Student Aid Operations Readiness Workshop

Companion to Before the Next File Arrives

The Weekly Bellows | November 2026

Purpose

Use this 35-minute packet with financial aid, IT, enrollment-reporting, and institutional-research colleagues to verify the three FSA updates and assign open work. These local recommendations do not replace official notices, institutional procedures, or security controls.

Bring the official notices and approved documentation of your installed software. Use invented records for training. Keep student names, identification numbers, financial information, passwords, and private screenshots out of this packet.

Meeting date _____ Facilitator _____

Participating functions _____

1 Verify the deployed software

Read GENERAL-26-70, issued November 6. Users should be on EDconnect 8.6.1 OR TDClient 3.5.0, as applicable, by December 7, 2026. FSA plans an infrastructure upgrade in early 2027. Older versions will lose access, but December 7 is the preparation deadline, not a stated shutdown date. Users already on the specified current version need no further action under this notice.

EDconnect 8.6.1 requires Windows 11 or Windows Server 2016 or later. Check TDClient's separate platform requirements if that is the product you use.

Product used _____ Deployed version _____

Where the version was verified _____

Platform and requirements checked _____

Person responsible for any needed work _____

Approved test and evidence location _____

Select the supported status after checking:

- [ ] Current version verified; no further action under this notice.
- [ ] Upgrade or platform work needed; owner and approved plan identified.
- [ ] Not yet verified; next check assigned below.

Next action _____ Owner _____

Local target date _____ Follow-up date _____

Do not mark this complete based only on a download or request. Follow approved change and testing procedures; do not bypass security controls.

2 Prepare staff for the sender change

Read GENERAL-26-69, issued November 5. During fall 2026, noreply@studentaid.gov migrates to these sender addresses:

noreply@login.studentaid.gov
noreply@mail.studentaid.gov
noreply@info.studentaid.gov

Beginning in 2027, the identified partner senders are:

noreply@info.nsldsfap.ed.gov
noreply@mail.nsldsfap.ed.gov
noreply@info.fsapartners.ed.gov
noreply@mail.fsapartners.ed.gov

A displayed From address alone does not authenticate an email. Open a known official service independently rather than follow a suspicious link. Route concerns through your IT or security process. The announcement does not justify blanket email-filtering exemptions.

Where staff will find the official notice _____

Who will review routing or filtering questions _____

How staff will help someone verify a message safely _____

_____

Practice question

A student says, “This message looks different. Is it really from Federal Student Aid?” Write a short reply that acknowledges the sender change, keeps the timing accurate, and explains a safe next step without declaring the message authentic from its displayed sender alone.

_____

_____

_____

3 Learn the Completers List review routes

Read the November 4 NSLDS Earnings Accountability User Guide publication notice and Chapter 1. Other reporting and calculation chapters are to follow. The list uses NSLDS enrollment and Title IV data for applicable completers, not every graduate. Aggregation works toward 30 non-excluded completers, expands award years and, when needed, CIP grouping. A Completed CIP may differ from an Evaluated CIP. These facts do not establish that your institution has an error.

The review window is currently expected to be approximately 60 days. The Department of Education sets its actual start and end dates. This chapter's release does not announce an open window or a universal deadline. Leave a deadline blank until an applicable official date is established.

Who will monitor for the applicable official dates _____

Where verified dates will be recorded _____

Who will coordinate the local review _____

Who understands underlying enrollment reporting _____

Who can interpret the list construction and program grouping _____

Where evidence and decisions belong in approved systems _____

Training exercise using invented information only

Choose one question about a made-up record: an underlying enrollment fact appears incorrect; a record may qualify for an exclusion or removal; an applicable student appears missing; or a previously removed record may need to be restored. Do not decide which action applies until you identify what evidence is needed and which guide route covers it.

Invented question _____

Evidence the reviewer would need _____

Relevant guide section or printed page _____

Person or function that can verify the facts _____

Proposed action route after verification _____

Where the decision would be documented _____

Check the distinction: correcting underlying enrollment data differs from exclusions or removals. Adding a missing student uses enrollment reporting. Web re-add restores a previously removed record. The route must match the verified facts; the worksheet itself does not determine eligibility for any action.

4 Label the dated service interruption accurately

GENERAL-26-68 announced the schedule for Veterans Day, November 11, 2026. The FAFSA Processing System accepted data but did not process it or dispatch ISIRs until November 12. FSA offices and contact centers were closed November 11; websites remained operational. COD was scheduled to accept and process school data and send responses and acknowledgments, but schools would receive no federal funds November 11. Funding changes were to resume November 12.

This is a dated reference, not an assertion that a holiday pause is still in effect. When reviewing monitoring from November 11, distinguish the announced service behavior from any separately verified local problem.

Where the dated service note belongs _____

What evidence would be needed before calling a gap a local failure _____

_____

5 Leave a usable next step

Record open work without including private records. Local target dates below are planning choices, not new federal deadlines.

Action 1 _____

Owner _____ Local target _____

Evidence or approved work location _____

Action 2 _____

Owner _____ Local target _____

Evidence or approved work location _____

Action 3 _____

Owner _____ Local target _____

Evidence or approved work location _____

Next check-in _____ Who needs the update _____

Primary sources

Federal Student Aid. November 6, 2026. SAIG software upgrade notice. GENERAL-26-70.

https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2026-11-06/saig-users-upgrade-edconnect-861-and-tdclient-350-software-dec-7-2026

Federal Student Aid. November 5, 2026. Sender email address update. GENERAL-26-69.

https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2026-11-05/update-federal-student-aid-sender-email-addresses

Federal Student Aid. November 4, 2026. NSLDS Earnings Accountability User Guide publication page.

https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/guides-worksheets/2026-11-04/nslds-earnings-accountability-user-guide

Federal Student Aid. November 2026. NSLDS Earnings Accountability User Guide, Chapter 1, Completers List. Printed pages 4 and 15–21 for scope, aggregation and review window; pages 20–21 and 32 for action routes.

https://fsapartners.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2026-11/NSLDSEarningsAccountabilityUserGuideChapter1CompletersList.pdf

Federal Student Aid. November 4, 2026. Veterans Day processing and customer service notice. GENERAL-26-68.

https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2026-11-04/veterans-day-federal-holiday-processing-and-customer-service-hours