Senior Year:
Planning for After High School

Parent & Student Presentation

September 8, 2025

Agenda

- Senior class information
- Post-secondary options – process & timeline
- Q&A / short break
- Financial aid information
- Q&A



Bridgett Hubbard
Senior Class Advisor

- Measure for caps & gowns during Resource on October 22. Deadline to order will be November 10. I will send specific instructions on what is needed when I receive the information. Cost is $33.99 plus tax and shipping. Late fee will be an additional charge. We encourage use of the many units that are in the community! (you can just order a tassel or a hat and a tassel!)
- Local scholarships
  - Class meeting during Resource to explain
  - Opens January 29, 2026
  - Due February 19, 2026
  - Scholarship FAQ
- Scholarship database on SS website for scholarship opportunities
  - Extremely important year!

Options for the Future



- Work
  - Apprenticeship
- Military
  - ROTC
- Higher education
  - 2 year technical college
  - 2 year freshman/sophomore college
  - 4 year college/university
  - Trade school

Work and Military Process

- Work
  - Prepare a resume & cover letter
  - Practice interviewing skills
  - Consider your professional image
  - Network
- Military
  - Take the ASVAB (October 29 & March 3 at OHS)
  - Talk to a recruiter

Academics are important because employers need highly skilled and knowledgeable employees!

College Application Process

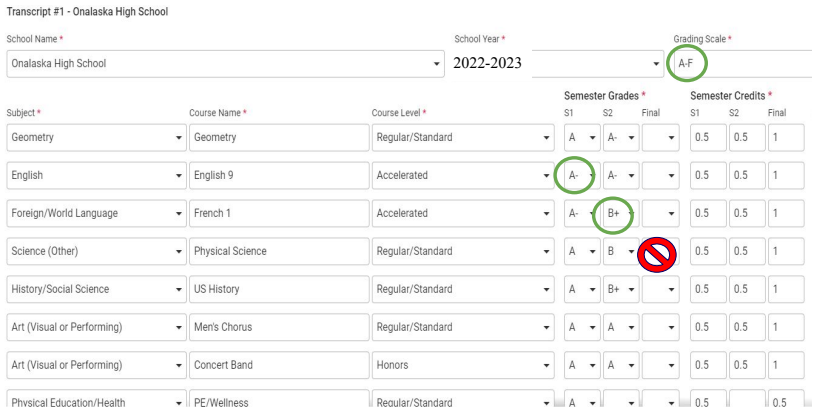
Steps to a complete application

A = All schools
4 – 4 yr schools
* = varies by school

- Apply online (A)
  - Apply early
  - Consider your professional image
  - Is your school on the Common Application?
- Payment (*)
  - Online payment (non-refundable)
  - Many colleges waiving application fees for all
  - UW Schools $25-$80 - Most free, Western $30
  - See counselor for help with fees
- High school transcript (A) OR self-reported grades
  - Request via Xello OR provide your counselor's new email address if requested electronically
  - Even if "Not required" send your transcript!

Self-Reporting Grades on Common App

- UW Madison, U of MN, other 4 year campuses



Transcript #1 - Onalaska High School

School Name * | School Year * | Grading Scale *

Onalaska High School | 2022-2023 | A-F

Subject *	Course Name *	Course Level *	Semester Grades * S1	S2	Final	Semester Credits * S1	S2	Final
Geometry	Geometry	Regular/Standard	A	A-		0.5	0.5	1
English	English 9	Accelerated	A-	A-		0.5	0.5	1
Foreign/World Language	French 1	Accelerated	A-	B+		0.5	0.5	1
Science (Other)	Physical Science	Regular/Standard	A	B		0.5	0.5	1
History/Social Science	US History	Regular/Standard	A	B+		0.5	0.5	1
Art (Visual or Performing)	Men's Chorus	Regular/Standard	A	A		0.5	0.5	1
Art (Visual or Performing)	Concert Band	Honors	A	A		0.5	0.5	1
Physical Education/Health	PE/Wellness	Regular/Standard	A			0.5		0.5

College Application Process, continued

- Test scores*
  - Most college(s) are test optional at this time
    - Double check with your college(s)
    - Consider sending if your score could help
  - ACT/SAT
- Essay(s) (4*)
  - 250 -650 words
  - "What should I write about?"
    - Consider your English 11/AP Language essay
    - Share something not already shared in the application
    - An opportunity for disclosure
  - Be aware of cutting & pasting essays
  - Many are used for scholarships
  - Essay Review UW Madison this Weds!

