Financial Aid Application
Completion Mandate: Public Act 101 -180
Welcome

In the chat tell us:

- Your organization or school
- What town you’re joining us from
- A popular restaurant in your area
Agenda

1. Financial Aid Applications
2. Public Act 101-0180 (FAFSA Graduation Requirement)
3. FAFSA Completion Initiative Overview
4. FAFSA Completion Initiative User Guide
5. Resources to Support Financial Aid Completion
Financial Aid Applications
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- The FAFSA is the first step in the financial aid process for most students
- It is used to apply for state and federal financial aid programs
  - Pathway for most students to apply for the IL MAP Grant
- Generates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
  - Used to calculate financial aid eligibility
- Most colleges use it to award institutional aid
- The application is available at no cost
The Big Grants

- Maximum award amounts for 2021-22
  - MAP Grant: Up to $5,496 (est.)
  - Pell Grant: Up to $6,495
- Total = $11,991
Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid (Alternative App)

- Provides a pathway for **eligible undocumented students** and **transgender students** who are disqualified from federal student aid to apply for the MAP Grant

**Note:** Although Selective Service registration is no longer required to qualify for federal financial aid, there is still a federal law requiring Selective Service registration for those who are under 26 and assigned a male gender at birth. This federal requirement continues to apply to both citizens and noncitizens.
Alternative Application Process

- Pre-screening questions available to first time applicants
- An ISAC ID number is assigned once the applicant creates a Student Profile
- The Alternative Application is patterned after the FAFSA
  - Uses the same EFC formula to determine MAP eligibility
- Students and parents must sign the application electronically using PINs provided by ISAC
  - PINs are e-mailed to the e-mail addresses provided on the application
Financial Aid Applications

**WHEN**
- As soon as possible after October 1st

**WHO**
- High school seniors and college students

**HOW**
- FAFSA: [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)
- Alternative App: [www.isac.org/alternativeapp](http://www.isac.org/alternativeapp)

**WHY**
- Determine eligibility for federal and state aid programs
- Some institutions use these to award institutional aid
Public Act 101-0180 (FAFSA Graduation Requirement)
FAFSA Graduation Requirement

- Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, in addition to all other graduation requirements, a high school senior enrolled in an Illinois public high school must meet one of the following requirements in order to receive a diploma:
  - File a FAFSA; or
  - File an application for state financial aid; or
  - File a waiver/opt-out form with the school district
FAFSA Graduation Requirement  Continued

● School districts must:
  1. Require each high school student to comply
  2. Provide to each high school student and, if applicable, his or her parent or guardian any support or assistance necessary to comply
  3. Award a high school diploma to a student who is unable to meet the requirements of subsection (a) due to extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school district, if
     i. The student has met all other graduation requirements under the School Code, AND
     ii. The principal attests that the school district has made a good faith effort to assist the student or, if applicable, his or her parent or guardian in filing an application or waiver
FAFSA/Alternative Application Nonparticipation Form

- Created by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
  - Must be filed with the school district
  - Indicates the parent or guardian or, if applicable, the student understands what the FAFSA and the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid are and has chosen not to file an application
    - Must use the ISBE waiver form
    - Available in English and Spanish
  - For non-financial aid questions or questions about the waiver/opt-out form, you can email ISBE at fafsa@isbe.net
FAFSA/Alternative Application Nonparticipation Form Continued

- Information requested (p.1)
  - Student information
  - School information
  - Parent/guardian information
- Certification of financial aid application knowledge
- Parent/guardian or student signature
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) (p.2)

○ What is the FAFSA?

● Information on this page must be read to certify that the student will opt out of completing a financial aid application
FAFSA Completion Initiative Overview
Financial Aid Application Completion Tool

- ISAC offers the Financial Aid Application Completion Initiative to assist public and private high schools in identifying students who have not completed a FAFSA/Alternative Application.
- It is a resource for Illinois high schools to keep track of their students’ financial aid application completion.
- Helps schools identify students who may need assistance with the financial aid process.
- Can be used to document compliance with the ISBE FAFSA graduation requirement.
Financial Aid Data Matching

- ISAC receives public high school senior class data from ISBE
- Private schools must complete a student record upload
- The student roster is then matched with FAFSAs and Alternative Applications that are filed each week
- ISAC provides participating high schools with updated information every Monday through the GAP Access portal

