NTT DTA INC (US)

Moderator: Christal Simms

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Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. We'd like to inform all participants your lines will be in a listen-only mode for the duration of today's call. Today's conference is being recorded, if you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

And now I'll turn today's meeting over to (Miesha Challenger). Thank you. You may begin.

(Miesha Challenger): Thank you so much. Good afternoon everyone. We want to thank you for attending today's webinar entitled the new look and feel of fafsa.gov. Our presenter today is (Jonathan Goodfell) who is a management program analyst here at federal student aid. (Jonathan) I will turn it over to you.

(Johnathan Goodfell): Thanks (Miesha). I'd like to start by thanking everyone for attending. And I also want to let you know the presentation is available for download in the top left-hand corner of your screen in case you are incredibly riveted by what I have to say. Or you're just scrolling through social media and not paying attention. Either way, there you go.

Also during the presentation, if you have any question, please write your questions in the Q&A chat box. We have FSA staff standing by to answer your questions. We will also share out some of your questions at the conclusion of the presentation.

All right, let's get started. So here is a look at our agenda, what we're going to cover today. I'll not bore you by reading through it. I just want to let you know that what we're going to cover is that most of the change you'll see are cosmetic in nature. All the questions are the same. Some of them are formatted and regrouped. But mostly you'll see that it's just design changes.

All right, so what is a responsive web experience? Some of you may have already seen this since we launched it a few months ago. But for those of you who haven't, basically what RWA technology does is it takes the application and whatever device you're using whether it's a desktop, a laptop, a tablet, a phone, it reorganizes and resizes the content to fit it in a way that makes it easier for the user to see and interact with. Which you can see by the super cool little picture I have on the right side of the screen there.

I do want to say before I start that while most of the application is now web responsive, corrections and the IRSDRT tool are not under RWA. So for example with corrections, if an applicant goes in and fills out an application, they're going to see everything in RWA, again with the exception of the DRT. If they want to go in and make a correction, for example, they want to add a school, it's going to look like it did before we launched RWA. So it's going to look very different than it does now, just like it used to a couple months ago.

All right, so let's talk about the homepage. It's one of our bigger design changes. So this is the top of the current homepage for those of you who haven't seen it. As you can see, we still have the two buttons like we've always had. You can start here. If you're a new user, we have returning user option to log in, or if you want to make a correction, add a school, do your student aid report.

This is the middle view of the screen if you were to scroll down, we have our traditional maintenance outage test and announcement which I make. So I'm very proud of this. The announcement section is expandable. So depending on how many announcements we have, the box will enlarge or shrink in size. If we have more than three or especially the long one, there will be a link to take you to a new page with all the fascinating announcements that I have crafted for you to read.

And then just below that we have a couple of sections. One, leads you to our help page. The other one will take you to state deadline information and then there's a basic FAQ section should you want to peruse that at your leisure. Additional resources below that are how to look up a school code, how to get a PDF or paper FAFSA form and how to get an FFS ID which if you don't have one, please go out and get one. Not right now, because I'm still talking. But after me, go and get one. They're amazing.

And the bottom of the homepage, we have sort of our precollege section. That's about college scorecard. How to get guidance for student aid. How to use our FAFSA forecaster tool which can give you a rough idea of what aid you might expect. We also have privacy and security links as well as social media links.

So that is what our homepage looks like right now. When we launch the new application on October 1, the homepage is going to look a little bit different. This is the top of the new homepage. As you can see it's similar to the current homepage. We still have the two log in buttons, but at the top we now have an easy access toolbar with links to loan information and studentaid.gov. If you want to know types of aid, information of how about how to repay your loans, those are quick ways to jump over there.

As you can see, we still have the super cool expandable announcement box, but I won't go into that any further. Below that, these are some changes that we have now. We've switched out the tiles that we have. It's, kind of, our before, during and after the FAFSA process. The first is an early eight estimate. This will take you to forecaster, so you can get an idea of what to expect before you fill out the FAFSA. The middle section is FAFSA help. This will take you to our main help page. And the third tile is what you can expect after the FAFSA form has been completed and submitted.

