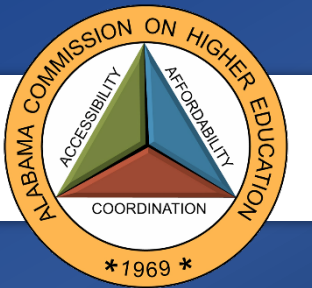


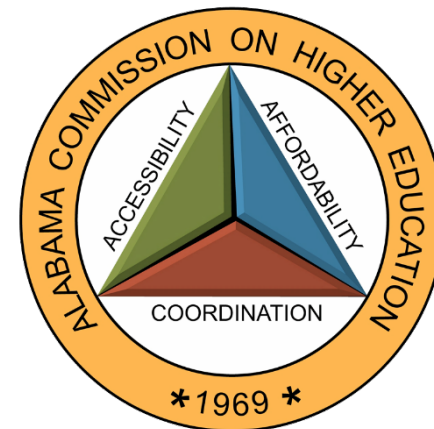
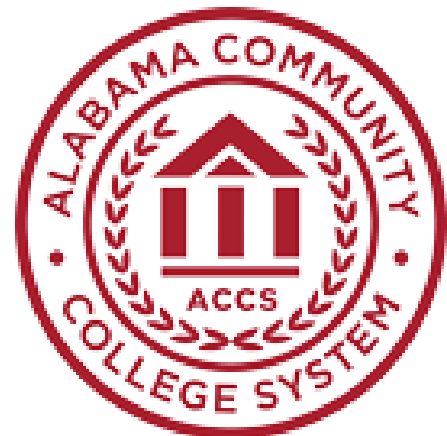
FAFSA Collaborative Outreach for Alabama Students

Dr. Jim Purcell, Alabama Commission on Higher Education



FAFSA Completion Initiative

- Per a policy passed by the Alabama State Board of Education, **FAFSA Completion became a graduation requirement for high school students** on April 8, 2021.
- Policy became **effective** for the **May 2022 high school graduating class**.
- Success of the initiative has required collaboration among the following:
 - Alabama State Department of Education
 - Alabama Community College System
 - Alabama Possible (statewide nonprofit focusing on college access)
 - Alabama Commission Higher Education
 - **Alabama Public Library System**

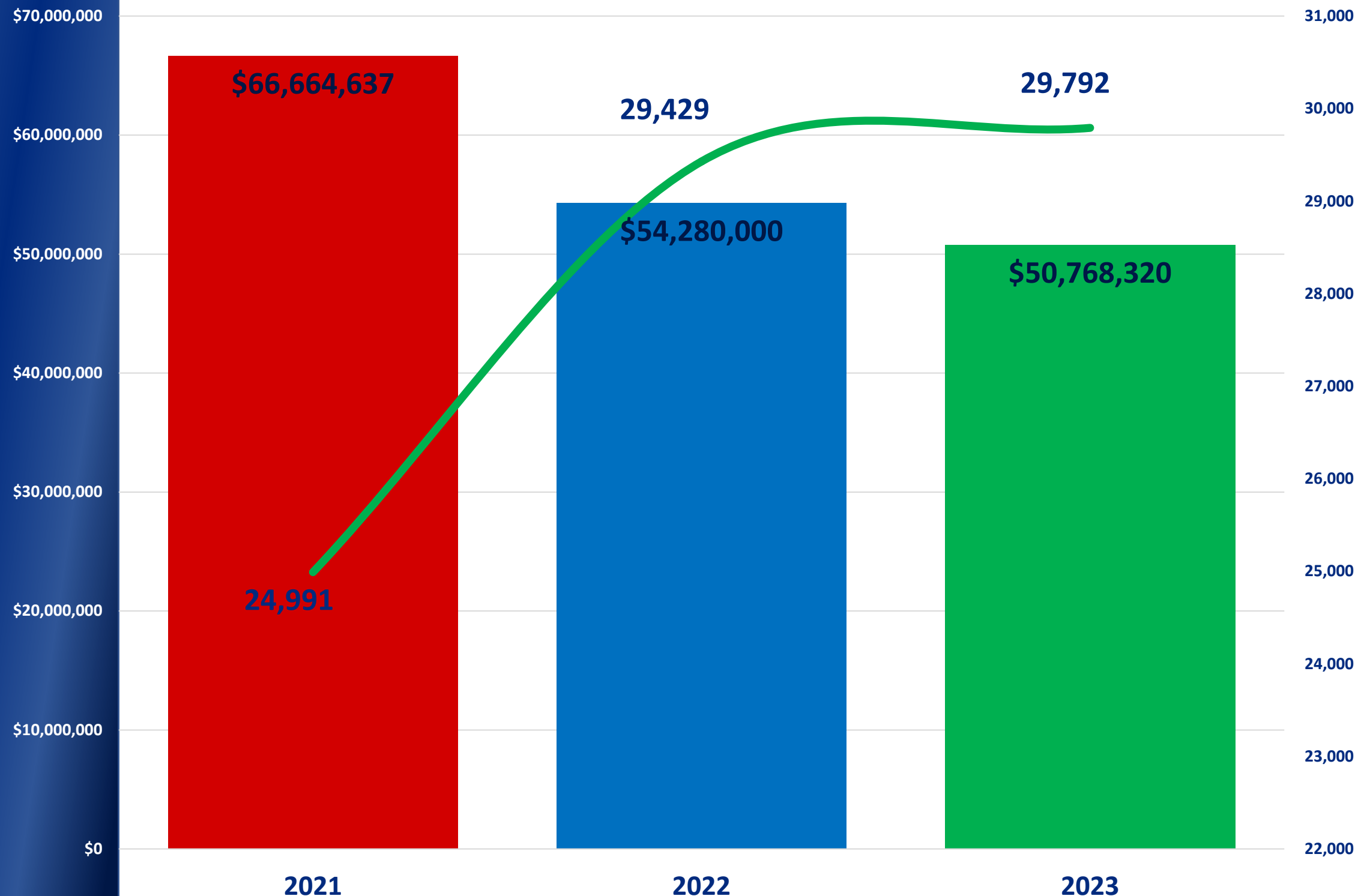


Why is Completing the FAFSA Important?