A = All schools
4 – 4 yr schools
* = varies by school

Essay Prompts

- "Each student is unique. Please tell us about the particular life experiences, talents, commitments, and/or interests you will bring to our campus."
- Please respond to ONE of the following:
  - "Tell us about any circumstances that may had had an impact on your academic performance"
  - "Tell us why you are interested in attending COLLEGE NAME and what aspects of the campus are especially important to you."

College Application Process, continued

- Letters of recommendation (*)
  - *If* needed/required
  - UW-Madison requires one
  - Email school counselor/teacher if an electronic recommendation is needed
  - Pink profile sheet in GC
- Help Days
  - Oct. 23 & 30 at OHS During Resource

A = All schools
4 – 4 yr schools
* = varies by school

Onalaska High School
Letter of Recommendation Request - Student Worksheet

Name:_____ Date Due:_____

Purpose of Letter: (☒ one) ___ college app. ___ scholarship app. ___other _____

Letter to be addressed to: (please include name, title and complete address)

_____
_____
_____

Find this in the Senior Google Classroom & our website under "Important Forms"

Academic Awards, Honors & Activities (please provide dates):

Extracurricular Awards, Honors & Activities (please provide dates):

Community Awards, Honors & Activities (please provide dates):

College Application Process
UW Direct Admit

UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN

- Students opted-in - Spring 2025
- Email from Universities of WI - August 2025
  - Not seeing an email?
- Log in/create account in the Direct Admit Portal
  - Complete Direct Admit Form by Nov 1st!
- Commit to a college by May 1st
- See your Counselor if you have questions

Resources

- Senior Google Classroom
  - Students can invite you to a guardian account
  - Military recruiters/college rep meetings
  - College fairs
  - Financial Aid
  - Cap/gown info
- STAR Conference folder from junior year
- Xello (assessments, occupations, education, transcripts)
  - Access through PowerSchool
- OHS Student Services office & website
- Assessments (ACT, ASVAB, etc.)
  - UW System pre-tests (math &/or Eng)
    - November 12-13 during Resource
- College websites - college fairs & tours

Resources continued

- Western Career Coaching
  - Once EVERY month at OHS (Oct 7 - first meeting)
  - Career Coach will meet/plan with students individually
  - Sign up in Student Services
- Western Open House
  - Tour programs
  - Apply for FREE! ($30 fee waived)
  - October 11 between 4-7 pm

Western Technical College
THE ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE

FAFSA Assistance

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

- College Goal Wisconsin Event
  - Fill out & submit your FAFSA for FREE
  - Oct. 2 at OHS LMC 6 - 8 PM
- FAFSA Completion & Scholarship Workshop
  - Feb. 11 & 12 at OHS during Resource

START HERE
GO FURTHER
FEDERAL STUDENT AID

Questions?

5 minute break
next up
Financial Aid Presentation

Financial Aid



{How to unlock money for college}

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid consists of funds provided to students and families to help pay for postsecondary educational expenses

Primary goal is to assist students in paying for college and is achieved by:

- Evaluating family's ability to pay for educational costs
- Distributing limited resources in an equitable manner
- Providing a balance of gift and self-help aid

Financial Aid Eligibility

Who can apply?

