

**AASFAA
2026 Spring Conference
April 7-10, 2026
Embassy Suite by Hilton Huntsville Hotel & Spa
Huntsville, Alabama**

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

3:00 pm	Sponsor Set-up	Pre-Function Foyer
5:30 pm-7:30 pm	Registration Open	Pre-Function Foyer
6:00 pm 7:00 pm	Complimentary Evening Reception by Embassy Suites Huntsville	
6:00 pm	Dinner on Your Own (“Community Table” on-site and area attractions)	
7:30 pm-	AASFAA Board Meeting/Dinner	Private Dining room

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

7:00 am- 12:00 pm	Registration Open	Pre-Function Foyer
6:00 am- 9:00 am	Free Made-to-order Breakfast by Embassy Suites Huntsville	
8:00 am- 9:00 am	Sponsor Set Up	Pre-Function Foyer
9:00 am- 11:30 am	Sponsor Area Open	Pre-Function Foyer

9:00 am-11:00 am | Concurrent Breakout Sessions

9:00 am- 11:00 am **New Aid Officer’s Workshop** Madison Boardroom
 Presenter: Dr. Libya Hunter, AASFAA Vice President, Bishop State

9:00 am- 10:00 am **Pell and Direct Loan Reconciliation (How to do the Process)** Redstone Board Room
 Presenter: Kari Dedwylder, Assistant VP of Financial Aid & Student Accounts, Jones College, Ellisville, MS

This session will provide a practical, step-by-step overview of Pell and Direct Loan reconciliation, focusing on how to align institutional records with the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) system and the G5 to ensure accurate reporting and cash management compliance. Participants will review key reconciliation components, common discrepancies, timing requirements, and best practices for maintaining audit-ready records.

9:00 am- 10:00 am **Dealing with Challenging Staff** Big Spring D
 Presenter: Joan Bailey, SASFAA President
 This session explores strategies for working with a variety of staff- how do we prevent one bad apple from spoiling the entire bunch!

10:00 am- 10:15 am **Break**

10:15 am- 11:15 am **Professional Judgement/Dependency Override. Let’s Talk. (It all depends on the situation)** Madison Boardroom
 Presenter: Jamie Burt, Financial Aid Director, The University of Alabama

Professional Judgment and Dependency Overrides often come down to one thing: it depends. In this session, we’ll review federal guidance, discuss common scenarios, and share best practices for evaluating and documenting special circumstances while supporting students with unique situations. Join the conversation on balancing compliance, consistency, and compassion in case-by-case decisions.

10:15 am- 11:15 am **Financial Aid Taking the Lead on Student Success** Big Spring D
 Presenter: Shannon Jones, Inceptia

Directors of Financial Aid are uniquely positioned at the crossroads of enrollment, affordability, and institutional policy. Yet, when communication between financial aid, the business office, and enrollment management is aligned, past due balances can become unintended barriers to student persistence and institutional growth.

This session explores how one institution paved the way for stronger cross-campus collaboration, positioning financial aid as a strategic partner rather than a siloed function. Attendees will learn how aligning financial aid and the business office can reduce accounts receivable, support student success, and positively impact enrollment outcomes and institutional financial health.

10:15 am- 11:15 am **Financial Aid Program Review. Are you prepared?** Redstone Board Room
 Presenter: Stephanie Miller, Financial Director, Central Alabama Community College

Ever wondered who, what, when, where, why, and how of a program review? If so, here's your chance to join us in figuring out the answers to the 5Ws and H questions.

11:30 am- 12:45 pm Lunch Big Spring ABC

1:00 pm- 2:00 pm Opening Session Big Spring ABC

2:00 pm- 2:15 pm Break/Vendor Area Open
Panel Discussion

Big Spring ABC

2:15 pm- 3:25 pm **“Behind the Curtain: What Vendors Want you to Know and What You Want them to Know.”**

Panel: Members of the Vendor Community

Do vendors scare you? Do they annoy you? Vendors would like to present what will help you maximize your relationships with one another while also hearing your opinions. Bring all your ideas and come interact with a panel of vendors while they talk about their world. Have you ever wanted to know what vendors were thinking? Have you ever wanted to ask a vendor a question but wanted to do it anonymously?

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm | Concurrent Break Out Sessions

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **The Who, What, why, and When of FAFSA Data Sharing**
Presenter: Celena Tullos, Assistant Vice President Enrollment Management, Auburn

Madison Boardroom

Navigating the complexities of FAFSA data sharing can be challenging, but understanding the rules surrounding access, disclosure, and usage is essential for maintaining compliance.

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **OB3A loans, a working session on loan proration**
Presenter: Stephanie Miller, Financial Aid Director, Central Alabama Community College
Tony Bordeaux, Associate Director, The University of Alabama

Redstone Board Room

This session will feature problem-solving with calculations for 'real-life' loan prorations.

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **The Evolving Landscape of Graduate Aid Administration**
Presenter: Joan Bailey, SASFAA President

Big Spring D

This session covers some OB3 information and explores what administrators will need to do to continue to help our students.

