



A Beginner's Look at College Financial Aid

A MEFA Institute Webinar

How to Participate in This Webinar

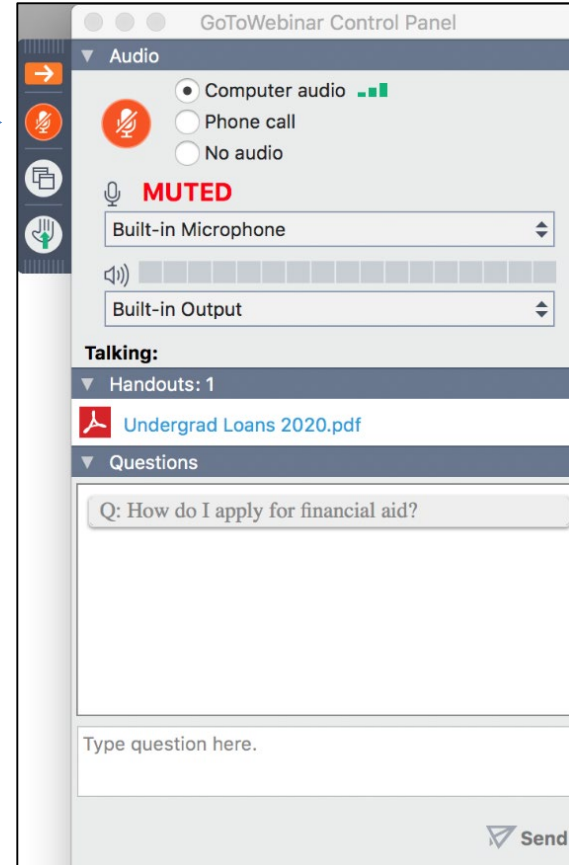
The microphone icon lets you know if you can be heard.
The presenter may mute everyone during the webinar.

The hand icon may be used if the presenter wants to
take a vote

Check the quality of your sound here

If the presenter provides handouts for the webinar, you
will find them here

Have a question during the webinar? Type it in the
Questions section



About MEFA

3



Not-for-profit state authority created in 1982
helping families plan, save, and pay for college

Presentation Agenda

1. Types and Sources of Aid
2. The Application Process
3. How Financial Aid Decisions Are Made
4. Paying for College
5. Free Resources
6. Questions



Types and Sources of Financial Aid

What is Financial Aid?

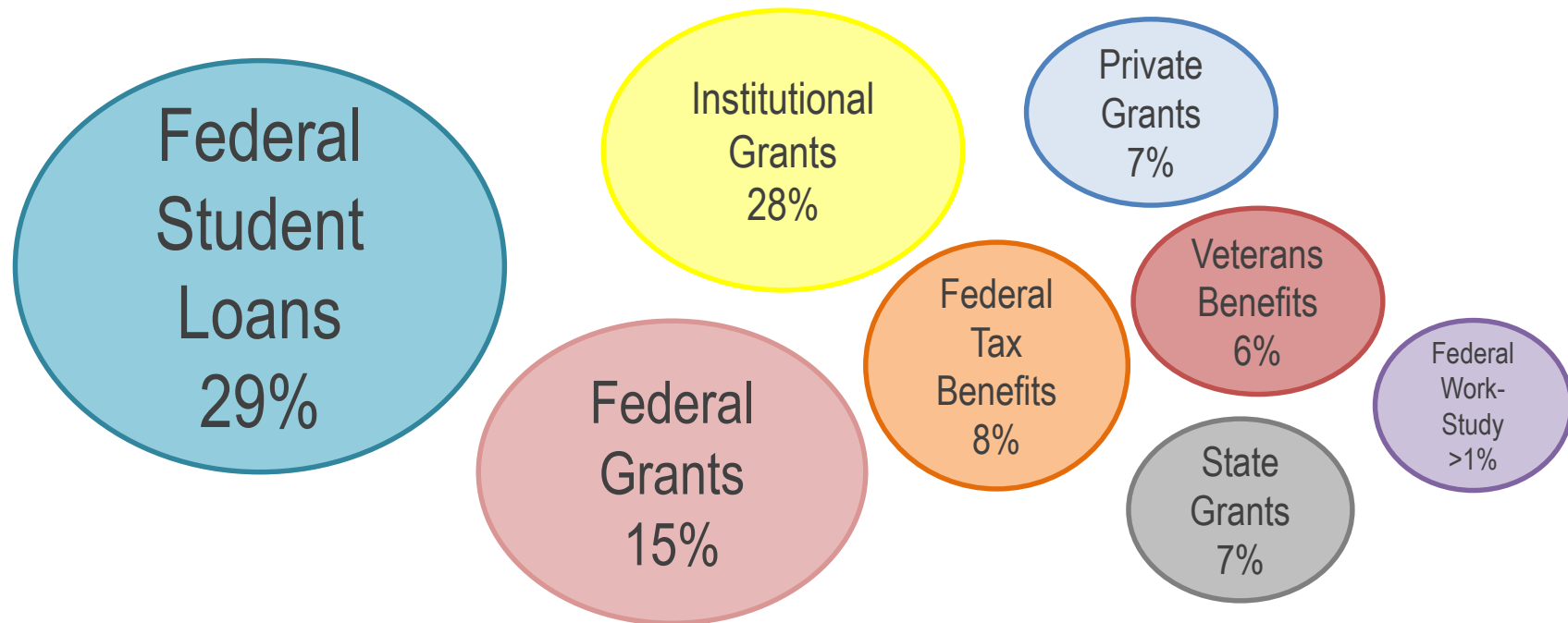
Financial aid is money to help students pay for college