You must:

- Be a citizen or eligible non-citizen of the U.S.
- Have a high school diploma or GED
- Be enrolled at least half-time (6 credits)
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by your college

Cost of Attendance

Cost of Attendance (CoA)

- Tuition and Fees
- Housing and Food (previously Room and Board)
- Books
- Related Expenses (transportation, personal expenses)

*Cost of Attendance is different at each college and is required to be published on their school website

Student Aid Index (SAI)

- Stays the same regardless of college
- Based on student and parent income reported on the FAFSA and a federal formula

How is Financial Need Determined?

Cost of Attendance

- Student Aid Index

= Financial Need

Completing the FAFSA

- **The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) helps families access:**
  - Federal funds
    - Grants, work-study, student loans, and parent loans
  - State funds
    - Grants, scholarships

Federal Grants

Pell Grant up to

$7,395

Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG) up to

$4,000



Federal Work Study

- Flexible hours
- On Campus
- Paid for hours worked

Federal Student Loans

DIRECT STAFFORD LOANS	MAXIMUM AMOUNT FRESHMAN YEAR	INTEREST FREE WHILE IN COLLEGE?	INTEREST RATE	FEES	REPAYMENT
Subsidized	$3,500	Yes	6.39%	1.057%	Six months after graduation OR if enrollment drops below ½ time
Unsubsidized	$2,000	No	6.39%	1.057%	

*ALL students can receive up to $5,500 between subsidized and unsubsidized direct student loans

Federal Parent PLUS Loans

DIRECT PLUS LOAN	MAXIMUM AMOUNT EACH YEAR	INTEREST FREE WHILE IN COLLEGE?	INTEREST RATE	FEES	REPAYMENT
Parent PLUS (credit check required)	Up to cost of attendance minus all other aid	No	8.94%	4.228%	Can pay as you go OR once student drops below ½ time, leaves school, or graduates

WI State Grants & Scholarships

- **WI State Grant (up to $3,500)**
- **Academic Excellence ($2,250 for 4 years)**

Additional application required:

- **Technical Excellence ($2,250 up to 3 years)**
- **TIP Grant (up to $1,800, 0 SAI required)**
- **Minority Undergraduate Retention Grant**
- **Hearing/Visually Impaired Student Grant**

*Must attend a WI public, private, technical, or tribal school

Commitment to Affordability

- **New! 2025 Wisconsin Tuition Promise (Fall 2025-Spring 2029):** Wisconsin resident, undergraduate students (new first–year and transfer students) with family Adjusted Gross Incomes (AGI) ≤ $55,000 who enroll at participating UWs in fall 2025 will be eligible. FAFSA completion required.
- All UWs are participating except for UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee.
  - UW-Madison undergraduates have access to Bucky's Tuition Promise
  - UW-Milwaukee undergraduates have access to Milwaukee Tuition Promise

www.wisconsin.edu/tuition-promise

Scholarships

Money gifted to students that can be based on:

- Academic merit
- Special skills and talents
- Membership and/or service to an organization
- Financial need
- Other

Scholarships

Where to look and who to ask:

- School counselor
- Church or Community foundations
- Employer
- Businesses and service organizations
- College websites and financial aid offices
- Online:
  - Fastweb.com
  - Niche.com
  - Scholarships.com

Private Loans

Money borrowed by student or parent:

- Explore your options
- Credit check required
- Terms vary by lender
  - Interest rates and loan limits
  - Limited repayment plans
  - May require co-signers
  - May require collateral

Completing the FAFSA

Apply at FAFSA.gov

Create an FSA ID

- Acts as an electronic signature
- Requires Social Security number
- Consists of username and password
  - Student and parents each need their own FSA ID
  - Parent will use the same FSA ID for all of their children
  - Complete this step 3-5 days before the FAFSA!

