan origination, National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) operations, or any function not directly related to the post-enrollment activities of loan consolidation, servicing, and recovering federal student aid obligations.

However, the CSB solution must be fully integrated and compatible with these and any other FSA business functions required to manage student aid obligations.

Update

On November 20, 2003, the contract for the development of the CSB solution was awarded to ACS Education Solutions, LLC and its team, which includes EDS, Raytheon, and Pearson. More than 30 small and minority-owned businesses are expected to participate in the contract.

The initiative combines the Loan Servicing (DLSS), Loan Consolidation (LC), Debt Collection (DMCS) and Conditional Disability Discharge Tracking (CDDTS) systems into a single consolidated system.

Phased-In Implementation

The CSB implementation has three phases.

- ***Phase One*** - The LC system will be retired and the CSB Data Mart will be established. Phase One began in January 2004 and is (approximately) seven months long.
- ***Phase Two*** - The remaining systems, including DLSS, DCMS and CDDTS will be retired and CSB will become operational. Phase Two will take approximately 15 months and runs concurrently with Phase One.
- ***Phase Three*** - The CSB application will be migrated to the Virtual Data Center (VDC). This final phase will take approximately nine months, will run concurrently with the latter part of Phase Two and concludes in late 2005.

3.7 Debt Collection Service Center (DCSC) (Call Center)

Description

Loans that are not repaid according to the terms agreed to when a borrower signs a promissory note can lead to default. In many cases, default can be avoided when the borrower submits a request for a deferment, forbearance, or cancellation and by providing the required documentation before the loan reaches the point of default.

Borrowers with questions about defaulted student loan accounts can call the DCSC's toll-free number or e-mail their questions.

DCSC representatives can answer questions about:

- Bankruptcy
- Balance Disputes
- Closed schools
- Collection Agencies
- Death or disability
- Default Status
- False certification
- Forgery
- Incarceration
- Infancy
- Ownership of Loan
- School Complaints
- Statute of Limitations
- Teacher and military cancellation
- Transcript Release
- Unable to Pay

Borrowers may call the 1-800 number for questions regarding defaulted student loan accounts or may also email the center their questions.

3.8 Debt Management and Collections System (DMCS)

Description

The Debt Management and Collections Systems (DMCS) administers defaulted student loans from the time a debt is assigned to ED until the loan is paid-in-full or otherwise satisfied.

This component of the Federal Family Educational Loan (FFEL) system was developed 20 years ago. It is co-owned by the Financial Partners business unit and the Students business unit.

Note! The DMCS reengineering project was incorporated into the Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) solution, and will be retired when CSB becomes operational.

3.9 Direct Loan Consolidation System (DLCS)

Description

The Direct Loan Consolidation System (DLCS) supports the ED's Direct Loan program (DL). Borrowers use DLCS to consolidate multiple student loans from multiple sources into one Direct Consolidation Loan, which is funded and serviced by ED. DLCS can also convert DL and FFEL originated loans into Direct Loans.

The DLCS Web site, at <http://loanconsolidation.ed.gov>, has three portals:

Borrower Services Portal: Borrowers, using their PINs, can:

- electronically sign their applications and promissory notes
- view the status of their applications and loans
- obtain information about the benefits of consolidation, eligibility, how to apply, and borrower rights and responsibilities and interest rates
- access other resources including Direct Loan Servicing, NSLDS, ed.gov, PIN information, and students.gov

School Services Portal: Borrowers can find out about

- interest rates,
- the consolidation process, a school's role in consolidation
- the benefits of consolidation to borrowers,
- the effect consolidation has on the school's default ratio

Loan Holder Services Portal: Borrowers can find out about:

- interest rates
- the consolidation process
- how to certify loan verification certificates
- how ED pays off a borrower's loan
- access to Loan Holder Services
(https://loanconsolidation.ed.gov/app_loanholder_application/loanholder/jsp/lhslogin.jsp)

DLCS also includes links to the online application, forms and publications, and FAQs.

3.10 Federal Student Aid (FSA) Collections

Description

Federal Student Aid (FSA) Collections services defaulted student loans administered under the Direct Loan and FFEL programs.

The Web site simplifies the process of bringing loans out of default, and contains information about:

- Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL) – When placed in default, these loans are assigned to a guaranty agency (an organization that administers the FFEL Program for a state) for collection. Periodically, guaranty agencies assign loans to ED for collection.
- William D. Ford Direct Loan Program (Direct Loans) - When placed in default, these loans are assigned to ED's Debt Collection Service.
- Federal Perkins Loans - When placed in default, Perkins Loans might remain with the school or be assigned to ED for collection.
- Federal Pell Grants and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG) - When a Federal grant was awarded incorrectly, a student may have to repay part of it.

3.11 Loan Consolidation

Description

Borrowers use consolidation loans to simplify repaying their Federal student loans by combining different federal student loans. Even if a borrower has just one loan, he or she can also choose to consolidate it. The FFEL and Direct Loan Programs offer consolidation loans.

FFEL Consolidation Loans

Borrowers choose a FFEL Consolidation Loan to consolidate several types of federal student loans with various repayment schedules into one loan in order to make one monthly payment.

A commercial lender makes the consolidation loan, credit bureaus are notified that the account has a zero balance, and the borrower signs a new promissory note that establishes a new interest rate and repayment schedule.

To receive a FFEL Consolidation Loan, a borrower must be in repayment on a defaulted loan (that is, three voluntary, on-time, full monthly payments). Depending on the balance due, the repayment period can extend up to 30 years.

Direct Consolidation Loans

The Direct Consolidation Loan program has four repayment plans, including an Income Contingent Repayment Plan. These plans are flexible to meet the different needs of borrowers. With a Direct Consolidation Loan, borrowers can switch repayment plans at any time and without cost. Direct Consolidation Loans do not exclude anyone based on the size of their loan debt.

See the table below for a listing of a variety of loans that can be consolidated into Direct Consolidation Loans.

Loans Eligible to be Consolidated into Direct Consolidation Loans		
Auxiliary Loans to Assist Students	Federal Perkins Loans	Health Professions Student Loans
Direct Consolidation Loans and Federal Consolidation Loans	Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans	Loans for Disadvantaged Students
Direct PLUS Loans and Federal PLUS Loans	Federal Supplemental Loans for Students	National Defense Student Loans
Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans	Guaranteed Student Loans	National Direct Student Loans
Federal Insured Student Loans	Health Education Assistance Loans	Nursing Student Loans

Note! Loan Consolidation was incorporated into the Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) solicitation, which was awarded in December 2003. That is, Loan Consolidation will be retired when CSB becomes operational.

3.12 Borrower Data Mart

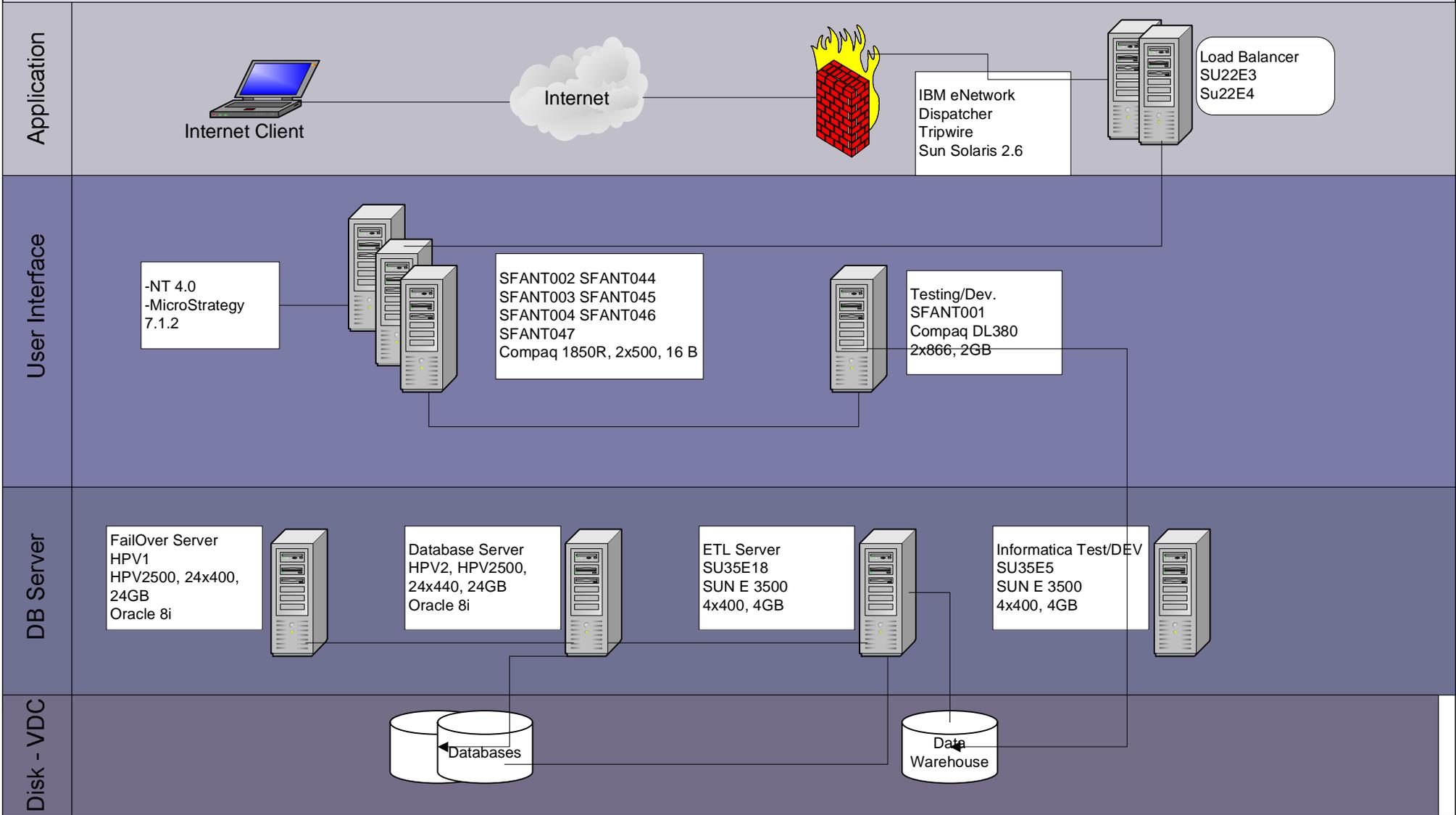
Description

The Data Mart Systems provides FSA with a normalized data schema for business components and object relational mapping. Stored primarily in Oracle databases, data is extracted from data marts and readied for delivery to portal users, analysis tools, or other FSA users.



See the next page for an illustration of the business process for the borrower data mart.

Borrower Data Mart



3.13 Credit Management Data Mart

Description

The Credit Management Data Mart (CMDM) replaces financial reporting previously completed by the Direct Loan legacy accounting system, FARS.

The CMDM brings together Direct Loan Servicing financial transactions with month end Direct Loan borrower, loan and institution demographic data.

The objectives of CMDM include:

- The FSA CFO and Student Credit Management can report on detailed financial transactions.
- FMS has a DLSS transaction register.
- Credit Management and other departments can complete MIS reporting using Direct Loan Data.
- End users have Web access to retrieve reports as needed.
- Designated FSA power users can create new reports.

CMDM has a number of levels of reporting capabilities. It is the primary reporting tool for the Direct Loan Program at the borrower, loan and financial transaction level.

Note! Eventually, the CMDM will move into the new Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) Data Mart.

3.14 Delinquent Loan Data Mart

Description

The Delinquent Loan Data Mart (DLDM) maintains data on direct loans that are either in jeopardy or are already in default. This data is used during communications with borrowers and collection agencies.

Note! Eventually, the DLDM will move into the Common Services for Borrowers (CSB) data mart.