- FAFSA is a **gateway** to over **\$150 billion** in federal aid as well as most state and institution aid.
- Alabama's Class of 2021 left roughly **\$67.8 million** in **unclaimed Pell Grant money** on the table (ranked **15th** nationally).
- FAFSA Completion is strongly associated with positive outcomes:
 - 92% of seniors who completed FAFSA enrolled in college or university following graduation;
 - Education is linked to higher incomes, better health, and more civic engagement.

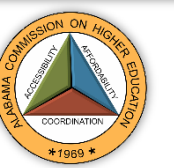


Alabama's Estimated Unclaimed Pell Dollars and Student FAFSA Completions

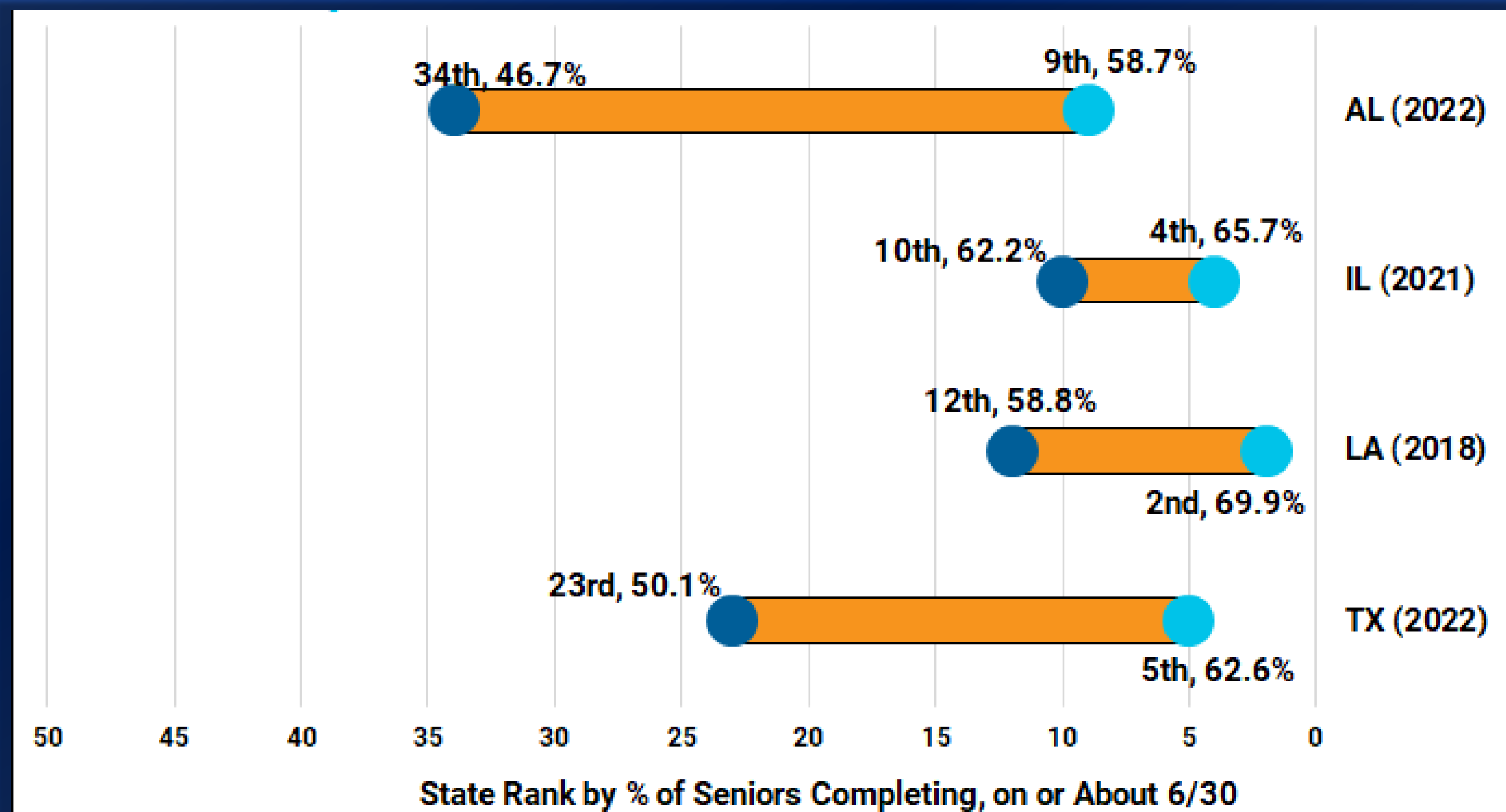


- AL has reduced unclaimed Pell dollars by **\$1.3M** for every percentage increase in FAFSA Completion.
- AL students received an estimated **\$11.8M in 2022** and **\$14.4M in 2023** of unclaimed Pell dollars due to improved FAFSA Completion.

Alabama's annual commitment of \$500,000 yielded an average increase of \$13,100,000 in federal student aid.