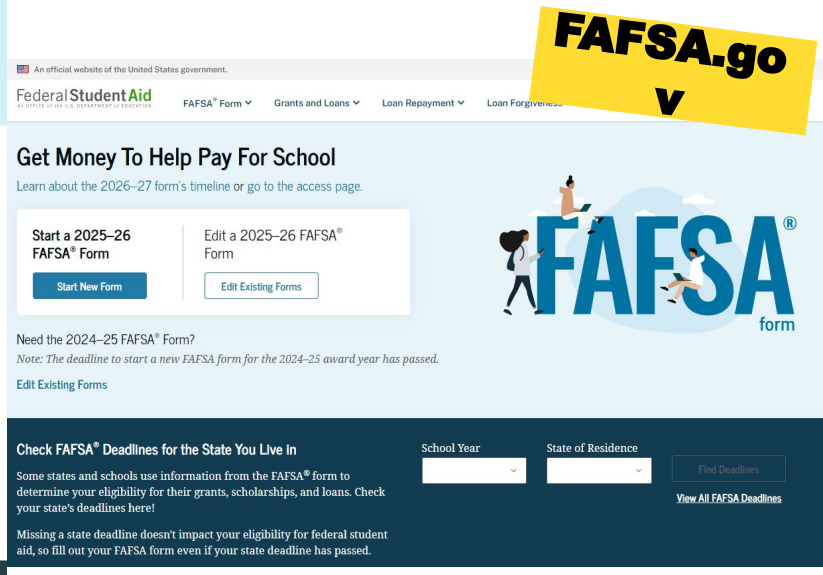
To complete the FAFSA students and parents need:

1. Social Security number
2. Dates: birth, death, marriage, separation or divorce
3. Most recent bank balances (cash, savings, checking)
4. Amounts of any income not reported on taxes
5. Net value of assets (personal and business)



Changes to FAFSA

- Streamlined application process
  - started last year, ran smoothly
- Student starts the application, sends parent an email invite to contribute their information
- Tax information transferred directly into FAFSA form via IRS direct data exchange (secure)

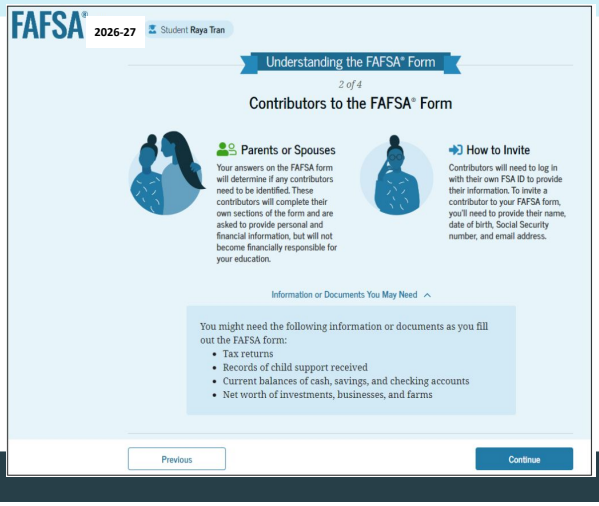


Start the FAFSA

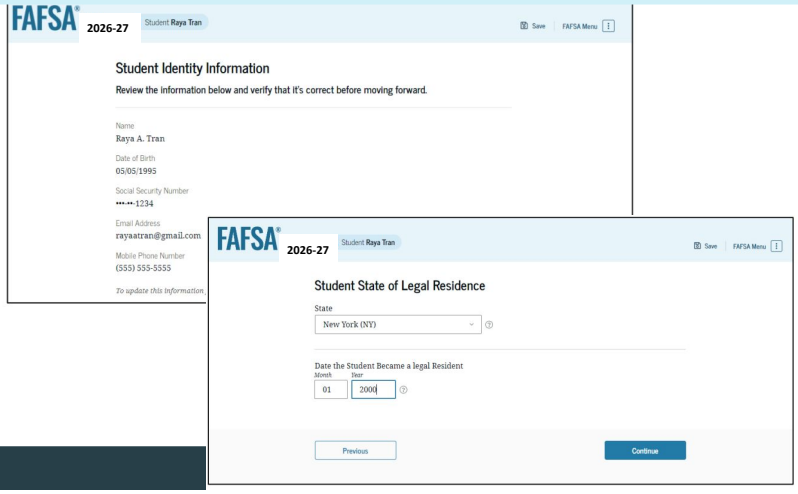
- **Two ways to complete the FAFSA:**
  - Student starts app, invites parent(s)
  - Parent starts app, invites student

