



April 17, 2025

**Joint Statement from Independent Colleges of Washington,  
the Washington State Council of Presidents, and the  
Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges**

Study after study shows that for people to land well-paying jobs, they need education beyond high school. Washington companies anticipate thousands of openings for individuals with advanced training and higher education.

Yet here in Washington, high school seniors who are not pursuing education beyond high school and not completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are foregoing millions in assistance to support their higher education aspirations. The FAFSA form – which can typically be completed in under an hour – unlocks federal and state financial aid, including grants that don't have to be paid back, like federal Pell Grants and the Washington College Grant.

Washington's high school seniors from the class of 2024 who did not complete the FAFSA were unable to access millions in college financial aid, [according to a 2025 study from the National College Attainment Network](#).

We urge students not to miss out on money to help them pay for college.

The \$7,395 maximum Pell Grant is financial aid that does not need to be repaid, and supports students living on low incomes. Still, the funds are only available to those who fill out the FAFSA. The same is true for the Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work Study programs. Filing a FAFSA is the key first step.

The FAFSA (or WASFA, *Washington Application for State Financial Aid, for people who are undocumented or who do not qualify for federal financial aid but may qualify for state aid*) also provides access to the [Washington College Grant](#), one of the most generous and flexible financial aid programs in the country.