

NORTH MESQUITE HS

SENIOR CHECKLIST

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is one of the most misunderstood areas of the college admission process. "When in doubt, apply for aid!" Approximately 90% of all financial aid available to students is channeled through the college Financial Aid Officer. The process has become complicated and is often confusing, but the reward of an education is too great not to give the process a chance.

- ☑ The financial aid process, the admissions process, and the housing process are separate at most colleges.
- ☑ The most important piece of the financial aid process is the **FAFSA**. This is the government's determination of your need. However even if you don't think you will qualify for any government aid, you need to fill this out before most colleges will consider you for any scholarships even if they are not based on financial need. The FAFSA cannot be filed until after January 1. Most of the financial information requested can be taken from your family's tax return (Form 1040 or 1040A). Because time is of the essence in filing a financial aid application, it may be necessary to estimate income for the current year.

PROCEDURE

1. Apply for admission and financial aid before the application deadlines (these can be before the deadline for admission).
2. Send application for admission and application for financial aid to separate offices.
3. You will not be granted financial aid until you have been accepted for admission.
4. It is possible for a college to offer admission but not to offer financial aid.
5. Be sure to apply to at least one college whose cost is within reach of your finances.

Most financial aid is given because the student has a mathematically determined need - determined as the difference between the cost of attending the college and the family's resources: $\text{Cost} - \text{Resources} = \text{Need}$. Students and parents are responsible for paying what they can; financial aid is intended to supplement such efforts--not substitute for them.

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

- ☑ **Grants** - gifts that do not need to be repaid (example: Pell Grant, Texas Grant).
- ☑ **Loans** - must be repaid, usually with interest (example: Perkins or Stafford Loan).
- ☑ **Work Study** - need based - student must earn the money by working for the college or university.

- ☑ **Local Scholarships** - usually based on need or merit - applications will be available in the Counseling Center in January.
- ☑ **Scholarships** - a form of gift aid usually based on athletic, music, or academic achievements
 - ☑ Determine which need analysis forms your college requires. In addition to the FAFSA some colleges may also have their own forms.
 - ☑ Don't hesitate to make an appointment with the college financial aid officer to discuss any concerns you may have about financial aid.
 - ☑ Be sure to make copies of all your applications. Students receiving financial aid for college must re-apply each year.
 - ☑ Men over 18 years old must prove draft registration in order to receive federal financial aid. Register at the local post office or on-line at www.sss.gov.

GENERAL INFO ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS

Many students feel that they must receive financial aid in order to attend college. Though the counselor has some references concerning scholarship information, it is not possible to supply a student the needed scholarship or to tell the student always where a scholarship is available. Many are posted in the counseling center – so come by frequently to check – and will be listed on the schools website. Scholarships are often difficult to obtain; forethought, initiative, and effort on the part of the student are necessary!! The following general suggestions may be of some help:

1. The college itself is still the best source of seeking scholarship aid. Check the college's website. For other information, inquire through the ex-student's association of that school.
2. Investigate the possibility of scholarships that might be offered through the company for which your parents work. Many large companies offer scholarships for the children of their employees. Parents should inquire now about this possibility through their human resources department.
3. If you have a special skill, talk to a teacher in that particular field. Athletic coaches, band or choral directors, art, speech or drama teachers, and other specialists in particular fields may be able to help.
4. Lodges, unions, or clubs where your parents belong may offer scholarships. Inquiry should be made through the organization's committee on education or through officers of the organizations.
5. Closely related to item #4 may be your own membership in some organization which offers scholarships: Junior Achievement, 4-H groups, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Variety Boys' Clubs. Inquire about these through local club sponsors and seek information in books about scholarship aid.
6. Scholarships are often offered by religious groups. Inquire about this possibility through your place of worship.

