



TIPS

LINKS TO SCHOOL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIPS:

[OLE MISS:](#)

[UT KNOX:](#)

[University of Memphis:](#)

[University of Alabama:](#)

[Samford:](#)

[University of Arkansas:](#)

[Mississippi State:](#)

College shouldn't be a DEPT SENTENCE!

DEBT-FREE DEGREE

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

How much will school cost?

Do a tuition cost estimation.

MyinTuition

Quick College Cost Estimator

Earn college credit with CLEP Exams:

<https://clep.collegeboard.org/exams>

What is CLEP and what are the benefits?

<https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/clep-exam/>

Do you need a semester transcript sent? Please contact Mrs. Jauregui to request!

MAKING A LIST, CHECKING IT TWICE...

December has arrived! This is an excellent time to step back and make sure you are up to date on your task list.

Senior year is an incredibly exciting time as your student plans for their next steps beyond graduation. As your child considers their options for college and the associated costs, it is critical to plan ahead and take steps now. A critical step to making sure your child is eligible to receive available financial assistance for college is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as you are able after the December release date. The FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for a variety of aid including federal, state, and school-based, as well as grants and scholarships.

Still Applying?

Re-evaluate Your College List

Ensure you have safety schools on your list, both financially and in terms of admissions. Narrow down the rest of the schools on your list so you prioritize applications for the schools you can actually see yourself attending versus applying for random schools you'd never actually attend.

Be Prepared for Your Worst-Case Scenario

Make sure you consider all the possibilities. What if you're rejected or wait-listed at the schools you most wanted? Though the worst-case scenario rarely happens, having a plan in place will have you prepared in any given situation.

Ensure Your Test Scores Were Sent

Don't forget that a lot of schools won't even *consider* your application until they have your test scores. Test scores should be officially sent from the College Board or ACT to all the schools you're applying to.

Focus on the Small Details

Don't forget to read between the lines when applying. It's easy to focus on the big essay questions, but don't let the minor details fall through the cracks. All of the details will factor in your acceptance, not just the major essay and taking extra precaution to not make mistakes shows the school that you are truly interested, rather than carelessly copying and pasting essays onto every application.

DATES

 December 6th-
Senior Buddies

Records

As you begin to receive acceptance and financial award letters, please bring copies or email Mrs. Jauregui at aljauregui@briarcrest.com We need to keep track of where our students have been accepted and any financial awards.

FAFSA UPDATES:

<https://financialaidtoolkits.ed.gov/tk/learn/fafsa/updates.jsp>

Planning to play sports in college? If you are registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center you need to send a 7th semester transcript. Contact Coach Jauregui to make a request.

The [Washington Post](#) (11/15) reports the Education Department [announced](#) Wednesday there will be a delay in processing the FAFSA “after a new version of the form goes live in December, a setback that advocates say could slow the delivery of college financial aid offers.” The announcement notifies higher-education professionals that “while students will be able to start submitting the FAFSA online next month, colleges will receive aid eligibility information by the end of January.” Typically, the handoff “occurs within a day or two, not weeks later. It will then take another month for the department to begin processing paper FAFSA applications and any corrections that colleges submit.” Asked about the delay, the ED said Wednesday that updating the FAFSA has been a “monumental undertaking” that included replacing outdated processing software and meeting new security standards prescribed by the IRS.

The U.S. Department of Education, which oversees FAFSA, is making major changes to the FAFSA application. These changes will take effect during the 2023-2024 school year. The changes aim to simplify the process of applying for federal student aid for students and their families, increasing the reach of financial aid to more students and families and creating affordable paths to college.

1

FAFSA applications will open in December.

Unlike most years when the FAFSA opens in October, FAFSA will not open until December 2023. While the exact date has not been released, the FAFSA Simplification Act mandates that the updated form is available by the last day of December. During future school years, FAFSA will once again be available on the traditional opening date in October. The deadline for completion will remain June 30th, 2024.

2

There will be fewer questions.

The FAFSA application questions will be reduced from 108 questions to 46 questions and will include skip logic so that students and families do not need to answer questions irrelevant to their specific situations. These changes are intended to facilitate an easier overall process for students and families.

3

Students and contributors must have verified FSA IDs.

FSA IDs will be required for anyone applying for federal financial aid as well as all contributors. Students, parents, and other contributors (such as spouses or stepparents) will need to create FSA IDs, wait 1-3 days for verification, and then use the verified IDs to begin the application process. FSA IDS will require multi-factor authentication with an email, phone, or authenticator app.

4

Income information will be automatically retrieved from the IRS.

The system has streamlined the ability to populate information from the IRS, rather than families having to manually enter the data or use an external data retrieval tool. Students, parents, and other contributors must provide consent for this data transfer, or students will not be eligible to access federal student aid.

5

There will be phone support offered in multiple languages.

The Office of Federal Student Aid will offer phone support in several languages, increasing accessibility for many students and families.

6

Students and parents can complete their information within the FAFSA simultaneously.

Unlike previous years, role-based information entry will allow students and parents to be in the form at the same time. Additionally, a “parent wizard” tool will be available to help students and families assess which parent or parents’ information is required on the FAFSA documentation.

7

The "Expected Family Contribution" will be replaced with the "Student Aid Index."

The term "Expected Family Contribution" is being replaced by the "Student Aid Index (SAI)." This number is based on a formulaic assessment of the financial resources that may be able to contribute toward education expenses. The updated needs analysis will remove the number of family members in college. Also, the SAI can now be a negative number, as low as -1,500 for those with the most financial need.

8

The "Cost of Attendance" will expand to include increased allowable costs.

The formula to calculate federal financial aid is Cost of Attendance – Student Aid Index – Other Financial Assistance = Financial Need. The Cost of Attendance will now include tuition, fees, food, housing, books, supplies, miscellaneous expenses, and transportation with allowances for loan fees, dependent-care costs, and expenses for disabled students.

9

Students can select up to 20 colleges to receive FAFSA information.

When completing the FAFSA, students select the colleges they would like to receive the information to formulate financial aid offers. Previously, students could only list up to 10 colleges; going forward, students will be able to list up to 20 colleges.

10

It will be easier to determine independent status.

For students who are homeless, orphans, former foster youth, or those with other unique or unusual circumstances that create barriers to providing parent information, the new FAFSA application will include a simplified process to more readily determine independent status. Financial aid professionals at postsecondary institutions will have increased authority and flexibility in adjusting student eligibility on a case-by-case basis.