

## HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID IN 9 STEPS

### **Step 1: Apply for an FSA ID.**

<https://studentaid.gov>

Your FSA ID will enable you to “sign” documents electronically, access your Student Aid Report (SAR) online and make corrections to your FAFSA through the web. If applicable both the parent and student must each apply for an FSA ID, using separate email addresses. If you have applied for aid in past years, you can reuse your FSA ID.

### **Step 2: Complete the FAFSA.**

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

You should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after October 1st as possible. The FAFSA is used to determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and your eligibility for federal and state aid, including subsidized student loans. We use the FAFSA to determine your eligibility for institutional aid.

The FAFSA must be filed for every year the student is in school. A FAFSA requires a signature from the student applicant and if applicable, a parent. To sign the online application, you must use your FSA ID (see Step 1).

There is no fee involved in filing the FAFSA and all families are encouraged to apply regardless of their family circumstances. You will need to indicate the college’s school code on the FAFSA.

•School Codes: SCHS - 012744

### **Step 3: Review your Student Aid Report.**

After filing the FAFSA, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). Correct any mistakes online by logging into your student aid account. When reviewing the SAR it will instruct you to contact the Financial Aid Office if additional information is required from you or your parent.

#### **Step 4: Submit financial aid forms.**

Check your email often! If the Financial Aid Office needs additional documentation you will be notified by email. Follow the instructions in the email and submit all requested documents as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Complete Entrance Counseling and the Master Promissory Note, if applicable. Entrance Counseling and a Master Promissory Note for Undergraduates are required for Federal Student Loan borrowers.

<https://studentaid.gov>

- **Entrance Counseling** reviews your rights and responsibilities when borrowing federal student loans.
- The **Master Promissory Note** is your promise to repay any federal student loans that you borrow.

#### **Step 5: Less than Maximum Borrowing Options (optional)**

Students with a completed FAFSA will be awarded the maximum federal financial aid they are eligible for. If you prefer not to borrow maximum loans, we also offer the option to borrow only what you need contact your Financial Aid Counselor, Page Robbins.

#### **Step 6: Financial Aid Program Plan**

Students who have completed a FAFSA can request to receive a personalized Financial Aid Program Plan from the Financial Aid Counselor.

This is an estimate of financial aid eligibility for the length of the program and is to be used for planning purposes only. You may request a Financial Aid Program Plan at any point during your program by contacting the Financial Aid Counselor.

#### **Step 7: Apply for scholarships.**

You should always maximize the amount of free money you use to pay for college before borrowing loans. You can use tools like [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) to search for national scholarships.

#### **Step 8: Review your award letter.**

The Financial Aid Office then determines what aid it has available to help meet your demonstrated financial need. The college will aim to meet as much of your need as possible. The Financial Aid Office will put together a financial aid package or award letter for you.

You will be notified by email when your award letter is ready to review in your Student Portal. The aid may come in the form of grants, scholarships, and student loans. Remember, when your financial aid award letter arrives, read it over carefully. To access your financial aid awards:

- Your award letter will be published under Student Portal – Campus Nexus, under My Financial Aid> Award letter> Review Award Details.
- In the awards details page you can accept and/or modify your awards.
- Once everything appears how you want it, select Accept All Awards.

Your financial aid package may or may not cover your total financial need. If financial need is not entirely met, this unmet need is called a "gap." This means that other resources must be found to meet the full cost of education. In many cases this will mean additional student and parent loans.

#### **Step 9: Apply for additional loans, if necessary.**

The Financial Aid Office will include federal student loans on your award letter if you are eligible. If these loans are not listed on your award letter, you still may be eligible to borrow alternative loans.

While federal options should always be considered first, alternative loans are available to students who need additional financial assistance for tuition, fees, and living expenses. Visit the page

[www.elmselect.com](http://www.elmselect.com) for more information