- 3 main types
 - Grants and scholarships (gift aid)
 - Federal work-study
 - Federal student loans

Financial Aid Breakdown

- Undergraduate Student Aid 2018-19 (\$186.9 Billion)



Merit-Based Aid



- Awarded in recognition of student achievements (academic, artistic, athletic, etc.)
- Might have renewable requirements or not be renewable
- Not offered at every school; check each school's website for details
- Separate application sometimes required (check deadlines!)
- Application deadline may be as early as November

Need-Based Aid



- Based on family's financial eligibility ("need")
- Eligibility determined by a standardized formula
- Includes grants, loans, and work-study
- Most financial aid is need-based
- Must be making satisfactory academic progress

Sources of Financial Aid

Federal

- Grants, work-study, loans, tax incentives
- [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)

Massachusetts

- Grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, loans
- mass.edu/osfa

College/University (institutional aid)

- Grants, scholarships, loans

Other Agencies

- Scholarships: Search through mefapathway.org, fastweb.com, and your school counselor

Federal Direct Student Loans

- Student is the sole borrower
- No credit check
- Subsidized and Unsubsidized
- 2.75% fixed interest rate for 2020-21
- Repayment:
 - No payments due while enrolled
 - Multiple options (many tied to income)
 - Total borrowed for 4 years: \$27,000 max
 - Estimated payment: \$300/month for 10 years
 - Estimated total debt: \$32,000-\$34,000
 - Deferment, forbearance, and forgiveness opportunities

Annual Loan Limits	
Freshman Year	\$5,500
Sophomore Year	\$6,500
Junior Year	\$7,500
Senior Year	\$7,500

The screenshot shows the Federal Student Aid website (StudentLoans.gov). The header includes the logo, the text "AN OFFICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION", and links for "Log In" and "Español". A "MENU" button is in the top right. The main banner features a group of diverse students and a "LOG IN" button with the text "Log in to StudentLoans.gov with your verified FSA ID" and "Create an FSA ID Natural Disasters". Below the banner, there's a section titled "Find out your student loan repayment options here" with a magnifying glass icon. The navigation bar has four categories: "Undergraduate Students", "Graduate/Professional Students", "Parent Borrowers", and "Repayment & Consolidation". Under "Undergraduate Students", there's a note: "The first step in getting student aid is completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.FAFSA.gov. You must do this every year." Under "Repayment & Consolidation", there's a list of steps: "Complete Entrance Counseling", "Complete Loan Agreement for a Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loan (MPN)", "Complete Financial Awareness Counseling", "Complete Exit Counseling", "Use the Repayment Estimator", "Complete TEACH Grant Initial and Subsequent Counseling", "Complete TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve", and "Complete TEACH Grant Exit Counseling". A video thumbnail titled "How To Create An FSA ID" is also visible.

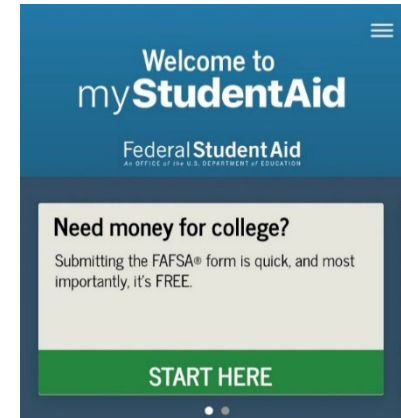
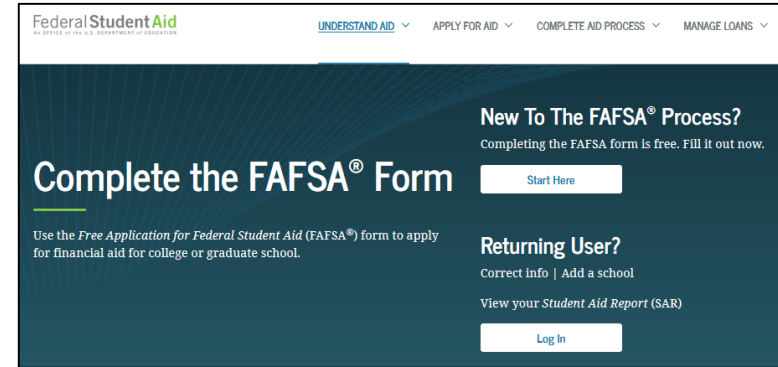
The Application Process

