Financial Aid
Success Toolkit

Resources to Support 100% FAFSA/CADAA Completion for Los Angeles Unified

Table of Contents

Welcome to the LAUSD
Financial Aid Success Toolkit (FAST)

The A-G Intervention and Support office wants to ensure that every eligible Los Angeles Unified School District(Los Angeles Unified) senior receives the maximum amount of Financial Aid possible. Schools will find information, templates, and more to support all seniors and their families to complete their fafsa/cadaa application. The FAST has the most updated information for the new 2024-2025 Better FAFSA/Better CADAA application, but please check back often as information may change or be updated.

You can also follow our social media channels for updates on the amazing financial aid resources available to California students.
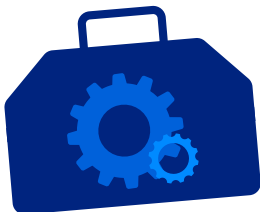
@CollegeAdvising4LAUSD   **@A_G4Lausd**

lausd.org/A-G

For more information and resources please visit the FAST Guide Webpage
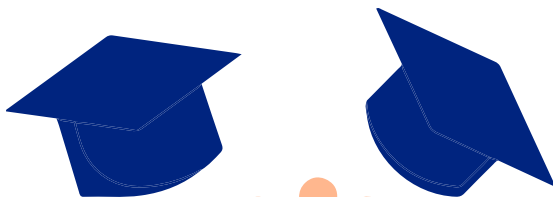
FAST Guide

Dear School and District Leaders,

The Los Angeles Unified School District is committed to achieving equity in college readiness, access, and enrollment for all students. The importance of applying for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) aligns to the 2022-2026 Strategic plan to ensure that all students graduate college and are career ready and is nationally recognized as a critical step on the path to college.

In 2022-2023, over 96% of Los Angeles Unified students submitted a FAFSA/CADAA application, and 89% of students fully completed the application last year. Out of the 64% of students eligible for a Cal Grant, 53% were awarded a grant.

In addition to the District goal of 100% completion, California passed AB469 (2021), amended California Education Code Section 51225.7 so that, beginning with the Class of 2023, each grade 12 student will need to complete a FAFSA or CADAA application unless the student or family elects to opt-out.

We are excited to share our **Financial Aid Success Toolkit (FAST)** to support efforts to help our students and families complete their financial aid applications. FAST includes a guide for schools with engagement strategies to support financial aid completion. There are videos, slide decks, communication templates, and social media samples to communicate effectively with students and families about important deadlines as well as opportunities to get support in completing their applications.

Should you need additional information or support, please reach out to your Region A-G Administrator Coordinators or other staff listed in the contact information section.

The Priority deadline for the FAFSA/CADAA is April 2 for this financial aid cycle.

New for 2024-2025: Better FAFSA/ Better CADAA

FAFSA Overview

1 **An FSA ID is an account username and password that is required to access the FAFSA form. Users without a Social Security number can create an FSA ID to access the FAFSA form.**

- Need FSA ID to access and edit information online
- Two-step verification for everyone setting up the FSA ID

2 **FAFSA roles:**

- Roles: Student (applicant), Parent (contributor)
- Once all required fields have been provided and all sections have been signed, any role can submit the FAFSA form
- Dependent students must invite their parent(s) to contribute to their form if parent information is required
- Independent students and a dependent student's parent must invite their spouse to contribute to the student's form, if spouse information is required

3 **Contributors:**

- Possible contributors: Parent, Other Parent, Student Spouse, and Student (when invited by Parent)
- Contributors must provide the required information and sign their respective section on the FAFSA form to be considered complete

4 **Requires consent from contributors to:**

- Retrieve and disclose federal tax information
- Be eligible for federal student aid
- Be eligible to receive an SAI (Student Aid Index) formerly EFC (Expected Family Contribution)

5 **Eligibility for need-based financial aid is determined by subtracting the student's SAI and other financial assistance from the cost of attending school.**

- Equation: Cost of Attendance (COA) - Student Aid Index (SAI) - Other Financial Assistance (OFA) = Financial need

New for 2024-2025:
Better FAFSA/ Better CADAA

2024-2025 FAFSA Updates

1   **Students can list up to 20 colleges (previous limit was 10)**

2   **Online FAFSA available in 11 most common languages spoken in U.S.**

3   **Paid preparation no longer permitted**

4   **More financial aid for single parent households. Two types:**

- Dependent students with just one parent
- Independent students who are single parents

5   **Greater eligibility for the maximum Federal Pell Grant**

6   **Less aid for middle-income and high-income families**

7   **Less aid for families with multiple children in college**

- Household size is now Family size and will be determined by the number of exemptions claimed on the federal tax return
- Can modify the family size to reflect current number

BETTER FAFSA
BETTER CADAA

New for 2024-2025: Better FAFSA/ Better CADAA

2024-2025 FAFSA Updates

1   **New questions on student's gender, race, and ethnicity (no effect on student aid eligibility)**

