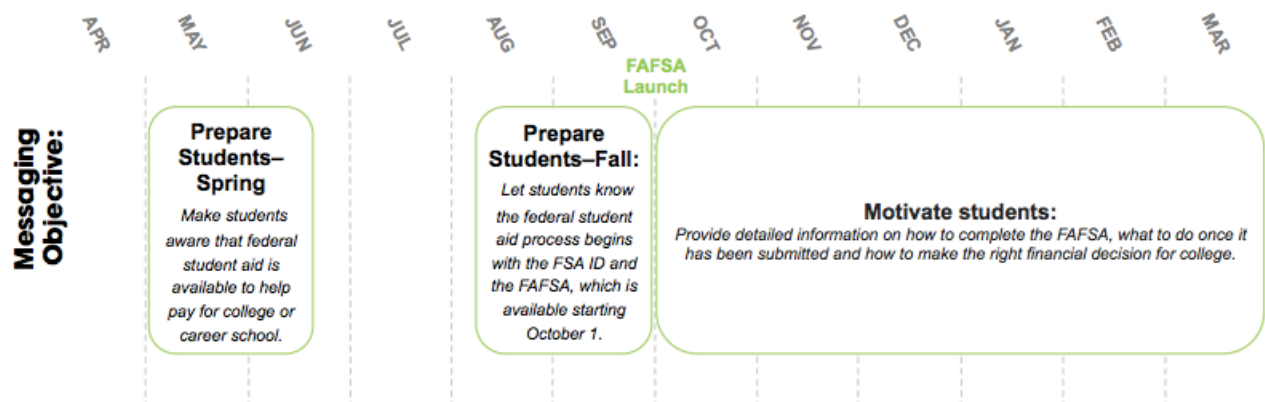


# 2017–18 FAFSA® Messaging and Planning Calendar

This document provides suggested outreach activities that can help you plan your communications to students and parents for the 2017–18 FAFSA. It provides timing, messaging objectives, target audiences, suggested outreach, and suggested resources. Details are provided for the May–June 2016 timeframe. During the summer, we will update the calendar to provide suggested communications for August–September, October 1 (the day the FAFSA launches), and for the months after the FAFSA’s launch.

## 2017–18 FAFSA Outreach Objectives and Timing



### Prepare Students–Spring

**Goal:** As you encourage students to begin exploring their college or career school options, let them know about resources available, such as federal student aid, to help them cover the costs. We don’t want students to rule out a postsecondary education just because of the cost.

**Timing:** May–June 2016

**Target Audience:** Juniors/rising seniors

**Secondary Audience:** Parents of junior/rising seniors (Note: While this document focuses on outreach to students, this information also can be used in your outreach to parents.)

**Primary Messaging Objective:** Educate students (and their families) about federal student aid and ensure they’re aware that aid is available to help pay for college or career school.

**Secondary Messaging Objective:** Tell students (and their parents) to create their FSA IDs. Students and parents are required to create and use their own FSA IDs, made up of a username and password, to access certain websites and electronically sign documents, such as the FAFSA.

## Thought/Conversation Starters:

- Get students thinking about their future.
  - Have you thought about what you want to do after high school?
  - The great majority of jobs require more than a high school education.
  - It's time to start planning for college or career school.
- Introduce the financial aspect of college or career school into their planning.
  - How you will pay for college?
  - There are programs, such as federal student aid, that can help pay for college.
  - Applying for federal student aid is completely free using the Free Application for Federal Student (FAFSA).
- Get them comfortable with the aid process.
  - Completing the FAFSA is the first step in the federal student aid process. By completing the FAFSA, you can see if you are eligible for federal grants you don't have to pay back, low-interest loans, and work-study funds. Plus, many states and colleges use your FAFSA data to determine your eligibility for state and school aid.
  - You can start filling out the FAFSA on October 1, 2016.
  - Just like many other websites, you'll need a username and password, called the FSA ID, to complete the FAFSA. You should get it now, before you start the FAFSA. Your parent will need to create an FSA ID too if he or she plans to sign the FAFSA electronically.

**Suggested Outreach and Resources:** The following outreach activities and resources are for your consideration as you work with students and parents. These are intended to serve as a menu of options from which you can pick and choose based on your needs.

- Share information on federal student aid and the aid application process with students.
  - We have basic introductory presentation slides—"Finding Money for College"—that you can include in a presentation. [Download the presentation.](#)
  - We have a graphic that explains the financial aid process that you can share. [Download the image.](#)
  - We have information on planning and paying for college or career school at [StudentAid.gov](#). Consider recommending the following pages:
    - [StudentAid.gov/prepare](#): Provides information on exploring careers, choosing a school, applying to schools, and budgeting. Students (and parents) also can see checklists on getting ready for college.
    - [StudentAid.gov/types](#): Provides information on financial aid to help pay for college or career school, including federal student aid, state aid, college/institutional aid, and scholarships.
- Are you working with parents who have been through the financial aid process previously and who might want to know what's changing? We have a fact sheet, infographic, and presentation that you can share:
  - College Students and Parents: What You Need to Know About the 2017–18 FAFSA (fact sheet). [Download the pdf.](#)
  - Changes to the FAFSA Process for 2017–18 (graphic). [Download the image.](#)
  - What's New for the 2017–18 FAFSA? Basics for Parents and College Students (presentation). [Download the presentation.](#)
- Encourage students (**and their parents**) to get their own FSA IDs. The student must create their own personal FSA ID, and the parent must create their own personal FSA ID that's different than the student's FSA ID. We have a fact sheet, presentation, video and blog post that you can use.
  - What's an FSA ID and Why Do I Need One? (fact sheet). [Download the PDF.](#)
  - Creating and using your FSA ID (presentation). [Download the presentation.](#)
  - How to create an FSA ID (video). [Download WMV](#) or [watch on YouTube](#).Why Students and Parents Need to Create Their Own FSA IDs (blog post). [Download the post.](#)

- Send an e-mail or text to students and parents. We have sample language that can help you get started. [Download sample language](#).
- Hang posters around your school. FSA has a poster that encourages students to think about their future and that makes them aware that financial aid is available. [Download poster](#) and [get information on how to order the poster](#).

### Prepare Students–Fall

**Timing:** August 2016/Start of 2016 school year–September 30, 2016

Messaging and planning calendar details will be provided by the end of June 2016.

### FAFSA Launch

**Timing:** October 1, 2016

Messaging and planning calendar details will be provided during summer 2016.

### Motivate Students

**Timing:** October 2016–April 2017

Messaging and planning calendar details will be provided during summer 2016.