



**THE 118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS**

# **NASFAA'S FINANCIAL AID 101**

**RESOURCES FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS**

JANUARY 2023

## Who Is NASFAA?

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) is the only national, nonprofit association with a primary focus on information dissemination, professional development, and legislative and regulatory analysis related to federal student aid programs. Our membership consists of more than 32,000 [student financial assistance professionals](#) at nearly 3,000 colleges, universities, and career schools across the country. NASFAA member institutions serve nine out of every 10 undergraduates in the United States. NASFAA is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for public policies that increase student access to and success in postsecondary education, most often in the context of Higher Education Act reauthorization and the budget and appropriations process.

The importance of investing in and strengthening our nation's postsecondary education system has never been more critical. Concerns over college access, affordability, and transparency are colliding with the growing demand in the workforce for college educated individuals, all while racial disparities in college access and attainment are becoming more stark than ever. As the 118th Congress begins, lawmakers have an opportunity to re-evaluate our country's higher education policies and take action to ensure an affordable college education is in reach for all students. Robust, streamlined student aid policy must play a central role in this effort. To that end, NASFAA offers the resources below to assist members of the 118th Congress as they work to pass reform that will strengthen access to, and success in, higher education for our nation's students.

NASFAA is available to provide feedback, technical assistance, and financial aid expertise to assist in your office's work. Upon request, NASFAA is also able to provide congressional staff with access to member-only resources such as Today's News, a daily newsletter covering timely updates in student aid legislation and the latest news, events, and trends in higher education. Please email [policy@nasfaa.org](mailto:policy@nasfaa.org) to get connected with NASFAA's policy team and learn about our additional resources.

## Resource #1 | Timely Higher Education Act Reauthorization Topics

### [NASFAA's Reauthorization Recommendations](#)

NASFAA's top priorities, organized by topic, to modernize the HEA so that it meets the needs of today's students and institutions. NASFAA continues its work on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA).

### [Higher Education Act Reauthorization Web Center](#)

An in-depth look into NASFAA's comments, analysis, and previous work as it relates to HEA reauthorization, including our HEA recommendations and summaries of reauthorization proposals introduced in previous congressional sessions.

### [Issue Briefs](#)

Focused on timely federal student aid policy issues, NASFAA's issue briefs provide background and recommendations for lawmakers.

### ["Off The Cuff" Podcast](#)

NASFAA's policy-focused podcast provides listeners with an unscripted view of hot financial aid and higher education-related topics.

## Resource #2 | Key Financial Aid Issues to Watch in 2023

### [FAFSA Simplification](#)

Significant changes to federal student aid policy, including simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), were attached to the FAFSA Simplification Act that became law in December 2020. This web center compiles resources related to these changes and their implementation, including summaries of changes to Federal Methodology, case studies, implementation checklists for schools, and NASFAA's FAFSA simplification news coverage.

### [Student Debt Cancellation](#)

In August 2022, President Joe Biden announced a plan to cancel \$10,000 to \$20,000 in student loan debt for millions of borrowers. Since that announcement, multiple lawsuits have successfully stopped the debt relief program, ultimately resulting in the Supreme Court agreeing to consider the administration's appeal during the first half of 2023. This NASFAA web center contains resources and the latest updates surrounding the debt cancellation program and pause on student loan repayment.

### [Negotiated Rulemaking](#)

Negotiated Rulemaking (or “Neg Reg”) is a process used by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) where stakeholders negotiate the terms of proposed rules. ED publishes the proposed rule in the Federal Register and solicits public comments, which are evaluated for inclusion in the final rule. ED has held two rulemaking sessions since the Biden Administration took office, one in Fall 2021 focused on Affordability and Student Loans and another in the spring of 2022 focused on Institutional and Programmatic Eligibility. This web center compiles NASFAA’s coverage of negotiated rulemaking, proposed rules and NASFAA’s comments, and final rules.

### [Improving Financial Aid Offers](#)

In recent years, policymakers have taken a closer look at financial aid offers. NASFAA values the importance of clear, concise, accurate information for students and parents, and recognizes there are ways to improve aid offers. As such, NASFAA has continued work to improve aid offers over the past several years, including convening a member-led task force, consumer testing, and updating [NASFAA’s Code of Conduct](#). This web center contains NASFAA’s aid offer resources, including financial aid offer models, a glossary of terms, an aid offer comparison tool for students and parents, and relevant research.

## Resource #3 | Financial Aid Basics

### [Legislative Tracker](#)

Updated regularly, the tracker provides a comprehensive look at higher education legislation introduced in both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate during the current and previous sessions of Congress, breaking down legislation by issue area in order to find the topics or federal programs that are the most relevant to your work.

### [National Student Aid Profile](#)

The National Student Aid Profile provides a high-level overview about the federal student financial aid programs that are authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. Updated annually, the Profile includes both national and state-level data for each Title IV program, including number of recipients, total volume of awards, and the distribution by family income.

### [Student Aid Reference Desk](#)

The “Ref Desk” compiles resources related to the administration of student aid programs with direct links to federal regulation, legislative text, U.S. Department of Education guidance, as well as interpretation & analysis from policy organizations, institutions, researchers, and groups focused on student access and success in higher education. It’s easily searchable and provides continuously updated expert data straight from the source.

## Resource #4 | NASFAA Research & Reports

### [Report: Protecting Borrowers & Advancing Equity](#)

Published in May 2022, this NASFAA report aims to fill the gaps in the conversation around student debt by providing systemic and targeted policy solutions to address underlying flaws in the student loan repayment system that lead borrowers into financial hardship. In all, the report outlines recommendations to improve student loan servicing practices, rethink the terms and conditions of student loan repayment, and reform student loan default.

### [Policy Task Forces and Reports](#)

NASFAA frequently convenes policy task forces and working groups to review and examine legislative and policy proposals within our key policy areas. Composed of geographically diverse groups of NASFAA members with experience in various postsecondary institutions and sectors, these groups publish reports with findings and recommendations from their work.

### [Highlighted Original Research](#)

An overview of research and grant projects NASFAA has done in collaboration with other stakeholders to address pertinent issues in higher education.

**The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) provides professional development for financial aid administrators; advocates for public policies that increase student access and success; serves as a forum on student financial aid issues; and is committed to diversity throughout all activities.**

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