

Sample article for organizations to use to reach customers (493 word count)

Post the following article on your websites and/or use in other communication vehicles to help your customers apply for student financial aid.

Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool when applying for student financial aid

To apply for federal student aid, students or parents will need to complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#). Completing and submitting the FAFSA is free, and it gives people access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college or career schools.

Completing the FAFSA is easier than ever. Students and parents can now access their IRS tax return information using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool for the remaining 2014 school year or the upcoming 2015 school year. The tool provides an easy and secure way to access and transfer the necessary tax return information directly into their FAFSA application.

If they are eligible to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, the IRS highly recommends using the tool for several reasons:

- It's the easiest way to provide their tax return data;
- It's the best way to ensure that their FAFSA has accurate tax information; and
- It may reduce the chances of being selected for income verification; therefore, students or parents will not need to provide a copy of their tax return transcripts to their college.

Students or parents who cannot successfully authenticate are not able to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. They will have to enter their tax return data manually and an IRS tax return transcript may be required.

Students or parents who filed tax returns with certain filing statuses, filed an amended tax return, or filed a Puerto Rican or foreign tax return, should not use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. Instead, it's recommended that they enter their tax return information manually.

To ensure the tax return is processed and the information is available to be transferred into the FAFSA, students and parents should, in most cases, wait three weeks if they filed the return electronically or eight weeks if they mailed in their tax return, before requesting tax data from the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.

If they are ineligible or otherwise choose not to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to retrieve tax return information, their college may require a copy of their IRS tax return transcript (or their parents' IRS tax return transcript, if they are a dependent student).

To order an IRS tax return transcript, they should go to IRS.gov and select "Get Transcript of Your Tax Records" under Tools to get the transcript online or by mail.

Additionally, they can call 800-908-9946, or fax or mail [Form 4506-T](#), Request for Transcript of Tax Return, to receive the transcript by mail. The IRS Data Retrieval Tool for obtaining tax return information is available within the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) website for the current school year.