2   **Changes to Reportable Income:**

- Types of untaxed income no longer reported (cash support, money paid on student's behalf, Veteran's education benefits, Workman's Compensation)
- Gifts to students such as distributions from 529 college savings plans owner by a non-custodial parent or grandparent no longer affect aid eligibility
- Child support received is now reported as an asset instead of income

3   **Changes to Reportable Assets:**

- All assets are considered in the formula. Small businesses and farms are no longer excluded
- Simplified Needs Test is now known as "Applicants Exempt from Asset Reporting"

4   **Income is reported for the parent who provides the most support**

5   **Student Aid Index (SAI) can have a minimum of -$1500**

- A negative value does NOT increase Federeal and State aid, but may increase institutional aid

7   **Identity match required for each contributor to verify FSA ID**

- A unique verified email address will be required to establish an account

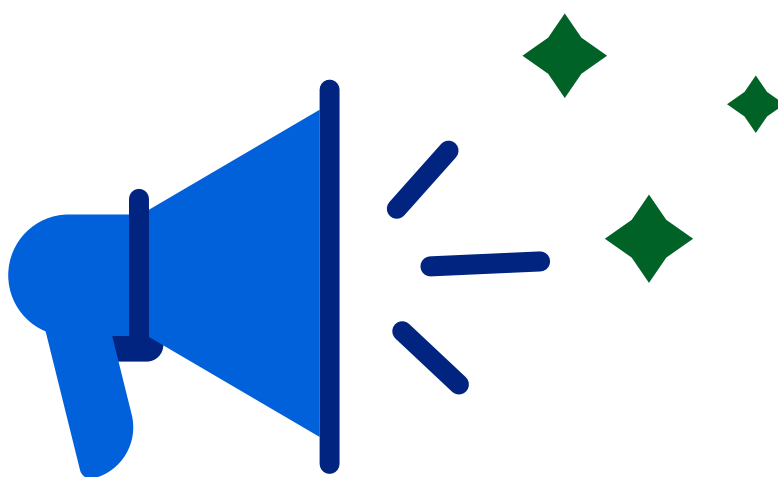- Family members cannot use the same account

8   **Users can apply for an FSA ID without entering an SSN or ITIN**

- Users without an SSN or ITIN will need to complete a knowledge-based identity verification process

FAFSA/CADAA Talking Points

General Talking Points:

- Students who file a FAFSA/CADAA have better postsecondary outcomes – they enroll directly into college in higher numbers, persist in college longer, and complete a bachelor's degree at higher rates than non-filers.

- In addition, students who complete and submit their financial aid applications become eligible for a greater number of funding sources for college: federal student loans with lower interest rates, forgivable student loans, federal and state scholarships and grants, and institutional aid.

- Los Angeles Unified is dedicated to finding creative solutions to support students in completing FAFSA/CADAA applications. We are providing schools with additional funding to offer after school and weekend help for students to complete their financial aid applications. As students complete their applications, schools will shift to supporting understanding financial aid award letters, tuition bills and payment options, the verification process, scholarship/grants search and loan options, college acceptance decisions, and submitting the Statement of Intent to Register.

- Los Angeles Unified is working closely with our community partners at L.A. Cash for College and CAL-SOAP to offer workshops for families and students. Topics range from financial literacy, financial aid overviews, to hands-on completion of the FAFSA/CADAA. Workshops are offered live and recorded for on demand viewing, in both English and Spanish. Future workshops will include how to read financial aid award letters, discussing the best match and fit as our graduates begin to make decisions for transition.

FAFSA/CADAA Talking Points

For students and families:

- Did you know that 2/3 of jobs now require some college education? Whether you already have your sights set on college, or if you're still exploring your options after graduation, all seniors should apply for financial aid by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024.

- Don't miss your opportunity to get FREE money to pay for the education you need for a successful career. Getting an Associate's Degree will help you earn an extra $7,000 a year on average than with just your high school diploma.

- All Los Angeles Unified graduates can go to college for FREE at any of the L.A. Community College District's 9 campuses through the L.A. College Promise Program. But you have to apply for financial aid by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024.

- Each year, hundreds of billions of dollars in financial aid are awarded nationally to undergraduate students in the form of grants and scholarships, work-study, and loans. Financial aid is provided by the federal government, the state governments, and colleges and universities.

- Interested in financial aid? You'll need to complete the FAFSA this year! You will need an FSA ID, so create one as soon as possible as it can take up to three days before you can use your account. FSA ID is a username and password combination used to log in, complete, and submit the 2024-2025 FAFSA form. You can find more information on getting an FSA ID at the [Federal Student Aid Website](#)

- FAFSA and CADAA are due by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024 to qualify for aid. If you make a mistake on your form, you will need your FSA ID to make corrections. Corrections can also be made after the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024.