4.0 Schools

Overview

Schools are institutions of higher learning (specifically, four-year or two-year public or private educational institutions, career schools or trade schools) that participate in ED's Title IV programs, as authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

Areas of assistance that ED provides help schools process Federal student aid, such as:

- The Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, which includes:
 - Aids to promote Federal aid
 - Computer-based training for COD and FISAP
 - EDEXpress Basics computer-based training
 - FSA Coach computer-based training
- ISIR Analysis Tool, which includes:
 - Documents and references, including Action Letters, Dear Partner/Colleague Letters, and other electronic announcements
 - Publications, such as Audit Guidance, Blue Book: Accounting/Recordkeeping/Reporting for the Business Office, Closed Schools Guide, Cohort Default Rate guide, Counselors' Handbooks
 - Worksheets
 - Schedules and tables
 - Laws and regulations

4.1 Schools Portal

Description

The FSA Schools Portal is ED's gateway to all FSA sites. The Schools Portal has five areas: Resources and Training, FAA Access to Student Data, Participation and Funding, and the FSA Calendar, and FSA Headlines.

It was one of ED's first steps to modernize and integrate FSA's systems.

Resources and Training

Schools access the IFAP home page for conference information, list-servers, to order publications and software, and to access training tools such as the FSA Self-Assessments Tool. It also links to the Training for Financial Aid Professionals Web site.

Resources and Training Links	
IFAP	http://www.ifap.ed.gov/
Conferences	http://edeworkshop.ncspearson.com/welcome.htm
Default Management	http://ifap.ed.gov/DefaultManagement/DefaultManagement.html
FSA Self-Assessments Tool	http://ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/qualityassurance/SFAAssessment.jsp
ISIR Analysis Tool	http://ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/qualityassurance/qatool.jsp
Listserves/Mailing Lists	http://fsa4schools.ed.gov/home/lm_list.htm
Publications and How to Order	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/fsapubshome.html

Resources and Training Links (Cont)	
School/Lender Program Data	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/data4schools.html
SAIG Software and Manuals	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/data4schools.html
Training/TFAP (Training for Financial Aid Professionals)	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/training/index.html
Video Conferences	http://www.edvideo.walcoff.com/

Participation and Funding

FAAs also have access to the following:

Participation and Funding Links	
FSA Self-Assessments Tool	http://ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/qualityassurance/SFAAssessment.jsp
E-App (Application/Recertification)	http://www.eligcert.ed.gov/
Audits and Program Reviews	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/services/casemanagement.html .
COD on IFAP	http://ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/currentCODPag.jsp
eCampus-Based/FISAP	http://www.cbfisap.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/welcome.jsp
Experimental Sites	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/expsites/index.html
eZ-Audit	https://ezaudit.ed.gov/EZWebApp/common/login.jsp
GAPS & E-payments	https://e-grants.ed.gov/gapsweb/epWelcome.asp
Quality Assurance Program	http://ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/qualityassurance/Default.htm
SAIG enrollment	https://www.fsawebenroll.ed.gov/PMEnroll/index.jsp
SAIG mailbox	http://www.saigportal.sfa.ed.gov/saigprod/portal.jsp

4.2 E-App Schools Portal

Description

E-App is a link from the Schools Portal and is the electronic version of the *Application for Approval to Participate in the Federal Student Financial Aid Programs*. Schools use E-App to apply for designation as an eligible institution, initial participation, recertification, reinstatement, change in ownership, or to update a current approval with changes such as a new address change, new location or program, increased level of offering, change of officials, or mailing address for publications.

Note! Schools must meet certain requirements and that not all schools may be eligible.

To apply for eligibility, schools must meet these minimum requirements:

- The school must be authorized by the state in which it is located to provide an educational program that is beyond secondary education.
- The school must admit as regular students only persons who have a high school diploma or equivalent or are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State where the school is located.
- The school must provide at least one eligible program that provides an Associate's degree or higher, or provides training to students for employment in a recognized occupation and is at least 300 clock hours and 10 weeks in program length.
- The school must be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit schools to participate in the Federal student aid programs.
- Three types of schools are recognized:
 - Public
 - Private nonprofit - a school that has been granted a tax exemption by IRS under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
 - Proprietary

The school must have provided its eligible program for at least two years prior to applying if it is a:

- Proprietary school, or
- Public or private nonprofit school that does not offer a program that is at least 900 clock hours and 30 weeks in length.
- Schools must also provide proof that they are financially responsible, are administrative-capable, and meet all of the requirements under the *Part 600—Institutional Eligibility* under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

4.1.2 FSA Call Center

Description

The Customer Service Call Center (CSCC) was established as a toll-free help line for Title IV program and procedural inquiries from financial aid professionals. CSCC accumulated FSA publications and guidance in electronic format to enable the call center staff to research the customer's inquiries.

FSA realized that providing electronic access to this information would be a major improvement and provide the tools needed to efficiently manage the Title IV programs.

FSA Customer Service Call Center number is 1-800-433-7327 and the e-mail address is fsa.customer.support@ed.gov.

The Customer Service Call Center, formerly the Customer Support Branch, was established in 1994 in the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), in response to Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards."

4.1.3 eCampus

Description

e-Campus is a Web-based system containing the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) in the three Campus-Based Programs (Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), and Federal Work Study (FWS).

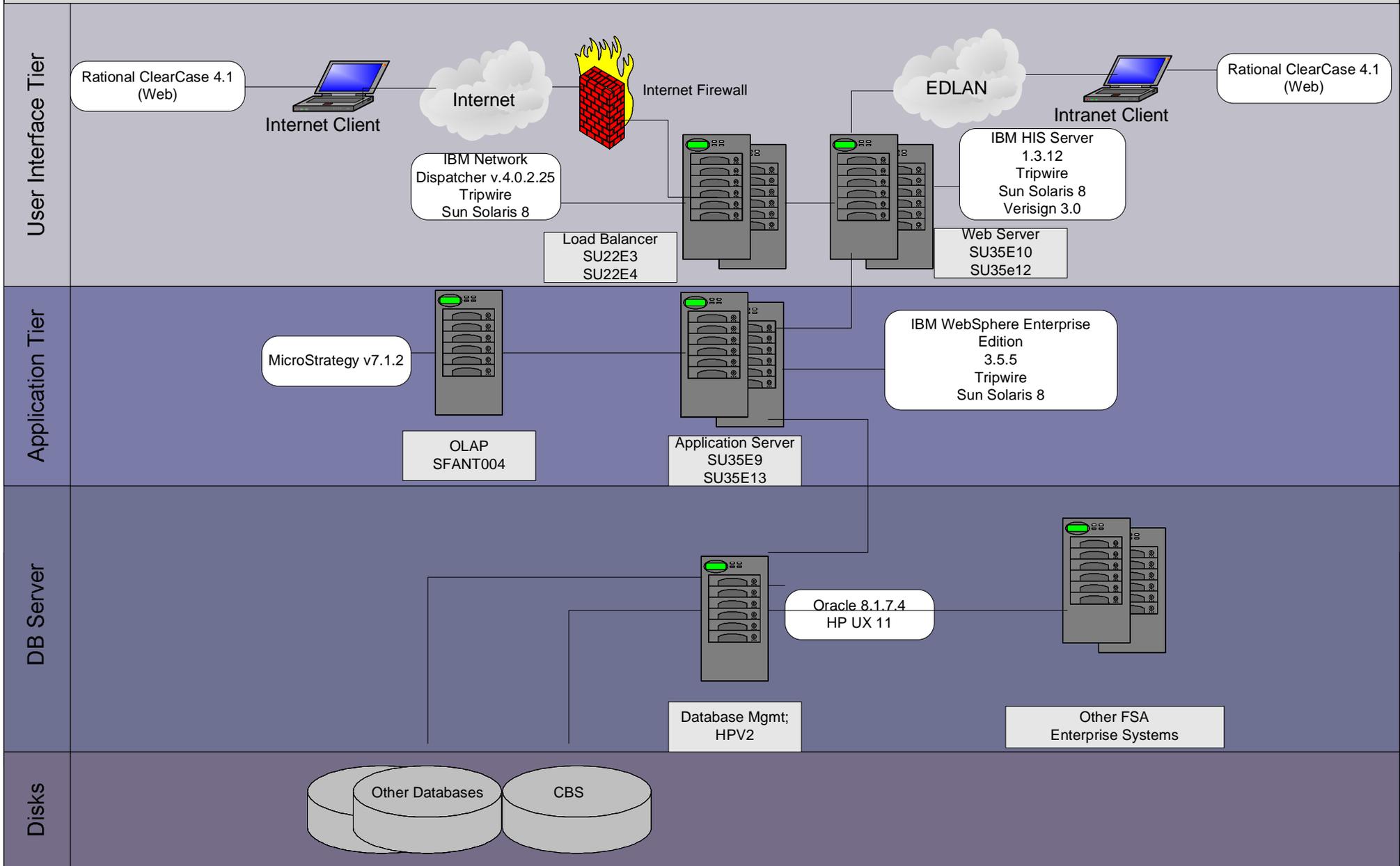
Users of the eCampus-based Web site can submit FISAP information, access Campus-Based account data, and view reports. A FISAP tutorial provides information on the eCampus-based program and how to complete the FISAP.

To logon, users need a valid FSA PIN and TG number.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture that supports the eCampus program.

eCampus Server Diagram



4.2 EDEExpress

Description

EDEExpress is ED's free software for the Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) that participating destination points use to electronically transmit, receive, and correct data.

Schools use EDEExpress to enter, edit, manage, and report Title IV student financial aid application data and Federal Pell Grant payment data. Using this software, institutions can also package financial aid awards, originate Direct Loans, and print Direct Loan promissory notes. Other products in the EDE Suite are SSCR-32, ISIR Analysis Tool, DL Tools, and Return of Title IV Funds.

The latest version of EDEExpress has three modules:

- Global module - Users enter demographic records, document-tracking letters, and user-defined data. It includes anything that doesn't fit into a program-specific module (for example, Application processing, Direct Loan, Pell).
- Application Processing module - Users enter Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and correction data via an interface with the FAA Access Web site, and other data related to the CPS.
- Packaging module - Users manage student financial aid awards using a methodology tailored specifically for each school.

Interfaces

The Application Processing module of EDEExpress interfaces with the CPS, SAIG, the FAA Access Web site and the PIN website.

The Global and Packaging modules have no external software interfaces.

External Software

EDEExpress interfaces with the PIN Web site via a Web service that performs FAA PIN authentication. It also interfaces with the FAA Access Web site by using a Microsoft browser ActiveX control to access the site and enter FAFSA and correction data.

Once data is entered, the CPS processes the data and creates an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) file that is sent through SAIG. The processed data (including Error data) can be imported into the EDEExpress software. EDEExpress can also export data, using a user-defined File Format that any external system could potentially use.

Database

The only database that the EDEExpress software directly interfaces with is the expres45.mdb Microsoft Access 2002 database. This database stores user-entered student information, record layouts, queries, setup parameters, and security information.

Note! EDEExpress is an alternative legacy mechanism for schools to access the CPS. While some schools will continue to use EDEExpress, ED's goal is to use zero-footprint (that is, no-install required) client-software such as a browser (e.g., Internet Explorer).

4.3 FSAdownload

Description

ED's FSA download Web site contains materials for operating partners, schools, and agencies that participate in FSA's programs. Users can download technical and informational materials relating to the FSA programs.

Materials include:

- Software, including Direct Loan Tools, EDEExpress, FISAP, ISIR Analysis Tool, and SSCR
- Technical references, such as COD Technical Reference, EDE Technical Reference, etc.
- User guides and process guides, such as CPS Test System, ISIR Guide, RAD Process Guide, etc.
- Other materials

Most documents are available either in Microsoft Word or Portable Document Format (PDF). Archived documents are also available.

FSAdownload has links to other FSA sites, including FSATech Listserv, where financial aid professionals can ask and get answers to their technical questions about FSA's software or systems. Listserv subscribers automatically get news flashes about processing and software issues. A user can request individual messages or receive all messages posted to the FSATech list in daily digests. The digest collects all of the messages posted to FSATech throughout the day, and compiles it into a single e-mail for distribution the following morning.

From the FSAdownload home page users can also link to FAA Access to CPS Online, E-Campus Based/FISAP Web site, Common Origination and Disbursement (COD), NSLDS for FAAs, and other ED links.

The FSAdownload site is <http://www.fsadownload.ed.gov>

4.4 Information for Financial Aid Partners (IFAP)

Description

The Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site at <http://ifap.ed.gov> is an electronic library for financial aid professionals. The site contains publications, regulations, and guidance regarding the administration of the Title IV Federal Student Financial Aid Programs.