Financial Aid Timeline

- Check deadlines and required applications on each college's website now
- Early action/decision deadlines are often in October or November
- Standard deadlines are typically in February or March
- **DON'T SUBMIT APPLICATIONS LATE**
- Use MEFA's College Application Manager to stay organized
 - mefa.org/college-application-manager



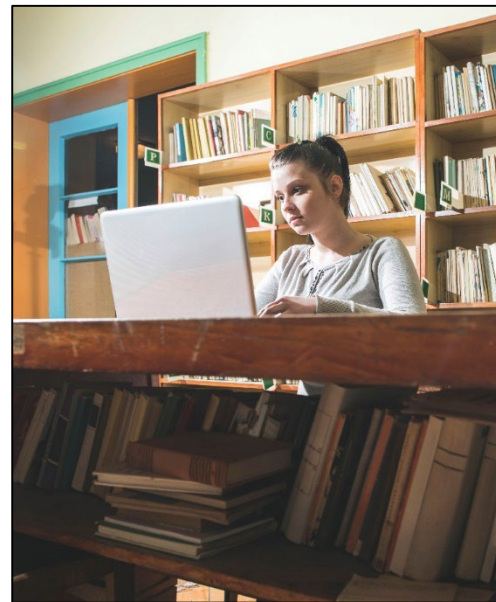
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Required by all colleges
- Becomes available October 1st: fafsa.gov
- Easy completion on myStudentAid mobile app
- Log in with an FSA ID: fsaid.ed.gov
 - Both student and parent need one!
- IRS Data Retrieval Tool: Pull in federal tax data
- FAFSA webinar recording on mefa.org/events
- **MUST BE COMPLETED EVERY YEAR**



What's Reported on the FAFSA?

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Student citizenship status
 - Non-citizen parents:
 - Use zeros for SSN
 - Print signature page to sign (cannot get FSA ID)
- Colleges where student is applying (each one will receive your FAFSA)
- Parents
 - Married, including same-sex parents
 - All parents who live together, married or not
 - Divorced/Separated: custodial parent & current spouse
 - Legal guardians are NOT a parent
- # in household, # of children in college



What's Reported on the FAFSA?

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Parent and student income (2019 income for the 2021-22 FAFSA)
 - Both taxed and untaxed
- Parent and student assets
 - Include: savings, checking, investments, other property
 - Include: all 529 accounts as a parent asset
 - Do not include: primary home, value of retirement, life insurance, value of small family business
- Debt is not reported except debt on reported assets



Who's Eligible for Federal & State Aid?

- U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens
- Valid SSN (except Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau)
- Males 18-25: Register for Selective Service (Male at birth)
- Must have high school diploma or equivalent (can't still be enrolled in HS)
- Regular student enrolled in degree or certificate program
 - If admitted to program and it includes remedial coursework, can receive aid for one year of remedial work
 - If taking prep coursework necessary for enrollment, can receive Direct Loan for one year

Eligible Non-Citizens

- U.S. nationals
- U.S. permanent residents with Form I-551, I-151, or I-551C
- Those with Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- Those who hold a T-visa or have parents with a T-1 visa
- Any “battered immigrant-qualified alien” or a child of such a person under the Violence Against Women Act
- Citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau

Federally Independent Students

No parent information collected (though some colleges may collect parent info for consideration of college-based funds)

Criteria

- 24 or older
- Married
- Graduate Student
- Active duty/Veteran of U.S. Armed Forces
- Provide more than half of support for children or dependents
- Emancipated minor
- In legal guardianship
- Since turned 13: orphan, in foster care, or ward of court
- Unaccompanied, homeless youth



