FAFSA Completion Initiative

Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Abel Montoya
Illinois Student Assistance Commission

- ISAC—State agency that awards approximately $400M annually in state grants and scholarships
- Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant
  - Approximately 189,000 students are awarded MAP each year
  - MAP grant is dependent on state appropriation
  - Up to $4798 for those with most financial need
    - $4720 for ‘11-’12 academic year due to cut in appropriations
  - Awards are suspended relatively early in the year due to limited funds
- 138 MAP-approved colleges in Illinois
- Over 140,000 high school students graduate each year in Illinois
- Outreach division has grown significantly
Illinois Student Assistance Corps (ISACorps)

- College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) awarded to Illinois, specifically ISAC
- As part of CACG, approximately 80 recent college graduates were hired to be near-peer mentors
- Corps members are asked for a 2-year commitment
- Corps members are placed throughout the state
- Target population is first-generation and/or low income students
- Corps use their experience and enthusiasm to connect, encourage, and assist students with the college going process
- Increased our ability to conduct outreach
## Access & Outreach Division Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>FY09</th>
<th>FY10</th>
<th>FY11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof Development Workshops</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Presentations</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA Completion Workshops</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Preparation Sessions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>26,675</td>
<td>47,869</td>
<td>66,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>8,381</td>
<td>24,690</td>
<td>24,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>3,609</td>
<td>7,564</td>
<td>8,811</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROI: Return on Investment for Illinois

- **Real cost to Illinois**:  
  - 2010—An estimated 46,500 students did not graduate from HS in Illinois translating into a loss in earnings on average of $263M per year.  
  - By graduating from HS, these new graduates would increase gross state product by as much as $335M & support as many as 2,300 new jobs.  
  - State tax revenue would likely grow by as much as $30M per year.

- **Access is the first step, but persistence and graduation are equally important.**

- **Not completing the FAFSA is a barrier for students in Chicago Public Schools**

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1. [http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/EconStates](http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/EconStates)
Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago.
Questions:
- How do we convey information on financial aid to students effectively?
- How do we get all eligible students to fill out the FAFSA?

Strategy:
- Train counselors and post-secondary coaches
- Conduct financial aid presentations and FAFSA completion workshops throughout the year
- Identify who has completed a FAFSA

Result: Interagency agreement between ISAC and CPS to further CPS’ goal of assisting students in their pursuit of financial aid for which they have applied.
Process

- CPS sends a list of their students in an encrypted file to ISAC
- ISAC compares file with in-house data
- The encrypted file is returned to CPS, which includes among other items:
  - Students that have completed the FAFSA
  - Total qualified for MAP
  - Total qualified for PELL
  - Distribution of students as it relates to Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
  - List of colleges to which students are sending FAFSA information
- Frequency was originally once a month; it is done on a weekly basis as of 2011
## CPS Completion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># Seniors</th>
<th># Completing FAFSA</th>
<th>% completing FAFSA</th>
<th>% completing FAFSA before suspense date</th>
<th>% completers filing before suspense date</th>
<th>Suspense date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY2007</td>
<td>18,366</td>
<td>10,552</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>9,497</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>8/26/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2008*</td>
<td>17,629</td>
<td>10,963</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>9,695</td>
<td>88.4%</td>
<td>8/16/07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2009</td>
<td>18,824</td>
<td>12,574</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>11,103</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
<td>7/26/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2010</td>
<td>18,615</td>
<td>13,929</td>
<td>74.8%</td>
<td>11,945</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
<td>5/15/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2011</td>
<td>18,613</td>
<td>15,323</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>13,666</td>
<td>89.2%</td>
<td>4/19/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY2012</td>
<td>18,368</td>
<td>15,716</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
<td>14,382</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>3/26/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Program began with the class of 2007 completing FY2008 FAFSAs.
Extending Program to Other Districts

- Interagency agreement with CPS was the template for current research agreement
- Rockford School District
  - 4 high schools
  - 1623 seniors in '11
  - 49.5% filing rate
- Elgin School District
  - 6 high schools
  - 2594 seniors in '11
  - 49.2% filing rate
- Both school districts are in northern part of the state
ISAC’s Resources

- Prairie State Achievement Exams—ISAC receives ACT test data from this exam to award scholarships and give scholarship recognition awards on behalf of the state.

- FAFSA Data—ISAC receives from the Department of Education FAFSA data for purposes of awarding the MAP grant.

- Research Planning & Policy Analysis (RPPA)—ISAC department that conducts research on data as it relates to the state.
FAFSA Challenge Meter

ISAC FAFSA Challenge
800,000 applications for 2011-12
766,600 to-date

Completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as possible is the first step for students and families to obtain postsecondary education financial assistance.

Complete Your FAFSA

FAFSA completions by school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>HS Name</th>
<th>HS City</th>
<th># FAFSA</th>
<th>% Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>001</td>
<td>Seymour High School</td>
<td>Payson</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>002</td>
<td>Liberty High School</td>
<td>Liberty</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>003</td>
<td>Central HS - Camp Point</td>
<td>Camp Point</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>004</td>
<td>Unity High School - Mendon</td>
<td>Mendon</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>Quincy Sr High School</td>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>012Y</td>
<td>Quincy Notre Dame High School</td>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>003</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill High School</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>004</td>
<td>Griggsville-Perry High School</td>
<td>Griggsville</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>010</td>
<td>Pittsfield High School</td>
<td>Pittsfield</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Promoting Program

- State Articulation Conferences
- Professional Development Workshops
- Emails to listservs
- Talking to key high school personnel
- Simplifying Research Agreement—Not needing SSN
- Creating one-page handout with FAQs
- Reminding schools that it is FREE!
- Results: 41 high schools have signed up to participate for 2012... and counting.
Questions?

Abel Montoya
Director of Outreach Operations
Illinois Student Assistance Commissions

abel.montoya@isac.illinois.gov
800-899-4722 ext 3708