IFAP's subscription option notifies registered customers by e-mail when new information (such as Dear Partner Letters, Announcements, Federal Registers, etc.) has been added. The email is customized based on users' subscription selections.

Users can elect to be notified when new documents are added to the IFAP catalog. Users can select more than one publication type or program/service category; when selections overlap, the system is designed to not send duplicate notifications of a single document.

IFAP is managed by the Customer Service Call Center (CSCC) within the Schools Channel of FSA.

IFAP Server Diagram



A future release of this document will include a server diagram for IFAP..

4.5 Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG)

Description

The Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) provides telecommunications support for the delivery and administration of data transmissions for Title IV programs via the Internet.

The SAIG promotes the electronic exchange of Title IV information between ED, state agencies, higher education institutions, Title IV application system contractors, lender, financial aid servicers, and need-analysis servicers.

Note! The SAIG replaced the Title IV Wide Area Network (TIV WAN), and has reduced operating costs by eliminating the kilocharacter charge invoiced from TIV WAN, internet transmissions are 75% faster than the TIV WAN, and data transmission is more secure because FSA implemented the SSL encryption prior to transmission.

The SAIG is designed around FSA's vision and target architecture to provide an Internet solution for data transmissions. SAIG uses a Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) application to support multiple hardware and operating system platforms. The vendor for the COTS application is bTrade.com. The integrated solution consists of TDClient (Transaction Delivery Client), TDCM (Transaction Delivery Community Manager), and TDNgine (Transaction Deliver engine) components.

Architecture

The SAIG Portal is composed of a HP-UX mid-tier server supporting the mailboxing system and a Microsoft Windows 2000/IIS5 server running a Web administration application. Supplementary systems include mainframe, enrollment application and client software products; TDClient for a variety of mainframe/midrange platforms and the PC based EDconnect. The SAIG Portal is a Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) application designed by bTrade and is made up of the following components:

- ***TDManager*** is used to manage Title IV (SAIG) destination points. This Windows application allows system administrators to manage the archive process.
- ***TDNgine*** is an open architecture gateway and is the mailbox application for the storing and retrieval of data.
- ***TDClient (TDAccess)*** is the client software that uses SSL 3.0 and the Diffie-Hellman Dynamic Key Exchange algorithm to securely send and receive FSA data transmissions over the Internet.
- ***TDCommunityManager (TDCM)*** is a Java-based application accessed via the Web and manages the Title IV (SAIG) Destination Point mailboxes and data. It was formerly called the Online Secure Manager or OSM.

Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) staff is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and security of the SAIG Portal components at the Virtual Data Center (VDC) in Meriden, Connecticut. Accenture and Pearson Government Solutions staff support the SAIG Portal administration and maintenance functions.

4.5.1 System Interfaces

These are the interfaces that are in the SAIG system.

- Windows-based PCs connect directly to the mailboxing system SAIG SecurePortal through the TDN.
- Mainframe and midrange clients (TDClient) connect to the Student Aid Internet Gateway (SecurePortal) through the TDN.
- The TDManager manages the mailbox participation through a connection with the SecurePortal through the TDN.
- TDCommunityManager (TDCM) monitors and tracks the transmissions and mailbox participation. This requires that the TDCM interact with the TDN portion of the SecurePortal.
- FSAdownload.ed.gov distributes the pertinent documentation.
- The EAI bus used by several application systems interfaces with the SAIG TDN through a Connector API.
- SecurePortal stores all data into an Oracle v. 8.17 database.

4.5.2 User Interfaces

User interfaces are primarily through the Internet.

- The TDClient software allows users to interface with the SAIG SecurePortal.
- The Internet Explorer and the Internet allows users to interact with the TDCM mailbox monitoring Web site.
- The Internet Explorer and the Internet allows users to receive delivery of their new EDconnect software via the FSAdownload Web site.
- The Internet Explorer and the Internet allows users to receive delivery of their new TDClient via a non-published FTP site.

4.5.3 Hardware Interfaces

SAIG Production Server

- TDCCommunityManager (TDCM) - Server name FSANT014, IP address is 198.77.203.117
- SecurePortal (TDN) - Server name HPL16, IP address is 198.77.163.220

4.5.4 Software Interfaces

SecurePortal (TDN) Version 2.5.2

The VDC hosts the SecurePortal (TDN) system on a UNIX server. The TDN interfaces with an Oracle v.8.17 database and uses standard FTP (File Transfer Protocol) protocol for transmission of data.

TDCCommunity Manager (TDCM) Version 2.4.0001

The VDC hosts the TDCM on a Windows 2000 server platform. Users and technical support teams use this piece of the mailboxing system to manage mailboxes on the SAIG mailboxing system. This product is used to verify that files are sent or received, determine why a transmission fails or restores a specific file.

TDManager Version 5.0.0009

The system is installed at the VDC, runs on a Windows 2000 platform, and uses ODBC (open database connectivity) to access its database.

TDManager specifies data compression, encryption, authentication, filter, and digital signature options. It also defines the Diffie-Hellman Dynamic Key Exchange algorithm and SSL v3.0 software interfaces.

4.5.5 Communications Interfaces

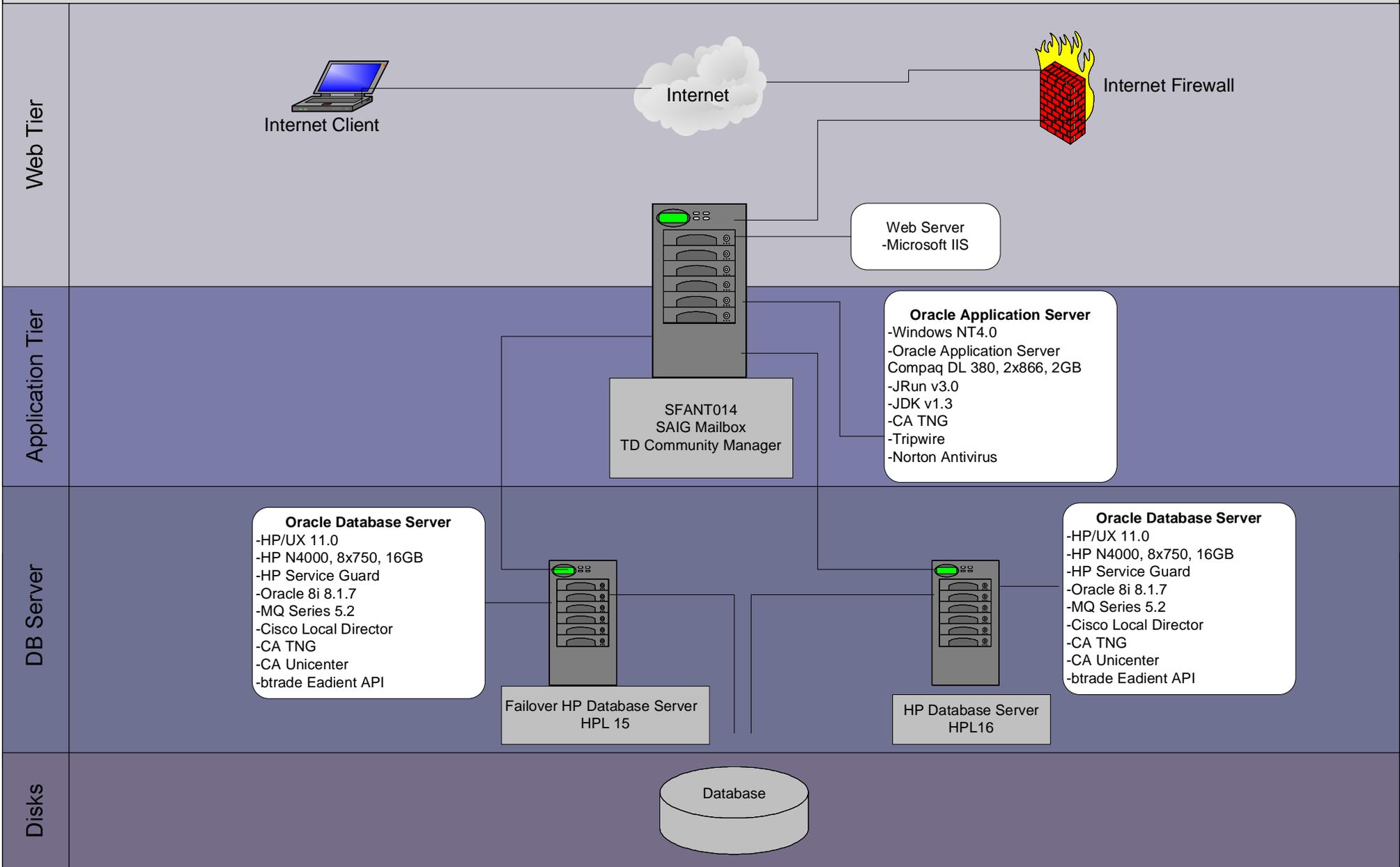
- The TDClient version 2.2.023 (for UNIX-based clients) or version 2.2.020 (for MVS, AS400 clients) and the TDClient API Version 2.2.0257 use an FTP process secured with SSL 3.0 and the Diffie-Hellman Dynamic Key Exchange algorithm to send and receive FSA data transmissions securely over the Internet.
- File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is used to communicate with SecurePortal TDN.
- HTTP is used to communicate with TDCM.

- Oracle ODBC Client v8.17 is used by the system administrators to connect to the database for troubleshooting, maintenance and other actions.
- TCP/IP protocol.
- WS-FTP PRO PC software is used to verify programs executing on the SAIG test server.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for the SAIG.

Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) Server Diagram



4.6 FAA Access to CPS Online

Description

FAA Access to CPS Online is a tool that enables Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs) to view students' SAR data, check batch statuses, enter a FAFSA, and other tasks.

CURRENT FUNCTIONALITY

- **Student Inquiry** - FAAs can view a student's ISIR data, including processing information, FAFSA information, comments, match results, and NSLDS information. FAAs can also see if an application has been received but not processed. A new feature for FAAs is the ability to request ISIRs via CPS.
- **Application/Correction Entry** - FAAs can enter FAFSAs (including Renewals and Corrections), make adjustments, and calculate estimated EFCs (prior to submission).
- **PIN Requests** (available during the renewal request period in October only)
- **Signature Hold File Request** - The Signature Hold File Request allows Web users access to control the frequency (one time, on-going cancellation) when a Signature Hold File is sent to them.
- **Batch Status (2003-2004)** – FAAs can view the status of batches of data.

4.7 Institutional Assessment Model (IAM)

Description

The Institutional Assessment Model (IAM) is a Web-based application that organizes information on educational institutions and then ranks the institutional information according to their potential risk of loss of government funds. IAM provides an empirical foundation, as well as an expansion, of the available institutional information, while allowing more effective use of the School Eligibility Channel (SEC) efforts.

The SEC is continually enhancing the quality of its gate-keeping, monitoring, oversight and management of institutions participating in the Title IV Student Financial Aid programs. Each year SEC reviews information on approximately 6,000 participating institutions; a considerable number of first-time institutional applicants; thousands of re-certification requests; and approximately 12,000 financial and compliance audit reports.

To achieve this task, each regional SEC Case Team developed its own prioritization procedures for targeting its monitoring and oversight activities to the most problem-prone institutions. Rather than rely on professional intuition, SEC staff use this fact-based decision-support system based on more comprehensive risk metrics and then use this systemic approach to determine which schools to target for intervention.

4.8 Closed Schools

Description

Many students affected by a school closing cannot continue their educations due to lack of opportunity, financial difficulties, or other problems connected to the school that closed.

Once a school closes, communicating with its former students is difficult. Outreach efforts are necessary to encourage these individuals to obtain copies of their financial and academic transcripts and attendance records as soon as possible, because these documents simplify their transitions to new schools.

Discharging Loans

When schools close, loans can be discharged if a student was enrolled when the school closed and could not complete the program because of the closure. A student who was on an approved leave of absence is considered to have been enrolled at a school. A student who withdraws within 90 days prior to a school closure is also considered eligible for the discharge.

