

Alabama 36112–6335, telephone (334) 953–2989.

Henry Williams,

Acting Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer, DAF.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No. ED–2015–ICCD–0101]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request; 2016–2017 Federal Student Aid Application

AGENCY: Federal Student Aid (FSA), Department of Education (ED).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 3501 *et seq.*), ED is proposing a revision of an existing information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before October 13, 2015.

ADDRESSES: To access and review all the documents related to the information collection listed in this notice, please use <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching the Docket ID number ED–2015–ICCD–0101. Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting the Docket ID number or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. *Please note that comments submitted by fax or email and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, LBJ, Room 2E105, Washington, DC 20202–4537.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact the Douglas A. Pineda Robles, 202–377–4578.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps ED assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the ED's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. ED is especially interested in public comments addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of ED; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might ED enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might ED minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: 2016–2017 Federal Student Aid Application.

OMB Control Number: 1845–0001.

Type of Review: A revision of an existing information collection.

Respondents/Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 40,135,807.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 20,560,481.

Abstract: Section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), mandates that the Secretary of Education “. . . shall produce,

distribute, and process free of charge common financial reporting forms as described in this subsection to be used for application and reapplication to determine the need and eligibility of a student for financial assistance . . .”.

The determination of need and eligibility are for the following title IV, HEA, federal student financial assistance programs: the Federal Pell Grant Program; the Campus-Based programs (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), and the Federal Perkins Loan Program); the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program; the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant; and the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant.

Federal Student Aid, an office of the U.S. Department of Education (hereafter “the Department”), subsequently developed an application process to collect and process the data necessary to determine a student's eligibility to receive title IV, HEA program assistance. The application process involves an applicant's submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). After submission of the FAFSA, an applicant receives a Student Aid Report (SAR), which is a summary of the data they submitted on the FAFSA. The applicant reviews the SAR, and, if necessary, will make corrections or updates to their submitted FAFSA data. Institutions of higher education listed by the applicant on the FAFSA also receive a summary of processed data submitted on the FAFSA which is called the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR).

The Department seeks OMB approval of all application components as a single “collection of information”. The aggregate burden will be accounted for under OMB Control Number 1845–0001. The specific application components, descriptions and submission methods for each are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1—FEDERAL STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Component	Description	Submission method
Initial Submission of FAFSA		
FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)	Online FAFSA that offers applicants a customized experience.	Submitted by the applicant via www.fafsa.gov .
FOTW—Renewal	Online FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA.	
FOTW—EZ	Online FAFSA for applicants who qualify for the Simplified Needs Test (SNT) or Automatic Zero (Auto Zero) needs analysis formulas.	
FOTW—EZ Renewal	Online FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA and who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	

TABLE 1—FEDERAL STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPONENTS—Continued

Component	Description	Submission method
FAFSA on the Phone (FOTP).	The Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) representatives assist applicants by filing the FAFSA on their behalf through FOTW.	Submitted through www.fafsa.gov for applicants who call 1-800-4-FED-AID.
FOTP—EZ	FSAIC representatives assist applicants who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas by filing the FAFSA on their behalf through FOTW.	
FAA Access	Online tool that a financial aid administrator (FAA) utilizes to submit a FAFSA.	Submitted through www.faaaccess.ed.gov by a FAA on behalf of an applicant.
FAA Access—Renewal	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a Renewal FAFSA.	
FAA Access—EZ	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a FAFSA for applicants who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	
FAA Access—EZ Renewal ..	Online tool that a FAA can utilize to submit a FAFSA for applicants who have previously completed the FAFSA and who qualify for the SNT or Auto Zero needs analysis formulas.	
Electronic Other	This is a submission done by a FAA, on behalf of the applicant, using the Electronic Data Exchange (EDE).	The FAA may be using their mainframe computer or software to facilitate the EDE process.
PDF FAFSA or Paper FAFSA.	The paper version of the FAFSA printed by the Department for applicants who are unable to access the Internet or the online version of the FAFSA for applicants who can access the Internet but are unable to complete the form using FOTW.	Mailed by the applicant.
Correcting Submitted FAFSA Information and Reviewing FAFSA Information		
FOTW—Corrections	Any applicant who has a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID)—regardless of how they originally applied—may make corrections using FOTW Corrections.	Submitted by the applicant via www.fafsa.gov .
Electronic Other—Corrections.	With the applicant's permission, corrections can be made by a FAA using the EDE.	The FAA may be using their mainframe computer or software to facilitate the EDE process.
Paper SAR—This is a SAR and an option for corrections.	The full paper summary that is mailed to paper applicants who did not provide an e-mail address and to applicants whose records were rejected due to critical errors during processing. Applicants can write corrections directly on the paper SAR and mail for processing.	Mailed by the applicant.
FAA Access—Corrections ...	An institution can use FAA Access to correct the FAFSA.	Submitted through www.faaaccess.ed.gov by a FAA on behalf of an applicant.
Internal Department Corrections.	The Department will submit an applicant's record for system-generated corrections.	There is no burden to the applicants under this correction type as these are system-based corrections.
FSAIC Corrections	Any applicant, with their Data Release Number (DRN), can change the postsecondary institutions listed on their FAFSA or change their address by calling FSAIC.	These changes are made directly in the CPS system by a FSAIC representative.
SAR Electronic (eSAR)	The eSAR is an online version of the SAR that is available on FOTW to all applicants with a PIN. Notifications for the eSAR are sent to students who applied electronically or by paper and provided an e-mail address. These notifications are sent by e-mail and include a secure hyperlink that takes the user to the FOTW site.	Cannot be submitted for processing.