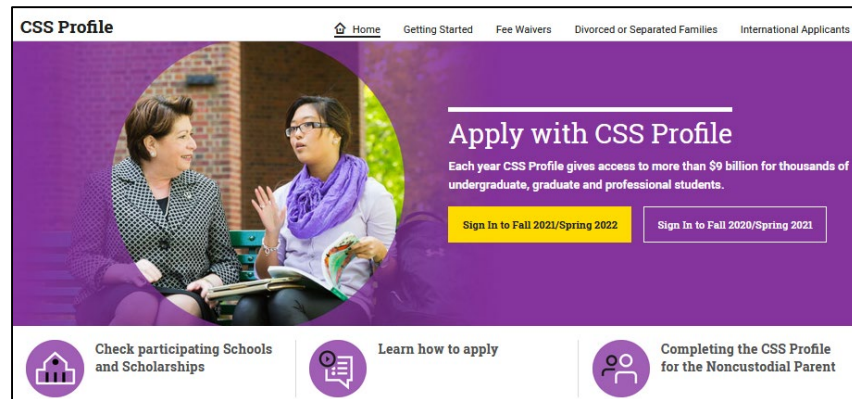
Other Financial Aid Applications

CSS Profile™

- cssprofile.org
- Required by some colleges and universities
- \$25 for 1st school, \$16 for each additional
- Becomes available October 1st
- Noncustodial parent will need to submit a separate Profile
- Profile webinar recording on mefa.org/mefa-institute

College Financial Aid Application

- Required by some colleges and universities



More About the CSS Profile

Why Do Institutions Use the Profile?

1. Collects more detailed information than the FAFSA
2. Allows schools to ask customized questions
3. Permits families to provide special circumstances



Start Here: cssprofile.org

High school seniors should apply for 2021-22

List of colleges that require the Profile

More info

The screenshot shows the CSS Profile website homepage. At the top is a navigation bar with links: Home, Getting Started, Fee Waivers, Divorced or Separated Families, and International Applicants. The main banner features a photo of two women talking and the text 'Apply with CSS Profile' followed by 'Each year CSS Profile gives access to more than \$9 billion for thousands of undergraduate, graduate and professional students.' Below this are two buttons: 'Sign In to Fall 2021/Spring 2022' and 'Sign In to Fall 2020/Spring 2021'. A row of three icons with text follows: a school icon for 'Check participating Schools and Scholarships', a speech bubble icon for 'Learn how to apply', and a person icon for 'Completing the CSS Profile for the Noncustodial Parent'. The bottom section, titled 'Site Topics', includes links and descriptions for 'Getting Started', 'Fee Waivers', 'Divorced or Separated Families', and 'International Applicants'.

CSS Profile

Home Getting Started Fee Waivers Divorced or Separated Families International Applicants

Apply with CSS Profile

Each year CSS Profile gives access to more than \$9 billion for thousands of undergraduate, graduate and professional students.

Sign In to Fall 2021/Spring 2022 Sign In to Fall 2020/Spring 2021

Check participating Schools and Scholarships

Learn how to apply

Completing the CSS Profile for the Noncustodial Parent

Site Topics

Getting Started
We've compiled the list of our most helpful resources to make it easier for you to apply.

Fee Waivers
The CSS Profile is free for eligible students.

Divorced or Separated Families
Some colleges may require the CSS Profile from both biological parents. Learn more.

International Applicants
Many colleges provide scholarship aid to international students. Know what to expect.

More info

Info for noncustodial parents

Overview webinar

Parent Information

- Report all parents and step-parents (up to 4) (include deceased)
- Legal guardians should be reported as parents (different from the FAFSA)
- Custodial parent, current spouse, and student provide info
 - Provide list of colleges
- Some schools require noncustodial parent to submit a Profile (check school's website)
- Student supplies email address of noncustodial parent
 - Either after school selection or in dashboard after submission
 - It is student responsibility to follow up with noncustodial parent



General Information Requested on Profile

- Colleges where student is applying
- Parent & student 2019 income
 - Will refer to tax return lines
- Parent & student projected income
 - 2020 & 2021
- Parent and student assets (current)
- Household member information
- Number of children in college



More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

Parent Income

- Untaxed Social Security Benefits, Earned Income Credit, Additional Child Tax Credit, Foreign Income Exclusion



Parent Assets

- Value and debt of primary home
- All business and farm information
- Parent assets held in siblings' names
- Retirement value (asked for, though not often used)



Parent expenses

- Medical/dental
- Private elementary/secondary school tuition
- Education loan payments



More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

Family data

- Ages of siblings
- Colleges that siblings attend



Student data

- Private scholarships
- Employee tuition benefits



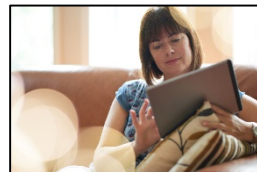
Explanation of special circumstances

- After certain questions and at the end of the application
- Can check a certain category but must provide details
- Notate change in income, exceptional expenses, etc.
- Send details to college if happens after completing the Profile



• Supplemental Questions

- Added by each college/university (requesting school will be noted)
- Sometimes not required but strongly recommended to answer




What is IDOC?