- You can correct a mistake after April 2, but you need to submit by the deadline.

- Reach out to the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend if there will be a significant change in you or your parent's income for the present year or if your family has other circumstances that cannot be reported on the FAFSA form.

FAFSA/CADAA Talking Points

For staff:

- Educators, did you know that you can access support for helping students complete financial aid applications? Direct students to resources and financial aid workshops offered by L.A. Cash for College, CAL-SOAP and CSAC.

- Many students do not complete financial aid applications for several reasons: financial aid applications are complicated; parents may feel uncertain about sending their children to college, especially if they rely on them for childcare or for income support; students may feel unsure about going to college, worried about leaving their families, or that they won't belong.

- Educators can help in promoting a sense of urgency with your seniors with financial aid applications. Share the importance of financial aid and post-secondary education and coordinate with your school counselors to offer assistance and resources to help students complete their financial aid applications by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024.
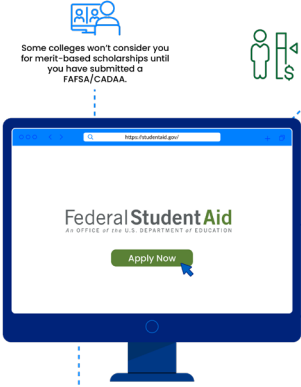
The Why of Financial Aid

Use these infographics to support knowledge and support for financial aid completion.

Steps to Apply for Financial Aid

FAFSA	CADAA
1 Create a FSA ID (Federal Student Aid ID) https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch	**1** Create an account https://dream.csac.ca.gov/landing
2 Gather all documents and information to begin your FAFSA http://bit.ly/486qdBW	**2** Complete your application using this checklist from Immigrants Rising http://bit.ly/486qdBW
3 Create a MyWebGrants Account https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/	**3** Create a MyWebGrants Account https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/
4 Review your Student Aid Report and prepare to submit financial aid documents to colleges and universities https://studentaid.gov/help/after-fafsa	**4** Review your account and prepare to submit financial aid documents to colleges and universities

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5 Reasons Why Students Need to Complete a Financial Aid Application

Some colleges won't consider you for merit-based scholarships until you have submitted a FAFSA/CADAA.

In California, only about 50% of seniors don't apply for the FAFSA/CADAA. That's about $500 million in money left on the table.

Federal Student Aid
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Apply Now

https://studentaid.gov/

4 out of 5 California Students use a combination of Federal, State, and college-based aid to pay for college.

On average, students with a bachelor's degree earn $1 million more over their working lives than someone with only a high school diploma.

47% More than 47% of California students qualify for the PELL grant, which does not need to be paid back.

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Which Financial Aid Application to Complete?

Students should only complete one of the applications (not both), according to the citizenship requirements below:

You are eligible to complete the **FAFSA** if you are a:	**OR**	You are eligible to complete the **CADAA** if you are:
U.S Citizen		Undocumented
Permanent Resident		Have a valid or expired DACA
Eligible non-citizen		U Visa holders
T Visa holder		Have Temporary Protected Status (TPS) 2 | Page Revised 11/21
		Meet the non-resident exemption requirements under AB 540, SB 2000, SB 68

Federal Student Aid
An OFFICE of the U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

www.fafsa.ed.gov

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

https://dream.csac.ca.gov

If you have further questions, including how to ensure you are completing the correct financial aid application, you can visit the Immigrants Rising website and review the document titled, "FAFSA VS CA Dream Act: Apply to the Correct Financial Aid," at: bit.ly/486qdBW

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What is Financial Aid?

Financial Aid is money from the Federal or State government, college, or private scholarship to pay for school.

It can be either:

GIVEN	Grants: Cal Grant(s) PELL grants Scholarships
EARNED	Work Study
BORROWED (Loans)	Subsidized Unsubsidized Parent PLUS

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Materials are also available in Spanish

FAQs for Stakeholders

Why do I need to provide all the private information requested on the applications? How is this information shared?

The information you provide on your college financial aid applications is used SOLELY for determining financial aid. It is shared only with the financial aid office and no other government entities.

Why should I complete a financial aid application if I'm not applying to college this fall?

Even if you don't think you will attend college, it is important to apply for financial aid before the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024. You don't HAVE to accept the aid, but you can't ask for it later.

Who is eligible for the FAFSA? What is the deadline?

All students who are U.S. citizens, U.S. permanent residents, or other eligible non-citizens who will graduate from high school or have received their GED. All students who are eligible should apply by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024. But students shouldn't wait until the last minute. Some colleges use FAFSA as a starting point for determining how much financial support a student will need, so the earlier a student can submit their FAFSA, the earlier they can work with their college to determine other financial aid supports that might be available to them.

➔ More information https://www.csac.ca.gov/how-apply

Who is eligible for the CA DREAM Act? What is the deadline?