7. If you are the son or daughter of a veteran, investigate the possibility of aid through veteran's organizations. Texas veterans may be able to pass on un-used portions of their Hazelwood provision benefits to their children or stepchildren!
8. If you have decided on a career, find out if there is an organized group of people in that business or profession with a scholarship to offer. The possibilities here are many. Teachers, engineers, doctors, nurses, printers, secretaries, and others have their professional organizations that offer scholarships of various types.
9. Check carefully the lists of scholarships available through tests. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) is now combined with the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT), which is given in the fall of the junior year. Although scholarships are limited in this nation-wide competition, many colleges and scholarship programs request scores from the PSAT-NMSQT.
10. Libraries have some books with information about scholarships and loans. Some of these are: Directory of Scholarships, Fellowships, and Student Loans by the American Association of University Women; You Can Win a Scholarship by Lovejoy and Jones; How to Prepare for College by Lass (Chapters 4 and 20); How to Get Money for College by Benjamin Fine and Sidney Eisenberg; Comparative Guide to American Colleges for Students, Parents, and Counselors by James Cass and Max Birnbaum; How to Beat the High Cost of College by Claire Cox; and College Scholarship Guide by Clarence Lovejoy.
11. The Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation Financial Aid Calendar is very valuable because it includes an explanation of the entire financial aid picture, college admission requirements in Texas colleges, and lists of individual scholarships. Students can check out a copy from the counselor's office.

Note: Scholarships should be typed. Neatness and accuracy (especially in spelling and sentence structure) is a MUST. Always save a copy of the application before submitting it. The information will often be used over and over for other applications. Deadlines MUST be met.

SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES AND SEARCHABLE DATABASES

Mesquite ISD Website (<http://www.mesquiteisd.org/students/scholarships/index.asp>)

This site is especially important to use in accessing the local scholarships that funnel their efforts through our school district.

U. S. Department of Education (<http://studentaid.ed.gov>)

The Federal Student Aid programs are the largest source of student aid in America, providing over \$60 billion a year in grants, loans and work-study assistance. Here you'll find help for every stage of the financial aid process, whether you're in or out of school.

College Board Scholarship Search (http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp)

Find scholarships, loans, internships and other financial aid programs from non-college sources to match your education level, talents and background.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (<http://www.collegefortexans.com/>)

Provided by the state of Texas for up-to-date, easy-to-follow information on preparing for college, selecting a college, paying for college, making your way through college and choosing a career.

Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (<http://www.adventuresineducation.org>)

Texas Guaranteed (TG) provides Adventures In Education (AIE) to help parents and students prepare for higher education. AIE also provides a section for high school and college counselors.

The Financial Aid Information Page (<http://www.finaid.org/>)

One of the most comprehensive annotated collections of information about student financial aid on the Web.

FastWeb Scholarship Search (<http://www.fastweb.com/>)

FastWeb lets you create a personalized profile that can be matched against its expansive database of colleges and scholarships. As the oldest and most popular free online scholarship matching service, the database has more than 600,000 scholarships totaling more than \$1 billion..

College Information Service (<http://iiswinprd03.petersons.com/finaid/>)

This financial aid database of nearly \$5 billion of scholarships and grants is fully searchable on the Web.

Sallie Mae (<http://www.wiredscholar.com/>)

Wired Scholar is a free scholarship search. View your results online immediately after submitting the profile. Save your search results to view later. Update your profile form anytime.

Hispanic Scholarship Fund (<http://www.hsf.net>)

The Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) is the largest Hispanic scholarship-granting organization in the nation. HSF recognizes and rewards outstanding Hispanic students in higher education .

United Negro College Fund (<http://www.uncf.org/forstudents/scholarship.asp>)

The United Negro College Fund awards scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students. Information on these scholarships and faculty fellowship grants are provided on this site for review. You can search for UNCF scholarships alphabetically, geographically and by discipline or major.

CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)

CareerOneStop is a collection of electronic tools, operating as a federal-state partnership and funded by grants to states. Each tool offers a unique solution to the overwhelming demands of today's labor market from the perspective of the job seeker, the employer and the public workforce community.

(VIEW MORE INFO AT MESQUITEISD.ORG/NMHS/COUNSELING)

Equal access to all programs and activities is assured students in the Mesquite Independent School District without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, and/or handicapping condition.