- College Board's Institutional Documentation Service
- Collects family documents (such as tax returns) on institution's behalf
- IDOC student dashboard tells student of required documents
- Institution-specific forms are under the *Get Forms* link on the IDOC dashboard
- Documents must be in JPEG, TIFF, or PDF format
- Sign any documents on signature lines
- IDOC Customer Service: (866) 897-9881
- idoc.collegeboard.com

Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC)

With IDOC, you submit your financial aid documents online and the College Board provides them to all of your IDOC schools automatically.

Sign in to IDOC



After You Apply



1. Colleges & state receive data electronically
2. Student will receive Student Aid Report (SAR) by mail or email
3. Contact the Financial Aid Office with any special circumstances
4. Colleges may request Verification documents. The financial aid application is incomplete until you submit these documents.
5. Colleges review applications and determine the financial aid award

Verification

What is Verification? *Federal Verification is a process that requires institutions to verify the accuracy of information provided on a student's FAFSA in an effort to assure federal aid is distributed to those who are eligible.*

Possible requirements for families:

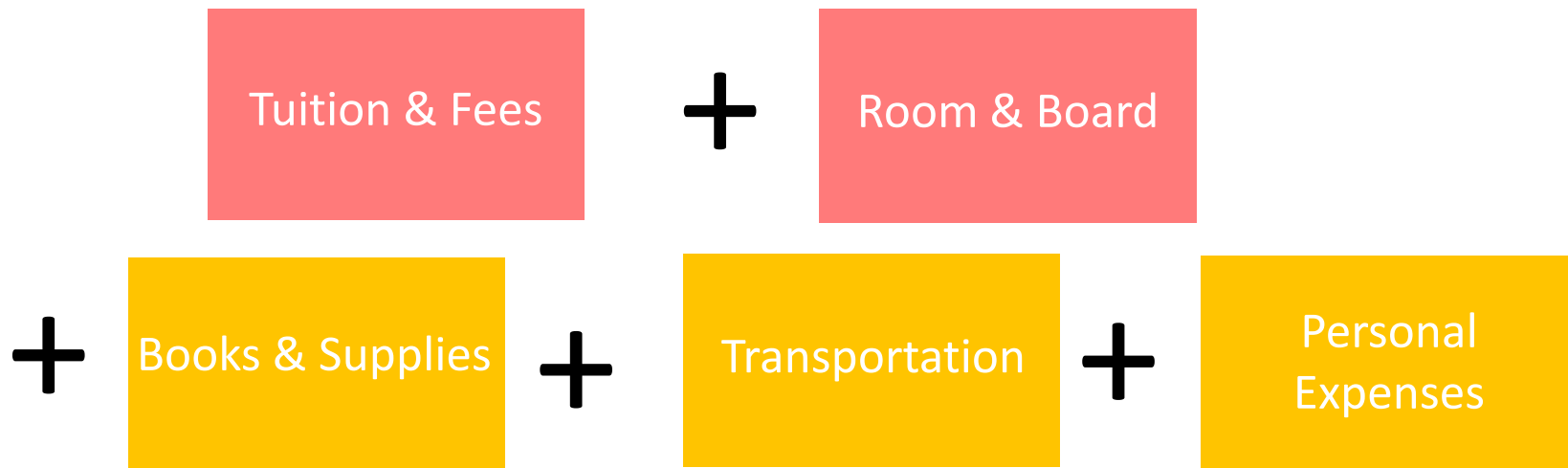
- College's Verification Worksheet
- Use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool
- Submission of signed tax returns via the College Board's IDOC or directly to the college
- IRS Tax Return Transcript
 - irs.gov: Select **Get Your Tax Record**
 - By phone: (800) 908-9946
 - By mail: Form 4506-T
- Verification of Non-Filing (VONF)
 - irs.gov: Select **Get Your Tax Record**
 - By phone: (800) 908-9946

Tax advocate service for families: irs.gov/Advocate/

How Financial Aid Decisions Are Made

Cost of Attendance (COA)

COA = Total Expenses for One Year of College



Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

- Amount family has ability to absorb for 1 year of college costs
- Same federal formula used for every family
- Some colleges also use an institutional formula
- Family has the primary responsibility for paying
- Not necessarily what the family will pay
- Lowered if family has more than 1 child in college
- EFC Calculator on mefa.org

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Calculator

Colleges and universities determine the amount of financial aid to award you based in part on your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Your EFC is intended to represent the amount your family can contribute toward college costs for one year. Use our calculator below to get an estimate of your family's EFC. And to learn more about the financial aid process, visit [Financial Aid Made Simple](#).