A loan cannot be cancelled because of personal circumstances that caused a student to withdraw more than 90 days before the school closed.

Serving Students Better

FSA tells students trying to locate records from a closed school that they should contact the state licensing agency in the state in which the school was located in order to ask whether the state made arrangements to store the records.

FSA's Closed School Web page lists the telephone numbers for State Licensing Agencies. The URL for the Closed School Web page is:
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/closedschool.jsp>.

4.9 School Eligibility Channel

Description

FSA's School Eligibility Channel (SEC):

1. Determines school eligibility for Title IV participation,
2. Monitors institutional compliance with Title IV statutes and regulations, and
3. Determines appropriate action when schools are not in compliance.

In addition, SEC provides Title IV management improvement services (technical assistance) to school personnel.

Note! FSA's School Eligibility Channel (SEC) was formerly the Case Management & Oversight (CMO).

The SEC's goal is to promote accountability in campus administration of federal student aid, working to strengthen program integrity by improving institutional Title IV compliance. Case Management Teams ("case teams") are the key staff units in SEC providing monitoring and technical assistance to approximately 6000 Title IV institutions in the U.S. and abroad. Case teams also oversee approximately \$60 billion in annual federal student aid funds. Major case team functions include audit resolution, program review, eligibility/recertification, and financial analysis.

The SEC has its own Web site, <http://cmonet.ed.gov/>, which contains information and links about the SEC and its initiatives, SEC tools, SEC Web sites, FSA Web sites, funding and participation, student data, reference materials, and training and conferences.

5.0 Financial Partners

Overview

Financial Partners Services (FPS) provides services to lenders and guaranty agencies, maintains oversight, and provides support for its partners. FPS also maintains a network of customers and guarantee agencies.

The FSA Financial Partners business unit with guaranty agencies, lenders, servicers, trade associations, trustees, schools, and secondary markets works to ensure that students can access information about Federal student loans, particularly the FFEL Program. It also works with state grant agencies on the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) and Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) Programs.

Financial Partners, Partner Services is charged with oversight of the Family Federal Education Loan (FFEL) Program authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education act of 1965, as amended (the Act). Partner Services' Regional Lender and Guaranty Agency Review staff visit FFEL program Guaranty Agencies to conduct program reviews to ensure their compliance with the Federal laws, regulations, and policy directives governing the FFEL programs. In addition, Partner Services staff provides technical assistance to support guaranty agencies in implementing changes in law and regulation as a result of reauthorizations to the Higher Education Act of 1965. The reports issued as a result of these reviews document both areas of compliance and areas where corrective action must be taken to ensure the integrity of the FFEL program.

The Financial Partners Portal contains three systems, Financial Management System (FMS), Financial Partners Data Mart, and National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Financial Partners Business Process Flow Diagram



A Future Release of this document will include a FSA Financial Partner's Process Flow Diagram.

5.1 Financial Partners Portal

Description

The Financial Partners Portal was designed in close cooperation with FSA's many partners in the financial aid community and will be updated regularly with content that will benefit the FSA community.

Within this portal, users are able to conduct business using one of the various online system processes by linking to FSA's Financial Management System (FMS), the Financial Partners Data Mart, or the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). Guarantors can access Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS) using the Citrix Metaframe Solution package. Users will also find resource tools that answer their day-to-day business questions.

The Financial Partners Portal provides access to:

- Financial Management System (FMS)
- Financial Partners Data Mart
- National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)
- Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS)
- Financial Partners Default Prevention Clearinghouse
- Publications
- Agencies, associations, and financial institutions contact information
- Project information

5.2 Financial Management System (FMS)

Description

The Financial Management System (FMS) is the centralized system for all FSA financial transactions. Financial partners use this online system to collect, process, maintain, transmit, and report data about financial events:

- Financial planning and budgeting activities,
- Accumulating and reporting cost information, and
- Preparing financial statements.

The Web site provides access to the following applications:

- Guaranty Agency Financial Report (GAFR Form 2000) – Guaranty agencies report collection activities, claims reimbursement and loan portfolio status.
- Lender Reporting System (LaRS) – Lenders submit quarterly student loan portfolio data in order to receive payments and report origination/lender fees due to ED.
- LEAP and SLEAP State Grant Aid Programs Application and Reporting – State education agencies apply for funding and submit performance reports on funds awarded to states.

The URL is (<http://www.fp.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/fp/fms.jsp>).

5.3 Postsecondary Education Participation System (PEPS)

Description

The Postsecondary Education Participants Systems (PEPS) provides consistent and reliable data and flexible reporting about postsecondary institutions, accrediting bodies, state licensing agencies, lenders, guarantors, and servicers.

It is used to:

- Supply ED's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) with school, lender, and guarantor audit and program review information,
- Determine which schools are eligible to participate in Title IV aid programs,
- Provide a extensive school file for lenders, schools, guarantors, state governments, and servicers, and
- Assist state governments in determining eligibility for the 529 College Savings Plan.

Users include:

- Online - FSA, OPE, OIG, GAO, all FFEL guarantors, regional and national accreditors, and state licensing agencies.
- Offline - schools, lenders, servicers, state governments, and the general public looking for school eligibility and certification status.

Impact

PEPS is a critical FSA delivery system because it keeps all eligibility, certification, and oversight information in PEPS.

All domestic and international schools use it to transmit the data required to apply for and update data PEPS is also critical to both international and domestic schools, since it provides the Web application which all of them must use to transmit their data used to apply for eligibility and certification and to make updates to ED.

Business is seriously disrupted if PEPS goes down for more than a short while, given the data PEPS collects from postsecondary institutions worldwide and the data it provides to the education community nationwide.

The PEPS impact on other Title IV delivery systems and education community systems is also high and critical.

Major Functions

DATA

- Administrative Actions and Appeals data concerning schools.
- Allows guarantors to enter data concerning lender and school reviews, and to view ED's reviews of those same entities.
- Audit and program review data on lenders and guarantee agencies via interface to Dept of ED OCFO.
- Audit data on schools, lenders, and guarantee agencies (including interface to Department of ED's OCFO).
- Data about postsecondary institutions, to include eligibility, certification for various Title IV programs, locations of instruction and courses offered.
- FSA staff with a Reviewer Area to review and accept or reject the data received from domestic and foreign institutions via the Web application. Accepted data is posted to the PEPS database.
- Institutional reviewer data.
- Program review data on schools, lenders, and guaranty agencies.
- Technical assistance data concerning schools.

INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS

- Closure information concerning schools.
- Direct Loan School participation information.
- Distance Learning information.
- Domestic and foreign institutions with a Web application to use to send new data to ED, update existing data, or send data for recertification to ED.

QUERIES AND RECORD MONITORING

- An extensive online query ability for online users, which includes the ability of users to download these queries into extracts and create their own reports.
- Monitors and records GA and lender servicer participation.
- Runs SQL queries for the FSA community (internal and external).

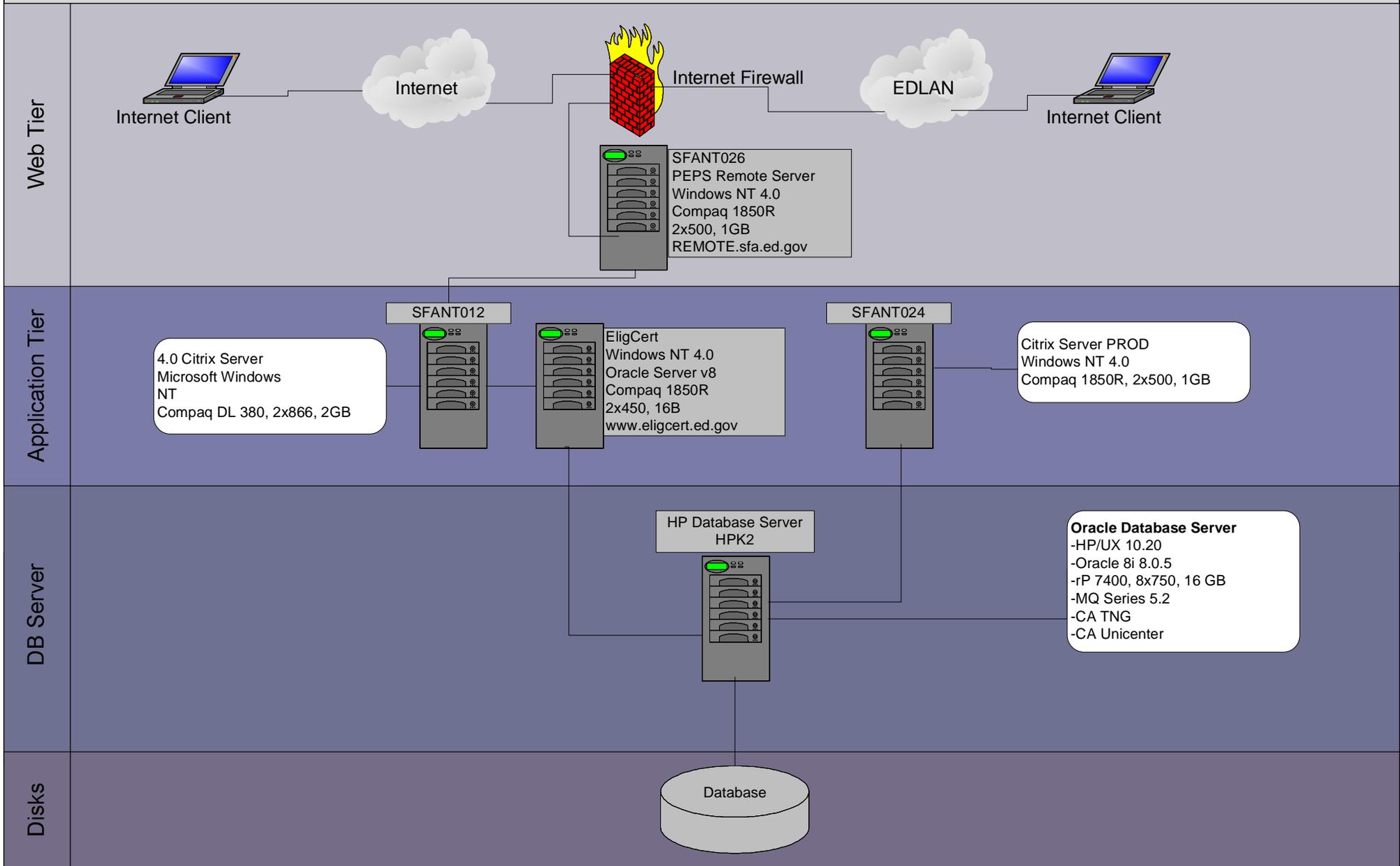
MISCELLANEOUS

- Assigns OPEID's as well as program ID's to all schools.
- Supports twice yearly default rate calculations for FFEL and Direct Loan schools, as well as FFEL lenders and guarantors.
- Internal FSA staff with a place to record 'pre-finalization of review findings' discussions.
- Logs hardware/software problem calls from PEPS users and forwards them to the appropriate area of response.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for PEPS.

Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS) Server Diagram



5.4 Financial Partners Data Mart

Description

The Financial Partners Data Mart provides executive/summary information and decision support capabilities around several key business functions that include Risk Management, Customer Relationship Management, Compliance Management, and Portfolio Management. Data from several FSA systems are consolidated into the Data Mart to provide multi-dimensional analysis capabilities.

The initiative for a data mart started in late 2000. The purpose is to provide executive/ summary information and decision support capabilities around several key business functions, which include Risk Management, Customer Relationship Management, Compliance Management, and Portfolio Management. Financial Partners is responsible for both current and retired loan programs and as such is under customer and program obligation to ensure the capture and comparative ability of all programs. By collecting information from several sources into a central location, Financial Partners as well as external partners will be able to more efficiently identify areas in which each party may assist the other while improving the support for students within the FFEL Program.