The California Dream Act allows undocumented and nonresident students who qualify for a non-resident exemption under Assembly Bill 540 (AB 540) to receive certain types of financial aid such as: private scholarships funded through public universities, state administered financial aid, university grants, community college fee waivers, and Cal Grants.

Students who live in California and meet the eligibility requirements for a non-resident exemption, as well as students who have a U Visa or TPS status, can use the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). Similarly, students without Social Security Numbers or students who have lost DACA status (or never applied for DACA), may still be eligible. Students are encouraged to apply by the April 2 Priority deadline to ensure they are considered for all financial aid for which they might be eligible.

➔ More information: https://dream.csac.ca.gov/

What is a CAL Grant and how do I apply?

The Cal Grant is a California-specific financial aid allocation that does not need to be paid back. Cal Grant applicants who apply for the FAFSA or CADAA by the deadline and meet all eligibility, financial, and minimum GPA requirements of either program automatically receive a Cal Grant. Grants are for students attending University of California, California State University, California Community College, or qualifying independent and career colleges or technical schools in California.

➔ More information: https://www.csac.ca.gov/cal-grants

FAQs for Stakeholders

Supporting Foster Youth and Students Experiencing Homelessness

What is the CHAFEE grant and who is eligible to receive it?

The California Chafee Grant for Foster Youth (Chafee Grant) awards up to $5,000 a year to eligible foster youth to be used at any eligible career or technical training school, California college or university. You can also attend schools in other states. To be eligible, students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Not have reached your 26th birthday as of July 1st of the award year.

2. If you were in foster care for at least one day, between the ages of 16 and 18. **or** Be a youth who was placed in out-of-home care by a tribe or tribal organization between the ages of 16-18.

➜ For more information, visit chafee.csac.ca.gov

What are some additional online resources?

Resources to support students who are foster youth and those experiencing homelessness. John Burton Advocates for Youth provides these tools for school counselors and teachers.

➜ https://jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/

➜ https://jbay.org/resources/fafsa-challenge-policies-tools/

What supports are offered at various California public universities and colleges?

Each college system has support services for students in Foster Care or those experiencing homelessness - visit the website for more information.

➜ CSU

➜ Each UC campus has a foster youth campus coordinator- you can find all contact info here for the foster youth campus coordinators at the UC campuses to which you apply

➜ Each of the 116 California Community Colleges has a Foster Youth Liaison on campus. Additionally, many campuses have programs available to provide resources and support to students in foster care. To see the directory of California community college campus-based Foster Youth Liaisons, please click here. To find out more details about what programs specific campuses offer, please refer to California College Pathways

FAQs for Stakeholders

What happens if a student is eligible for the FAFSA but their parents are undocumented?

Your parent or spouse doesn't need an SSN to complete their section of your FAFSA form.

Starting in December 2023, parents or spouses will be able to create a StudentAid.gov account without having an SSN to access their portion of your FAFSA form. On the 2024–25 FAFSA form, if the parent or spouse is completing their own section and doesn't have an SSN, the SSN will be blank and disabled. If the parent or spouse has an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), they should add it to the FAFSA form. If they don't have an ITIN, they should leave that question blank.

Note: The StudentAid.gov account your parent creates for the 2024–25 FAFSA form can't be used for the 2023–24 FAFSA form.

On the 2023–24 FAFSA form, if your parent doesn't have an SSN, your parent must enter 000-00-0000 when the FAFSA form asks for their SSN. You'll have to print out the signature page from the online FAFSA form so your parent can sign it and mail it to the address indicated.

→ More information: https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/undocumented-students

How can immigrant students who are documented or undocumented get support to navigate college financial aid?

Immigrants (documented and undocumented) often have a harder time finding the supports they need to access financial aid for college. High schools that make a concerted effort to train staff in the financial aid application process and support immigrant students can make a big difference. Community based organizations such as **Immigrants Rising**, A College Bridge Cafe, and Latino U College Access can provide additional expert support.

→ More information: https://immigrantsrising.org/going-to-college/

What documents do students and their families need to complete the FAFSA?

All students and contributors identified must obtain a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) to sign the FAFSA electronically — there should be one ID for the student and separate ID is for the parent/ other contributors — prior to completing their FAFSA. It takes only a few minutes. Students with parents who are undocumented can still file the FAFSA. While parents who are undocumented are not able to use a SSN, they can obtain an FSA ID and provide consent. They can print the signature page, complete it, and mail it in instead.

FAQs for Stakeholders

What are verification requests?

It is common for students and families to be asked to submit copies of documents (generally income tax returns, W-2 forms, and 1099 forms) to help financial aid administrators certify that all the information submitted on the FAFSA/CADAA form is accurate. If families receive an email notice, phone call or letter from a FAFSA/CADAA administrator or college with a verification request, they should respond as quickly as possible with the requested information. The colleges' financial aid office will keep this information confidential. Students and families should reach out to their school for support if you receive verification requests. Verification requests are not unusual, and schools can help navigate how to respond promptly.