This information collection also documents an estimate of the annual public burden as it relates to the application process for federal student aid. The Applicant Burden Model (ABM), measures applicant burden through an assessment of the activities each applicant conducts in conjunction with other applicant characteristics and in terms of burden, the average applicant's experience. Key determinants of the ABM include:

- The total number of applicants that will potentially apply for federal student aid;
- How the applicant chooses to complete and submit the FAFSA (e.g., by paper or electronically via FOTW®);
- How the applicant chooses to submit any corrections and/or updates (e.g., the paper SAR or electronically via FOTW Corrections);
- The type of SAR document the applicant receives (eSAR, SAR acknowledgment, or paper SAR);

- The formula applied to determine the applicant's expected family contribution (EFC) (full need analysis formula, Simplified Needs Test or Automatic Zero); and
- The average amount of time involved in preparing to complete the application.

The ABM is largely driven by the number of potential applicants for the application cycle. The total application projection for 2016–2017 is based upon two factors—estimating the growth rate of the total enrollment into post-

secondary education and applying the growth rate to the FAFSA submissions. The ABM is also based on the application options available to students and parents. The Department accounts for each application component based on web trending tools, survey information, and other Department data sources.

For 2016–2017, the Department is reporting a net burden decrease of –3,522,674 hours. This decrease is considered to be an adjustment in burden hours from the 2015–2016 FAFSA.

Dated: August 7, 2015.

Stephanie Valentine,

Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Office of the Chief Privacy Officer, Office of Management.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education

AGENCY: Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Secretary announces tests, test forms, and delivery formats that the Secretary determines to be suitable for use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS). The Secretary also clarifies that, to provide for the transition from the performance accountability system for the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) to the performance accountability system for AEFLA as reauthorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), this announcement will remain effective until June 30, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jay LeMaster, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 11–152, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–7240. Telephone: (202) 245–6218 or by email: John.Lemaster@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 14, 2008, we published in the **Federal Register** final regulations for 34 CFR part 462, Measuring Educational Gain in the National Reporting System

for Adult Education (NRS regulations) (73 FR 2306). The NRS regulations established the process the Secretary uses to determine the suitability of tests for use in the NRS by States and local eligible providers. We annually publish in the **Federal Register** and post on the Internet at www.nrsweb.org a list of the names of tests and the educational functioning levels the tests are suitable to measure in the NRS as required by § 462.12(c)(2).

On April 16, 2008, we published in the **Federal Register** a notice inviting test publishers to submit tests for review (73 FR 20616).

On February 2, 2010, we published in the **Federal Register** a notice (February 2010 notice) listing the tests and test forms the Secretary determined to be suitable for use in the NRS (75 FR 5303).

The Secretary determined tests and test forms to be suitable for a period of either seven or three years from the date of the February 2010 notice. A seven-year approval required no additional action on the part of the publisher, unless the information the publisher submitted as a basis for the Secretary's review was inaccurate or unless the test is substantially revised. A three-year approval was issued with a set of conditions to be met by the completion of the three-year period. If these conditions were met, the Secretary would approve a period of time for which the test may continue to be used in the NRS.

On September 12, 2011, we published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 56188) an annual notice of tests determined suitable for use in the NRS (September 2011 notice). The September 2011 notice updated the list published in the February 2010 notice and included suitable test delivery formats. The September 2011 notice clarified that some, but not all, tests using computer-adaptive or computer-based delivery formats are suitable for use in the NRS.

On August 6, 2012, we published in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 46749) an annual notice of tests determined suitable for use in the NRS (August 2012 notice) that included the same list of forms and computer delivery formats for the tests published in the September 2011 notice. We also announced a sunset period during which States and local providers could continue to use tests with three-year NRS approvals otherwise expiring on February 2, 2013, during a transition period ending on June 30, 2014.

On January 25, 2013, we announced in the **Federal Register** (78 FR 5430) an extension of the approval period for tests approved for a three-year period beginning on February 2, 2010. The

approval period was extended from February 2, 2013 to September 30, 2013, without affecting the sunset period ending on June 30, 2014.

On December 12, 2013, we published in the **Federal Register** (78 FR 75550) an annual notice of tests determined suitable for use in the NRS (December 2013 notice) that updated the August 2012 notice and provided an extension of the approval period for three tests initially approved for a three-year conditional period from February 2, 2010. The approval period was extended to June 30, 2015. We also announced an extension of the approval period for one additional test—a revised version of a test previously approved for a three-year conditional period from February 2, 2010. The approval period for that test also was extended to June 30, 2015.

On October 29, 2014, we published in the **Federal Register** (79 FR 64369) an annual notice of tests determined suitable for use in the NRS (October 2014 notice) that updated the December 2013 notice. We announced that the four tests with approvals extended through June 30, 2015, may be used in the NRS during a sunset period ending on June 30, 2016.

In this document, the Secretary announces the list of tests and test forms determined to be suitable for use in the NRS. These include: (1) The eight tests previously approved for a seven-year period from February 2, 2010 through February 2, 2017; (2) three tests previously approved for an extended period through June 30, 2015 and now approved for an extended period through February 2, 2017; and (3) one test—a revised version of a test previously approved for an extended period through June 30, 2015—for which the Secretary is providing approval through February 2, 2017. With respect to the latter four tests, although we have identified several issues that the test publishers still need to address related to the requirements in § 462.13, we are taking this action in light of the following intervening factors. These factors include (1) the Department's plan to implement new descriptors for the NRS educational functioning levels and to issue new regulations that will govern the assessment review process; (2) the Department's desire to minimize disruption for its grantees in the transition to AEFLA as authorized by WIOA, including with respect to measuring educational gain under the NRS; and (3) the attendant transition authority in section 503(c) of WIOA, which authorizes the Secretary of Education to “take such actions as the