

TO: Secretary Paige
FROM: Acting COO Candy Kane
RE: FSA Weekly Report
DATE: August 5, 2002

THE WEEK AHEAD

NY Staff Return: As of today, August 5, our New York staff are expected to be relocated back to their office space at 75 Park Place. The staff were evacuated during the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, and they've been working in leased space ever since. The phones are to be active on August 5 and new computer monitors are to arrive from D.C. New York staff report they expect the return to be "stressful." The space overlooks "ground zero."

KEY NEWS

e-FAFSA Surpasses 4 Million: On July 31, we received our four millionth e-FAFSA for the 2002-2003 cycle. We just closed the 86-week 2001-2002 cycle with a total of just less than 3.7 million e-FAFSAs. We are only 32 weeks into the 2002-03 cycle and we've already surpassed four million.

National Default Prevention Day: On August 1, FSA hosted almost 2,000 participants in the 2nd annual NDPD. Loan default prevention and aversion workshops were held in each of our 10 regional locations, plus Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

Perkins e-Promissory Notes: Using a Web-based "e-Note," on July 8 Penn State became the first Title IV participating school to have a student sign their Perkins Loan Promissory Note electronically. FSA worked with the Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations (COHEAO) to develop the Perkins "e-Note." Schools administer the Perkins program.

In addition to Penn State, the University of Minnesota and Devry Institute are using Perkins "e-Notes." On July 24, FSA posted the "e-Note" files on IFAP so all schools have the option of using it.

FSA will discuss the results of this initiative at the mid-year COHEAO conference in Chicago on August 3.

Enterprise Application Integration (EAI): The Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) team completed a connectivity test for the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) system interface to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). The interface will provide NSLDS with daily updates of Pell Grant disbursements to students. The connectivity test validated that information can be transported from COD to NSLDS and back.

Campus-Based Programs:

- **“FISAP” Posted:** The *Fiscal Operations Report* for 2001-2002 and *Application to Participate* for 2002-2004 (together, the “FISAP”) have been posted on the Web at cbfisap.sfa.ed.gov <<http://cbfisap.sfa.ed.gov/>>. A letter explaining e-FISAP procedures, along with the Instructions Booklet and Reference Guide, has been posted on IFAP (ifap.ed.gov <<http://ifap.ed.gov/>>). The FISAP is due October 1.
- **Reallocation:** Notice has been posted on IFAP to let schools know the Reallocation process has begun and the Reallocation Form is available as part of the e-FISAP. Schools can use the form to return unexpended 2001-2002 funds and to request additional Federal Work-Study funds for the 2002-2003 award year. Reallocation Forms are due August 23.

GAO Recommendations on Higher Ed Tax Policy: On July 31, FSA participated in an exit conference with GAO, OS, MIT, OPE, and OERI to discuss their draft statement of facts and recommendations on Higher Education Tax Policy. GAO recommends that ED: (1) clarify instructions on the FAFSA; (2) sponsor more research on the impact of the Title IV programs (i.e., attendance, completion, cost, and choice of school); and (3) partner with Treasury to jointly conduct research on the impact of tax credits and Title IV programs. GAO was to meet with Treasury on August 1 and is expected to have the draft report available for comments on August 16.

Urgent Publication Approval Needed: The backlog of FSA publications awaiting ED approval is beginning to clear, but we are still awaiting action on the *2002-2003 Federal Student Aid Handbook*. The handbook is a large reference manual for schools that administer Title IV programs. The handbook was written for the school year that began July 1, and FSA urgently needs approval to be able to use FY02 funds. The publication was submitted for approval in January and currently is being reviewed by OPE.

UCP Computer Upgrade Successful: The planned network upgrade for FSA staff in Union Center Plaza was completed on August 2. ED CIO partnered with FSA CIO and FSA Communications to get info to staff to prepare for the upgrade. On the day the upgrade went live, ED CIO staff wearing red baseball caps met FSA staff at the UCP entrance, handing out flyers reminding us how to login. Also, each staff member found on their keyboard a reminder card with instructions, and red hatted ED CIO “floorwalkers” walked each floor throughout the day, asking staff if they had any questions or problems.

RESOLUTION OF KEY ISSUES

Nothing to report.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

Nothing to report.

REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

Nothing to report.

POLICY DOCUMENTS

Nothing to report.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Nothing to report.

ON THE HORIZON

Nothing to report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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