

College Preparation: FAFSA

Lindsay Hawkins, Sherry Franklin, Ann Newman, Lacy Pennington
Published by *K20 Center*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License

Time Frame 2 periods

Essential Question(s)

- What is the FAFSA?
- In what ways can the FAFSA benefit students?

Summary

In this session, students will learn the importance of the FAFSA and important information about filling out the FAFSA. Students will brainstorm ways to pay for college.

Learning Goals

- Students will explore and evaluate the benefits of the FAFSA.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the FAFSA process.
- Students will create a FSA ID.

Attachments

- Activity Slides—College Preparation FAFSA.pptx
- FAFSA Checklist—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.pdf
- FAFSA Checklist—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf
- FAFSA Facts—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.docx
- FAFSA Facts—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.pdf
- FAFSA Facts—College Preparation FAFSA.docx
- FAFSA Facts—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide (Teacher Guide)—College Preparation FAFSA.docx
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide (Teacher Guide)—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.docx
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.pdf
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide—College Preparation FAFSA.docx
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf
- Paying for College—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.docx
- Paying for College—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.pdf
- Paying for College—College Preparation FAFSA.docx
- Paying for College—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf
- Scholarships for Me—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.docx
- Scholarships for Me—College Preparation FAFSA - Spanish.pdf
- Scholarships for Me—College Preparation FAFSA.docx
- Scholarships for Me—College Preparation FAFSA.pdf

Materials

- Activity Slides
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide handout (attached; one per student)
- FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide (Teacher Guide) (attached; one per facilitator)
- FAFSA Fact handout (attached; one per student)
- FAFSA Checklist handout (attached; cut apart; one half sheet per student)
- Paying for College handout (attached; optional)
- Scholarships for Me handout (attached; one per student)
- Chart Paper (5 sheets)
- Markers
- Laptops with internet access (one per student)

Engage

Teacher's Note: Activity Preparation:

It is essential to review the lesson plan, supplementary materials, and suggested websites to ensure your familiarity with the components of the lesson and to confirm that all information is the most current, as FAFSA guidelines can change from year to year.

(NOTE: Resources within this activity were updated at the time of publication. However, if a resource listed is no longer up-to-date, visit https://studentaid.gov/ to locate the latest information available.) Program form or their state's equivalent instead of the FAFSA. Check for the date the FAFSA will be available at https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa.

Prior to starting this activity, label five posters with one of the following titles: Work, Scholarships, Grants, Loans, and Other. Hang the posters around the room.

Use the attached **Activity Slides** to present the activity. Introduce the activity by displaying **slide 2**. Move to **slide 3** and **4** to display the essential questions and learning objectives.

Display **slide 5** and share the following question with the students:

"What are some resources that can help you pay for college?"

Give students some time to think about their answer and ask for a few volunteers to share their answers.

Possible Student Responses

Possible student responses include college and local scholarships, jobs, FAFSA, student loans, work-study, or credit cards.

Display **slide 6** and introduce the Carousel instructional strategy. Assign students to groups to brainstorm what they know about the following resources in relation to paying for college:

- Work
- Scholarships
- Grants
- Loans
- Other

For the resource "Other," students will record other ways they can think of to pay for college.

Number the students 1-5 to create five groups. Assign each group a poster and provide them with a marker. Using the question you just discussed, have students brainstorm a list of what they know about the resource on their assigned poster. Use the 2-minute timer on the slide and provide each group with two minutes to record their ideas on the paper. Once the timer has stopped, have the groups rotate to the next poster. Repeat this process until the groups are back at their original poster.

Display **slide 7**. Give each group time to read over what has been recorded for their resource. Have each group choose a spokesperson to share interesting or important information about each resource and explain why they think their resource is helpful when paying for college.

Teacher's Note: Posters

Keep the five posters to use during the Evaluate activity.

Teacher's Note: Carousel Activity

If students are struggling, consider sharing ideas from the **Paying for College** handout. Provide student the handout after the activity if you feel it would benefit them.

Explore

Display **slide 8** and introduce the Think-Pair-Share instructional strategy. Explain to students that they will be exploring the FAFSA.

Pass out copies of the **FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide**. Explain to the students that they will work individually to read each statement and write "true" or "false" next to each statement. Encourage students who do not know the correct answer to make an educated guess with each statement.

Once everyone is finished, display **slide 9** and have each student find a partner. Inform the class that they will now discuss and compare their answers with their partners to determine the best choice, "true" or "false." Assign each pair of students a set of questions to focus on.

- Set 1: Answer questions 1-4
- Set 2: Answer questions 5-8
- Set 3: Answer questions 9-11

Display **slide 10.** Share the link for the FAFSA HIVE with the students. Inform the students that they will use the HIVE resource collection to find the correct answer for each statement. Encourage the students to mark where they found the information. Using the 10-minute timer on the slide, provide the students with 10-15 minutes to explore the FAFSA Websites.

Once time is up, display **slide 11**. Use the **FAFSA Student Anticipation Guide (Teacher Guide)** to help guide the discussion. Ask for volunteers from each group to share the answers for their statements and where they found the answers.

After the discussion, pass out a copy of the **FAFSA Fact** handout to all students so that they will have a set of statements with the correct answers for home use to assist in filling out the FAFSA.

