

## 6 Easy Steps in the Student Financial Aid Process

- Start with the FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- Most financial assistance programs (federal, state, campus-based) require a FAFSA.
- January 1 is the first day to submit a FAFSA for grants and loans.
- Early applicants get best shot at the \$122 billion available.
- Students and parents shouldn't dread completing the FAFSA.
- Completing the FAFSA is free, takes little time and isn't hard to do.

### How to complete the FAFSA online in as little as one hour!

#### Step 1: Request a PIN.

- PIN allows applicant to electronically sign the FAFSA, check their FAFSA status and make corrections. **Students and parents** each must get a PIN at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).

#### Step 2: Know state and college deadlines and requirements.

- State and college deadlines tend to be earlier than the federal deadline (many as early as February or March). Most college deadlines are **February 15<sup>th</sup>** for both FAFSA and scholarships.

#### Step 3: Complete the FAFSA online.

- Access "FAFSA on the Web" at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) (English or Spanish). Apply as soon as you can on or after January 1, because funding is usually awarded on a first come, first served basis.

#### TIP:

If your family's tax return is not ready for filing, don't put off completing the FAFSA. Estimate the tax information (using the previous years tax info), submit the FAFSA and be sure to make the corrections later, if necessary.

#### Step 4: Review your Student Aid Report (SAR).

- The SAR summarizes the data you submit to FAFSA. Review your SAR line-by-line. Make corrections.
- If your FAFSA information is complete, the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is printed in the upper right-hand corner. Schools you listed on the FAFSA will receive electronic copies of your SAR.

#### Step 5: Determine if you need to verify your information.

- At least 30% of submitted FAFSA's are selected for verification. If you've been selected, an asterisk (\*) will appear after your EFC number. If selected - submit tax returns and other documentation to your school's financial aid office.

#### Step 6: Compare award letters.

- If you're eligible for aid, schools where you are accepted at will send you an award letter.
- Carefully compare amounts and types of aid awarded.

### Benefits of using "FAFSA on the Web" to submit your application:

- Online help is available for each question.
- Calculations are performed automatically.
- "Chat" online with a customer service representative for free.
- Potential errors are detected before the application is processed.
- Electronic filing is faster than submitting the paper version.

**#1 reason:** Schools are not sent paper copies of the FAFSA . 98% of students submitted their applications on line last year.

Regardless of parents income, a FAFSA must be filled out to qualify for university based scholarships, academic and need based scholarships.

Submitting a FAFSA does NOT obligate you to take out student loans or any other aid, all aid is optional.

Every fall EHS hosts a family Financial Aid night – check the calendar for the date!