States' FAFSA Completion Rank and Percentage of Seniors Completing a FAFSA in **Year Before** and **Implementation Year** of Universal FAFSA



Source: National College Attainment Network (NCAN.org)

FAFSA Completions by School District 2021-23

Select Counties

Barbour

25.6% to **86.7%**

91%

Sumter

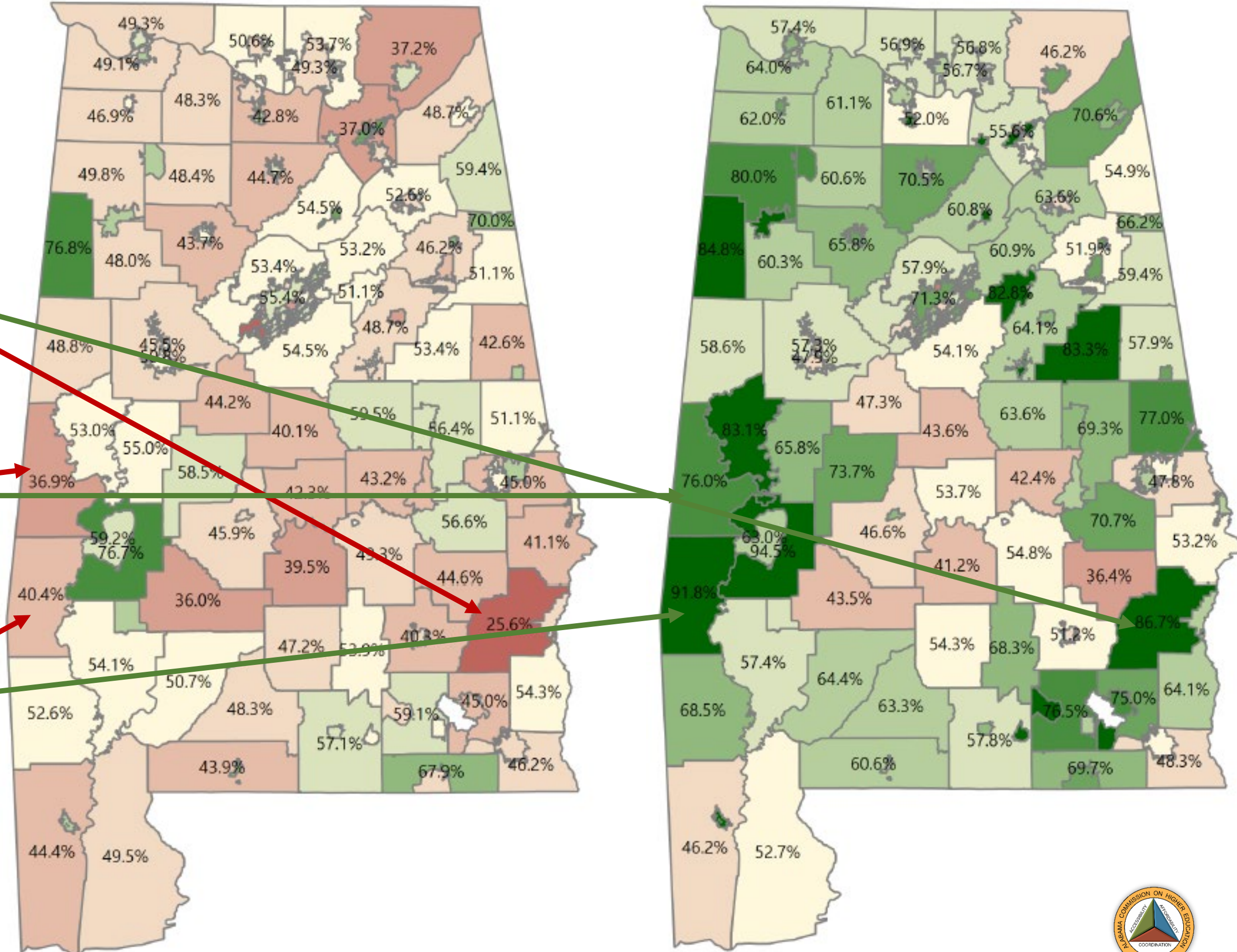
36.9% to **76%**

88%

Choctaw

40.4% to **91.8%**

93%



Benefits of FAFSA Initiative in Alabama

- Oracle revises software when FAFSA makes changes
- **More students now apply and complete** the FAFSA
- **Significantly increased FAFSA completions** for students from **low income, minority, rural, and urban backgrounds**
- **FAFSA error messages** are **addressed earlier** in the process
 - Reduces duplicative efforts by campuses
- **More students have financial aid support** for college
- College enrollment increases
 - Community colleges had a **17% increase in student applications** and a **7% increase in student enrollment**
- More communication efforts with recent high school graduates **reduced Summer Melt** in 2023



FAFSA 101 & Updates

Mae Whiting, Data & Research Director
Alabama Possible



Alabama Goes to College Campaign



CASH FOR COLLEGE

Cash for College's goal is for every graduating senior to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) before they graduate from high school so that they can access federal, state, and institutional aid to pay for their education after high school.

ALABAMA COLLEGE APPLICATION WEEK

Alabama College Application Week is part of a national effort to increase the number of first-generation college students and students from low-income families pursuing a college degree or other higher education credential.

COLLEGE AND CAREER DECISION DAY

College and Career Decision Day celebrates students committing to pursue their education past high school: whether to obtain a two-year degree, a four-year degree, a certificate or industry recognized credential; enter the military; or pursue a skilled trade.

Agenda

● **What is the FAFSA and why should students complete it?**

● **What are some of the key changes on the new 2024-25 FAFSA?**

● **What are the steps and documents needed to complete the new FAFSA?**

● **Where can families find resources and support?**

Types of Financial Aid

There are **four** main types of financial aid to help you pay for college:

1

GRANTS

Gift aid that doesn't have to be paid back. Grants are often need-based like the federal Pell Grant.

2

SCHOLARSHIPS

Another form of gift aid. Can be awarded for anything, including academics, athletics, or volunteer work.

3

WORK-STUDY

Get a paid part-time job through the federal work-study program to help you cover part of the cost of college.

4

LOANS

Borrowed money that must be paid back with interest (an extra charge that grows over time).



What is the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is used to determine a student's eligibility for grants, scholarships, work-study jobs, and low-interest loans.