FINANCIAL AID CALCULATOR

Determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) for the 2019-2020 school year

STUDENT STATUS

PARENTS' CONTRIBUTION

STUDENT'S CONTRIBUTION

EFC

GETTING STARTED

First we need to collect some information about the household to determine how to calculate the student's EFC

STUDENT STATUS

Is the student independent? [more info](#)

No

HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

STATE OF RESIDENCE

Select a state

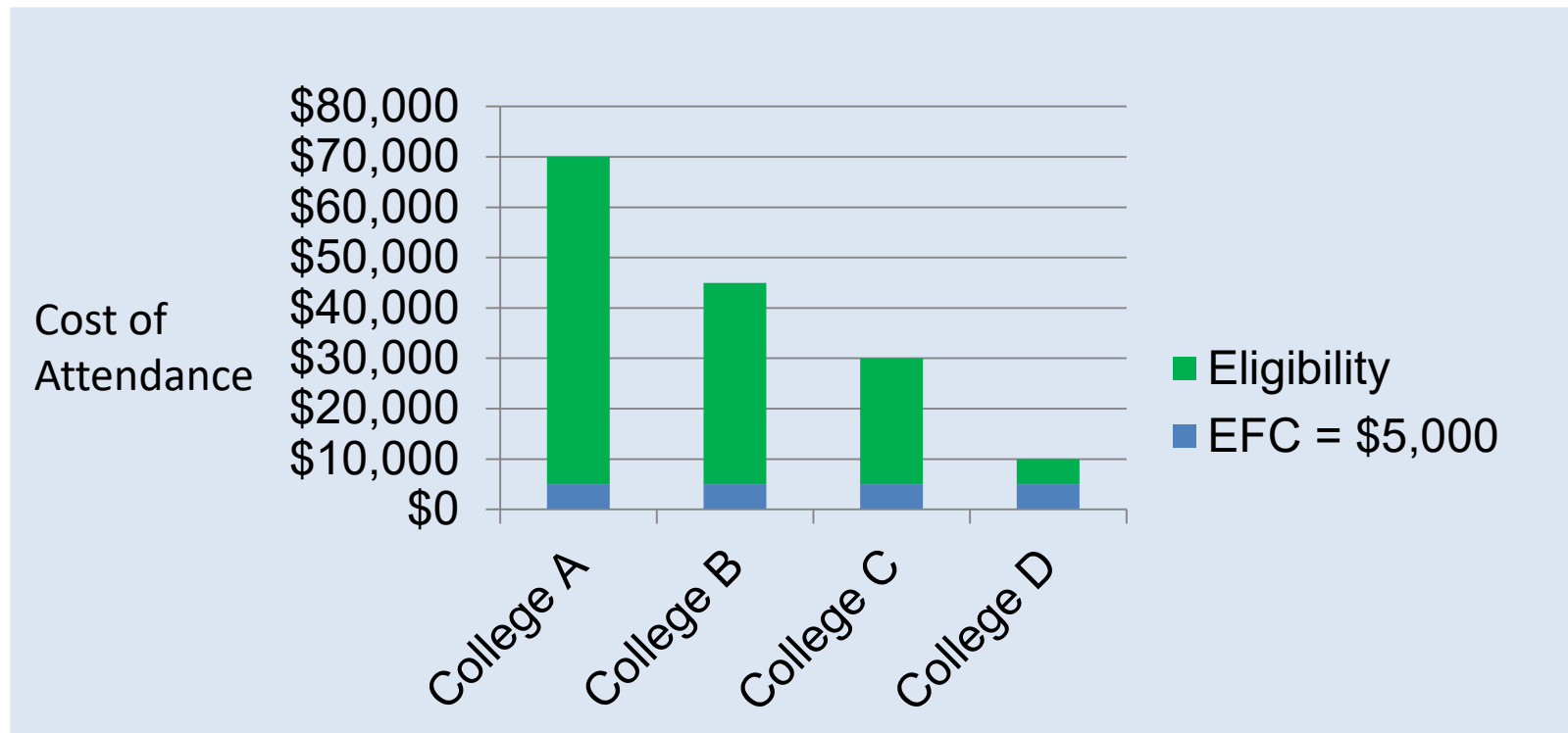
NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD ⓘ

CHILDREN IN COLLEGE ⓘ

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Cost of Attendance (COA)} \\ - \text{Expected Family Contribution (EFC)} \\ \hline = \text{Financial Aid Eligibility} \end{array}$$