Will I have to complete financial aid forms every year?

Yes. You must submit forms every year you are enrolled in college, and the earlier you do so the better. Usually the FAFSA and CADAA application windows open October 1 each year.

Are there any good resources online where I can get my questions answered or get additional support about financial aid?

Yes! If you've been accepted by any college or university, the school's financial aid representatives are a great resource. They are experts in financial aid for college whom you can meet with individually. In addition, many colleges and universities host admitted students events where you can also get financial aid support.

What happens after I submit my FAFSA/CADAA?

All students should create a WebGrants 4 Students (WG4S) account to monitor and manage their state awarded financial aid. After a student's FAFSA or CADAA application is processed, they will receive an email from CSAC letting them know it's time to create their WebGrants 4 Students account. WebGrants 4 Students (WG4S) will let students check the status of their state grants, and take necessary steps to secure their aid. It's important to note that a student's WG4S account does not replace their school or FAFSA accounts and they may need more than one account to successfully apply for financial aid. Stay up-to-date on deadlines and requirements by reading all correspondence from CSAC, FAFSA and your school of attendance.

Where can I go to apply for more aid - like scholarships?

Your counselor can help provide great info on scholarships, and you can log on to Naviance.

Los Angeles Unified students can use Naviance to search for scholarships.	Resources for foster youth and youth experiencing homelessness **Resource coming soon**	For information for undocumented students here bit.ly/3RJ8Lyw

FAQs for Stakeholders

What is the L.A. College Promise? How do I apply and what are the benefits?

The Los Angeles College Promise (LACP) serves first-time, full-time college students and is designed to support students to complete a higher education degree and/or a workforce certificate. LACP helps students "start right" on their way to "ending right" with a degree, university transfer or workforce certificate in a timely, efficient manner. It is a partnership between Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), City of Los Angeles, L.A. Chamber of Commerce, UNITE L.A. and private philanthropy.

Important aspects of the Promise are waived tuition for the first two years of college, priority enrollment, the opportunity to receive a free laptop, additional financial support, and a dedicated support team providing academic and student support services.

Important aspects of the Promise are:	
Waived tuition for the first two years of college	Priority enrollment
Opportunity to receive a free laptop	Additional financial support
Dedicated support team providing academic and student support services	

→ More information about the LA College Promise here: https://lacollegepromise.org/

FAFSA/CADAA Resource Bank of Engagement Activities

Flyers and Guides

To help message the value of FAFSA/CADAA, and flyers and infographics are provided, along with templates for holding events to support FAFSA/CADAA workshops. Many are in English and Spanish.

Messages Home

Keep in contact with families – use Blackboard Connect (phone and text), Schoology, website, emails, and social media to families with reminders about the FAFSA/CADAA as well as information about upcoming deadlines, school counselor office hours and opportunities to get support to complete financial aid applications.

Race to Submit

Regularly check on your school's progress toward FAFSA/CADAA completion. The only way to access individual student completion is to have a Webgrants Administrator. This person is assigned by the principal and has access to updated financial aid completion used to track how well your school's efforts are working and target resources to individual students and families who need support.

Financial Aid Awareness

Make FAFSA/CADAA a team effort and involve families and school staff. At every meeting with families, add in a few slides sharing the importance of the FAFSA/CADAA. Use professional development time to share instructional videos with staff to increase awareness of the FAFSA/CADAA. These videos will address specifics on supporting students who file the FAFSA and those who file the CADAA navigate to the college financial aid application process.

Click to view materials

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Flyers and Guides

Hold regular office hours at least once per week for students and families to receive support from school counselors or community experts to complete their FAFSA/CADAA. Publicize these office hours on your school website and with classroom college access lab hours.

Materials are also available in Spanish

Click on the images to download PDFs

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Messages Home

Blackboard Connect Messages

Under 300 characters (Text messages)

English	Seniors and families of seniors – it's not too late to apply for college financial aid! April 2 is the deadline. Contact your school counselor for help.
Spanish	¡Estudiantes de último año y sus familias – no es demasiado tarde para completar las aplicaciones de ayuda financiera! El 2 de abril es el último día. Contacto a su consejero/a escolar para obtener ayuda.

Under 300 characters (Text messages)

English	Hello. This is Principal [name] from [school]. Has your senior completed their financial aid applications yet? [Name], our school counselor and other helpers will be available.
Spanish	Hola. Habla [Principal's name] el/la director/a de [school name]. ¿Ya ha completado su estudiante las aplicaciones para ayuda financiera para la universidad? [Counselor's Name], nuestro/a consejero/a escolar y otros ayudantes estarán disponibles.