3:30 pm- 5:00 pm Sponsor Area Open
6:00 pm- Dinner on Your Own

Pre-Function Foyer

Thursday, April 9, 2026

6:00 am–9:00 am Free Made-to-order Breakfast by Embassy Suites Huntsville

7:00 am- 9:00 am Registration Open

8:00 am- 11:30 am Sponsor Area Open

Pre-Function Foyer

Pre-Function Foyer

9:00 am-10 am | Concurrent Breakout Sessions

9:00 am- 10:00 am **Panel Discussion- Institutional Scholarships Best Practices**
Presenter: Eric Prewitt, Financial Aid Director, Shelton State Community College
Marcus Byrd, Financial Aid Director, Alabama A & M

Madison Boardroom

This panel will discussion best practices for **awarding scholarships, availability to students, types of scholarships, and budget management**

9:00 am- 10:00 am **Return to Repayment and Default Management**
What is going on? Repayment is here and what am I supposed to know?

Big Spring D

Presenter: Shannon Jones, Inceptia

This session will cover the importance and current urgency behind managing your CDR, key strategies including targeted outreach, grace period counseling, and repayment planning to equip students with the tools they need to avoid delinquency. Join us to learn how to implement these steps effectively and see the impact they can have on your school's CDR and overall student success

9:00 am- 10:00 am **Staff Churn**
Presenter: David Page, Blue Icon Advisor

Redstone Boardroom

Staff churn is real. Planned exists, such as retirement, usually enable you to put together a transition plan and transfer knowledge prior to the departure. Unfortunately, other separations are unplanned due to a variety of reasons and can create disruptions without tools and resources in place. This training will explore reasons why people leave an institution and how the financial aid office can reduce and mitigate the negative impact of unplanned exits. We'll discuss best practices, techniques, and tasks you need to deal with turnover, onboarding, and training to support the office through the transition and help the new staff be successful.

10:00 am- 10:15 am Break

10:15 am- 11:15 am | General Session

10:15 am- 11:15 am Fraud Big Spring ABC
Presenter: Lisa Aiken, Special Agent, Office of Inspector General

This session's presentation will go over the mission, types of fraud committed by schools, students, contractors, etc., differences between OIG, FSA, Partner participation and oversight, external fraud, sources of allegations, examples of cases and questions.

11:30 am- 12:45 pm Sponsor's **Appreciation Lunch & AASFAA Business Meeting** Big Spring ABC

General Session Big Spring ABC

1:00 pm-3:00 pm **Federal Update– What's New in Our Orbit**
Presenter: Dr. Heather Boutell, Vanderbilt School of Medicine

Get ready for liftoff as we explore the latest federal regulations, guidance, and policy changes impacting financial aid. This session will highlight key updates, compliance considerations, and what's ahead for our campuses. We may not have a federal trainer, but Heather will channel her inner fed to provide you with what you need to know.

3:00 pm- 3:15 pm **Break**

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm | Concurrent Breakout Sessions

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **Financial Aid Operational Calendar** Big Spring D
How to create? What should be on it and why?
Presenter: Kari Dedwylder, Assistant VP of Financial Aid & Student Accounts, Jones College, Ellisville, MS

The session will also cover how to build and manage an effective Financial Aid Operational Calendar, outlining critical federal deadlines, compliance milestones, processing cycles, reconciliation checkpoints, reporting requirements, and cross-departmental coordination points. Attendees will learn what to include, why each element matters, and how a structured calendar supports regulatory compliance, internal controls, and efficient office operations.

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **Administrative Capability - What does it mean To Your Campus?** Redstone Boardroom
Presenter: David Page, Blue Icon Advisor

This session's objectives: define administrative capability, legal documentation, adequate resources, consumer information, automation & electronic processes, general privacy & security safeguards, separation of functions and record keeping & retention.

3:30 pm- 4:30 pm **Where Financial Aid & VA Benefits Meet: Understanding Processes and Policies** Madison Boardroom
Presenter: Rose Cobb, Veteran and Military Affairs Coordinator, Jefferson State Community College
Alabama Veterans Affairs Association (AVAA)-President

This session explores how financial aid and VA education benefits intersect on campus, with a focus on key processes, policies, and practical considerations for staff who support military-connected students. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of compliance responsibilities, common points of overlap, and ways to better coordinate service for students using VA benefits.

3:30 pm- 5:00 pm Sponsor Area Breakdown Pre-Function Foyer
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm | Complimentary Evening Reception by Embassy Suites Huntsville
6:00 pm- 10:00 pm AASFAA President Dinner/Reception Big Spring ABCD-
Restaurant/Patio

Friday, April 10, 2026

6:00 am – 9:00 am | Free Made-to-order Breakfast by Embassy Suites Huntsville

9:00 am-11:00 am | General session Big Spring ABCD

9:00 am – 10:00 am Private **Loans and Credit – What Schools Need to Know**
Presenter: Jonathan Looney, Sallie Mae, Director, Relationship Management

With the changes to the federal Parent PLUS loan and the elimination of the federal GradPLUS program, families with incoming freshmen and new graduate students will likely ask questions about private loans that schools haven't had to answer in the previous years. This session will help college and university staff become more familiar with the following:

- **Credit worthiness and private student loan access for students, parents, and graduate borrowers**
- **How the One Big Beautiful Bill impacts the federal loan programs including loan proration for all students (and their Sub, Unsub, and legacy GradPLUS loans)**
- **New scenarios students/families must consider to finance their remaining costs**
- **Establishing credit and credit inquiries**

- **Interest rates and APR's and the differences**
- **Cosigner release**
- **Loan limits**
- **HEOA and private lender disclosures**
- **The lender origination process**

10:00 am – 11:00 am

SASF AA Update

Presenter: Joan D. Bailey, SASFAA President

NASF AA Update

Presenter: Celena Tullos, Auburn

11:00 am Adjourn