Financial Aid – FAQ's

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Beware of scams and services that charge you a <u>FEE</u> to search for financial aid.   Applying for student aid is FREE; that is why the application used by <u>most</u> schools is called the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Launch FAFSA or CADAA through www.CaliforniaColleges.edu

For FAFSA, both you & a parent must obtain an FSA ID at that time from the following website to use as an electronic signature: https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm.
Do not share your FSA ID with anyone.

Where can I find money for 4 & 2-year colleges or vocational and technical schools?

Sources of Financial Aid
- Federal Government
- CA State government
- Institution (your future college)
- Private individuals, companies, organizations, foundations, churches, etc.

What types of financial aid might I receive?

Gift Aid—Grants and Scholarships

This is free money from the sources listed above.

Self-Help Aid—Loans and Work-Study

This must be repaid or earned.

How do colleges determine my financial aid offer?
It is determined from your family's expected family contribution (EFC) based on the following information:

- Age of the older parent if filing as a dependent
- Number in the family
- Number of children in college
- Parents' level of education
- Parent income & assets
- Student's income & assets

Who should fill out the forms?

Each student

Do my parent(s) need to fill out the parent section of the form?

If you are filing as a dependent, then "yes." Most high school students are considered "dependent". See flowchart on the back to determine your status.

How do I Apply?

Find out what forms the college requires for financial aid.

In California and within EGUSD:

1) **FAFSA** (**F**ree **A**pplication for **F**ederal **S**tudent **A**id) **OR CADAA** (California Dream Act Application)

2) Some private colleges use an additional form called the **CSS Profile.**

3) The Elk Grove Unified School District staff will automatically submit your **Cal Grant GPA Verification** electronically **between   October 1st --   March 2nd**

When do I complete the forms?

Launch the FAFSA or CADAA on www.CaliforniaColleges.edu between October 1st -- March 2nd.

The preferred method is to file <u>online</u> which greatly reduces errors and results in a faster financial aid offer.

If I plan to attend a community college, do I still need to apply for financial aid?

YES! Tuition is **FREE** for every student regardless of family income as long as the FAFSA or CADAA is completed.

What if I don't know where I'll be attending?

Apply anyway and use your top college choices to meet the deadlines. Changes can be made later.

Do I need to apply for admission before applying for financial aid?

Not for FAFSA, but CSS Profile (needed for <u>some</u> private colleges) has a fee, so decide where you're applying before completing.

Do I need to be admitted to a school before I apply for aid?

NO! Do not miss your financial aid deadline.

OTHER RESOURCES

http://www.finaid.org
Everything on financial aid including scholarships, grants, loans, estimator tools & more

https://studentaid.gov/ Federal Student Aid tools and information

https://dream.csac.ca.gov/landing California Student Aid Commission information and resources

http://www.csac.ca.gov/ California website for Cal Grants & other sources of funding

http://www.ecmc.org/ Good source on applying and managing student loans

www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf
Information on federal tax credits and deductions for college

http://www.gibill.va.gov
Financial aid programs for veterans and their dependents

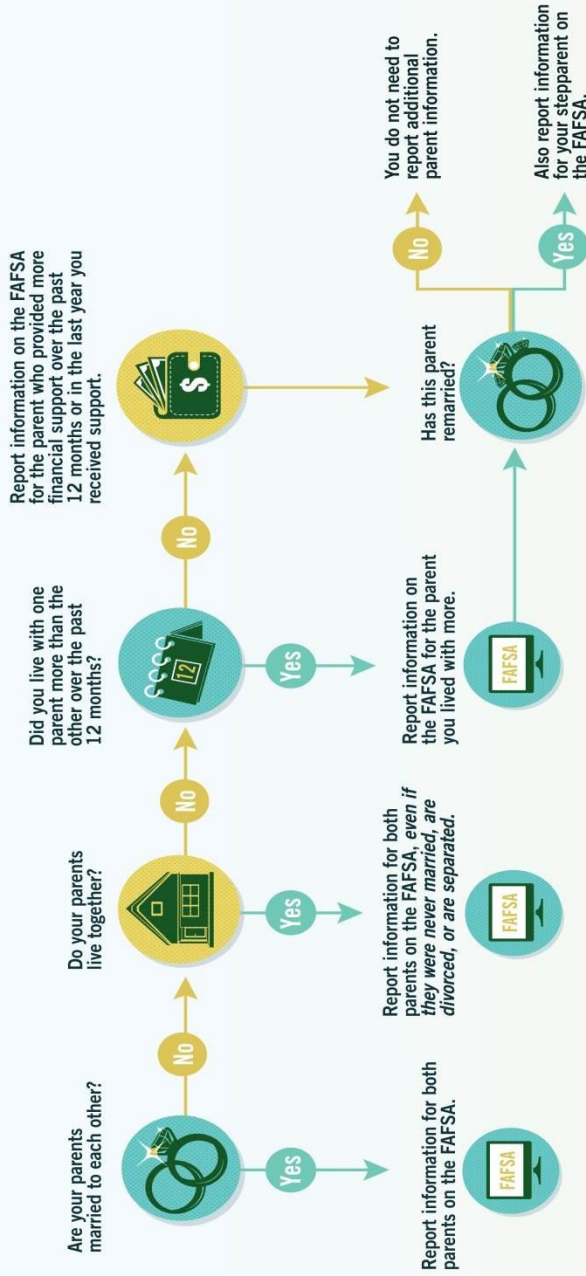http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
Information on the **CHAFEE** grant for current and former foster youth as well as other scholarship services

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WHO'S MY PARENT WHEN I FILL OUT MY FAFSA?®

Dependent students are required to report parent information on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA).[1] For reporting purposes, "PARENT" means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or stepparent, or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent.

Use this guide to figure out which parent's information to include (depending on your family situation).

Are your parents married to each other?

— No →

Do your parents live together?

— No →

Did you live with one parent more than the other over the past 12 months?

— No →

Report information on the FAFSA for the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months or in the last year you received support.

Has this parent remarried?

— No → You do not need to report additional parent information.

— Yes → Also report information for your stepparent on the FAFSA.

Are your parents married to each other? — Yes → Report information for both parents on the FAFSA. **FAFSA**

Do your parents live together? — Yes → Report information for both parents on the FAFSA, *even if they were never married, are divorced, or are separated.* **FAFSA**

Did you live with one parent more than the other over the past 12 months? — Yes → Report information on the FAFSA for the parent you lived with more. **FAFSA**

The following people are not your parents unless they have legally adopted you:

- Widowed Stepparent
- Grandparents
- Foster Parents
- Legal Guardians
- Older Brothers or Sisters
- Aunts or Uncles

If you're not sure whom to report as a parent, you can visit StudentAid.ed.gov/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info or call 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243).

[1] If you're not sure whether you are a dependent student, go to StudentAid.gov/fafsa/filling-out/dependency

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