Below that, we have a redesigned student aid deadline function. It used to be on a separate page, now it's on the homepage. You can select the state you're going to school in and the year that you're going to be attending school and click view deadline. Once you do that, it'll pop up with the information that looks like this. Let's say you want to go to school in Nevada, because why not? It gives you the state deadline, the college deadline and then the federal deadline which is always the same June 30 of the cycle that we're in.

And then the very bottom of the page, we have a great deal of different links that you can click on for various types of information which I'm not going to go through all of those. You can see them October 1 when you bring up the new application.

All right, the log in process has also changed a bit. We have tried to make it easier for users to fill out. We really got a lot of good feedback from our social media team, from applicants, from parents, and our own data that show from time to time even though it's not supposed to happen, sometimes a parent might fill out a FAFSA on behalf of their child posing as their child. We don't like it to happen, but it does. So in order to make it easier, we have separated the log in screen into two tabs. If you are the student which is the current screen that's showing, you would click on this tab and you can enter your FSA ID. And FSA ID password, again after this, if you don't have one, go get one. And it will log you in and this is a good way to do it, because it prepopulates some of the information in the form.

If you are not the student or you do not have the student FSA ID and password, then you can click on the second tab for parents, prepares, and students from freely associated states. And you can enter in the student's personal information such as first name, last name, social and date of birth.

All right, so this is our new introduction page. We have reorganized it to have everything into collapsed sections, so it's less overwhelming. You can open one at a time. It looks like this. You can be super brave and click expand all. And then all of them will open. I'm sure everyone wants to read through all of those. So go ahead and do that after this if you would like to.

All right, tooltips, this is one of my favorite things that we've changed. So most of you are probably familiar with the old help function where everything just, kind of, floated on the right-hand side of the screen. Or you could hover the cursor over a button or a bar. We found that people really use that never. So we tried to redesign this in a more user-friendly way. So each field has a little blue question mark icon at the right-hand side. And if you click that, it will bring up a help and hint for that field.

So this is an example if you click on the question mark for student's last name. It gives you some information. There's a blue more link tab that can give you more information if you need it. You can click the help button to go to the help page for even more information. You can also print this if you just want to have it or you love paper. Whatever floats your boat. All right, so that's help.

Our school code search function has also undergone some changes. I'm going to talk about that next. All right, when you get to search for colleges, and before I start, let me backtrack a little bit. You'll see up at that top, where it says student demographics, there is a green checkmark. That indicates that that section has been completed. The school selection section has a little blue pencil icon. That indicates that that is a section that we are working on. If you have completed a section, you can jump back to it, if you have not completed a section or you're currently working on a section, you cannot jump forward. Also you'll notice right under that there's a blue banner that says student information, when you're in parent section, that will change to parent information.

All right so down at the bottom for federal school code search, you can click yes, I know it, if you happen to know it. Or you can click no, I don't know it. And then you can enter the state that you want to go to school in. You also have the option of entering the city and the school name. Once you type that in, you click search and it'll bring up various schools that match your search criteria. From there, you pick the schools that you want to go to. You can add up to ten if you are doing the online form.

And it will bring up this page which allows you to choose your housing plan and also has a little blue plus sign mark to allow you to get rid of the school or change the orders of school. So if you click on the blue plus sign, it'll open up that bottom bar. You can remove a school, you can change the order of schools. For federal aid purposes, it does not matter what order you list your schools in. However, some states award the amount of aid given based on the order of schools. So that might be important depending on what state you're applying to.

All right, so let's talk a little bit about dependency status, the ever-controversial topic. Some people think they should not be dependent. If you fall into that category, I'm sorry. That's determined by congress, not me. So write your congressman.

All right so these three questions are prepopulated if you log in with the FSA ID and password based on information that is attached to that. The next two questions you would fill in yourself. For the purposes of this demonstration, we're going to go for a dependent student. So we're going to answer no to these. You can also see at the top, we have two green checkmarks because we completed student demographics and school section. And you get a banner or a box rather at the top telling you this application was saved successfully.

