

Class of 2021 Financial Aid Tip Sheet

As you [already know](#), the 2020-2021 FAFSA opens on October 1, and it is recommended that CCHS seniors and families complete the FAFSA as soon as possible to secure [state](#) and [federal](#) funding that you are eligible to receive for the 2021-2022 school year.



Bottom line, completing the FAFSA before December 1 is a best practice for all college bound students and families.

In order to complete the FAFSA, students and families will need to follow the steps below:

1. Create your [FSA ID](#): A username and password which allows you to submit your FAFSA.
 - a. This step can – and should – be done before October 1.
 - b. Seniors will create an FSA ID **and** one parent will need an FSA ID.
2. Gather [this information](#) as it relates to the student and parent(s).
3. Complete the [FAFSA](#) between October 1 and December 1.
4. Keep an eye on your email for confirmation of completion, follow up tasks and updates from your colleges.



Additional Financial Aid How-To's

1. Complete the [CSS profile](#), if applicable
 - a. [Select colleges and universities](#) require the CSS profile when processing financial aid packages.
2. Ask questions that arise! Questions are a good thing! Ask Ms. Murphy, Ms. Antrim and never hesitate to contact specific college or university financial aid offices directly.
3. This can feel like a complicated process, and there is help for you and your family through the process available at through the [Counseling Office](#), our [ISAC partnership](#), [resources from Mrs. Antrim](#) and through contacts with college admissions offices.
4. Apply for local and national scholarships as your schedule allows.
 - a. Local awards will be posted to [Naviance](#). Once logged in, click on the **Colleges** tab, then **Scholarships & Money** for various scholarship information; local awards will be posted more frequently during second semester.
5. Review [financial aid letters](#) as they arrive carefully. Award letters can feel tricky to read accurately, and your financial aid representatives are key to an honest answer related to **true** cost of attendance.
6. Reach out to local financial aid experts at JALC, [Rachel Sveda-Webb](#) and SIU, [Elyse Weller](#), for assistance. Our local experts are available to help you regardless of where you plan to attend college.
7. Have an [honest conversation](#) with yourself and your family about the most affordable options and remember that you do not have to commit to a college or university until May 1.



And...just a few more resources to assist you!

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| Video Tutorial – Filling out the FAFSA | What does this word mean? Financial aid terms defined |
| FAFSA Completion Checklist | College Scorecard – compare options and costs (and more) |
| Understanding College Costs | College Application Guide - information to assist with applications, finances and final decisions (and more) |
| Fastweb - scholarship matches (and more) | Tuition Funding Sources – scholarship matches (and more) |