Why complete the FAFSA?

Access to federal and non-federal aid

- There are many need-based federal aid options, including the Pell Grant which is aid that *does not* have to be paid back.
- Many non-federal grants and scholarships, including institutional aid from colleges, also require FAFSA completion.
- Most students in AL qualify for Pell Grant aid. The max award is \$7,395/yr, which is significant because the average cost of tuition and fees at a 2-year college in AL is \$5,048/yr.

Source: [National Center for Education Statistics \(Digest of Education Statistics 2020-21\)](#)
and [National College Attainment Network](#)

Types of Federal Aid

Financial Aid Type	Main Qualification
<u>Pell Grant</u>	Demonstrate financial need; up to \$7,395 per year
<u>Federal Supplemental Ed Opportunity Grant</u>	Demonstrate exceptional financial need
<u>Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant</u>	Parent/guardian died serving
<u>TEACH Grant</u>	Students take courses and commit to a teaching career
<u>Federal Work-Study</u>	Demonstrate financial need; work part-time

Types of Federal Aid

Financial Aid Type	Main Qualification
<u>Federal Direct Subsidized Loan</u>	Some financial need; government pays interest while student is in school
<u>Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan</u>	No financial need required; student responsible for interest during all periods
<u>Direct PLUS Loans</u>	Taken out by parents or graduate students; higher interest rates
<u>Aid for International Study</u>	Students studying abroad or getting a degree from an international school
<u>Aid for Military Families</u>	Students serving in the military or those who are related to active duty personnel or a veteran

Changes in FAFSA Rules for 2024-25

- FAFSA will be **reduced the amount of questions**.
- **Importing income data from tax records** will be **easier**.
- **Formulas** to determine who will qualify for aid and how much money to be received **have been changed**.
 - **New formula emphasizes wealth instead of cash flow**.
- **Lower-income families** should be **eligible for more aid**.
- **Students** who are **incarcerated** and have been **convicted of drug-related offenses** are now **eligible for financial aid**.



Changes in FAFSA Rules for 2024-25

- If the student is a dependent student for purposes of the FAFSA, **students and their parent(s) must each create a Student Aid Account (FSA ID)** before completing the form.
- The Social Security Administration **must verify each user's identity and authenticate their FSA ID** before the form can be accessed. This can sometimes take 3 days.
- There is an alternative identity verification process for students whose parents do not have Social Security numbers. This includes students with undocumented parents.
- **Students and parents** must **log in** to the FAFSA **separately** to complete their respective sections of the form.

Changes in FAFSA Rules for 2024-25

- **Unintended/Intended consequences - less financial aid for some students:**
 - **Net worth of family farms and businesses** will now be **required** as part of the FAFSA application.
 - Number of **students a family has enrolled** in college will **no longer factor** into the FAFSA calculation.
 - If parents are divorced/separated, the **parent who provided the most financial support** in the last calendar year now **completes the FAFSA**.

Current issues for 2024-25 FAFSA

- After a **delayed launch**, there have been several **technical glitches and delays** associated with the release of the new FAFSA.
- Many families are encountering issues with different aspects of the form, which will **delay submission** and ultimately **postpone the timeline for receiving and accepting aid offers from colleges and universities.**

Steps to Complete the FAFSA

- STEP 1: Create FSA IDs
 - STEP 2: Gather documents
 - STEP 3: Student fills out their section of the application
 - STEP 4: Contributor completes their section, if applicable
 - STEP 5: Review FAFSA Submission Summary
 - STEP 6: Complete verification, if applicable
 - STEP 7: Receive/accept financial aid offers
- These should be done in advance!*

Documents Needed for FAFSA

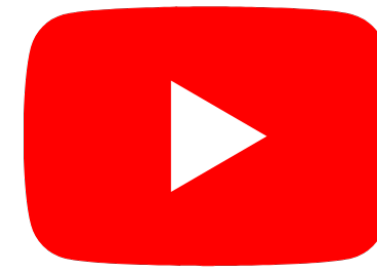
It can save time and ensure accuracy if families have the necessary paperwork before starting the FAFSA:

- Social Security number of student
- Alien Registration number of student **[if not a U.S. citizen]**
- Date(s) of birth for student & parent(s) **[if student is dependent]**
- Parent(s) Social Security number(s), if available* **[if student is dependent]**
- Prior-Prior Year Tax Returns, if manually entering **[2022 taxes for 2024-25 cycle]**
- Information on child support received and federal benefits received like Medicaid, SSI, SNAP, TANF, etc.
- Information on cash, savings and checking account balances, investments, real estate assets (not including home)