Over 300 characters (Text messages)

English	This is Principal [name] from [school]. All seniors should complete their financial aid for college applications before April 2! [School name] is holding our final office hours on [date] from [time] at [location] to help seniors and families complete your financial aid applications and respond to verification requests. Join us to get your questions answered or to get help submitting your applications!
Spanish	Este es [Principal's name] el/la director/a de [school name]. ¡Todos los estudiantes de último año necesitan completar sus aplicaciones para ayuda financiera antes del 2 de abril! [School name] está proveyendo Horas de Oficina el [date] a las [time] en [location] para ayudar a los estudiantes y sus familias a completar las aplicaciones para ayuda financiera.

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Messages Home

Blackboard Connect Messages

Over 300 characters (Email messages)

English

Hello. This is [Principal's name] from [school name]. Has your senior completed their financial aid applications yet? Submitting the FAFSA or CA DREAM Act is one of the most critical steps your senior can take toward college success. [School name] is holding a number of events over the next few weeks to support seniors and families to complete their financial aid applications and respond to verification requests. Stay tuned to our social media or ask [counselor name] for more information about upcoming financial aid for college completion events!

Spanish

Hola. Habla [Principal's name] el/la director/a de [school name]. ¿Ya ha completado su estudiante de último año las aplicaciones para ayuda financiera universitaria? Uno de los pasos hacia el éxito universitario más importantes que puede tomar su estudiante es completar las aplicaciones para FAFSA o CA DREAM Act. [school name] está organizando varios eventos durante los próximas semanas para apoyar a los estudiantes de último año y sus familias para completar sus aplicaciones para ayuda financiera y responder a las solicitudes de verificación. ¡Estén atentos a nuestras redes sociales o pregunten a [counselor name] para obtener más información sobre los próximos eventos para completar la ayuda financiera universitaria!

Over 300 characters (Text messages)

English

This is [Principal name] from [school name]. Has your senior completed their financial aid applications for college yet? [School name] is committed to supporting 100% of our seniors to apply for financial aid this year – even if they're not sure if they're going to college in the fall. Stay tuned for more information about upcoming financial aid for college completion events

Spanish

Este es [Principal's name] el/la director/a de [school name]. ¿Ya ha completado su estudiante de último año las aplicaciones para ayuda financiera para la universidad? [school name] estamos comprometidos a apoyar al 100% de nuestros estudiantes de último año para que soliciten ayuda financiera - aun si no están seguros si asistirán a la universidad en el otoño. ¡Estén atentos para obtener más información sobre los próximos eventos para completar la ayuda financiera universitaria

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Schoology/Email/Website Messages for Families Samples

Message 1 / Mensaje 1:

Date / Fecha

Dear _____School Students and Families,

Congratulations on reaching your senior year! We are excited to see you ready to graduate from high school, and to help you prepare for next steps. Whether you are enrolling in a bachelor's, associate's, a credential or a career technical education program, there's money available to help you pay for school.

There is a crucial deadline for you to remember -April 2. By this date, all students need to submit either the Better FAFSA or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) to qualify for most opportunities for financial aid. By submitting either the FAFSA/CADAA, you are also applying for state financial aid like Cal Grants and the Middle-Class Scholarship, federal financial aid programs like Pell Grants, and institutional aid from individual colleges like the Blue and Gold Scholarship or the State University Grant.

Let's work together so that each and every one of our seniors completes their financial aid applications!

Estimados estudiantes y familias de la escuela _____,

¡Felicidades por llegar a tu último año de preparatoria! Estamos emocionados de que estés listo para graduarte de la escuela preparatoria, y para ayudarte a prepararte para los próximos pasos. Ya sea que si te hayas inscrito para un programa de licenciatura, un título básico, una autorización o un programa de educación técnica profesional, hay dinero disponible para ayudarte a pagar por la escuela. Ve este video de nuestros socios en CALSOAP LA para entender mejor el proceso de ayuda financiera (inglés y español).

Hay una fecha límite que tienes que tener en mente - 2 de abril. Para esta fecha, todos los estudiantes necesitan presentar la Solicitud gratuita para obtener ayuda federal (FAFSA) o la solicitud de la Ley para Soñadores o Dream Act de California (CADAA) para calificar para la mayoría de las oportunidades de ayuda financiera. Al presentar la FAFSA/CADAA, también estás solicitando ayuda financiera estatal como Cal Grant y la beca de clase media, programas federales de ayuda financiera como subvenciones de Pell, y ayuda institucional de universidades individuales como la beca Blue and Gold o la subvención de la universidad estatal.

Trabajemos juntos para que todos y cada uno de los estudiantes de último año de preparatoria completen sus solicitudes de ayuda financiera.

[Principal's name]

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Schoology/Email/Website Messages for Families Samples

Message 2 / Mensaje 2:

Date / Fecha
Dear _____School Students and Families,
Now is the time to apply for financial aid. Use the timeline below to help you submit your application by the Priority deadline of April 2, 2024!