Colleges fill in Financial Aid Eligibility with financial aid from all sources

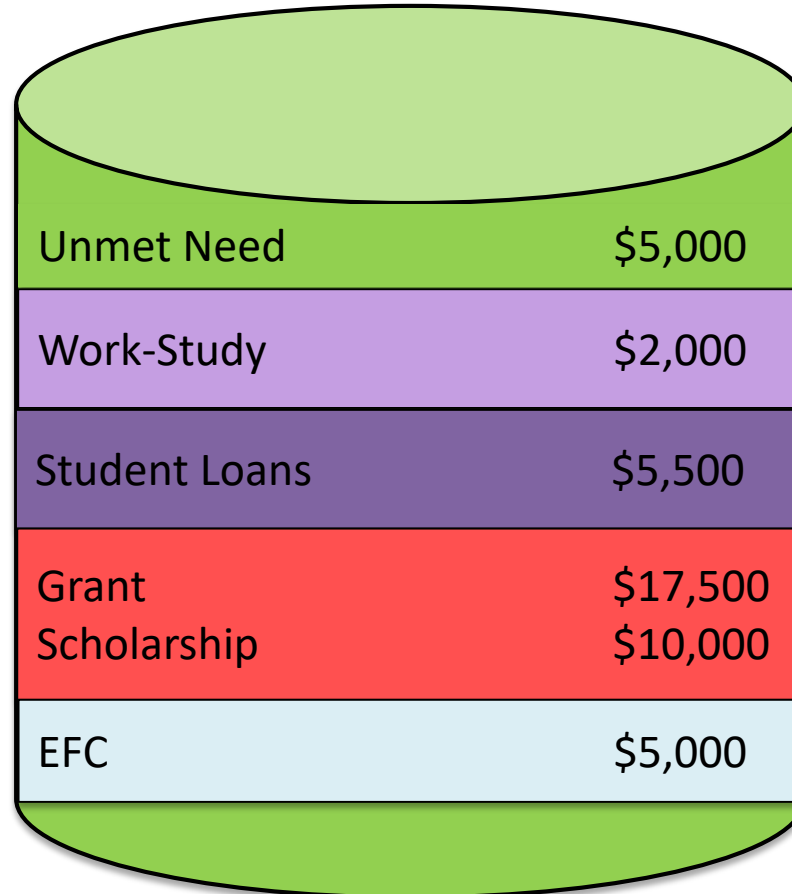
How the Formula Works



Financial Aid Awarding

**College COA =
\$45,000**

Unmet need and EFC is the
FAMILY's responsibility



Award Letters: Totals Can Vary

COA: \$45,000

EFC: \$5,000

Total Eligibility: \$40,000

	College A	College B	College C
Grants/Scholarships	\$32,500	\$25,500	\$17,500
Student Loans	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
Work-Study	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total	\$40,000	\$33,000	\$25,000
Unmet Need	\$0	\$7,000	\$15,000

Award Letters: Types Can Vary

COA: \$45,000

EFC: \$5,000

Total Eligibility: \$40,000

	College A	College B	College C
Grants/Scholarships	\$27,500	\$17,500	\$0
Student Loans	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
Parent Loans	\$0	\$10,000	\$29,500
Work-Study	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
Total	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Unmet Need	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000

Paying for College

Filling the EFC and Unmet Need: An Example

Balance Due		\$20,000
<i>Past Income (Savings)</i>		
	Student Savings	-\$1,000
	Parent Savings	-\$4,000
<i>Present Income (Current Wages)</i>		
Parent Contribution to Payment Plan		-\$5,000
<i>Future Income (Borrowing College Loans)</i>		
	Education Loan	-\$10,000
		\$0

Additional Financial Considerations

- Consider the number of children you will send to college
- Think in terms of total enrollment (4+ years) and total debt
- Consider the post-graduation monthly loan payment
- Students should research potential starting salary for intended career
- Is the student considering graduate school?
- Know your credit score if you plan to borrow a private loan
- Compare each school's net price after financial aid offers are received



Paying for College in MA: You Have Options

MassTransfer

- Makes transfer from community college to a 4-year public MA college more affordable
- Benefits include guaranteed credit transfer, tuition credit, & freeze on tuition
- mass.edu/masstransfer



Tuition Break

- Reduction on out-of-state tuition costs at New England schools for certain programs
- Nebhe.org/programs-overview/rsp-tuitionbreak/overview



Free Resources

Net Price Calculators

- Online tool found on each institution's website
- Asks questions about family finances & student academics
- Provides personal, estimated net college price
- Displays federal & institutional aid
- Merit-based aid may also be included



Learn about Your Financial Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial aid renewability criteria (financial, academic)• Treatment of private scholarships
Ask About Special Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in family circumstances• Can I appeal my award? How?
How to Contact the Financial Aid Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone call• Email• Chat (if offered)

9 Things MEFA Encourages Families to Know

1. What is the total cost of attendance?
2. What financial aid applications are required and when are they due?
3. What are the college's application requirements for divorced or separated parents?
4. What is the college's policy on need-based aid?
5. Does the college offer merit-based scholarships? How do students apply?
6. Assuming that cost and family responsibility remain constant, how will grant and loan amounts change from year to year? What if the family's situation changes?
7. Are scholarships/grants renewable each year? If so, are there conditions such as grade point average, enrollment status, or major?
8. Are students required to apply for financial aid even if they receive a scholarship?
9. How do outside scholarships affect the financial aid package the school offers?