* The following slides will be shown from the Student starts application perspective (recommended way to complete FAFSA)

Invite Contributors



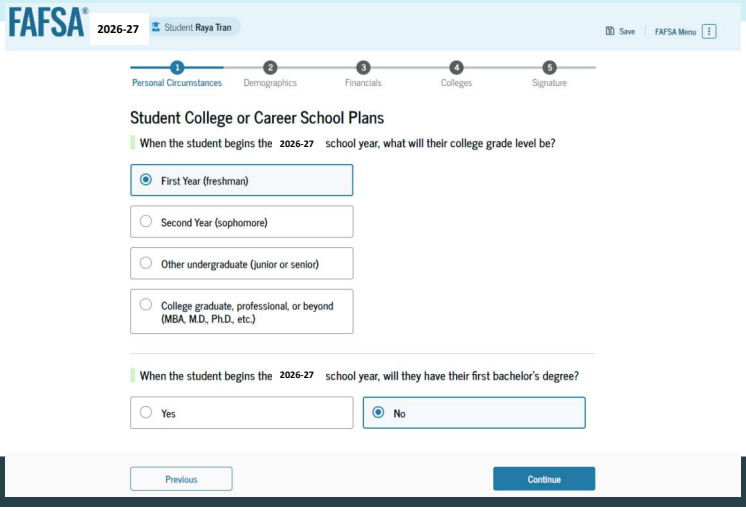
Confirm your Information



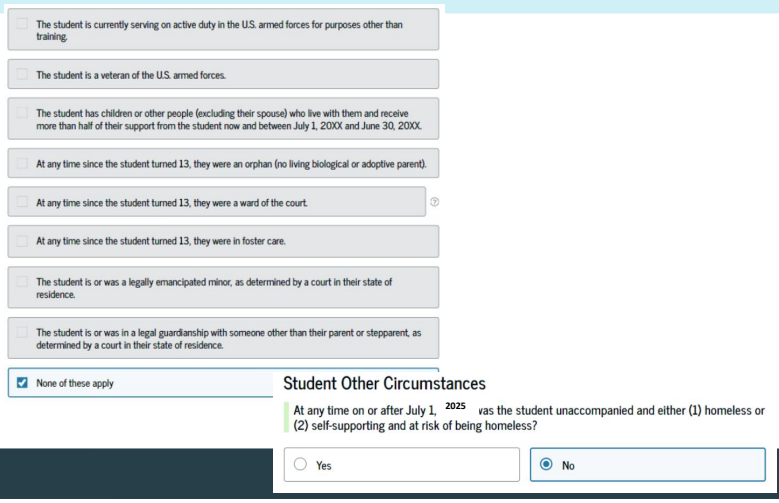
5 Steps to complete FAFSA!