Major Objective

The major objective of the FPDM will be to serve as the central location for information associated with lending activities among Financial Partners including Guaranty Agencies, Lenders, and Servicers particularly in the FFEL Student Loan Program. The FPDM is the infrastructure/system that will provide customer information for employees and partners. The FPDM will ultimately be the main source of consolidated customer information that will support several key business areas within Financial Partners. This Data Mart initiative supports Federal Student Aid's (FSA's) three main objectives. It will ultimately reduce costs by providing capabilities that currently either do not exist or are very inefficient to provide. It will increase customer satisfaction by providing more timely information to our partners that will allow them to work more effectively with FSA. It will increase employee satisfaction by providing them with the information and tools to better support 'partner' relationships both internally and externally. It also has a long-term benefit in ensuring consistent data and a single resource of data.

The Financial Partners Data Mart (FPDM) provides summary information and decision support capabilities for several key business functions including:

- **Risk Management** – Targeting areas of fiscal risk to FSA and its financial partners (i.e., Guaranty Agencies, Lenders and Servicers). Monitoring financial partners’ operating performance (risk factors) to identify and focus on areas of risk and the need for technical assistance. Reducing the time required between identifying risk areas and implementing solutions.
- **Customer Relationship Management** - Increasing routine, positive communication with external financial partners by providing information regarding their performance between review cycles. Assist guaranty agencies in reviewing lenders by providing additional information.
- **Compliance Management** – Focusing performance reviews to those financial partners that are not performing in accordance with standards and/or regulations. Improving the efficiency of pre-planning and analysis activities associated with the review process.
- **Portfolio Management** – Identifying and assessing the portfolio mix to improve policy decisions. Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of trend analysis by providing calculated benchmarks, where appropriate.

Web site

Power Users can:

- Execute existing reports via the Internet and via the MicroStrategy Desktop Application.
- Create new reports using existing data mart objects via the Internet - FPDM Ad hoc Query Tool. This task allows the User to create a report for their view only. If a report is to be shared with an extended audience, the report must be moved to a shared folder via the configuration management process.
- Create new reports using new data mart objects using the MicroStrategy Desktop Application.
- Modify existing data mart reports and objects using the MicroStrategy Desktop Application.

The Web site is located at (<http://www.fp.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/fp/dmart.jsp>).

5.5 National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)

Description

The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) is ED's central database for student aid. NSLDS receives data from schools, agencies that guaranty loans, the Direct Loan program, the Pell Grant program, and other U.S. Department of Education programs. NSLDS provides a centralized, integrated view of Title IV loans and Pell grants that are tracked through their entire cycle; from aid approval through closure.

Web site

Students can use the Web site to make inquiries about their Title IV loans and/or Pell grants. The site displays information on loan and/or grant amounts, outstanding balances, loan statuses, and disbursements. However, borrowers need to provide certain information prior to accessing the site, such as:

- Social Security Number (SSN);
- First two digits of last name;
- Date of Birth; and,
- Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Also, the NSLDS site is secure; the unique combination of SSN, PIN, and personal information needed to access the NSLDS Student Access Web site makes it as secure as using an ATM.

The NSLDS Student Access Web site is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, unless maintenance is being performed.

The Web site is located at is <http://www.nsls.ed.gov>.

Interfaces

NSLDS interfaces with the following systems and individual entities:

Central Processing System (CPS)—CPS sends NSLDS a daily prescreening feed identifying applicants for new or additional Title IV aid. NSLDS returns to CPS financial aid history data for any applicant found in the NSLDS database. From this data, CPS generates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and a Pell Grant Index. Also, CPS submits demographic data on a quarterly basis. NSLDS also notifies CPS when eligibility has changed using the post screening process.

Federal Family Education Loan System (FFELS)—FFELS sends NSLDS a weekly file containing data on all loans held by ED in the Debt Collection System (DCS) portfolio, including Perkins loans, FDLP loans, and FFELP loans. FFELS also supplies GA code table and lender code table information to NSLDS.

Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS)—PEPS sends NSLDS a daily file containing updates to the ED school table. NSLDS computes and stores official school cohort default rates and sends them to PEPS for storage.

Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS)—DLSS sends NSLDS a weekly file containing data on Direct Loans from first disbursement until they are repaid or reported to NSLDS with a closed status. In turn, NSLDS sends Student Status Confirmation Report (SSCR) data to DLSS.

Common Origination and Disbursements (COD)—COD sends NSLDS a daily feed containing data on Federal Pell grants.

Guaranty Agencies (GAs)—GAs, or their servicers, send NSLDS a monthly feed containing data on FFELP loans held by lenders or by the GA itself. In turn, NSLDS sends Student Status Confirmation Report (SSCR) data to GAs. NSLDS sends Payment of Loan Processing Issuance Fee (LPIF), Account Maintenance Fee (AMF), and Reasonability data periodically to GAs.

Schools—Schools, or their servicers, send NSLDS data on Perkins loans, on Pell and FSEOG overpayments, and on student enrollment status.

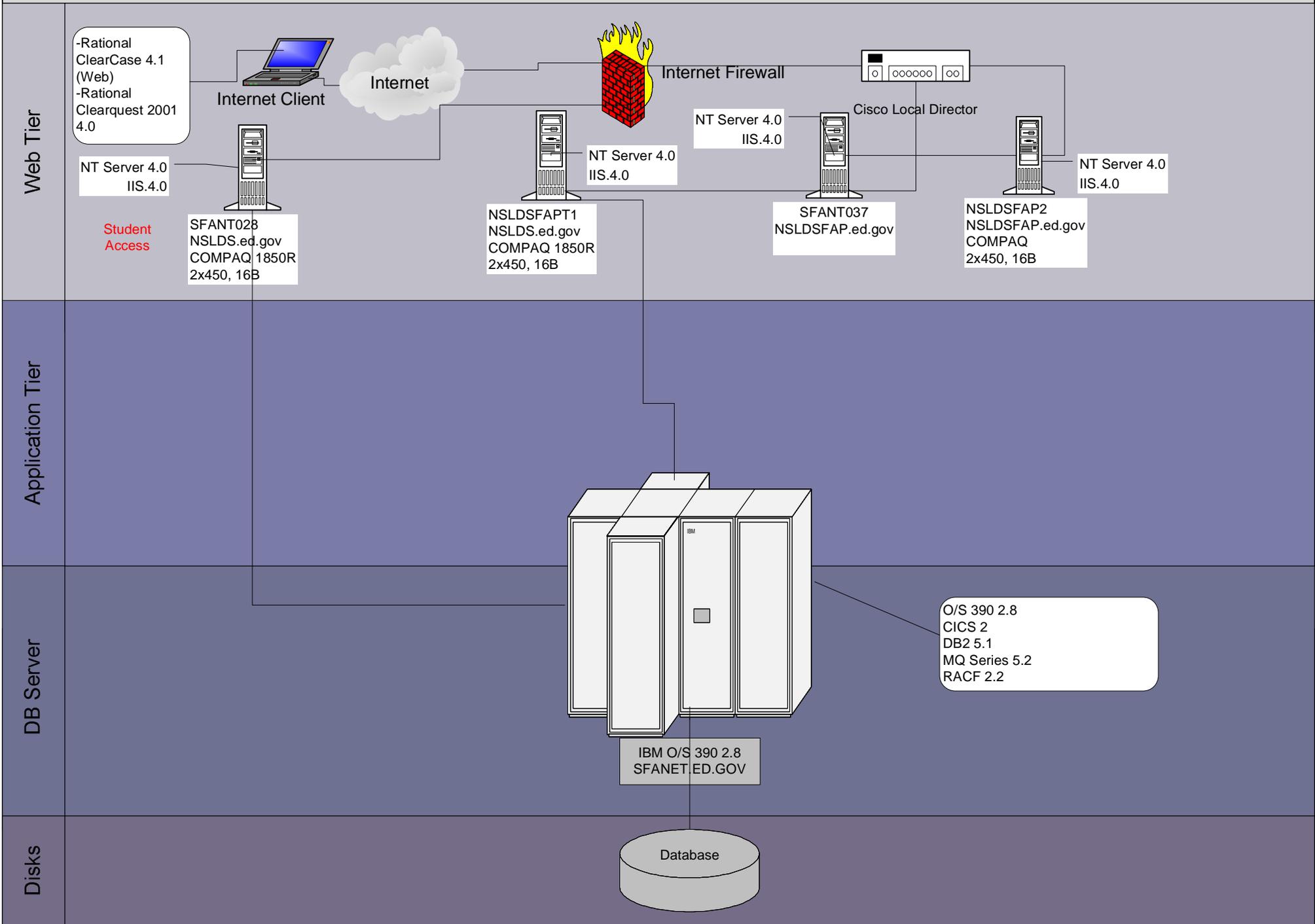
Lender/Lender Servicers—Lenders or Lender Services can now access NSLDS information through the Web site.

State Agencies—State agencies can now access NSLDS information through the Web site.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for NSLDS.

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) Server Diagram



6.0 Ombudsman

Overview

In 1998 Congress directed ED to appoint a student loan Ombudsman. Despite numerous improvements in lending money to students, when it came to repaying their loans, there appeared to be little improvement in services to students. Both students and advocates reported that there was massive confusion in the student lending programs. The Ombudsman is the last resort. After all other avenues are exhausted, the Office of The Ombudsman will intervene to try to solve the problem.

Ombudsman's Role

An Ombudsman resolves disputes from a neutral, independent viewpoint. The Federal Student Aid (FSA) Ombudsman will informally conduct impartial fact-finding about student complaints. The Ombudsman Office recommends solutions, but does not have the authority to reverse decisions. The office also works to bring about changes that will help prevent future problems for student loan borrowers.

The Ombudsman researches students' problems and determines whether or not they have been treated fairly. The Ombudsman researches students' problems and determines whether they have been treated fairly.

The FSA Ombudsman informally conducts impartial fact-finding about student complaints. The Ombudsman Office recommends solutions, but does not have the authority to reverse decisions.

The office also works to bring about changes that will help prevent future problems for student loan borrowers.

If a student loan complaint is justified, the Ombudsman's Office works with the student and the office, agency, or company involved in the problem. On the student's behalf, the Ombudsman will contact other offices within ED, private lenders, loan guaranty agencies, and the servicing agency or firm collecting the loan.

If the complaint is not justified, the Ombudsman then takes the time to explain to the student how they reached their conclusion.

-

Ombudsman Business Process Flow



The next version of this document will include an Ombudsman Business Process Flow.

6.1 Ombudsman Office Customer Support

Description

The Ombudsman customer support can help customers:

