

Dear Class of 2025 Students and Parents,

FAFSA is open now! In the 2021-22 academic year, Alabama enacted legislation requiring high school seniors to either complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** before graduating from high school or to opt-out by completing a non-participation waiver. In October, Seniors began getting ready for their FAFSA completion by creating a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID with the assistance of the OHS Career Coach. The next step will be for the parent or guardian contributor to also create a FSA ID in order to get ready to be able to electronically sign their student's FAFSA application.

What is the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is a key step for any student who plans to seek federal and state financial aid to attend college, including grants and loans. It is a free online application which requires applicable financial information for both the student and the parent(s) of dependent students.

Completing the FAFSA determines a student's eligibility for grants, scholarships, and work-study jobs. Some students are eligible for federal grants, including the Pell Grant of around \$7,000 per year. Pell Grants are a form of gift aid that does not have to be repaid.

Information submitted on the FAFSA is also used by colleges and universities when determining merit and need-based scholarship awards. Colleges might have specific priority deadlines for financial aid applications so students should check the priority deadlines for each school they apply to. Students should file the FAFSA as early as possible for first-come, first-served aid.

Remember, the FAFSA does not obligate you to accept any financial aid for college that you do not want, such as student loans.

If your student will NOT be enrolling in a college or technical school, plans to join the military, or you do not wish to complete the FAFSA, you will need to submit a waiver. Waivers will be available from the Career Coach after January 2025.

What Parents need to know and do:

- All OHS Seniors must complete the 2025-2026 FAFSA or a waiver form in order to participate in graduation since this is an ALSDE graduation requirement.
- Both a parent or guardian (contributors) **and** student will need a FSA ID. Most students created their FSA ID during College Application Week in October 2024.
- Store all of your information in a safe place because you will need to complete the FAFSA each year your student attends college or tech school. Students were provided a worksheet for recording their login information and asked to keep it in a safe place.

The 2024–25 FAFSA form will expand eligibility for federal student aid.

- 610,000 new students from low-income backgrounds will be eligible to receive Federal Pell Grants due to updates to student aid calculations.
- Use the [Federal Student Aid Estimator](#) to get an early estimate of what your federal student aid could be after submitting the new form.

What You Should Do Now:

- Make sure each contributor creates their own [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) account. Even if a contributor doesn't have a Social Security number, they will be able to create an account when the 2025–26 form goes live.
- Watch the [“Preparing for the FAFSA Form”](#) playlist (on YouTube) to understand what information and documents you'll need to fill out the FAFSA form.
- Complete the 2024-2025 FAFSA only if your student intends to attend college during Summer 2025.
- Complete the 2025-2026 FAFSA to receive aid for Fall 2025. *Even if your student took dual enrollment courses during high school, they are a First Time Freshman Fall 2025.

Parent FAFSA Process

GET YOUR FSA ID

Your FSA ID serves as your electronic signature, and it can take up to 3 days before you can use it. Sign up for it now. Your student should have already created one, if not please have them create it.

Go to <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch> and click the blue "Get Started" button to create your FSA ID. If your student still needs to make their FSA ID, they must use the above website also.

Gather FAFSA INFORMATION

1. Social Security Numbers – Parent(s) & Student
- 2.

You **may** also need the following

3. Federal Income Tax Record from two years ago – **2023** Tax Return Information
4. Untaxed Income information: child support, worker's compensation, etc.
5. Asset information: bank statements, businesses, and investments

Start and Complete FAFSA Application at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>.

Complete **2025-26 FAFSA**. Your student will have a better chance receiving any aid that is “first-come, first-serve” and some scholarships use FAFSA results to award money.

Additional Help:

- How to Create an FSA ID: [Video](#)
- Complete the Personal Circumstances and Demographics Sections of the FAFSA® Form: [Video](#)
- Contributor Responsibilities (Parent or Guardian): [Video](#)
- Completing the Student Financials Section of the FAFSA: [Video](#)
- Review, Sign, and Submit Your 2025–26 FAFSA Form(Final Steps): [Video](#)
- FAFSA in Alabama [information](#)