FAFSA Completion

Regardless of your current financial status, we encourage all families to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA application became available on **October 1**. Because aid is delivered upon availability, the sooner you apply the better! For Missouri residents, the priority date to be considered for state funds is April 1; however the college(s) you are interested in attending might have earlier/later deadlines. Because of the various deadlines by state and school, be sure to check all of the **FAFSA priority deadlines** for the colleges to which you have applied or will be applying.

Apply now: **https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa**

The FAFSA is submitted electronically, so you will sign using a FSA ID. The student and parent should both apply for a FSA ID. The verification process may take 3-4 days, so plan accordingly!

Apply for a FSA ID: **https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing**

After your FAFSA application is reviewed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). The SAR includes all of the information you reported on your FAFSA and shows your Expected Family Contribution, or EFC. The EFC will be a 6 digit number between 000000-999999. This number represents the dollar amount your family would be expected to contribute for the upcoming school year. The schools you designate on the FAFSA will receive the information you reported and use it to determine your financial aid award.

If you need, or would like assistance with your application, there are several **free workshops available** to guide you through the process.

> **FAFSA Frenzy Events**
> **https://journeytocollege.mo.gov/pay/file-a-fafsa/fafsa-frenzy/public-fafsa-frenzy-events/**
>
> **The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis**
> **https://www.sfstl.org/advice-assistance/workshops-and-assistance**

Scholarship Opportunities

In addition to applying for financial aid, we also urge students to actively seek scholarship opportunities. We maintain all of the scholarships that we are asked to advertise in **Naviance**. Students and parents have access to see all advertised scholarship opportunities through the "**Scholarship Search**" under "**Colleges**". Aside from the Scholarship List, there is also a **National Scholarship Search** available, as well. Another site that we recommend is **Scholarship Central**, a database of scholarships specifically for St. Louis area students. As noted on the Scholarship Central site, most of those scholarships are currently "ended" but will become available in January. Of course, students may also register for other national scholarship databases, such as **fastweb.com**, **cappex.com**, **finaid.org** or **scholarships.com**.

College Financial Aid Offices

Be sure to contact each financial aid offices at the schools to which you have applied to gain a deeper understanding about their financial aid opportunities. This also provides you with an opportunity to discuss your family's unique circumstances which you were unable to explain on the FAFSA.

College Cost Comparison

As you begin to receive financial aid packages from colleges, it is helpful to use a college cost comparison worksheet to assist you in making your final decision. Below is a sample tool provided by the Missouri Department of Higher Education:

College Cost Comparison Worksheet