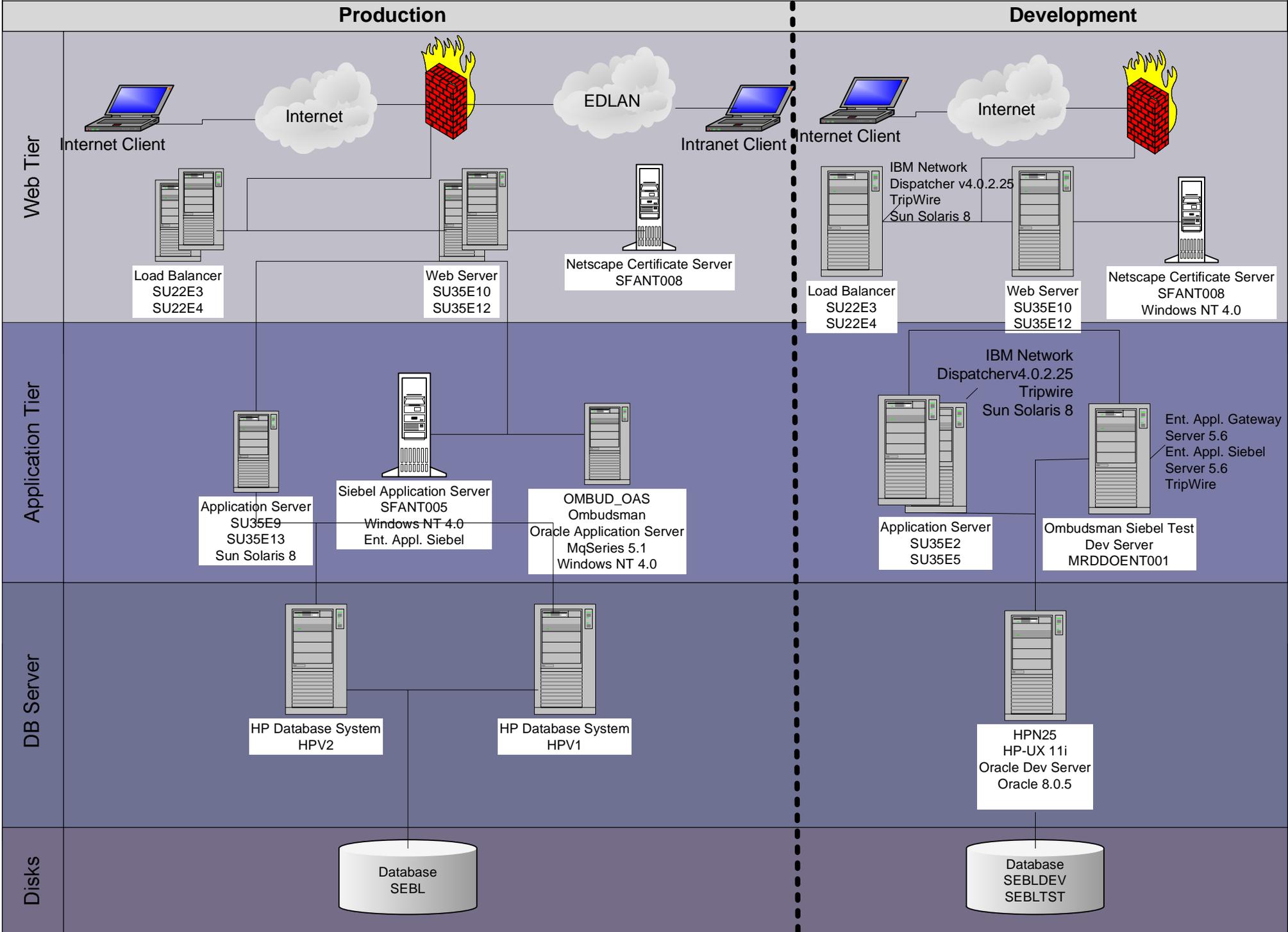
- Resolve discrepancies in loan balances and payments
- Understand interest and collection charges
- Rehabilitate loans by establishing satisfactory repayment plans
- Defer or discharge loans
- Resolve issues related to income tax refund offsets, default status
- Consolidations, bankruptcies, service quality, and other customer concerns

The FSA Ombudsman does not provide general customer services. For example, they don't handle requests and information about student aid or application forms.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for the Ombudsman.

Ombudsman Server Diagram



7.0 FSA Chief Information Office (CIO)

Description

The FSA Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for promoting the effective use of technology to achieve FSA's strategic objectives. The office focuses on sound technology planning and investments, integrated technology architectures and standards, effective systems development, and production support.

CIO core business functions and processes include the Application Development Group, the Enterprise IT Management Group, and the Enterprise IT Services Group.

7.1 Application Development Group

The Application Development Group is responsible for developing mainframe and distributed applications for FSA's channels and functional areas.

It uses the Internet and other technologies and processes to provide services and information for the student financial aid community, while reducing costs, cycle time, and paperwork.

It also identifies opportunities to develop tools and services that could improve customer service, reduce the overall cost of delivering student aid, and improve employee satisfaction.

The responsibilities of the Application Development Group include:

- Providing leadership and direction for innovation activities
- Managing and coordinating interagency projects
- Managing special application development projects
- Administering relational databases to ensure data integrity and reliability
- Providing systems configuration management and change control

- Preparing the resource, financial, and procurement planning to support the design and development of computer systems

See the table below for specific application development responsibilities.

* Application Development Group (Specific) Responsibilities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Administers related databases to assure data integrity and reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Manages special application development projects, as required to support FSA's strategic objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides systems configuration management and change control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinates the production installation of new applications into the target production operational environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Manages and coordinates interagency projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides the necessary resource, financial, and procurement planning to support the design and development of computer systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designs, tests, and implements computer systems to support the needs of the channels and functional areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plans, develops, and implements internal quality control and productivity analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides user training as part systems implementation and roll-out
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintains systems documentation and procedural manuals in accordance with established standards and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provides leadership and direction for innovation activities 	

7.1.2 Enterprise IT Management Group

The Enterprise IT Management Group provides technology planning and oversight, development and maintenance of technology architecture, development and promulgation of technology standards. It also identifies and applies industry-recognized Best Practices processes and discipline.

The responsibilities of the Enterprise IT Management Group include:

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

- Develops and communicates a consistent information technology vision and strategy
- Researches, analyzes, tests, and plans for the implementation of new techniques
- Provides analysis, advice, guidance, and support to acquire technologies and technology-related services
- Conducts in-depth research and analysis and forms partnerships with industry experts, other Federal agencies, and ED staff, to identify “best practice” processes and tools
- Facilitates the transition of proven tools and services to FSA customer channels
- Keeps up-to-date with emerging technology and trends and acts on technological changes

TECHNOLOGY ARCHITECTURE

- Develops and maintains the FSA enterprise information technology architecture
- Works with FSA customer channels and functional areas to ensure the FSA architecture supports business requirements.
- Provides enterprise-level configuration management.
- Ensures that new technologies comply with the established architecture and approves exceptions
- Provides analysis, advice, and guidance to FSA customer channels and functional areas when evaluating and selecting technologies

TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

- Defines information technology standards, principles, and protocols to ensure interoperability of technologies across FSA
- Evaluates and recommends technologies to be used in business solutions within channels and functional areas that are consistent with established standards and protocols
- Performs contract-related functions and monitors contractor performance as appropriate

7.1.3 Enterprise IT Services Group

Enterprise IT Services Group plans, manages, operates, and maintains FSA's development, test, and production environment technical infrastructure, including the Virtual Data Center, and FSA Internet and Intranet infrastructure.

The responsibilities of the Enterprise IT Services Group include:

FSA WEB MASTER

- Coordinates content development with business areas owning the content
- Maintains FSA's Internet and Intranet sites and manages the change control process for implementing changes to the production environment

DATA CENTER

- Provides technical support for the Virtual Data Center, including:
 - Configuration management and change control
 - Database management
 - End-user technical support
 - Hardware and software support
 - Security management
 - Systems training

OPERATIONS AND SCHEDULING

- Coordinates production job schedules across FSA major systems
- Provides system processing activities and production support for the channels and functional areas

- Develops operational policies and procedures for data processing activities
- Reviews and evaluates processing activities to ensure compliance with established standards
- Performs contract-related functions and monitors contractor performance for enterprise-wide systems
- Plans, develops, and implements internal quality control and productivity analysis

7.2 Data Strategy

Description

This initiative was undertaken to improve program integrity, operational efficiency and customer service through improvements in data quality, data access, and data sharing.

Upon completion, it will ensure that accurate and consistent data is exchanged among FSA's systems and its employees, customers, partners, as well as compliance and oversight organizations. It also works to ensure that these initiatives support our requirements, aligns our IT systems with ED's Enterprise Architecture, and maps FSA's data architecture to ED's data collection strategies.

The data strategy project was initiated in FY03 to:

- Identify focus areas for data improvements,
- Develop strategies for implementing data quality, access, and sharing improvements, and
- Identify "quick win" opportunities.

Business cases will come out of the Data Strategy project to focus on implementing the various components needed to achieve common data standards throughout FSA. The focus areas are Common Student ID, Routing ID, Single Enrollment & Access Management, research & deploy technology to support our requirements (which aligns with ED's Enterprise Architecture), and mapping FSA's data architecture to the Department overall data collection strategies. This initiative is to move FSA from FY03 data strategy to planning and implementation.

Projects

- Plan and begin implementing high-priority data improvement areas
- Begin implementing the data quality process, developed in FY03 data initiative
- Begin implementing new XML-based and standardized data sharing/data exchange
- Begin standardizing and integrating key technology areas (portal, Web services, data warehouse/data marts)

Note! With this initiative in place, FSA will be in the position to provide concrete technical and architectural guidance so that subsequent system implementation efforts are aligned to support FSA achieving Data & Information Quality mandates. FSA, through this effort, will create an effective management tool for the management of data.

7.3 Enterprise Application Integration (EAI)

Description

The Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) Core Architecture effort consists of the design and implementation of the MQSeries integration architecture.

EAI is the Virtual Data Center GSS's infrastructure, as well as a service that supports these architectures.

Note! EAI (along with ITA) is not a system; rather, it is an infrastructure for the VDC GSS, as well as a service that supports these architectures. The systems and applications that reside on the EAI infrastructure are required to comply with regulations before they go into production.

The EAI Architecture Maintenance and Production Support project will provide maintenance and production support for vital enterprise architecture and infrastructure that support FSA systems used by FSA, students, schools, financial partners, and other stakeholders associated with the delivery of federal student aid.

Also, the EAI architecture addresses the FSA Business Channels' need to access common data and business processes across the disparate systems. The technical services provided by the EAI architecture support students, schools, and financial partners by enabling the FSA systems to exchange information via common, reusable methods. EAI provides the messaging infrastructure for connectivity between existing legacy systems, COTS (Commercial Off The Shelf) applications, Data Warehousing systems, and Web-based solutions. The EAI messaging infrastructure and the advanced integration capabilities, such as message/data transformation, provide an overall service delivery system with standard interfaces upon which all new and legacy systems can depend.

EAI and ITA are two distinct and non-overlapping technical architecture areas. The EAI provides an infrastructure for applications to quickly and efficiently integrate with back-end systems through a messaging infrastructure that guarantees message delivery.

EAI COMPONENTS

Collectively, the implementation of the EAI components and architecture is referred to as the EAI Bus. The EAI components provide the core architecture to enable FSA applications to utilize a common, reusable infrastructure for connecting disparate, heterogeneous systems. The EAI core architecture provides the EAI components and services to connect the FSA Internet Domain and nine FSA legacy systems to the EAI bus. Middleware communications are provided by MQSeries Messaging, transformation and routing is provided by MQSeries Integrator, and application connectivity is provided by custom EAI adapters.

7.3.1 Applications and Systems using EAI

The EAI architecture is currently utilized by numerous systems and applications within FSA. See the table below for a list of these systems and applications.

Applications and Systems using EAI		
➤ Central Processing System (CPS)	➤ eMaster Promissory Note (eMPN)	➤ <i>Loan Origination Web (LOWeb)</i>
➤ Common Origination and Disbursement (COD)	➤ <i>eZAudit</i>	➤ National Student Loan Database System (NSLDS)
➤ Common Services for Borrowers (CSB)	➤ FAFSA	➤ Ombudsman OCTS
➤ Credit Management Data Mart (CMDM)	➤ FAFSA Demo	➤ PIN
➤ Delinquency Loan Data Mart (DLM)	➤ Financial Management System (FMS)	➤ Postsecondary-Education Participant System (PEPS)
➤ Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS)	➤ Financial Partners Datamart (FPDM)	➤ Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) Enrollment
➤ E-Campus (eCB)	➤ ISIR Database	➤ Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) Mailboxes