National and Community Resources

- FAFSA Day
 - Free assistance completing the FAFSA
 - 5 virtual events Oct-Feb
 - Register at FAFSADay.org
- Educational Opportunity Centers
 - Free financial aid help
 - MassEdCO.org








What Families Can Do Now

- Get an FSA ID for the student and parent
- Research deadlines and required applications
- Sign up for webinars at mefa.org/events
- Reference MEFA's *Timeline for College Admissions and Financial Aid* on mefa.org



Massachusetts Educational
Financing Authority






College prep for juniors

Is your family on track with college planning? We share four tasks you can complete in the next few weeks to start preparing for life after high school. We also highlight three questions that you and your child can consider as you plan for what's next. Review it all in our post, *Junior Year College Planning*.


[Get the guidance](#)



Saving monthly

There's still plenty of time to save for college. And want to know an easy way to do so? Set up a monthly automatic deposit into a 529 U.Fund account, and watch your savings grow. We walk through the simple steps to scheduling regular contributions in our quick slide show, and also include information for setting up a U.Fund if you don't yet have one. Review the tutorial to learn how to get started.

[View the slides](#)



Don't miss these tax tips

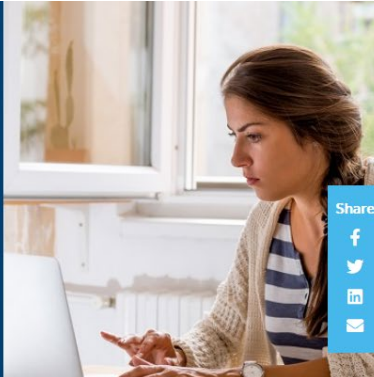
As a parent, especially one preparing for college, you may be eligible for certain tax deductions on your federal or state return. Tax expert and CPA, Alissa Wade provided helpful details on tax benefits in our post, *Tax tips for parents*. Read it now to find out valuable money-saving info.

[See the post](#)

© 2019 Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority

Things To Do

- Register for upcoming MEFA Institute webinars and complete lessons to earn PDPs: mefa.org/mefa-institute
- Share MEFA resources with families
- Visit mefa.org/counselors



THE MEFA INSTITUTE

The MEFA Institute

The MEFA Institute is a series of free professional development lessons geared toward school counselors, college access professionals, and college administrators focused on planning, saving, and paying for college, planning for career, and reaching financial goals. Attend webinars, read blogs, and view videos within our curriculum, on your own schedule, to gain knowledge on numerous college planning topics and earn PDPs.

Share

f

twitter

in

envelope

Connect with MEFA on Social Media



A screenshot of a Facebook post from MEFA. The post is titled "QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS #FINAID" and lists five questions in a grid format. The questions are: 1. What is the college's total cost of attendance? (blue box), 2. What financial aid applications are required and when are they due? (orange box), 3. What are the college's application requirements for divorced or separated parents? (dark grey box), 4. Does the college offer merit-based scholarships? How do students apply? (green box), and 5. Will my financial aid stay the same every year? (light blue box). The MEFA logo is in the bottom right corner of the grid.

MEFA
Published by Ajea Nicole [?] · February 22 at 5:30 PM · 🌐

After you receive your financial aid award from the colleges to which you have been accepted, you may need to gather some additional information. The following are some important questions to ask.

QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS #FINAID

1 What is the college's total cost of attendance?	2 What financial aid applications are required and when are they due?	3 What are the college's application requirements for divorced or separated parents?	4 Does the college offer merit-based scholarships? How do students apply?	5 Will my financial aid stay the same every year?
---	---	--	---	---

mefa



facebook.com/mefaMA



[@MEFAtweets](https://twitter.com/MEFAtweets)



linkedin.com/company/mefa



youtube.com/MEFAcounselor

Thank You

50

Questions?

(800) 449-MEFA (6332)

collegeplanning@mefa.org

How was the webinar? We'd love to hear your feedback.
Leave us a Google review at [Google.com](https://www.google.com)