All right, additional dependency questions, this is an example of how we have regrouped some of the questions. These used to pop up one at a time, and we found basically through user feedback that people didn't like that. They felt like they were being tricked into a never-ending application. So we have grouped some of these into check boxes, so if any of these apply to you, you can check them, or you can click none of the above.

All right, and then here is our homelessness filter questions. If you answer no to this, it will skip the remainder of the homelessness questions. But if you should answer yes, we follow up with a couple of additional questions such as how you were deemed a homelessness status.

All right, so you - this case has been determined dependent. This is where you will see the information that you need to provide parental information if you are a dependent student. You would click that radio button which is already prefilled actually. If for some reason you are unable to provide student information, that would send you down a special circumstances path which you don't want to go to, because it greatly limits your aid. If you happen to fall into that, I would recommend contacting your school financial aid office.

All right, household size, we found in the past that a lot of users had some confusion surrounding the household size. And we used to make the household size a worksheet optional is no longer optional. Everyone who applies will get this screen. The gray boxes are predetermined from answers already completed. The white boxes you can change. And if you were to change them, the total, that last gray box with the four in it will change.

So for example if you - your parents' other children right now is set to one, if you change that to two, the household size would automatically adjust to five. Same thing for number of college, but the important thing is that everyone gets this worksheet now.

Simplified path determination, all right, dislocated worker questions have often been a source of confusion. So now we only show this question to applicants who qualify for it. So if we know from what you've already answered that you would in no way could be a dislocated worker or have a parent who is a dislocated worker, you will not see this question.

All right, again here's more examples of how we grouped questions together so that they're easier to use or to answer and you don't have to go through them one by one. You also have the none of the above options which you did not have in the past.

Additional financial information, finances everyone's favorite. This is for parents and it's for parents who have indicated they have filed taxes. If you have not filed taxes, you will not see this sheet. If you are an independent student, you have not filed taxes, you will not see this. This is the first half. This is the second half. So this is one more thing that we've done to, kind of, try and make it easier. Used to be that everybody saw this. Now you only see it if we know that you have filed your taxes.

So I'm going to talk about the sign and submit process which is very different from what it used to be. As usually, you're going to get the FAFSA summary. This like the introduction page, is broken into different categories. However when you get to them, they are all expanded. You can click on any of the blue links if you want to change an answer and it'll jump you right back to that page. So if you typed in your address wrong, you could click on student's permanent mailing address. It will take you back to that page. You could change your answer and then jump back to sign and submit. If it's overwhelming and you want to close them all, you can also do that, and it'll look a little bit easier (unintelligible).

All right, so various options that I want to go through depending on how you entered the application. So this is what's going to come up if the students and the parents have both provided their FSA ID and password before getting to this page. So if the student either logged in with their FSA ID and password or used the IRSDRT and used their FSA ID and password and the parent also enters their FSA ID and password to use the DRT, you will get this page. Where all you have to do is click provide student signature or provide parent signature. It'll ask you to agree to the terms which I'm sure everyone will read. If you're the student and you click sign this application. You've agreed to the terms. This will pop up. You click sign this FAFSA.

If you did not enter your FSA ID at any point during the application and you were the student, it's going to give you the option to do so. It's also going to give you the option to go back and create an FSA ID if you want to submit electronically. If you don't at the bottom left, you can see other options for sign and submit. This screen will pop up. Again, we recommend that you sign electronically. It's the easiest way to do it and the fastest. So that's the first option. You can also print a signature page, or you can submit without signatures.

This is what it will look like if both student and parent sign electronically. It shows you the student's left for the social and also for the parent. So if you have two parents in your household, you can tell which parent signed electronically. Once that's done, you would click submit my FAFSA now and it would submit.

If you chose an option for example to submit without signatures, it would come up like this. You still have the option to choose another way to sign. If you really don't want to, and you would like to submit without signatures, you can click submit my FAFSA now.

That will take you to the confirmation page. This is the top of the confirmation page. It has all the information you need on it including your confirmation number and then steps to what will happen next. You can also print this page. If you scroll down on the confirmation page, you have some more information such as your EFC which his always popular, the schools you put on your FAFSA. Additionally, you have these two buttons that will show up under certain circumstances. There are a handful of states that allow an applicant to put information from their FAFSA into a state aid application.