Future Plans

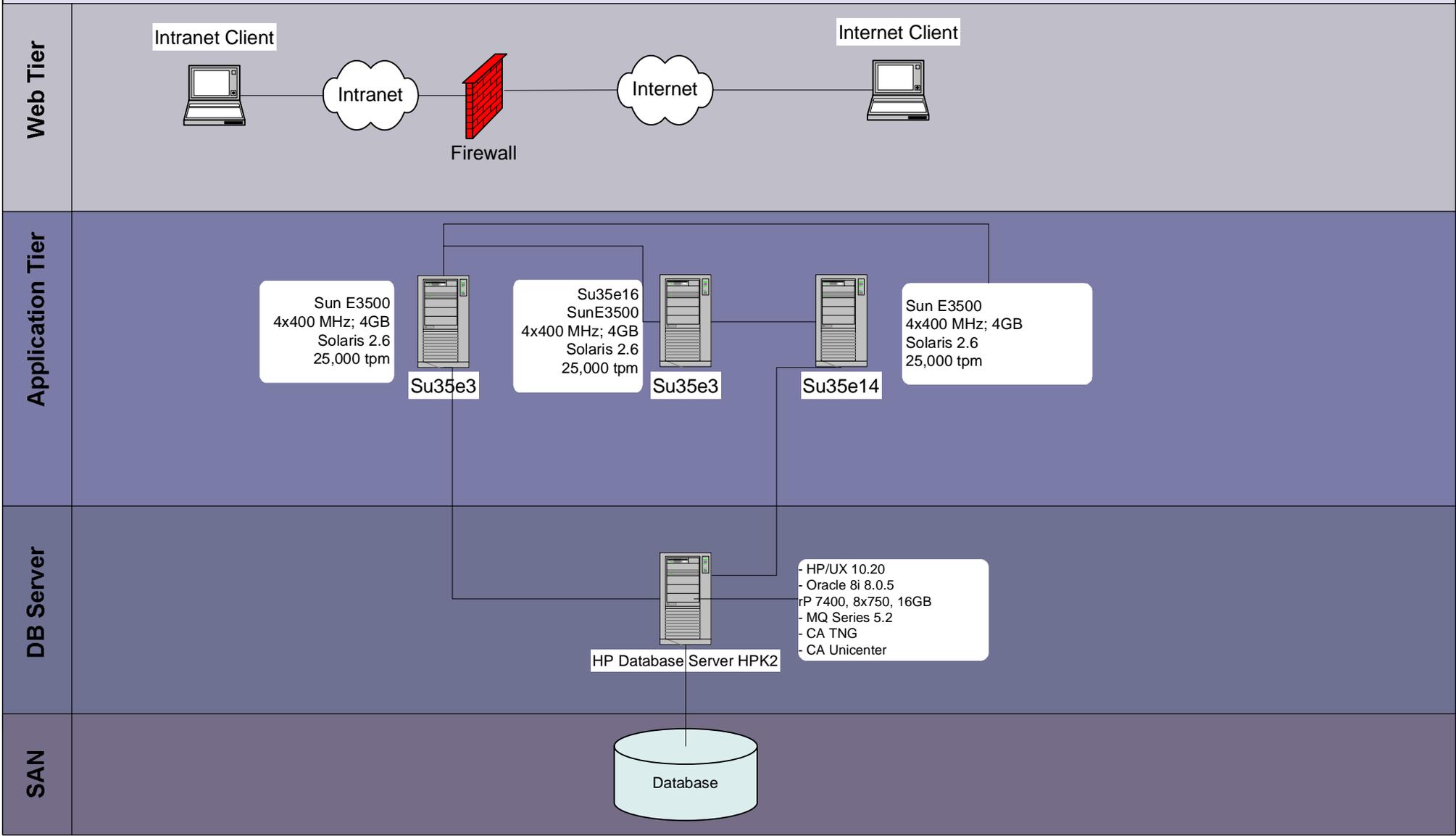
In 2004-2005, EAI is planning to implement additional IBM Websphere application servers and HIS Web server “fixpacks” and version upgrades, Interwoven content management tool version upgrades, and refreshing the Reusable Common Services (RCS).

EAI will be evaluating a potential upgrade on the CommerceQuest Data Integrator product in 2004-2005 timeframe, as IBM support for Data Integrator v4 expires in 2005.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for the EAI.

Enterprise Application Integration (EAI)



7.4 Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA)

Description

The Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA) provides an integrated, enterprise-wide technical architecture that enables FSA to facilitate the development and execution of FSA applications in support of FSA's mission and business strategy. The ITA is a strategic component of the overall FSA enterprise architecture. It comprises three core architecture domains: Internet, Integration, and Infrastructure.

EVOLUTION

ITA will evolve as existing systems are modified or retired and new applications are added to the FSA environment. This project is focused on promoting efficiency and performance during development efforts, providing application maintenance and production support for products rolled-out under the ITA, and evergreening/upgrading ITA products identified by the Enterprise Architecture Management (EAM), and approved by the Architecture Working Group (AWG).

WHAT ITA PROVIDES

ITA provides services, support, and engineering to maintain and enhance the Internet, EAI and Security architectures in ITA Release 2.0.

Specifically, ITA:

- Ongoing technical and functional support of the Integrated Technical Architecture
- Technical architecture detailed design of additional ITA services required to support post-Release 1 functionality
- Post-Release 1 implementation analysis and review
- Designs, builds, and tests incremental components and ITA services integration with ITA Release 1, including security improvements
- Supports ITA infrastructure upgrades, including hardware and software product evaluation of new versions, patches, and upgrade
- Defines and enhances the development and test environments to support application development and testing

Note! ITA (along with EAI) is not a system; rather, it is an infrastructure for the VDC GSS, as well as a service that supports these architectures. The systems and applications that reside on the ITA infrastructure are required to comply with regulations before they go into production.

7.4.1 Applications and Systems using ITA

The ITA architecture currently hosts numerous systems and applications within FSA. See the table below for a list of these systems and applications.

Applications and Systems using ITA		
➤ Credit Management Data Mart (CMDM)	➤ Financial Partners Data Mart (FPDM)	➤ Ombudsman
➤ Delinquency Loan Data Mart (DLM)	➤ Financial Partners Portal	➤ PIN (Personal Identification Number)
➤ e-Campus	➤ <i>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</i>	➤ Program Guidance
➤ EDEExpress Basics	➤ FSA Coach	➤ Schools Portal
➤ ezAudit	➤ FSANet	➤ Student Aid on the Web
➤ FAFSA Demo	➤ Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP)	➤ Students.gov
	➤ ISIR Database	➤ XML Registry

Future Plans

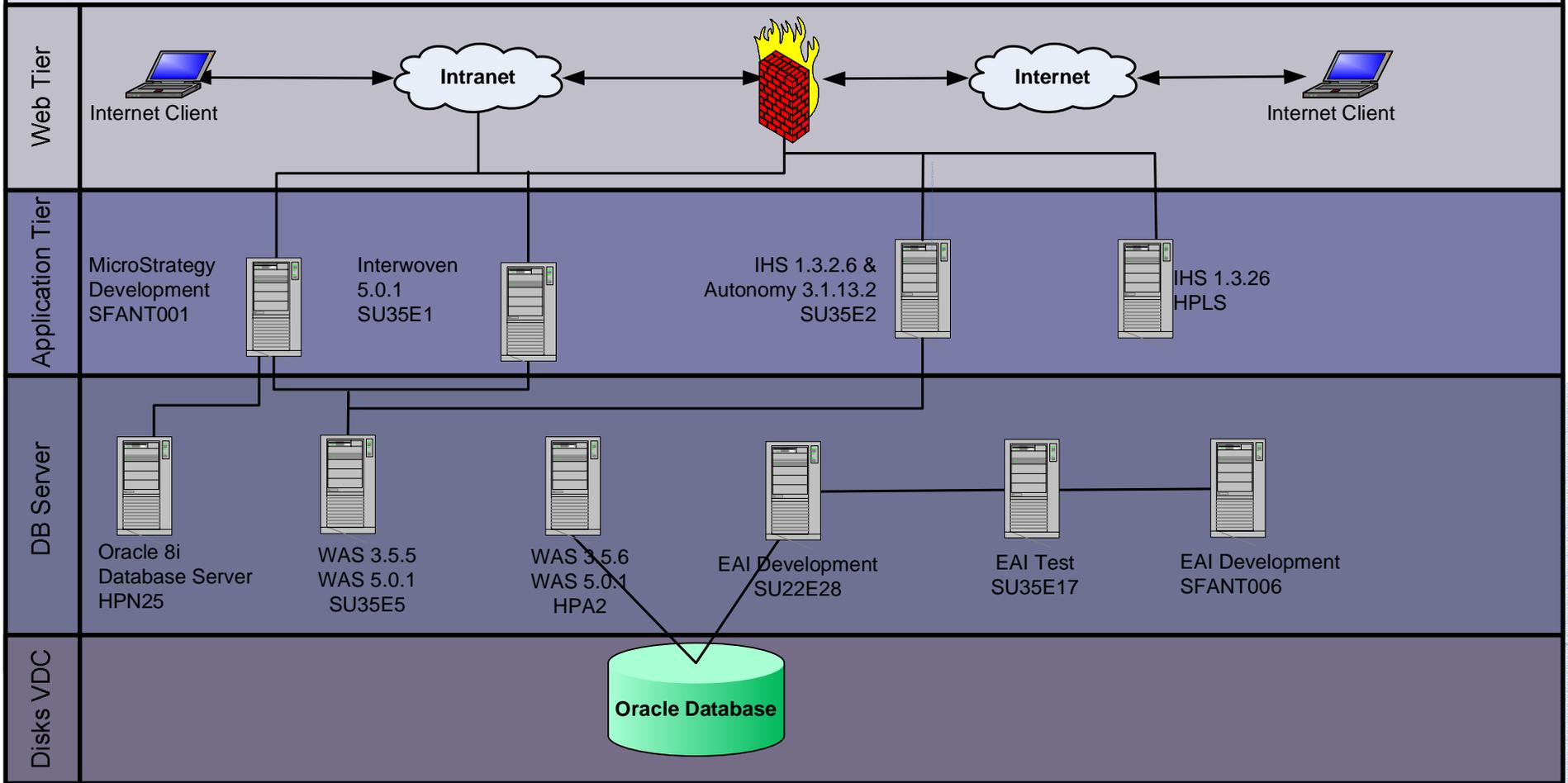
Similar to EAI, in 2004-2005 ITA is planning to implement additional IBM Websphere application servers and HIS Web server fixpacks and version upgrades, Interwoven content management tool version upgrades, and refreshing the Reusable Common Services (RCS).

ITA will be evaluating a potential upgrade on the CommerceQuest Data Integrator product in 2004-2005 timeframe, as IBM support for Data Integrator v4 expires in 2005.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for ITA.

FSA Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA)



7.5 Virtual Data Center (VDC)

Description

The Virtual Data Center (VDC) provides the 7x24x365 technical and operational services in support of mainframe and midrange hardware and software. The VDC also manages the software licenses for applications residing at the VDC on behalf of FSA.

See the table below for a list of technical and operational services for all Information Technology systems.

*Technical and Operational Services		
➤ Automated monitoring of infrastructure and application systems	➤ Data security	➤ Network Management
➤ Backups – nightly, incremental, and weekly	➤ Disaster recovery planning and annual testing for each system application	➤ Operating system upgrades
➤ Conduct and participate in security audits	➤ Hardware upgrades and refresh	➤ Quarterly capacity planning
➤ Configuration Management	➤ Help Desk support	➤ Software license acquisition and maintenance (Rational suite, Websphere, CoolGen, Microstrategy, etc)
➤ Continuity of operations – restoration time for each application depends on Service Level Agreement (SLA)	➤ Mainframe and midrange hardware support	➤ Telecommunication services to facilities outside the VDC
		➤ Storage tape handling

** These technical and operational services include but are not limited to...*

The end user population includes students and parents, schools, third party servicers, guaranty agencies, state agencies, lenders and financial aid administrators from across the world who need access to FSA's federally mandated systems and Title IV services (e.g., FAFSA, etc)

Information Technology (I/T) services are hosted CSC's Meridian, Ct facility. This facility has been designed specifically to host a data center environment, and has been hardened to mitigate sources of typical I/T service outages with dual telephone line feeds, dual utility company feeds, a backup UPS battery farm, and backup diesel generators.

The VDC provides operations and technical support for FSA's federally mandated systems and the Title IV Delivery Systems. The VDC also provides electronic access to these applications over the Web, which leads to several benefits to the end user including reduction in application errors, immediate end user confirmation of FAFSA filing requirements completion, and immediate preliminary summary of expected parental financial support.

The consolidation of systems and electronic access saves both FSA and the end users time and money. Application systems supported include but are not limited to:

* Application Systems Supported by VDC		
➤ Central Processing System (CPS)	➤ FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)	➤ National Student Loans Database Systems (NSLDS)
➤ Direct Loans (LO)	➤ FFEL	➤ Participation Eligibility Post Secondary System (PEPS)
➤ Direct Loans Servicing (DLS)	➤ Financial Management System (FMS)	➤ Personal Identification Number (PIN) web site
		➤ Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG)

** These technical and operational services include but are not limited to...*

Note! Stakeholders of the VDC are the business owners within FSA for each project hosted at the VDC, as well as FSA's Title IV customers, including students, schools, third party servicers, guaranty agencies, state agencies, lenders and financial aid administrators. Both the stakeholders and Title IV customers would be adversely affected without services provided by the Virtual Data Center.