Partners

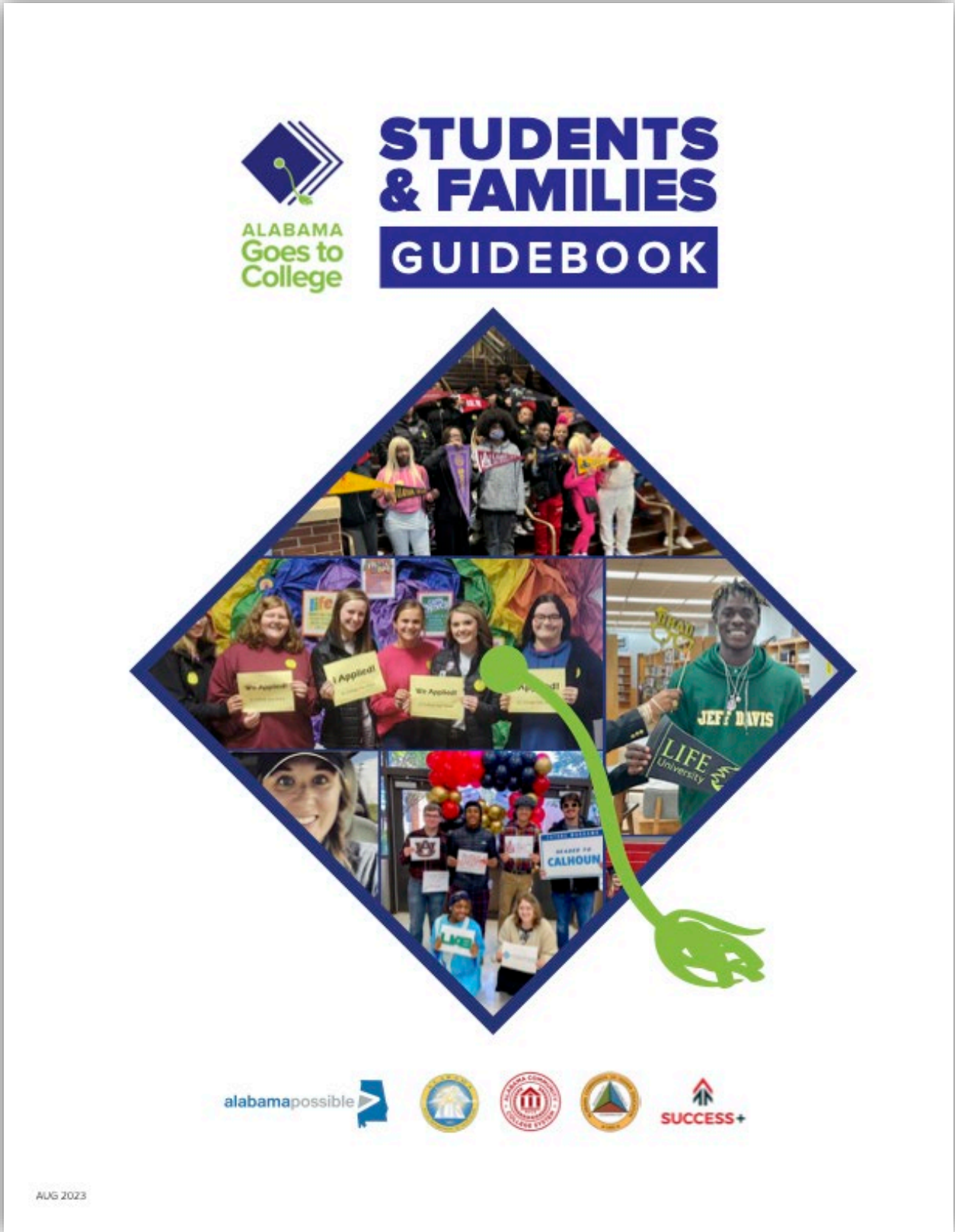
- We encourage libraries to support FAFSA completion by building relationships and collaborating with the following groups:
 - High school guidance counselors and career coaches within your school district
 - Financial Aid Directors and staff at local community colleges and universities
 - College access and success organizations like Alabama Possible

Resources



2024-25 FAFSA Playlist available on
[Federal Student Aid's YouTube](#)

Resources



Resources



ALABAMA Goes to College

HELP DESK

College Planning | Admissions | Financial Aid

   @algoes2college

 (334) 316-6155

alabamapossible 



Resources

Check out our Google Drive folder →



Is My Parent a CONTRIBUTOR When I Fill Out My FAFSA® Form?

A parent means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent. A stepparent is considered a parent if they have adopted you. Stepparents that have not adopted you will be identified as a parent spouse.

Are your biological or adoptive parents married to each other?

- Yes: Your parents' marital status is married (not separated), and both of your parents' information must be included on the FAFSA® form. If your parents did not file taxes jointly, then both of your parents are contributors. Their individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA form. If your parents filed taxes jointly, only one parent is required as a contributor and will report information for both parents.
- No: Your parents' marital status is unmarried (both legal parents living together), and both of your parents are contributors, even if they were never married, are divorced, or are separated. Their individual information, consent and approval, and signatures will be required on the FAFSA® form.

Do your biological or adoptive parents live together?

- Yes: The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.
- No: The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who has the greater income or assets will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.

Did one parent provide more financial support than the other over the past 12 months?

- Yes: The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.
- No: The individual information, consent and approval, and signature of the parent who has the greater income or assets will be required on the FAFSA® form, and this parent will be identified as a contributor.

Has this parent married/repartnered?

- Yes: Your parent's marital status is single (never married), separated, divorced, or widowed. An additional parent will not be identified as contributor.
- No: Your parent's marital status is married/repartnered. Your stepparent will also be identified as a contributor on the FAFSA® form if they didn't file their taxes jointly with your parent.

Note: Dependent students are required to report parent information on the FAFSA® form, and in most cases, a parent will be identified as a contributor for these students. All contributors are required to provide their information, signature, and consent and approval to have their federal tax information transferred directly from the IRS into the FAFSA form. Being a contributor on the FAFSA form does not mean an obligation for the student's education.

September 2023

2024-2025 FAFSA Process...Next Steps

You completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), here's what happens next.

1) EXPECT YOUR FAFSA SUBMISSION SUMMARY (FSS)

WHERE DO I FIND IT?

- Expect an email with a link to your FSS within 3 days from FederalStudentAidFAFSA@gspeemail.ed.gov.
- View the FSS on the student's landing page at StudentAid.gov.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- The FSS confirms your FAFSA was processed, provides your Student Aid Index (SAI), and estimates your federal financial aid.
- If your FSA ID was not verified before you submitted the FAFSA, the first FSS will show your FAFSA was not processed. Once verified, the second FSS will confirm that your FAFSA was processed, provide your Student Aid Index (SAI), and estimate your financial aid.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- If accurate, keep the FSS for your records.
- If corrections are needed, make them at StudentAid.gov.
- The FSS will indicate if you were selected for verification.