What is the timeline for the FAFSA/CADAA?

1. GATHER YOUR FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS AND DECIDE IF YOU NEED TO COMPLETE FAFSA OR CADAA
   Use the FAFSA unless you are an undocumented, Dream Act-eligible student. Students in these categories should submit the CA Dream Act Application.
2. CREATE YOUR FSA ID
   This is only for students who will be completing the FAFSA. Students completing the CA Dream Act Application should skip to step #3. Need help creating your FSA ID? Watch our CALSOAP L.A. Video How to Create: FSA ID
3. BY THE PRIORITY DEADLINE OF APRIL 2, 2024 SUBMIT THE FAFSA OR CADAA
4. CHECK YOUR EMAIL
   After your FAFSA or CADAA application is processed, you'll receive an email letting you know it's time to create your WebGrants4Students account.

Estimados estudiantes y familias de la escuela _____,
Ahora es el momento de aplicar por la ayuda financiera. Utiliza el calendario que aparece a continuación para ayudarte a enviar tu solicitud antes del 2 de abril.

¿Cuál es la cronología para el programa de FAFSA?

1. REÚNE TUS DOCUMENTOS FINANCIEROS Y DECIDE SI NECESITAS COMPLETAR LA FAFSA O CADAA
   Usa la FAFSA a menos que seas un estudiante indocumentado y elegible para la Ley para Soñadores o Dream Act. Los estudiantes en estas categorías deben presentar la solicitud de la Ley de Soñadores o Dream Act de CA.
2. ESTABELCE TU ID DE FSA
   Esto es solo para los estudiantes que van a completar la FAFSA. Los estudiantes que completen la solicitud de CA Dream Act deben pasar al paso 3. ¿Necesitas ayuda para crear tu ID de FSA? Ve nuestro video de CALSOAP LA Cómo crear: ID DE FSA
3. ANTES DEL 2 de abril, ENTREGA LA FAFSA O CADAA
4. REVISA TU DIRECCIÓN DE CORREO ELECTRÓNICO
   Después de procesar tu solicitud de FAFSA o CADAA, recibirás un correo electrónico informándote de que es hora de crear tu cuenta WebGrants4Students.

[Principal's name]

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Messages Home

Schoology/Email/Website Messages for Families Samples
Message 3 / Mensaje 3:

Date / Fecha
Dear Families,
If your senior has not yet completed their FAFSA/CADAA - it is not too late. Please join our college center's office hours or attend a workshop from our partners to get help completing your senior's financial aid application. You can contact your college center here [add contact information for college counselor or lead on financial aid] You can also visit the CALSOAP L.A. and L.A. Cash for College websites to find workshops in English and Spanish. These partners are State approved to help you with your financial aid application.
Before your workshop, make sure you are ready for the FAFSA/CADAA.

Estimadas familias,
Si su estudiante de último año de preparatoria aún no ha completado su FAFSA/CADAA - no es demasiado tarde. Por favor, únase a las horas de oficina de nuestro centro universitario o asista a un taller de nuestros socios para obtener ayuda para completar las solicitudes de ayuda financiera de su estudiante de último año. Puede contactar a su centro universitario aquí [añadir información de contacto para consejero universitario o dirigir en ayuda financiera] también puede visitar los sitios web de CALSOAP L.A. y L.A. Cash for College para encontrar talleres en inglés y español. Estos socios están aprobados por el Estado para ayudarle con su solicitud de ayuda financiera.
Antes de su taller, asegúrese de estar listo para la FAFSA/CADAA.

Ready to Apply?
Prepare for your financial aid application - it will make your work so much easier. Use this checklist to make sure you have all the terms you need before you meet with a counselor, advisor or attend a workshop for financial aid help. It lists what students and parents/guardians need. Be sure to check our school website and social media feeds for more updates. [add social media handles here] Let's work together so that each and every one of our seniors completes their financial aid applications!

¿Listo para completar la solicitud?
Prepárese para su solicitud de ayuda financiera - facilitará su trabajo mucho más. Use esta lista de verificación para asegurarse de que tiene todos los documentos que necesita antes de reunirse con un consejero, asesor o asistir a un taller para ayuda financiera. Enumera lo que los estudiantes y padres/tutores legales necesitan. Asegúrese de consultar el sitio web de nuestra escuela y las redes sociales para obtener más actualizaciones. [add social media handles here]
Trabajemos juntos para que todos y cada uno de nuestros estudiantes de último año de preparatoria completen sus solicitudes de ayuda financiera.

[Principal's name]

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Schoology/Email/Website Messages for Families Samples

Message 4 / Mensaje 4:

Date / Fecha

Dear Families,

It is a critical month for the [school name]'s FAFSA/CADAA completion push. Research shows that 90% of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA/CADAA go to college immediately after graduation – compared to just 55% of seniors who do not complete the application.