Teacher's Note: Discussion Summary

The main point that students need to understand from the discussion is that all students should complete the FAFSA. Many students think that they are ineligible; however, most are eligible! Students should also be aware that completing the FAFSA on the release date or as close as possible to that date will ensure maximum funding opportunities.

Display **slide 12**. This is a good place to end Day 1. On Day 2, students will be creating a FSA ID. **They will need their social security number and a valid email address.** It is recommended that they use a personal email as their school email will no longer be in use once they graduate.

Explain

Display **slide 13** and remind students about the essential questions and learning objectives.

Move to **slide 14** and ask the students to share what they learned about the FAFSA during the previous activity. Ask the students the following question:

"Why is the FAFSA important?"

Display **slide 15** and inform students that before they can fill out the FAFSA their parents/guardians and they themselves will need a FSA ID. Inform them that a FSA ID is their username and password that allows them to log into the U.S. Department of Education online systems. This is a legal signature and each person on their FAFSA will need their own FSA ID.

Display **slide 16** and ensure that each student has their own laptop or computer as they will be putting in personal information. Encourage students to use a personal email not their school email, as on graduation that email will no longer be available. Have students navigate to the FSA ID website on the slide and follow the prompts to create their FSA ID.

Once students have completed this activity, inform them it will take 3-5 days to receive their FSA ID. Once they and their parents/guardians have an FSA ID, they will be able to fill out the FAFSA.

Alternative Parent Activity: Paying for College 101: Part 1

Consider presenting Paying for College 101: Part 1 for parents. This will not only provide parents with the resources they need to create a FSA ID, but also provide them with ways to pay for college.

Extend

After students have completed their FSA ID, they will explore the Scholarship Opportunities HIVE. Display **slide 17** and have students navigate to the HIVE using the shortened URL. Encourage students to explore all the different types of scholarships available. Pass out the **Scholarships for Me** handout and have students list the names of scholarships they are interested in applying for along with the deadlines.

Evaluate

Teacher's Note: Posters

Hang the five posters from Engage back on the wall where the students can view all of them.

Display **slide 18**. Have students look over the posters from Engage. Ask the students the following question:

"How do you avoid a lot of debt when it comes to postsecondary education?"

As a class, discuss what has been learned in this lesson and students' next steps, which should include filling out the FAFSA. Before students leave, pass out a copy of the **FAFSA Checklist** for students to use when preparing to fill out the FAFSA.

Research Rationale

College graduates also tend to have job satisfaction, jobs that offer a greater sense of accomplishment, independence, opportunities for creativity in the workplace, and social interactions with colleagues. (Wolniak & Engberg, 2019). College readiness is a process, not a program. The reasons students do not matriculate to college are many and varied (Bhat & Stevens, 2021). To mitigate the college-going gap, high school students need both support and assistance in preparing for and attending college (Bhat & Stevens, 2021). College admission processes are complex. Many students have no idea where to begin. Students' need for appropriate steps and guidance to make sense of college entrance (Bettinger & Evans, 2019). Applying for financial aid and scholarships, navigating college admission requirements, participating in ACT and SAT workshops, writing the college admission essay, and securing needed recommendations are all college processes that often hamper students in securing admission. Minority students, first-generation college applicants, and students whose families have low socioeconomic status (SES) rely more heavily on their schools for guidance (Bettinger & Evans, 2019). Also, school personnel understand that parental support and involvement is integral to any college readiness initiative, but low SES parents, who are most concerned about financial support, might see these costs as prohibitive to their child's entry to college (Bhat & Stevens, 2021). Research shows that providing information and college assistance can improve college enrollment for students, especially minority and low-socioeconomic students (Bettinger & Evans, 2019). Providing students with an intentional opportunity to understand the necessity and the steps to apply for financial aid will help create a college-going culture within the school and establish clear expectations that all students have the ability and opportunity to attend college.

Resources

- Bettinger, E. P., & Evans, B. J. (2019). College guidance for all: A randomized experiment in pre-college advising. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 38(3), 579-599.
- Bhat, C. S., & Stevens, M. M. (2021). College and career readiness group interventions for early high school students. The Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 46(1), 20-31.
- Corporation, X. (n.d.). Click. Compare. Choose. OKcollegestart. https://www.okcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid_Planning/Oklahoma_Grants/Oklahoma_Tuition_Aid_Grant.aspx
- Federal Student Aid. (n.d.). https://studentaid.gov/
- Federal Student Aid. (n.d.-a). https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch
- Federal Student Aid. (n.d.-a). https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
- K20 Center. (n.d.). *FAFSA.* HIVE. https://hive.k20center.ou.edu/boards/24
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery walk/Carousel. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/118
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- K20 Center. (n.d.). *Scholarship opportunities.* HIVE. https://hive.k20center.ou.edu/boards/25
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Paying for College 101: Part 1. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/family-resource/3541
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Paying for College 101: Part 2. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/family-resource/3385
- Wolniak, G. C. & Engberg, M. E. (2019). Do “high-impact” college experiences affect early career outcomes? The Review of Higher Education, 42(3), 825-858.
- YouTube. (2021, September 21). *K20 Center 2-minute timer*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcEEAnwOt2c
- YouTube. (2021, September 21). *K20 Center 10-minute timer*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gy-1Z2Sa-c