

Preparing to Complete the FAFSA

**Grade Level:** 11, 12**Domain:**

Financial Literacy

TIME:

45 Minutes

This lesson is designed for students to learn about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and prepare to complete the form.

Objectives

Students will:

1. Identify the colleges they are applying to and research each school's financial aid requirements.
2. Learn about the FAFSA.
3. Learn how to create an FSA ID prior to completing the FAFSA.

MEFA Pathway Activities

- My Colleges

Materials Needed

- Internet connection
- College Application Manager (attached)
- MEFA's webinar, [Understanding the FAFSA](#)
- Key FAFSA Terms handout (attached)
- MEFA's video, [Creating an FSA ID](#)

Vocabulary

- FAFSA
- FSA ID

Future Ready Skills

- Time Management
- Communication
- Organization

PART 1

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE



Pre-Class Activity

Students should watch MEFA's webinar, [Understanding the FAFSA](#), to learn about the FAFSA and review the Key FAFSA Terms handout to become familiar with those terms.

PART 2

APPLYING INFORMATION

Students should watch MEFA's 90-second video, [Creating an FSA ID](#). Students should then create an FSA ID at studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account. Both the student and one custodial parent will need to create an FSA ID. Students should save their FSA ID and password in a safe place, as they will need this information to access the FAFSA and sign the form electronically. The student is now ready to complete the FAFSA when it becomes available on October 1.

PART 3

EVALUATING INFORMATION

Have students log in to MEFA Pathway and click on **My Colleges** under the *Explore Colleges* tab. For each college they are applying to, have students click on the college to view the details page. Students should scroll to the bottom and click on the college's website link to check admissions and financial aid deadlines. Have students add all of the colleges' admissions and financial aid deadlines, along with all additional required forms, to the *College Application Manager* (attached).

College Application Manager

As you explore colleges and build your college list, keep track of your details here. Remember that deadlines are critical when applying to college and requesting financial aid, so set reminders to ensure you submit all applications on time.

School Name	Admissions Deadline*	Send SAT, ACT or Neither	Required Financial Aid Apps	Financial Aid Deadline*	Notes

*If you're applying Early Action or Early Decision to a school, your admissions and financial aid deadlines will be earlier than the standard admissions and financial aid deadlines. Make sure to note these earlier deadlines here if applicable.

Key FAFSA Terms

FSA ID: A username and password that allows a student to log in to federal financial aid websites. Both the student and one custodial parent will need an FSA ID to submit the FAFSA.

Federal School Code (FSC): A unique number assigned to each college and university that provides federal financial aid to students. Families will need to list these codes on the FAFSA to indicate the schools to which the student is applying.

FUTURE Act Direct Data Exchange (FA-DDX): A resource provided by the Department of Education and IRS that allows the FAFSA to pull federal tax return data electronically into the FAFSA from the IRS website after a FAFSA contributor provides consent.

Student Aid Index (SAI): A calculated number intended to reflect the family's financial strength and ability to pay for college, though it does not define what exactly a family is required to pay for college. A family's SAI will appear immediately on the confirmation page once the FAFSA is submitted, and each college will use the SAI to determine the student's financial aid offer.

FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS): A summary of the information that a family has provided on the FAFSA, as well as notification of basic federal financial aid eligibility. Students receive an FSS soon after submitting a FAFSA.