§ 668.120 Decision of the Secretary.

(a) The Secretary issues a final decision. The Secretary may affirm, modify, or reverse the decision of the hearing official, or may remand the case to the hearing official for further proceedings consistent with the Secretary’s decision.

(b) The Secretary may delegate the performance of functions under this section to a designated department official.

§ 668.121 Final decision of the Department.

(a) In the event that the initial decision of the hearing official is appealed, the decision of the Secretary is the final decision of the Department, unless the hearing official’s decision is remanded by the Secretary.

(b) In the event that the initial decision of the hearing official is not appealed within the time limit specified in §668.119(a), the initial decision automatically becomes the final decision of the Department.

§ 668.122 Determination of filing, receipt, and submission dates.

(a) The request for review, appeals, and other written submissions referred to in this subpart may be either hand-delivered or mailed.

(b) All mailed written submissions referred to in this subpart shall be mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested.

(c) Determination of filing, receipt, or submission dates shall be based on either the date of hand-delivery or the date of receipt indicated on the original U.S. Postal Service return receipt.

§ 668.123 Collection.

To the extent that the decision of the Secretary sustains the final audit determination or program review determination, subject to the provisions of §668.24(c)(3), the Department of Education will take steps to collect the debt at issue or otherwise effect the determination that was subject to the request for review.

§ 668.124 Interlocutory appeals to the Secretary from rulings of a hearing official.

(a) A ruling by a hearing official may not be appealed to the Secretary until the issuance of an initial decision, except that the Secretary may, at any time prior to the issuance of the initial decision, grant a review of a ruling upon either a certification by a hearing official of the ruling to the Secretary for review or the filing of a petition for review of a ruling by one or both of the parties, if—