Note: A roster that is uploaded by the school is the best way to ensure an accurate completion match and rate
Financial Aid Application Completion
Performance Metrics

- Current high school completion rate
- Can sort and filter to search any high school across the state
- Can compare up to two years of completion data
- Data updated every week
2021 Recognition of Excellence

- All schools with an award will receive the center banner the first year they place.
- Award period for the Class of ’21 was from October 1, 2020 – August 21, 2021:
  - 26 Platinum schools
  - 76 Gold schools
  - 127 Silver schools
  - 202 Bronze schools
2022 Recognition Calculation and Participation Criteria

- Award period for Class of ‘22
  - October 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
  - 67% will be Bronze based on the Class of ‘21 average
- Public schools
  - ISAC will use ISBE-provided data to prepopulate rosters
- Private school
  - Must complete a student record upload for the entire class of 2022 into the GAP Access portal at least once during the award period

Note: If your school does not appear in the Financial Aid Applications Completion chart (pictured in slide 19), please upload a roster
FAFSA Completion Initiative User Guide
GAP Access Portal Sign-Up

- The FAFSA Completion Initiative tool is only available to high schools.
- School principal must certify and agree to the terms and conditions.
  - School principal can then designate privileges to authorized users.
- For questions, contact:
  - Mary Lewis
    - Mary.Lewis@Illinois.gov
School Summary

- School summary will include:
  - Graduation year
  - Class size
  - Filed a financial aid application
  -Filed, has EFC
  - Filed, no EFC
  - Pell eligible
  - MAP eligible
  - Total Opt Out
Data by Graduation Year

- Once graduating class has been selected, user will have access to:
  - Opt-Out Waiver checkbox
  - Individual data
  - Application filing status
  - Date application was received
  - MAP eligibility
Add and Delete Function

- Add student records to your school’s list
- Delete student records that should not appear on the school’s list
- Users can edit students date of birth and name
- Changes will be reflected immediately, but data is matched every Monday
Reports

- Schools can download a report that mirrors the format of the Graduation Year screen in excel format
- Data can be sorted as needed
- Schools should monitor their school rosters and make any updates as necessary
- ISBE will accept reports for compliance
FAFSA Graduation Requirement Compliance

- The ISAC generated roster can be saved/printed to demonstrate compliance for the entire class having submitted a financial aid application or a non-participation form.
  - You must participate in ISAC’s FAFSA Completion Initiative in order to access this report.
- Paper/electronic waivers can be kept in the individual student file or with the master list for the entire class.
- This requirement must be met by July 31st of the graduating class year along with all other ISBE graduation requirements.
Resources to Support Financial Aid Completion
ISAC Corps Provides Year-Round Help

- The ISACorps are near peer mentors trained to support students and families with college planning and financial aid.
- The ISACorps continues to assist the community outside of financial aid season to ensure that students have all the tools and resources that will help them transition to a college campus.
ISAC College Q&A

- This text messaging service allows students and parents to send their college planning and financial aid questions to a real-life ISAC staff member.
- This service is particularly valuable when a counselor or ISACorps member is not immediately available.
#RocktheFAFSAIL

- Statewide campaign to increase student’s financial aid application completion
- High schools are encouraged to host one or more financial aid application completion workshops throughout the winter and spring
  - ISAC staff is available to assist
  - Use the Rock the FAFSA toolkit to help get the word out
ISAC College Minute

● College planning and college-going topics in less than a minute!
  ○ Available in Spanish

● Use as quick reminders during the school day
NCAN FAFSA Tracker
As of 2/18/22 for the Senior Class of 2022

- Illinois’ FAFSA completion rate is 50.3%
  - IL ranks #3 nationally
  - National completion rate is 37.7%
- Compared to the Class of 2021, during the same period
  - There is a 0.4% increase in the FAFSA completion rate in Illinois
  - There is a 1.7% increase in the overall national FAFSA completion rate

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Rank</th>
<th>% of Seniors Completing</th>
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Resource Links

- ISBE FY22 FAFSA Nonparticipation Form
- Financial Aid Application Completion Performance Metrics
- Financial Aid Completion Initiative User Guide
- Rock the FAFSA Toolkit
- #ISAC College Minute
- NCAN FAFSA Tracker
Thank You!

Questions?

Reach out to
Manuel Talavera | Professional Development Specialist
manuel.talavera@illinois.gov