

## **POLICY TO IMPROVE COMPLETION RATES OF THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)**

The Rocky Hill Board of Education (the “Board”) understands that completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (“FAFSA”) is an important step in the path to postsecondary education and is associated with higher rates of college enrollment. The Board is committed to improving the completion rates of the FAFSA for students enrolled in the Rocky Hill Public Schools (the “District”).

### **Program to Improve FAFSA Completion Rates**

In order to improve the completion rates of the FAFSA by students enrolled in grade twelve in the District, the District shall develop a systematic program through which students are educated about the purpose and content of the FAFSA, encouraged to complete the FAFSA, and assisted in the completion of the FAFSA, as may be necessary and appropriate. The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. The Board further directs the Superintendent or designee to conduct periodic assessments of such regulations, at least annually, to determine the effectiveness of such regulations in improving completion rates of the FAFSA.

### **FAFSA Graduation Requirements**

Students graduating in 2025 and beyond are required to have satisfied on of the following prior to graduation:

1. Completed a FAFSA;
2. For student without legal immigration status, completed and submitted to a public institution of higher education an application for institutional financial aid; or
3. Completed a waiver of completion of the FAFSA and/or financial aid application, as applicable, on a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, signed by the student’s parent or guardian or signed by the student if the student is eighteen or older.

On and after March 15 of each school year, a principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator may complete the waiver on behalf of any student who has not satisfied the above requirements if such principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator affirms that they have made a good faith effort to contact the parent/guardian or student about completion of such applications.

### **Confidentiality of FAFSA**

Any information contained in a FAFSA held by the Board shall not be a public record for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act and thus shall not be subject to disclosure under the provisions of section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

### **Reporting of FAFSA Completion Rates**

Each year, the Superintendent or designee will report to the Board the FAFSA completion rate for each high school in the District.

**POLICY TO IMPROVE COMPLETION RATES OF THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) Continued**

**Gifts, Grants and Donations to Implement Policy**

The Board may accept gifts, grants and donations, including in-kind donations, to implement the provisions of this policy.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10a-11i

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Public Act No. 23-204, “An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025, and Making Appropriations Therefor, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget”

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS ADDRESSING IMPROVING THE  
COMPLETION RATES OF FAFSA**

In order to improve the completion rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (“FAFSA”) by students enrolled in the Rocky Hill Public Schools (the “District”), the District will:

- Develop a FAFSA Task Force to identify challenges, successes, and next steps in improving the completion rates of the FAFSA among students in grade.
- Track data from such students regarding FAFSA completion, including date of completion.
- Identify FAFSA coaches who will be assigned a caseload of students to assist students in completing the FAFSA and monitor their completion rates.
- Provide incentives to students who have completed the FAFSA, which may include but are not limited to, spirit days and giveaways, if funding permits.
- Conduct annual presentations to students about the purpose and importance of the FAFSA and the District’s resources available to help students in completing the FAFSA.
- Provide professional development to identified District staff regarding the FAFSA and best practices for supporting students in completing the FAFSA.

Legal Reference:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Public Act No. 23-204, “An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2025, and Making Appropriations Therefor, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget”



**Local Education Agency Student Financial Aid Waiver**

Starting with the Class of 2025, all Connecticut public high school students are expected to either complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or complete and submit to a public institution of higher education an application for institutional financial aid for students without legal immigration status in order to graduate high school unless they submit or obtain a waiver in accordance with Section 320 of Public Act 23-204. This waiver form, upon completion, exempts a student from this high school graduation requirement.

**I. STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student Name (please print):

State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID):

Student Date of Birth:

Student School District:

Student High School:

**II. SIGNATURE (one signature required)**

Students seeking a waiver from the FAFSA or other institutional financial aid application graduation requirement must have a parent or legal guardian read, sign, and return this form to the student’s school prior to graduation. Students who are 18 or older or are legally emancipated minors may sign this form on behalf of themselves.

On or after March 15 of the school year, a principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator may also waive the student from this graduation requirement so long as they affirm that the school has made a good faith effort to contact the parent, legal guardian, or student on at least three (3) occasions about completing the FAFSA or institutional financial aid application.

<b>PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN</b>	
I understand the purpose of the FAFSA and choose not to submit a completed financial aid application for the student listed above. I also understand that by not completing the FAFSA, the student will not be considered for the Connecticut Roberta Willis Scholarship Program Grant of up to \$5,250 or Federal Pell Grants of up to \$7,395.	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
<i>Parent or Legal Guardian Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
OR	
<b>STUDENT (only students who are eighteen years of age or older or are legally emancipated minors)</b>	
I understand the purpose of the FAFSA and choose not to submit a completed financial aid application. I also understand that by not completing the FAFSA, I will not be considered for the Connecticut Roberta Willis Scholarship Program Grant of up to \$5,250 or Federal Pell Grants of up to \$7,395.	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
<i>Student Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
OR	
<b>SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE</b>	
By signing this form, I affirm that the school has made a good faith effort to contact the parent, legal guardian, or student on at least three (3) occasions about completing the FAFSA or institutional financial aid application. I further affirm that I am the principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator.	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
<i>School Representative Name/Title (Please print)</i>	<i>Date (must be on/after March 15)</i>
<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
<i>School Representative Signature</i>	