SELECTED FOR VERIFICATION, PROVIDE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Check your student portal and email for notification from the college. You must complete the verification process to get financial aid.

FINANCIAL AID OFFER(S)

The college(s) will send the offer via your college-based student portal, email, or mail. A detailed list of the types and amount of aid available to you.

STUDENT AND PARENT LOANS, IF NEEDED

The college(s) will determine the type and amount of loans you can borrow. Read the Promissory Note at StudentAid.gov after you receive your financial aid. All borrowers must complete Entrance Loan Counseling before the loan can be disbursed.

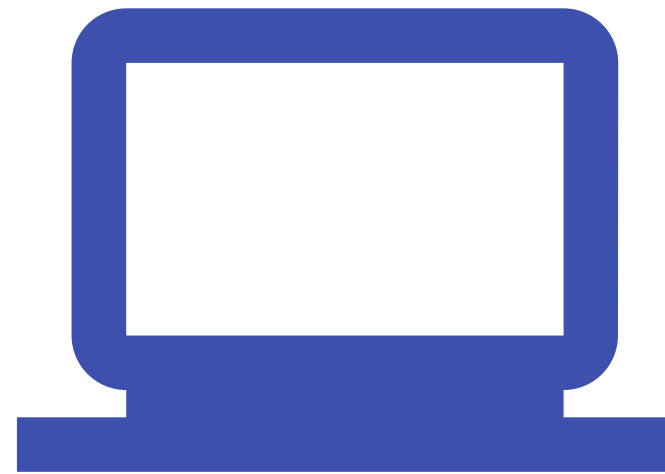
StudentAid.gov

Created by EducationQuestFoundation (Created 2.15.24)

Stay Connected!



WEBSITE
alabamagoes2college.org

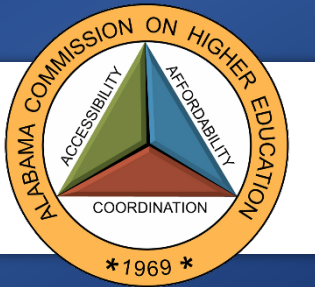


PHONE
334.316.6155

EMAIL
algoestocollege@alabamapossible.org

FAFSA Completion Portal

Ron Leonard, Director of Special Initiatives, ACHE



Overview of the FAFSA Completion Portal

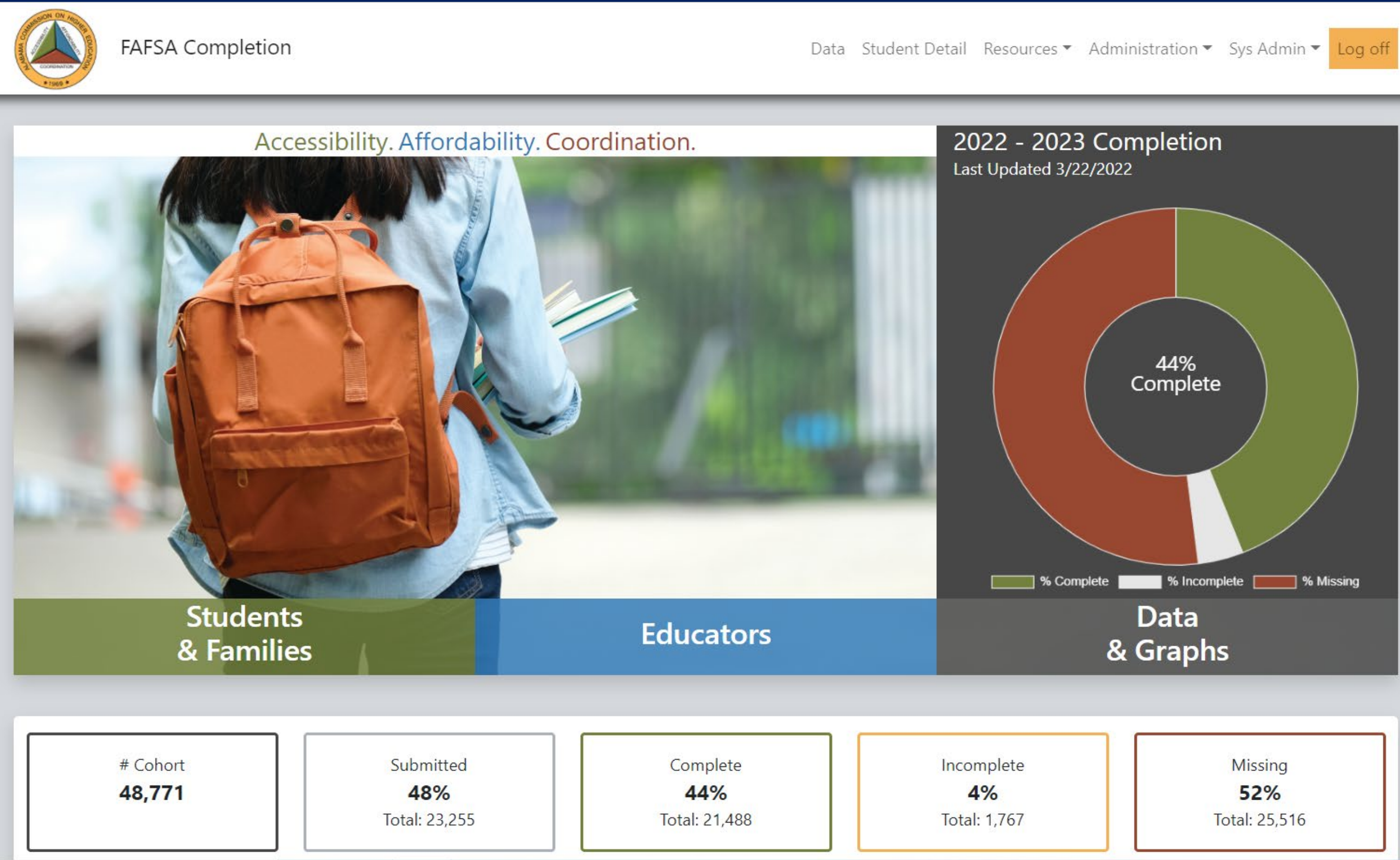
What is it? A web tool that shows the progress of how well all Alabama school districts and their schools are completing the FAFSA.

