



FAFSA Completion Messaging Toolkit for High Schools

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This toolkit provides communication tools created to make it easier for school counselors and staff to promote the FAFSA, promote FAFSA events, and to bust myths about the FAFSA with your students.

The toolkit materials include:

- **School channels:** Morning announcements, social media, marquees, newsletters, and school websites offer many ways to help students know about the importance of completing a FAFSA
- **Parent and guardian engagement:** Emails and letters help to inform the parents and guardians of important deadlines and financial aid workshops

FAFSA Events

“Seniors, are you trying to figure out how to pay for college? We’re hosting a FAFSA night on (insert date and time) at (insert location) to help you complete the FAFSA. Contact (name) to find out what you need to bring with you. See you there!”

“Going to college next year? You may be eligible for FREE money, like scholarships and grants. Come to our FAFSA event on (insert date and time) to complete the FAFSA in an hour or less. Contact (name) to find out what materials you’ll need to bring with you. See you there!”

Building Awareness

“Seniors, the FAFSA helps you find money for college including grants, student loans, work-study and some scholarships to help you pay for college. Contact (name) to find out more.”

“Seniors, don’t wait to submit the FAFSA – get it in today. The sooner you get the FAFSA in, the more funding is available. Contact (name) for more information.”

Myth Busting

“Seniors, did you know not all financial aid have income caps? Everyone should fill out the FAFSA. Contact (name) for more information today.”

“Seniors, if you’ve got 30 minutes, you can get the FAFSA completed. Getting the FAFSA done doesn’t take long. Contact (name) to find out what information you’ll need and how to apply.”

Spring Wrap-Up

“Seniors, a submitted FAFSA is not a completed FAFSA. Remember to check your email to ensure everything is complete. If you’ve been selected for verification, don’t worry! This is normal. You’ll just need to fill out extra documents to finalize your application before colleges can create a financial aid offer letter. Also, you’ll need to download the necessary forms from your college’s website and send those in as soon as possible. Confused? Contact (name) for help!”

“Juniors, do you need money for college? Make sure your parents file their taxes this year. You’ll need them for your financial aid application in October! If you need help filing your taxes, free community tax centers can help you and your family. The nearest location is at (insert closest location and operating hours). If you have any questions about the financial aid process, contact (name) for help!”

Sticker Price and Actual Price

“Seniors, if you’re applying to colleges or considering whether college is right for you, understand that college IS affordable no matter what your current financial situation is. College may seem expensive because of the price you see on college websites. The TRUTH is that most students pay less than their college’s published price, thanks to many forms of financial aid. There is money available for 4-year, 2-year, and technical schools! If you have any questions, please contact (name) for help!”

“Seniors, do not let the cost of college keep you from pursuing your goals. There is an abundance of financial aid available in federal, state and college grants, low-interest loans, scholarships, and work-study funding. But you must fill out the FAFSA! This is the first step in receiving any need- or merit-based aid. So, you better get to work on those applications! If you need help, contact (name).”

Promise Push

“The PROMISE Scholarship awards up to \$4,750 every year to cover college expenses. That’s money you DON’T repay! File the FAFSA to find out what types of financial aid you are eligible for at FAFSA.gov! If you need help, contact (name).”

FACEBOOK POSTS

Building Awareness

“Seniors, don’t wait to complete the FAFSA. Get it in today. Visit FAFSA.gov to start your journey to postsecondary success!” #CollegeBoundWV

“Seniors, start by getting your username (FSA ID) and password set up to complete the FAFSA. Go to FAFSA.gov and begin today.” #CollegeBoundWV

Myth Busting

“Myth -- Students should wait to fill out the FAFSA until they are accepted into college.

Fact -- Don’t wait. Students are highly encouraged to complete their FAFSA application their senior year of high school.” #CollegeBoundWV

“Myth -- The FAFSA takes forever to fill out.

Fact -- If you’ve got 30 minutes to spare, you’re good. Because that’s how long it takes to fill out the FAFSA.” #CollegeBoundWV

“Myth -- My parents make too much money, so I won’t qualify for financial aid.

Fact -- There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal financial aid. All eligible students qualify for some type of financial aid, including grants, work-study, loans, or scholarships.” #CollegeBoundWV

“Myth -- All scholarships do not require the FAFSA.

Fact -- Many of the merit-based scholarships require the FAFSA on file for students to be considered.” #CollegeBoundWV

FAFSA Events

“We’re hosting a FAFSA workshop on (insert date and time). We’ll help you complete the FAFSA in about an hour or less. You’ll need to bring these items with you: your social security number, driver’s license number, tax records from last year, records of untaxed income, and list of schools you are interested in.”

#CollegeBoundWV

Sticker Price and Actual Price

“You CAN afford college! Your current financial situation should never stop you from turning your dreams into reality. Most students pay less than their college’s published price, thanks to the many forms of financial aid available through FAFSA. Be your own advocate. Learn more about the difference between a college’s sticker price and the price you’ll actually pay! Good luck with those applications!”