1. Personal Circumstances
2. Demographics
3. Financials
4. Colleges
5. Signature

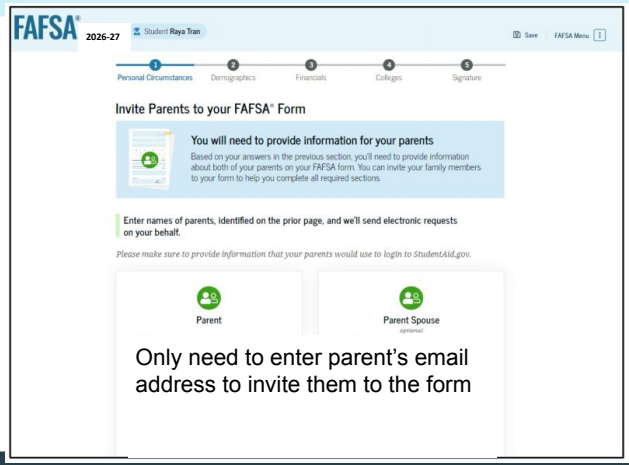
Personal Circumstances



Student Dependency Status



Enter Parent Information



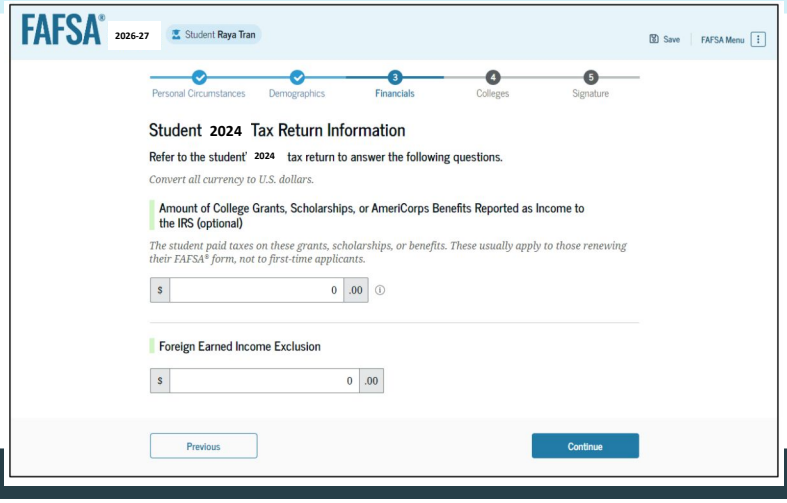
Who Provides Parent Info

- Both biological or adoptive parents if they are:
  - Living together, regardless of marital status or gender
- If parents are divorced, legally separated, or never married AND do not live together:
  - the parent who provided the most financial support provides their information
  - If that parent is remarried, student must also include step parent information
- Not necessarily the same as who claims child on taxes
- If both parents provided an exact equal amount of financial support or if they don't support you financially, provide information for the parent with the greater income and assets.

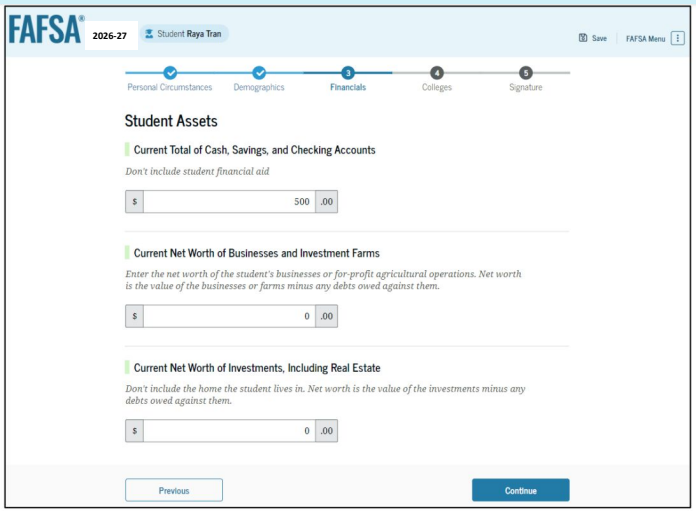
Demographic Information

- Gender, Race, Ethnicity (answers do not affect Financial Aid status)
- Citizenship
- Parent Education level
- Student High School Information