Where is it? <https://fafsa.ache.edu>

Who can access it?

- Public can view the completion metrics by the individual schools, school districts, and statewide
- Approved educators of school districts with a signed ACHE user agreement have access to more detailed information to help students with the completion process

Public View of FAFSA Portal: Homepage



FAFSA Completion

Data Student Detail Resources Administration Sys Admin Log off

Accessibility. Affordability. Coordination.

2022 - 2023 Completion
Last Updated 3/22/2022

44% Complete

% Complete % Incomplete % Missing

Students & Families Educators Data & Graphs

# Cohort 48,771	Submitted 48% Total: 23,255	Complete 44% Total: 21,488	Incomplete 4% Total: 1,767	Missing 52% Total: 25,516
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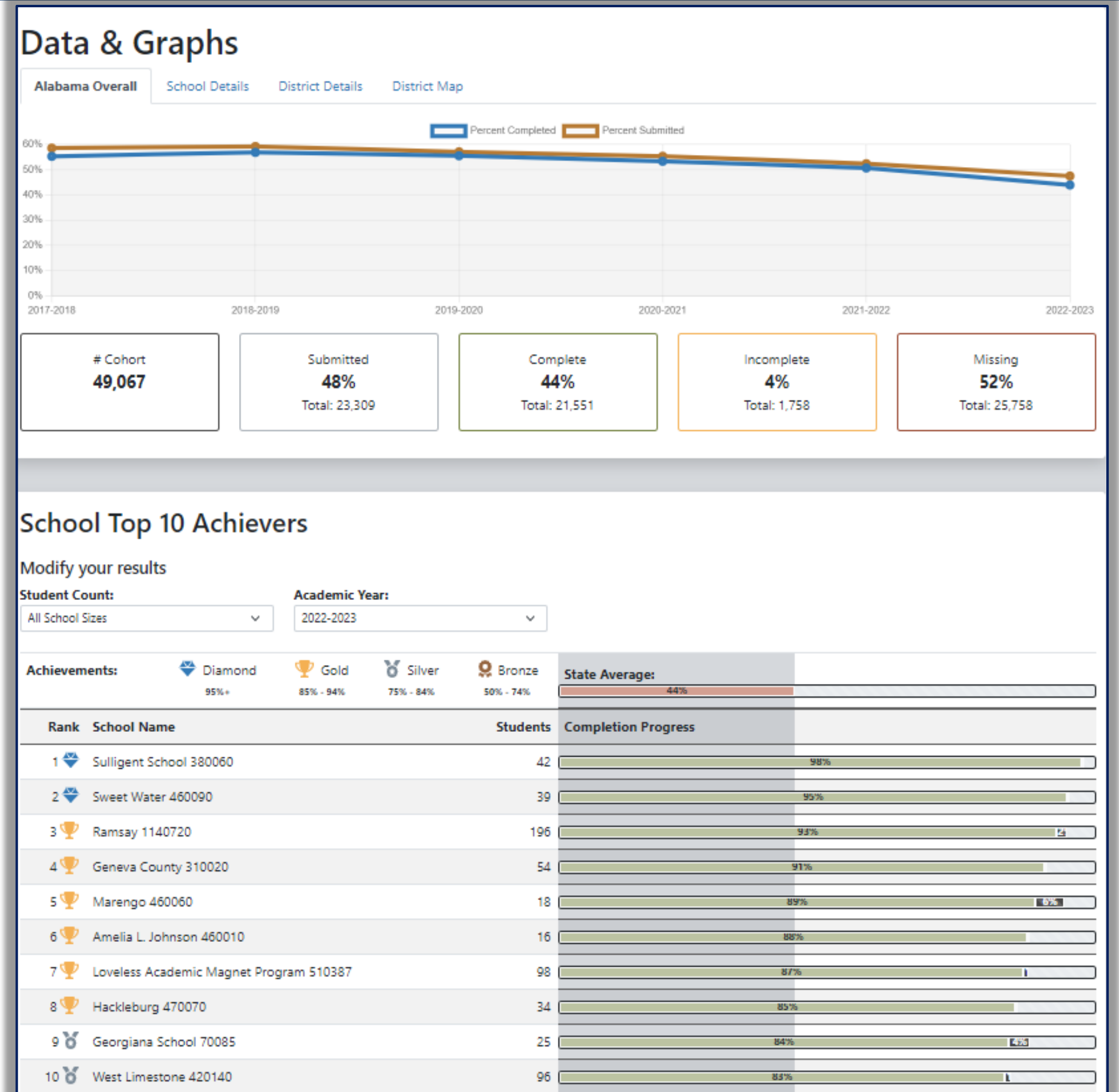
The **FAFSA Completion Portal** has added enhanced graphics and statistical data.

More information about the FAFSA, state financial aid opportunities, and directories and costs of attending Alabama's institutions of higher education have also been made available.

Public View of FAFSA Portal: Data and Graphs

The **Data and Graph** section on the home page leads to a page with graphs and statistics for the state's completion rate as well as the top 10 school districts and top 10 schools.

Dividers across the top of this page allows you to search for details per school and district. A district map by county is also available for a statewide overview of completion rates.



