

Getting Financial Support for College

Do you want to go to college, but worry that you can't pay for it? Luckily, there is money out there for high school students who need it, in the form of grants, loans, and work study. To get it, you need to fill out a form called the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Here are a few facts about the FAFSA that every college-going family should know.

So... what is the FAFSA?

FAFSA is an online form that asks for financial information about a family in order to determine whether a student is in need of help paying for college. Most students who fill out the FAFSA are eligible for some amount of aid, so it is important to get it done.

- Filling out the FAFSA is **FREE**. You do not need to pay to access or fill out the FAFSA. The form can be found at WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV.
- The FAFSA is **safe**. FAFSA is an application that helps students find money for college, overseen by the U.S. Department of Education. Students will be asked to provide social security numbers and other sensitive information, but this information is only used to determine how much aid a student may need. That's it.
- Some financial aid is awarded on a first come, first serve basis: the sooner you fill out the FAFSA, the more aid you may receive! Federal funding is available to apply for throughout the academic year, so you should apply even if you feel it is late. Admissions deposits are typically due by May 1 OR a few weeks after you are accepted if it is after May 1.
- The form takes about **two hours** to complete but can be completed over a few days.
- You only fill it out **once** for all of your college applications, and once a year after that.
- Need help filling out the form? **College Goal Sunday** is an event where families can get help with the FAFSA for free. It will take place at East High School, on January 26, 2014 from 1 PM to 3 PM. Bring your Social Security Number and tax forms for your family -- 2013 W2s, state, and federal tax returns. Leave with a completed FAFSA! If you have not yet filed or won't be filing, bring all documentation that you have and the financial aid representatives will assist you.
- What if I don't live with my family? Or my parents don't file tax forms? Ask your **school counselor**, and talk to the **financial aid departments** at the colleges to which you want to apply. They can help you.
- If the results of your FAFSA determine that you are eligible for aid, you don't have to take it. But it is good to know what help you need.
- Can't make **College Goal Sunday**? Free help with completing the FAFSA is available from the Urban League of Rochester, Monroe Community College, Bryant & Stratton College and other local colleges. Check out their websites for details.



Rochester College Access Network is a group working to expand college access for Rochester city youth. It is a program of Rochester Education Foundation. For more information about the Network, please call REF at 271-5790, or contact us at info@rochestereducation.org