So for example, if you were trying to go to school in New York, they're one of those states. So you will be allowed to click the button to populate a good portion of your state application with aid that you already entered into your FAFSA. Additionally, if you have a sibling who needs to fill out a FAFSA, you can click the sibling button and that will help your parent out by prepopulating a lot of the information that they've already put in for your sibling. If one of these are going to apply to you -- let's say you're going to school in New York but you don't have a sibling -- the sibling button would go away and the New York button would stretch all the way across the page. If neither of these apply to you, then neither one of them would show up. They're dynamic based on your circumstances.

And that is pretty much all I had to present on RWA. (Miesha) would like to talk about upcoming webinars?

(Miesha Challenger): Thanks (Jonathan). That was a lot of great information and we see you guys have some really great questions coming in. I just wanted to inform you all that we have another upcoming webinar on Tuesday, September 25 from 4:00 to 5:00 pm Eastern time entitled the FAFSA Process, Filling Out the FAFSA Form. The link is embedded in this particular PowerPoint so if you click on the link you can register. So we encourage you all to definitely register for that next webinar and also, we will be recording this webinar.

And you can find the recording on studentaid.gov for students and parents. We have a section on our studetnaid.gov resources page for webinars where you'll find it there probably in about two weeks. And then for your college access professionals, this presentation will be available on our tools page where you can search for webinars and there will be a list of all the webinars and you'll be able to find it there.

So we, again, encourage you to register for our next webinar which will be Tuesday, September 25.

So at this time, we are going to take some questions that some of you have been asking us. And so (Jonathan), there's a couple of questions, maybe you want to read out and give us some feedback.

(Jonathan Goodfell): All right, so this question is from (Amy). So to make sure I have this straight, a user can technically make corrections and us the IRSDRT, using the on the web FAFSA on their phone. But it will just not look responsive, correct?

That is correct. So if you're using the DRT whether it's in the original application or a correction, it's going to look like if you were to pull it up on your phone, without any responsive technology. If you're doing corrections on your phone, or a tablet, it's going to look like it would before we implemented RWA.

All right (Jamey) has a question. What is the show application data link? (Jamey), thank you. You're our new favorite. I totally forgot to mention. That is just part of our testing site where these screenshots were taken from. It will disappear when we launch the application. Ignore it. It has no value remaining. Don't worry about it.

All right, so another question, so there are no Parent 1, Parent 2 options anymore? There are. There is language in the FAFSA that says Parent 1 or Parent 2. It also will dynamically display as mother or father depending up on how you answer questions before that. So the format will look different, but if you're parents are married, it's going to come up as Parent 1 and Parent 2. If you've indicated that your parents are divorced or widowed and you're only answering questions for your mother, the text is going to display as mother not Parent 1.

Where will the student aid report be? Thank you (Amy) for that question. That will be after you submit, and you get the confirmation page. It will come in an email. So I highly recommend that when you're filling out the FAFSA, you put your email in. If you don't, you'll have to wait a few days to get a physical copy in the mail. So it's a good idea to put your email in if you have an FSA ID, it'll go to the email on file for that. So if you're a student, and you are also working with your parent on this, make sure that when the parent signs up for their FSA ID, that you do not use the same email. You want to use separate email addresses. That will go to your email if it's in the FAFSA, otherwise it'll go to your physical mailing address.

All right, question from (Jessie). Will corrections ever have the new RWA design? They will. They will not have it as a startup. That is something we're working on. The date is to be determined. But yes, eventually corrections will have the new RWA design. It just won't be at the October 1 start up.

All right, a question from (Amy). If a user starts to fill out the FAFSA on the mobile app, can they switch over to the on the web version and pick up where they left off? Absolutely, the mobile app has been designed to work with the traditional online application. So you can start online and switch to mobile. You can start to mobile and switch back to online. You can jump back and forth as much as your heart desire wants you to. So go for it.