District Top 10 Achievers


Modify your results

Academic Year:

2022-2023

Achievements:

 Diamond
95%+

 Gold
85% - 94%











 Silver
75% - 84%

 Bronze
50% - 74%

State Average:

60%

Completion Progress

Rank	District Name	Students	Completion Progress
1	 Holy Family Cristo Rey	0	100%
2	 Opp City	81	95% 2%
3	 Marengo County	73	95% 1
4	 Alabama School of Fine Arts	55	93%
5	 Guntersville City	123	93% 2%
6	 Arab City	175	91% 1
7	 Choctaw County	73	90% 3%
8	 Elba City	44	89% 2%
9	 Sylacauga City	156	88% 3%
10	 Daleville City	73	88% 3%

School Top 10 Achievers

Modify your results

Student Count:

All School Sizes ▼











Academic Year:

2022-2023 ▼

Achievements:

 Diamond
95%+
 Gold
85% - 94%
 Silver
75% - 84%
 Bronze
50% - 74%

State Average:
60%

Rank	School Name	Students	Completion Progress
1	 Holy Family Cristo Rey 3000000	0	100%
2	 Georgiana School 70085	25	100%
3	 Loveless Academic Magnet Program 510387	98	99%
4	 Geneva County 310020	54	98%
5	 Sulligent School 380060	42	98%
6	 Ramsay 1140720	199	97%
7	 Opp 1800010	81	95%
8	 Sweet Water 460090	39	95%
9	 Marengo 460060	18	94%
10	 Amelia L. Johnson 460010	16	94%

Schools within District

District Name: **School Name:**

2022-2023 Summary Data




Review your results





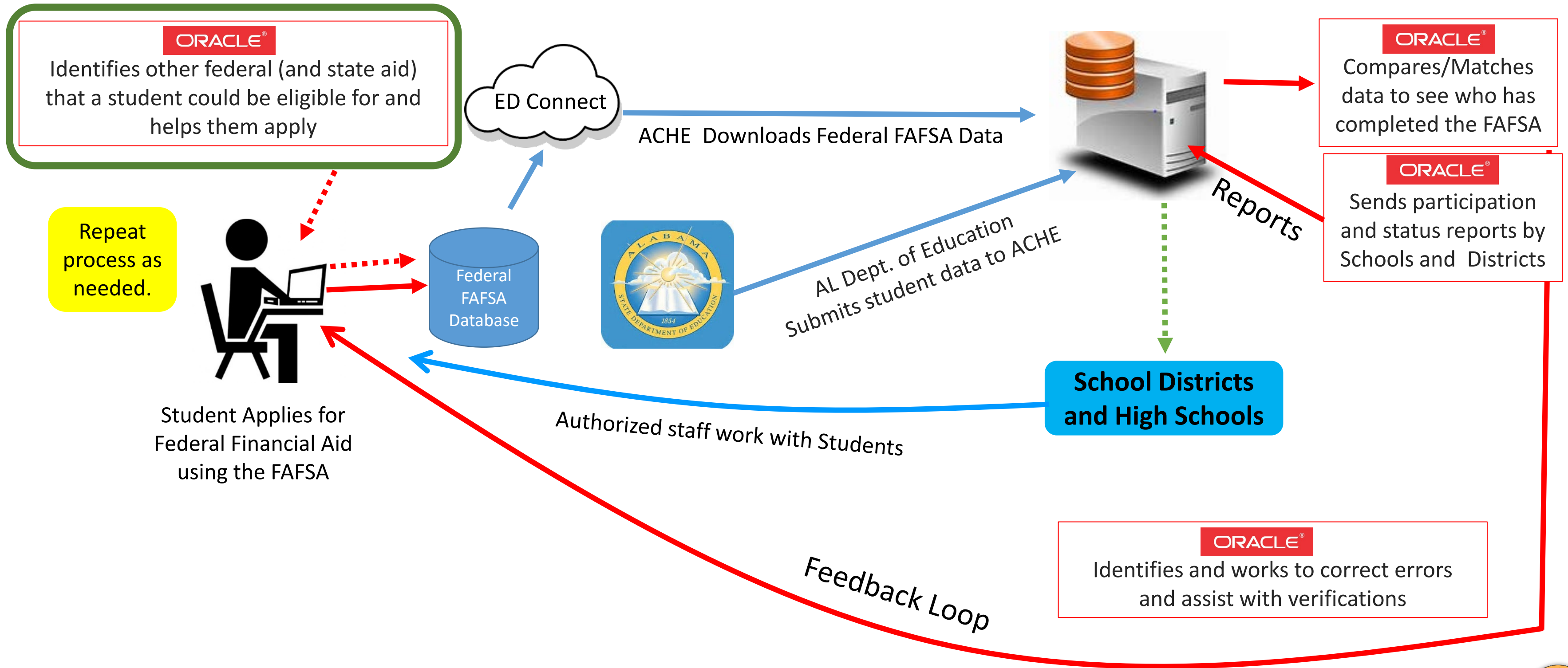

Achievements:

-  Diamond
95%+
-  Gold
85% - 94%
-  Silver
75% - 84%
-  Bronze
50% - 74%

<u>District Name</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Completion Progress</u>
State Average:			60%
Autauga County	Autaugaville School	*	47% 6%
 Autauga County	Billingsley High School	43	72% 7%
Autauga County	Louise M Smith Development Center	*	
 Autauga County	Marbury High School	122	63% 3%
 Autauga County	Prattville High School	399	52% 2%



Process Flow Diagram



Other Important FAFSA Portal Information

The portal is updated on a daily basis at the start of the FAFSA year.

- Targeted information supports schools and districts with helping their students complete the FAFSA
- Improved reporting and data analysis capability is provided
- Displays ranks and badges to encourage participation statewide

FAFSA letters are sent via email to all students according to their FAFSA status:

- FAFSA is Missing or Incomplete
- Congratulations – Your FAFSA is Complete!
 - Information to the *Birmingham Promise* students is shared

Ron Leonard

fafsa@ache.edu (334)242-2211



FAFSA Collaborative Outreach for Alabama Students



Thank You!