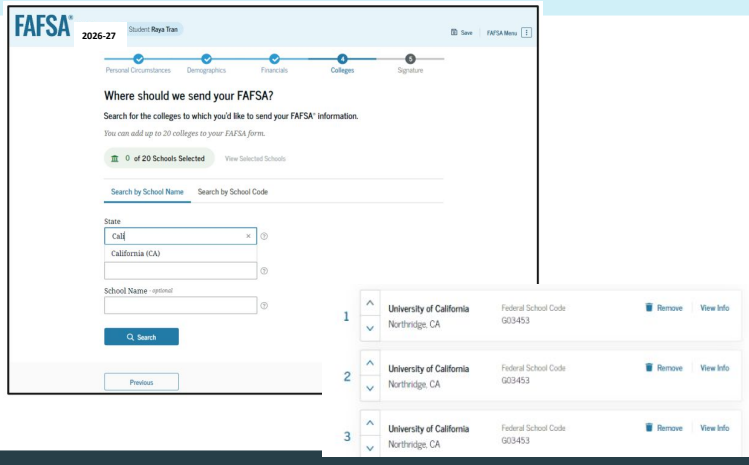
Student Financials



Student Financials

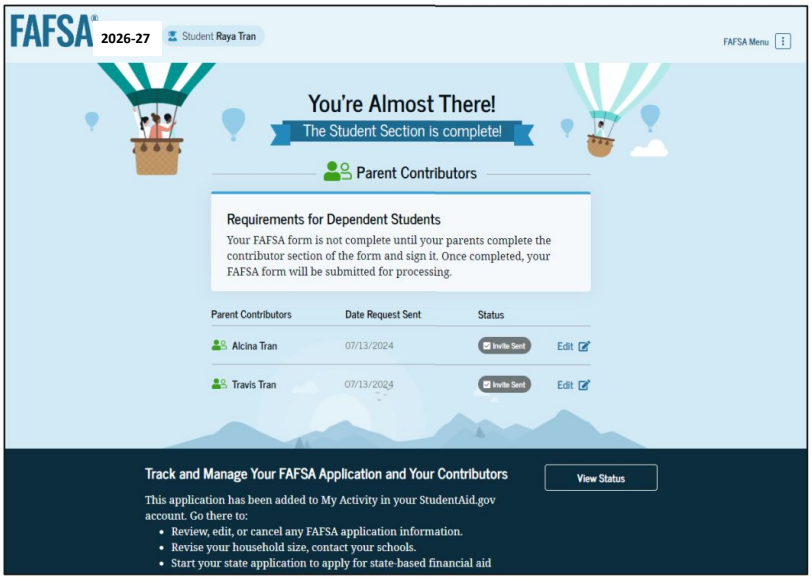


Colleges



Signatures

- Student and Parent both sign and submit
- FAFSA is not complete until both processes are done