All right, looking for a new question. All right, here's a question colleges listed on the FAFSA. I thought colleges could no longer see the full list of colleges listed on the FAFSA. Is this no longer the case? They still won't be able to see the full list. It's only when students have applied to their school. And if you want more information about that, you can go to studentaid.gov and look under filing or filling out and school list. They don't technically see the list, but state order does still affect state aid in some circumstances.

All right a question about the IRSDRT. When completing the DRT, will the address have to be exact? For example Road versus Rd depending on which you used when they filed? No. So the - well yes and no. The address does have to match which you put on your taxes. However, the DRT is intuitive enough to know that Rd means Road. And, you know, so on and so forth. But I strongly recommend when using the IRSDRT that you have a copy of what you sent to the IRS, so you can make sure that it matches exactly what you put in there. Otherwise, you might have problems authenticating and nobody wants that.

All right, here's a question about FSA ID. To confirm, if creating an FSA ID ahead of time one must wait a few days before filing. If you create one as you are filling out the FAFSA, parent potentially, then they will be able to sign, correct? So when you apply for an FSA ID, it has to clear social security and that takes a little bit of time. So it is a good idea to do it a couple days beforehand. However, if you're going through the application and the student or parent wants to apply for one on the spot, you can always submit without signatures and then when you get your FSA ID confirmed. Because you'll get an email about it. You can go back in under corrections and find your FAFSA and it'll go through as it would normally.

(Miesha Challenger): And this is (Miesha). Just to reiterate. So with your FSA ID, you can create it ahead of time. If you're a first-time filer, not a renewal FAFSA, you can complete your FAFSA right away. There is a social security verification that takes one or two days. But you don't have to wait for that. You don't have to wait for that to fill out the - your FAFSA form. If you are a first-time filer, so for you rising seniors, you can create your FSA ID and fill that out right away without having to wait for the social security match. You can go into your profile in a day or two and see that the match has been confirmed. But as a first-time filer, you can fill it out right away with your FSA ID once you create it.

(Jonathan Goodfell): Thank you (Miesha).

(Miesha Challenger): We're trying to get you - get some questions.

(Jonathan Goodfell): All right, so here's a question about tax information, everyone's favorite subject. When linking your tax information to the FAFSA, will the information from the tax return transcript have to match exactly in order for it to link? All right, so when you are authenticating with the DRT, the IRSDRT automatically transfers tax information into the FAFSA form. Once you do that, it cannot be changed by the applicant after submission. This question might be talking about authentication though. So when you are authenticating, and you are trying to move your tax information, you have to fill out personal information and it does have to match exactly what's on the taxes that you filed.

All right, here's a question about logging in as a parent. If the parent is logged in as the parent, can they create the save key? Absolutely, that is what the save key is for. If you are a parent and you want to fill out pretty much the entire FAFSA for your student and then just have them come in and sign it, that is what the separate tab on the log in screen are for. You can enter your student's information. You can create a save key. You can fill out FAFSA. If your student's with you, they can submit right way. If not, you can give them the save key and then they can log in. Enter the save key. Jump to the signature page. Sign and you're done.

Additionally if you're a student and you're filling it out, just a dependent student perhaps living away from campus away from home, and you need your parents to fill out their information, you can fill out as much as you want. Send your parents the save key. They can log in. fill out their information and sign if they have an FSA.

All right, so this is a question about undocumented students and how they complete the FAFSA. How do undocumented students complete the FAFSA? You need to check with your high school counselor or financial aid office to see whether completing the FAFSA form is the way to apply for state and college student aid. To begin your FAFSA form, you have to enter a social security number. While completing the FAFSA form, you must answer the are you - all right, so you need a social security number to fill out the FAFSA form. If you do not have a social security number, you need to talk to your high school counselor or your financial aid office to see the best way to fill this out.

All right, another question about tax information. When linking your tax information to the FAFSA, will the information from the tax return transcript have to match exactly in order for it to link? Again, when you are authenticating before you transfer, your information has to match. Once you have authenticated in the DRT and the IRS knows it's you and not someone trying to get your info, it will automatically transfer your information if you would like to choose that option. Once that happens any field that's populated by the DRT will be replaced with the words transferred from the IRS. And that will not be able to be changed by the applicant.

