FAFSA Completion Initiative ICAPS Help Manual

Your institution has signed a Data Sharing Agreement with the Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Iowa College Aid (Iowa College Aid) to determine the completion status of a student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may use the FAFSA completion data to provide assistance to students in completing the FAFSA.

Through the Iowa College Aid Processing System (ICAPS), you will upload files of students you work with and download information on their FAFSA status.

Getting Started: ICAPS Tips

- The dropdown menu is on every screen, allowing users to navigate the portal without returning to the main menu page.
- The academic year displayed at the top reflects the year for which the FAFSA is being completed, NOT the current academic year.
- Select Help to view all of the ICAPS user guides.

Create High School Student File

ICAPS requires each institution or high school to upload a list of their students into the system on a .csv file with specific column headings. Use the template provided to you via email, or use the following steps to create a student file through ICAPS:

1. Download a blank student file. Login to ICAPS and select Download FAFSA Completion from the home page. Click the Download File button and open the file in Excel.
2. Save the file as a .csv file. This is an important step. Your file will not process in ICAPS if it is not in the correct file format.
   a. Press F12 or click File in the top left-hand corner and select "Save As"
   b. Name your file
   c. Make sure the "Save as type" box is .csv (Comma Delimited)
   d. Save your file
3. Enter student data. Enter your students' data into columns A through D of the spreadsheet. Date of Birth must be entered as mm/dd/yyyy and the zip code must be entered with 5 numeric digits. Use column E for your own sorting purposes or leave it blank. For example, if you are uploading a student roster consisting of multiple high schools, you may enter the high school name in column E. The remaining columns will populate with FAFSA Completion information in the download process.

Upload High School Student File

Once you have created and saved your student file on your computer, login to ICAPS to upload your high school student file.

1. Log in to ICAPS
2. Select Upload High School Student File from the main menu
3. Click the Choose File
4. Find your saved student file on your computer and confirm the selection by selecting Open (Remember: only .csv files will upload into the system.)
5. Click Upload File.

High School Student File Upload Errors

A message will display at the top of the screen with the status of your file upload. If all rows of student information have uploaded successfully, the following message will display:

FafsaCompletion_00457689_2025-2026_20250829.csv uploaded successfully!

Select Download FAFSA Completion File from the main menu or click here.

If your file has errors, the following message will display (specific error may vary). This means that not all student information from your file has been uploaded into the system. Click File Import History for information on the row(s) with errors; make the corrections and upload a new file. Note: the header row is always row 1.

FafsaCompletion_190822000409_2025-2026_20250829.csv uploaded successfully!
but 7 row(s) failed to process due to errors; for more information see the File Import History

Select Download FAFSA Completion File from the main menu or click here.

Download Completion File

Download your completion file to receive the FAFSA completion status of the students from your student file.

1. Select Download FAFSA Completion File from the main menu or the successful Student File Upload message
2. Select the Download File button and open the file. The file will look like the student file with columns F through J populated with FAFSA completion data
3. You can now use the file for your FAFSA completion needs

FAFSA Completion File Fields

Column F: SUBMITTED_DATE: date the student filed their first FAFSA for the year

Column G: PROCESS_DATE: date the most recent FAFSA transaction was processed; If the student or a college filed corrections to the original FAFSA, Process_Date is the date those corrections were processed

Column H: SELECT_FOR_VERIF: value will be Y or N. A value of Y indicates the student was selected for verification by the federal processor and must provide additional documentation to their college financial aid office

Column I: FAFSA_STATUS:

- *Complete*: the record on the uploaded file fully matches a FAFSA record in ICAPS; the FAFSA has been processed and has a calculated SAI

- *Incomplete*: the record on the uploaded file fully matches a FAFSA record in ICAPS but the FAFSA was not able to be processed and no SAI was calculated. The reason or reason(s) are in the INC_REASON column

- *Partial Match*: Only 3 of the 4 data elements provided (columns A through D of the student file) matched a FAFSA record in ICAPS

- *No Match:* Student data elements did not fully match or partially match a FAFSA record in ICAPS

- *Multiple Match*: Student data matched to more than one FAFSA record

- *Blank*: the record on the uploaded file was an error

Column J: INC_REASON: if the FAFSA status is *Incomplete*, the student must make a correction to their FAFSA before it can be submitted. The error needing a correction will be listed in this column.

Tips:

- ICAPS will save the students on the most recent student file upload for your school. After the initial file upload for your school, you can click the Download File button at any time to receive updated FAFSA completion information for the stored list of students.

  This means that you do not have to upload a student list every time. Iowa College Aid recommends uploading a full roster, and then uploading a new roster only if corrections must be made to the student data, if students must be added or if students must be removed.

- If you need to remove a student from your class roster, delete the entire row by right-clicking on the row number and selecting delete. Highlighting the spreadsheet cells and hitting backspace will not fully delete the information and you will receive errors upon upload into ICAPS.

- Student data from the uploaded student file must match all four data elements on the student's FAFSA to be a Full Match and receive FAFSA completion information.

- If you have Partial Match and No Match records on your download file:

  - A Partial Match means that three of the four data elements matched. You should review and correct the student data and then save your file. You should upload the new file to ICAPS. It is not required that you clear the other columns; the system will ignore that information during the upload and replace it with the most recent information in the system.

  - A No Match means that two or less of the four data elements matched. Most likely, this student has not completed a FAFSA.

- Select File Import History from the main menu to view a list of files that your school has uploaded for the current academic year.

- Iowa College Aid imports FAFSA completion information once a week. You will have access to ICAPS at all times, however the information in the system will only update once a week.