#CollegeBoundWV

“Do NOT let the cost of college keep you from pursuing your dreams; investing in your higher education is worth it! The first step to beginning your journey to a postsecondary degree or certificate is sending in your applications. If you need help paying for your college applications, find out if you qualify for a fee-waiver by speaking with (name).” #CollegeBoundWV

TWITTER TWEETS

“Don’t want to take out any loans? File the FAFSA anyway and chances are, you’ll be eligible for FREE money!” #CollegeBoundWV

“Afraid of the FAFSA? Don’t be! Your information is confidential.” #CollegeBoundWV

“Think your parents make too much money to qualify for financial aid? Think again! File the FAFSA to see what you could be eligible for!” #CollegeBoundWV

“College grants = money you don’t have to repay! File the FAFSA today and see what grants you qualify for!” #CollegeBoundWV

“Costly college applications got you down? Find out if you qualify for a fee-waiver by contacting (name) today!” #CollegeBoundWV

“You CAN afford college! Fill out the FAFSA to find out how much money colleges can offer you!” #CollegeBoundWV

“The maximum award for the Federal Pell Grant is \$6,495. Submit the FAFSA to see how much you can get for college!” #CollegeBoundWV

“Attention seniors! Do you need money for college? The FAFSA is now available. It is important that you submit your financial aid application as soon as you can to increase your chances of receiving the maximum aid you are eligible for. Even if you are still in the process of applying to colleges or haven’t heard back from the schools you have applied to, you should still submit your financial aid application. If you need help filling out the FAFSA, you can receive FREE assistance at one of the Financial Aid workshops happening in (location). Don’t miss out on the chance to have your questions answered by financial aid experts, obtain guidance on next steps after submitting your FAFSA, and gain scholarship search and application information. Contact (name) for information.”

“Attention seniors! As you continue submitting your college applications, remember to apply for scholarships. There are countless school-specific, local, state, and national scholarships for students with all different types of academic backgrounds and interests. These scholarships combined with other types of aid can reduce the cost of college for you and your family. Don’t let misinformation about the scholarship process keep you from getting the money you need in order to go to college. You do not need a 4.0 or amazing writing skills to receive a scholarship award. For additional information on scholarship myths, please contact (name).”

“The federal government offers \$150 billion in financial aid for college each year. The resources exist, but students need our support to take advantage of this aid. The first step in the financial aid process is filling out the FAFSA at FAFSA.gov. The FAFSA is the most important form students fill out that can get them money for college. Filling out the FAFSA is the first step for almost ALL financial aid — from the federal and state government, colleges, and many scholarships! Filling out financial aid forms is critical to make sure students don’t lose out on dollars for college.”

“The FAFSA helps students know how much funding they may be eligible to receive for college. It includes funding for grants, student loans, scholarships, and work-study. The FAFSA is for every senior who is planning to pursue an education beyond high school, regardless of how much money a student or his/her family might have. There’s no income cut-off to qualify for federal financial aid. The FAFSA takes about 30 minutes to complete. We’re hosting a FAFSA event to help students and families complete the FAFSA on (insert and time) at (insert location).”

SAMPLE MARQUEE MESSAGES

“Know the truth behind the FAFSA and get money for college!”

“Get money for college! Apply for scholarships! It’s easier than you think!”

“Ask (name) how you can get money for college!”

“Do you qualify for a college application fee-waiver? Ask (name)!”

“Free tax help for eligible families at (insert address)!”

“We are (insert number of seniors) away from our FAFSA completion goal!”

“(Insert percent of seniors) percent of (insert HS name)’s seniors have filed the FAFSA already. Have you?”

The FAFSA must be submitted by March 1st to be eligible for the Promise Scholarship, which awards up to \$4,750 each year to cover college expenses. Additionally, March 1st is the deadline for applications for the WV Engineering, Science, and Technology Scholarship and the Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program. The priority deadline for the WV Invests Grant is April 15th. We’re hosting an event on (insert date and time) in the (location). You’ll need to bring these items with you: your social security number, driver’s license number, tax records from 2020, records of untaxed income, and list of schools you are interested in. Contact (name) if you have any questions.”

SAMPLE EMAILS AND LETTERS

“Subject: Does your senior need money for college?”

We’re hosting a FAFSA workshop on (insert date and time) at (insert location) to help you and your high school senior complete the FAFSA. The FAFSA, which stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid, helps students know how much funding they may be eligible to receive for college. It includes funding for grants (including the Federal Pell Grant which awards up to \$6,495), student loans, work-study, and scholarships. At the workshop, we’ll help your student complete the FAFSA in about an hour or less. You’ll need to bring these items with you: your social security number, driver’s license number, tax records from 2020, records of untaxed income, and list of schools you are interested in. Contact (name) if you have any questions.”

“Subject: Seniors -- Don’t miss important deadlines!”

Don’t leave money on the table for college. All high school seniors should plan to start filing the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, beginning on October 1st. The FAFSA helps students know how much money they could get to help them pay for college from grants, work-study, student loans, or scholarships.

If you have any questions about this toolkit,
please contact:

Kaci Foster

Communications Specialist
WV Higher Education Policy Commission
Email: Kaci.Foster@wvhepc.edu
Phone: (304) 588-0655

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