(Miesha Challenger): (Jonathan), here's a question for you from (Marian). If you log in as a parent, can both the student and I believe this means the parent sign at the same time or do you have to log back out and have the student sign back in? So think the question is can both the student and the parent be in at the same time or does one have to log out and then have the student log back in?

(Jonathan Goodfell): That's a good question. So the FAFSA, the best way to fill it out, is if the student and the parent are together. If the student and the parent are together and let's say the parent started the application by entering the student's personal information; name, date of birth, social, etc. They can go through and fill out the application and then if they want to sign electronically, you'll just both get the option to sign electronically and then a screen will pop up where you can enter your FSA ID and password.

So nobody has to log out if you're both there together. If you're not and you're using a save key because one of you started the application and the other one is in a different location, then you have to log out and the other participant has to enter. Put in the save key. And then they can go and sign.

(Miesha Challenger): And I think you mentioned (Jonathan), another question that people are asking as it relates to being in at the same time, is if you start on the mobile app, but want to finish on your desktop or laptop, is that possible?

(Jonathan Goodfell): Yes, they were designed to work together so that's absolutely possible. If you start on the mobile app and it's not your thing and you want to switch to a laptop or desktop, totally fine. It's okay.

(Miesha Challenger): We definitely still have some more questions coming in. (Jonathan) as we still have individuals answering questions, are there some things that maybe people who are listening really need to be mindful of as it relates to the change? Because the FAFSA is still going to act the same as it has previously, correct? I mean the only thing that's going to change, the functionality changes a little bit. But maybe you just want to share. Give people a little bit of a feeling of ease that it will still just the change is supposed to help the FAFSA form be a little bit easier to fill out even though we already know it's gotten much better throughout the years.

(Jonathan Goodfell): Right, so that's why my initial presentation was so brief. I think it was like what, 20 minutes? Because the questions are the same. The questions for the FAFSA, just to you know because we get a lot of hate mail about this. I’m not blaming anybody for that. Those are set by congress. So we cannot change the questions. The questions are set. What we did to make it easier is we made this responsive to whatever device you're on and we regrouped some of the questions and we added a checkbox feature, so you don't get one question after another after another. So it's designed to be easier to fill out, but the questions are the same as they've been for past years. Again, it takes an act of congress to change the questions on the FAFSA.

(Miesha Challenger): Then we're going to answer a few more questions. So just, kind of, in conclusion, I think that (Jonathan) has given us just a quick summary of the new functionality and I know a lot of were asking questions about are different things going to change? But right now as it stands, the mobile app - not the mobile app. I'm sorry. The functionality of the desktop will look the same for the new FAFSA, the 2019-2020 FAFSA which will come out October 1. So (Johnathan), do you anticipate there being any other changes coming throughout the next cycle? Are there any things that people should look out for that may not be available now but may be coming in the coming months?

(Jonathan Goodfell): Well, we are constantly striving to improve the user process. But that's all I can say for right now. However, we do have some things in the work. Well I mean I already said that corrections will eventually become web responsive. So we're working on that. We are trying to work with the IRS to get the DRT eventually to become also web responsive. So, you know, things like that we're working on. And then we might release a few additional things throughout the year in an effort as always to improve user experience. That's our top priority.

(Miesha Challenger): Great, well (Jonathan) we want to thank you so much for providing us with this information today. And as I mentioned earlier the recording for today's webinar will be posted on the financial aid toolkit. For students and parents, it'll be on studentaid.gov on the resource page under the webinar section. And for the college (unintelligible) professionals and financial aid administrators, you can go to our financial aid toolkit website and go to our search page and search under webinars. And it'll be located there in about a week or two.

And so with that, we're going to conclude today's webinar. Again, (Jonathan) thank you so thank you so much for this wonderful information that we know everyone is so excited about. We've already gotten wonderful feedback about how it is more user friendly and we look forward to this individual being more interactive in filling out as many FAFSAs as possible.

So with that being said, we thank you so much for joining us today and enjoy the rest of your day.

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