8.0 Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Overview

The FSA Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is the financial advisor to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Working with ED's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), the CFO develops and implements sound, value-added FSA financial management policies, procedures, systems and program controls.

CFO core business functions include the:

- Financial Management Group
- Asset Management Group
- Budget Group
- Financial Management Systems Group

8.1 Financial Management System (FMS)

The FSA Financial Management System (FMS) is the single point of financial information, integrating all accounting transactions from the FSA's systems (including Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFEL), Direct Loan, Pell, LEAP/SLEAP, and campus-based transactions) and the Grants Administration Payments System (GAPS). It is the only comprehensive source of a school's student financial data across all FSA systems. It is also the application for collecting FFEL-Lender (LaRS/LAP) and FFEL-GA (Form 2000) data used by the Lender community.

FMS improves funds control, reconciliation, financial reporting, payment processing, accounts receivable management, and budget execution.

FMS is an Oracle Federal Financials Application (Release 11.0.3) System. Phase III was implemented on September 30, 2001.

8.1.2 Operating Requirements

FSA's business processes require that the financial system, at a minimum, must:

- Be integrated, to minimize the data gathering and process redundancies caused by ad hoc systems tracking the same information.
- Provide access to sufficient levels of data,
- Support all FSA Channels (Schools, Students, Financial Partners) and FSA partners and FSA contractors,
- Provide timely and consistent data for strategic decision making,
- Promote increased reporting capability,
- Provide appropriate security, controls, and audit trails.

Future Plans

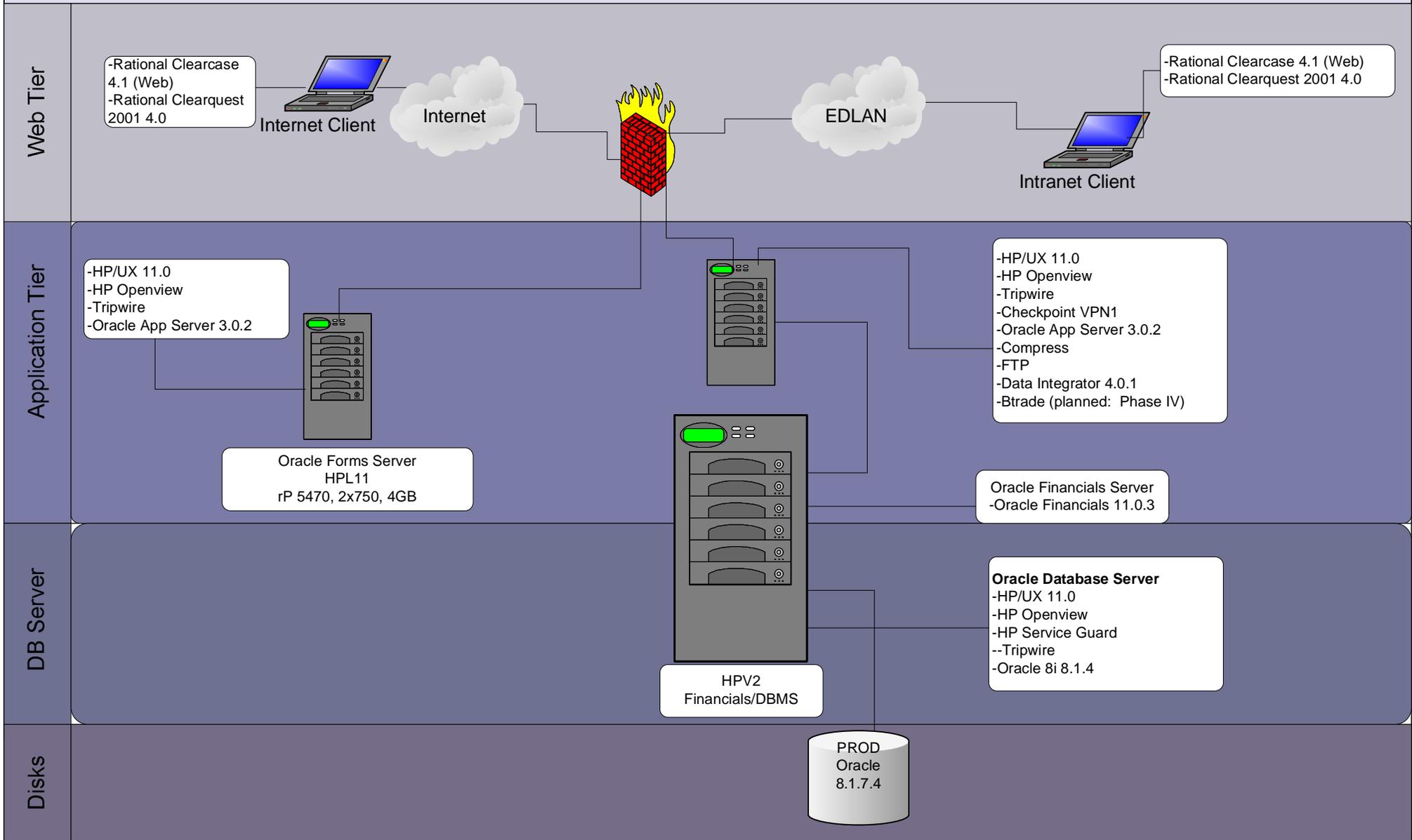
Current FMS operations will be maintained as new requirements for CSB, FEBI, or CDA are implemented. Future plans include new audit trails, improved reporting, reducing manual entries and system errors, and improving system integrity.

The future business environment is being developed as part of the Oracle 11i upgrade and Data Strategy initiatives.



See the next page for an illustration of the server architecture for FMS.

Financial Management System (FMS)



8.3 CFO Data Mart

The CFO Data Mart is an automated financial analysis and reporting process. Data is supplied by ED's Financial Management Systems Software (FMSS) and users.

Nightly, FMSS extracts data entered during that day and exports it via FTP to the Informatica server at the Virtual Data Center (VDC). Informatica then exports the data into Oracle, performs the required transformations, and populates the CFO Data Mart.

Via the FSA intranet, users access the data mart by a MicroStrategy Intelligent Server to satisfy user requirements that are sent via a Web interface.

The CFO, FP, and CM Data Marts have identical architectures except that the CFO Data Mart is on Oracle 8.1.7, and FP's and CM's are on 8.1.6.

9.0 FSA Communications

Overview

FSA Communications provides FSA staff with FSA and ED-wide documentation. It has three roles:

- External Relations – Inform ED colleagues, the higher education community, Congress and the public about FSA, its financial aid programs, and its progress as a PBO.
- Internal Relations – Brief staff and operating partners about FSA’s modernization projects and office-wide initiatives, and issues regarding the PBO status.
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) & Privacy Act – Respond to requests for information from the public under the Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act.

FSA Communications has three products:

- FSANet
- *FSA Now*, a monthly newsletter
- *FSANet Style Guide*

FSA Communications is located at <http://fsanet.ed.gov/communications>

The FSA Intranet provides FSA staff with internal documentation and ED-wide information.

The site includes the following components:

FEATURES	DOCUMENTATION
Employee Services	Life at Work, News & Events, Travel, Administration, and My Commute
Career Zone	Learning and career development services
FSA University	Business learning services to support FSA employees and partners
FSA Communications	Press releases, announcements, and publications
Students Channel	Information about Borrower Services
Schools Channel	Information, tools, and news
Financial Partners	Information and contacts for FSA's Financial Partners
Ombudsman	Policies, reports, forms and letters
CFO	Purchasing, administration, financial management, and training information
CIO	CIO-related activities such as IT Services Report, Vision/Mission, IT Security, People Library, IRB Activities, Career Planning, Giga Group.
Analysis	Analysis and performance metrics on the enterprise
Human Resources	HR-related information and links
Acquisitions	Acquisitions and contract performance information

Located at the VDC in Meriden, Connecticut, CSC staff is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and security of FSANet's hardware and operating system, and ROH staff is responsible for its administration and maintenance.

9.1 FSA Now

FSA Now is the FSA staff newsletter. Published monthly, *FSA Now* contains articles about upcoming conferences, projects, and management activities.

9.2 FSANet Style Guide

The *FSANet Style Guide* describes the preferred graphics and design elements and establishes guidelines for using them in FSA web and print products. FSA staff and operating partners use these graphics and design elements so that all FSA communication products have a consistent design.

10.0 Other

10.1 Workforce Support Services

Workforce Support Services is a new service area and includes Human Resources.

Human Resources is responsible for implementing a centers of excellence model and allocating personnel to meet the needs of the channels and enterprise areas and functions.

Its services include:

POSITION MANAGEMENT

- Facilitate position classification actions
- Develop position descriptions
- Develop position description/structure reports
- Provide advice and counsel on position description issues

STAFFING/PLACEMENT

- Facilitate staffing/placement processing actions (recruitment, reassignments, etc.)
- Develop staffing patterns and reports
- Develop and/or facilitate KSA/crediting plans/questions
- Develop and/or facilitate detail statements
- Provide advice and counsel on staffing/placement issues

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- Facilitate the completion of annual employee performance appraisals
- Develop reports and ratings
- Develop FSA performance appraisal data reports
- Develop and deliver performance management training to managers and supervisors
- Administer FSA employee recognition programs

HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

- Develop HR programs unique to FSA
- Facilitate interpretations of HR laws, regulations, and policies
- Guide managers and supervisors' decision-making through consultation

PAYROLL

- Reconcile and resolve payroll issues and discrepancies for FSA
- Security administration of the Federal Payroll Processing System (FPPS) for FSA
- Provide guidance and support to FSA on payroll policy and procedures

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

- Provide direct support to managers/supervisors on conduct-based actions
- Provide direct support to managers/supervisors on performance-based actions (including within grade increase denials)
- EEO liaison to ED EEO staff
- Reasonable accommodation
- Dispute resolution

LABOR RELATIONS

- Negotiations (including implementation of agreements)
- Collective Bargaining Agreement administration
- Develop Labor/Management reports

PERSONNEL SECURITY

- Administer FSA employee identification badge process for FSA contractor employees
- Maintain security database for FSA contractors and employees
- Provide guidance, support and interpretation of ED Security Policy
- Validate security clearance levels for FSA contractors and employees for system access
- Prepare security investigation documents and submit to OM Security office
- Assign position and ADP risk factors to FSA positions
- Administer FSA financial disclosure process

10.2 FSA Home Page

The FSA Home Page is the portal to FSA's channels (Schools, Students, and Financial Partners), technical documents, and the FAFSA.

It contains news, calendars, tools and software, access to student data, training resources, and a library of technical documents, program materials, regulations, worksheets and schedules.

It is located at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fsa/index.html>

Appendix A - Project Table

SUBSYSTEM	PROJECT
Students	FAFSA (+ FAFSA on the Web)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAFSA on the Web FAFSA on the Web (Customer Service)
	CPS
	Personal Identification Number (PIN) Requests
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal Personal Identification Number (PIN) Requests
	Students Channel
	Student Aid Awareness (Call Centers)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)
Borrowers	Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS) Web site
	EServicing
	Direct Loan Servicing System (DLSS) PIN Request
	Common Origination & Disbursement (COD)
	National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)
	Common Services for Borrowers (CSB)
	Debt Collection Service Information Center (Call Center)
	Debt Management and Collections System (DMCS)
	Direct Loan Consolidation System (DLCS)
	Federal Student Aid Collections
	Loan Consolidation
	Data Marts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit Management Data Mart Delinquent Loan Data Mart

SUBSYSTEM	PROJECT
Schools	Schools Portal FSA Call Center E-App Schools Portal FSAdownload Information for Financial Aid Partners (IFAP) Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) Postsecondary Education Participation System (PEPS) Closed Schools FSA Case Management and Oversight (CMO)
Financial Partners	Financial Partners Portal Financial Partners Data Mart
Ombudsman	Ombudsman Channel Customer Support
FSA University	Front2Back on the Web FSA Coach FSA Extranet
CIO	Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) Integrated Technical Architecture (ITA) Data Strategy Enterprise Architecture