

NEWS TO KNOW



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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President Obama Promotes Free Tuition

During a recent speech at an Indianapolis community college, President Obama discussed his *American's College Promise* and said middle-class college students should have more opportunities to "get the best skills possible" as quickly and cheaply as possible.

The president said "Here in America, it shouldn't matter how much money your folks make. If you're willing to work hard, you should be able to get that opportunity."

Obama said he wanted to make it easier for students to leave school without the "bonds of debt" and provided details of his budget proposal to make two years of community college free. He said students need to work hard to earn the sup-

port by completing their degrees and maintaining a 2.5 grade point average, and that community colleges need to get better at keeping students focused on coursework and training that translate into good jobs. "We're not just working to make our community colleges free," he said. "We want to make them better and more responsive."

He discussed a variety of subjects including the effects his plan would have on four-year universities, college savings funds, education for veterans and historically black colleges.

Go to the [president's remarks](#) for a video and the full text of his speech.

OF INTEREST

WHAT IS FLORIDA CAMPUS COMPACT?

Florida Campus Compact (FL|CC), a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents, promotes public and community service to develop students' citizenship abilities, helps college campuses build community partnerships and provides resources and training for faculty who wish to integrate civic and community-based learning into their curriculum. Membership includes public, private, two- and four-year institutions (www.compact.org).

From their website, "Florida

Campus Compact (FL|CC) is committed to helping students develop the values and skills of active citizenship through participation in public and community service."

FL|CC works with over 50 colleges and universities in Florida. Their mission is to advance the civic purposes of colleges and universities by increasing their ability to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility.

For more detailed information on FL|CC, visit www.floridacompact.org.

Draft Framework for a New System of College Ratings

In December, as part of President Obama's plan to expand college opportunity, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) released a draft framework for a college ratings system. This plan is designed to: (1) help students and families make informed decisions when selecting a college; (2) help colleges improve based on principles of access, affordability and outcomes; and (3) enable incentives and accountability in federal student aid.

The draft proposes to group two-year and four-year schools separately, but suggests that ED is considering other groupings. Twelve proposed metrics are listed: percent Pell, EFC gap, family income quintiles, first generation college status, average net price, net price by quintile, average loan debt, completion rates, transfer rates, labor market success, graduate school attendance, and loan performance outcomes.

The draft indicates that ED plans to have the ratings plan in effect for the start of the 2015-16 academic year.

For more detailed information go to [draft framework](#).

Career and Adult Education

Career and Adult Education includes District Technical Centers, Adult Education Providers and Florida colleges. This division of the Florida Department of Education was designed to meet the needs of a wide customer base including students, business and industry, school districts, Florida colleges, community-based organizations and correctional institutions. It represents a collaboration and partnership between private and public sectors throughout Florida, seeking to improve Florida's workforce.

For more information:

[District Technical Centers](#) (PDF)

[Adult Education Directors](#)

[Division of Florida Colleges](#)

[Education Directories](#)

Commission for Independent Education

Their role:

- To serve as a consumer protection agency by protecting the individual student and promoting accountability at the independent postsecondary level
- To protect the integrity of these institutions by assuring that certain standards are met
- To encourage independent institutions to offer programs that meet the needs of Florida citizens

This office within the Florida Department of Education is comprised of 7 commission members and more than 30 staff members.

In 2013-14, staff members conducted 644 on-site visitations to schools, colleges and universities, which included evaluating institutions' physical facilities, student records and record storage, class schedules, academic programs and tuition charges among others tasks.

For more information, visit the [Commission for Independent Education](#) website.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Publication Date: January 30, 2015

DCL ID: GEN-15-03

Subject: Wind-down of the Federal Perkins Loan Program

Summary: This letter provides information on the wind-down of the Federal Perkins Loan Program and schools' limited authority to continue to make loans to certain students beyond September 30, 2015.

"Dear Colleague:

This letter provides an update on the status of the Federal Perkins Loan Program as we approach the end of the statutory authority for schools to make Perkins Loans. Under section 461(b)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (the HEA), the authority for schools to make a Federal Perkins Loan ended on September 30, 2014, with an automatic one-year extension pursuant to section 422(a) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Thus, absent Congressional action, schools may not make Federal Perkins Loans to new borrowers after September 30, 2015. If prior to October 1, 2015, a school makes the first disbursement of a Federal Perkins Loan to a student for the 2015-2016 award year, the school may make any remaining disbursements of that 2015-2016 loan after September 30, 2015."

For more detailed information go to <http://ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/attachments/GEN1503.pdf>.



- [Title IV Aid Disbursement](#) — Reporting, Excess Cash, and Reconciliation Requirements
- [GEN-15-02](#) — New Pell chart
- [GEN-14-22](#) — Apprenticeships and the Federal Student Aid Programs, including Federal Work-Study funding
- [GEN-14-23](#) — Competency-Based Education Programs - Questions and Answers
- [2015-2016 FAFSA on the Web](#) — Preview Presentation and [2015-2016 FAFSA on the Web Worksheet](#)
- [2015-01-13 \(Application Processing\)](#) 2015-2016 Student Aid Report (SAR), Acknowledgement, and Student Aid Eligibility Worksheet for Question 23 mock-ups

REMINDER

It's not too early to be thinking about the [2015 FASFAA Annual Conference](#).





Calendar of Events

MARCH

- ◇ REMINDER - Review and report your DERs and Reconciliations/Refunds for state scholarship and grant programs
- ◇ Eligible Mid-Year high school graduates may receive Bright Futures spring term funding
- ◇ Students continue to receive notifications to repay Bright Futures hours dropped or withdrawn after the drop/add period

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES & TOOLS

Visit these sources for valuable financial aid information:

[Funding Your Education: The Guide to Federal Student Aid](#)

[Federal Student Aid Handbook](#)

[Federal Student Aid](#)

[Financial Aid Overview](#)

[Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\)](#)

[Mapping Your Future](#) (for Financial Aid Professionals)

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THE OSFA PHILOSOPHY



The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) has the ability to offer its partners and customers something few public agencies can, the ability to shape OSFA programs and services based on their specific needs and concerns. OSFA provides financial aid workshops, publications, prompt services for participants, and helps fund scholarship and grant programs. If a participant has a problem or suggestion, the OSFA management team listens and makes every effort to implement a solution that meets their needs. Public dollars deserve the kind of accountability OSFA provides in financing education.

The News to Know is now available on the [Policy, Regulations, and Guidance](#) page of our website. Previous editions may be viewed on our [Archives](#) page.

Contact OSFA

Tallahassee, FL

Toll-free State Programs: 1-888-827-2004

E-mail: OSFA@fldoe.org

Toll-free Federal Loans: 1-800-366-3475

Locally: 1-850-410-5200

**[Click here](#) to contact an
OSFA Outreach
Representative about
your institution's needs.**