If your senior has not yet completed their FAFSA/CADAA, it is not too late – there are several opportunities for you to get help completing all the applications for which your senior is eligible. Students and families can [use bulleted items that apply to your school]

• Join us on [date] from [time] at [virtual location]. You are also encouraged to join us if you have questions about any verification requests you've received.
• Request appointments at additional times to receive support with financial aid applications. Please contact [name] to set up an appointment.
• Join an event hosted by our partners at L.A. Cash for College or CALSOAP

Let's work together so that each and every one of our seniors completes their financial aid applications!

Estimadas familias,

Es un mes crítico para la iniciativa de finalización de la solicitud FAFSA/CADAA de [nombre de la escuela]. Las investigaciones muestran que el 90% de los estudiantes de preparatoria que completan la solicitud FAFSA/CADAA entran a la universidad inmediatamente después de la graduación – comparado a apenas el 55% de los estudiantes de último año de preparatoria que no completan la solicitud

Si su estudiante de último año de preparatoria aún no ha completado su FAFSA/CADAA - no es demasiado tarde–hay varias oportunidades para que ayudar a completar todas las solicitudes para los estudiantes de último año de preparatoria que son elegibles. Los estudiantes y las familias pueden [use bulleted items that apply to your school]

• Únase a nosotros el [date] a partir de [time] en [virtual location]. También le animamos a que se una a nosotros si tiene preguntas sobre cualquier solicitud de verificación que haya recibido.
• Solicitar citas en horas adicionales para recibir apoyo con solicitudes de ayuda financiera. Póngase en contacto con [name] para programar una cita.
• Únase a un evento organizado por nuestros socios en L.A. Cash for College o CALSOAP
Asegúrese de consultar el sitio web de nuestra escuela y las redes sociales para obtener más actualizaciones. [agregar identificadores de redes sociales aquí]

Trabajemos juntos para que todos y cada uno de nuestros estudiantes de último año de preparatoria completen sus solicitudes de ayuda financiera.

[Principal's name]

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Messages Home

QR Codes for Sharing Communication Templates and Samples

Federal Resource

Financial Aid Tool Kit

State Resource

Training Materials

State Resource

FAQs

State Resource

CA Dream Act Application

Materials to Support Engagement Activities

Race to Submit

Regularly check on your school's progress toward FAFSA/CADAA completion. The only way to access individual student completion is to have a Webgrants Administrator. This person is assigned by the principal and has access to updated financial aid completion used to track how well your school's efforts are working and target resources to individual students and families who need support.

If your school needs to register a WebGrants Administrator:
→ go to https://www.csac.ca.gov/webgrants-access-request

For a video on how to use the system:
→ watch this link https://youtu.be/74wGVFOObHA

Access the Los Angeles Unified District Race to Submit data. This Google folder is updated weekly with information from the state and contains data sorted by school site/Community of School/Local District and Board District:
→ https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1a4ED97b0GAOggr9Daiis0lpwLfg1XFO7

Use this sample "Student Financial Aid Application Tracker" to help your school monitor student submissions.
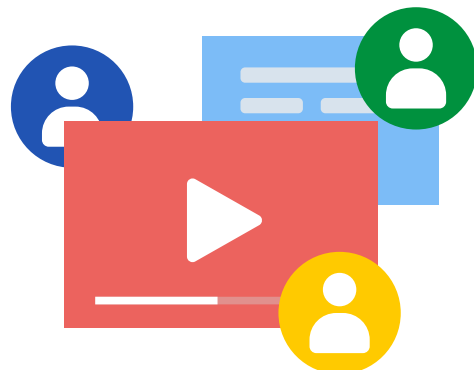→ Download Google Sheet: https://bit.ly/3S5H587

Financial Aid Awareness

Make FAFSA/CADAA a team effort and involve families and school staff. At every meeting with families, add in a few slides sharing the importance of the FAFSA/CADAA. Use professional development time to share instructional videos with staff to increase awareness of the FAFSA/CADAA. These videos will address specifics on supporting students who file the FAFSA and those who file the CADAA navigate to the college.

→ https://www.youtube.com/@CaStudentAid

Acknowledgements

FAST is made possible thanks to the collaboration between Los Angeles Unified Division of Instruction and our college access partners: L.A. Cash for College, California Student Opportunity and Access Program (CALSOAP) and John Burton Advocates for Youth.

Resources in the toolkit are intended to enhance the work already being done districtwide to support the drive for 100% FAFSA/CADAA completion. Region offices and school leaders will find tools and strategies to use immediately with students, families and staff to build the knowledge and skills needed to navigate towards successful financial aid application completion.

Thank you for your essential work with school communities.

Contact Information

A-G Region Coordinators

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Los Angeles Unified Departments

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Contact Us at lausd.org/a-g

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