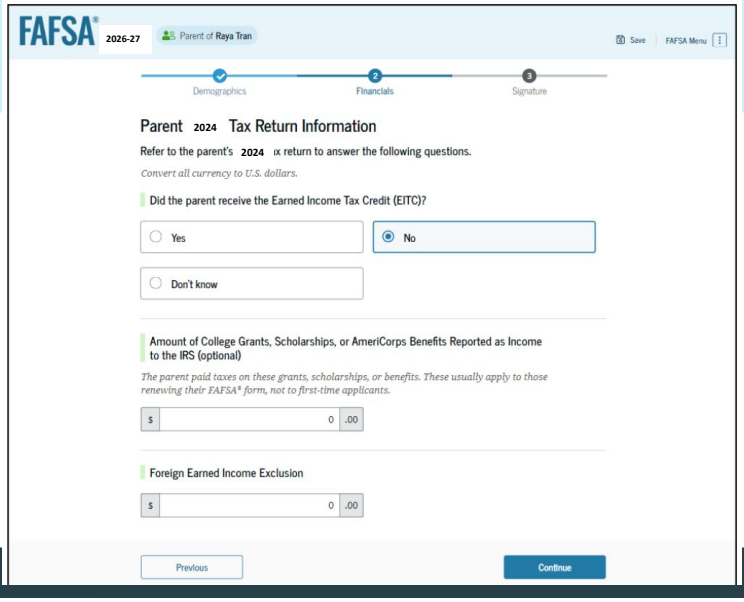


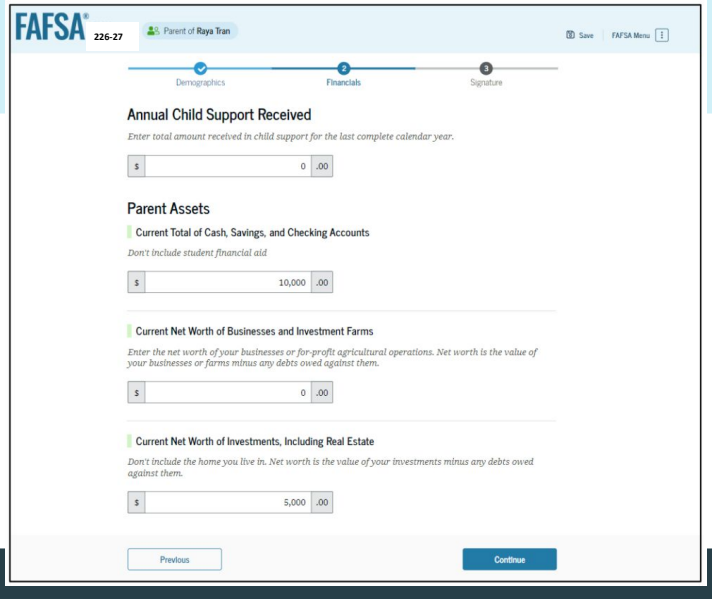
Parent portion of FAFSA

- 3 Steps:
  - Demographics
    - Address, Marital Status, Legal state of residence
  - Financials
  - Signature

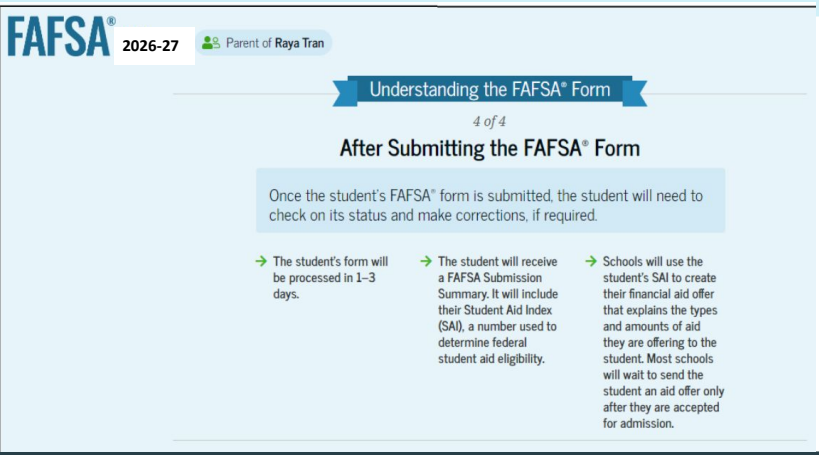
Parent Financials

- Federal benefits
- Tax filing status
- Family size
- Number of people in college
- Other income
- Asset information
  - Do not include the value of the home you live in, life insurance, or retirement accounts
  - Do not include the net worth of a family-owned small business (less than 100 employees) or a family farm where the family resides





Next Steps



Next Steps

- Review SAR and make corrections if needed
- Check future college portal:
  - Review financial aid offers
  - Accept financial aid
- CSS Profile (some institutions require)
- Receive financial aid (Fall semester)

Help is Available!

- **College Goal Event**
  - **October 2nd 6-8pm at OHS!**
- College Financial Aid Office
- 1-800-4-FED-AID
- FAFSA.gov
- StudentAid.gov

Thank you for coming!

Individual Q&A after presentation

Senior Year Timeline 2025-26

***Seniors** – **First semester, before Thanksgiving** – Complete your college applications
***All Year** - Meet with college representatives and military recruiters. Watch the scrolling message board outside Student Services for upcoming visitors and ask for a pass.
***All Year** – Apply for scholarships (check Freddy's Footnotes, Student Services Scholarship Database, the Student Services office, the colleges you are applying to, websites such as fastweb.com)
***Senior Men, when you turn 18 years old** – Register with Selective Service System at sss.gov or see Mrs. Morrison in Student Services

September 5 – Senior classroom with counselors
September 8 – Senior Parent & Student Night and Financial Aid Info 6:15 pm in the OHS PAC
September 12 – Registration deadline for October 18th ACT test
September 25 – Baby Ads and Senior Photos due
September 30 – All AP Students should be enrolled in their AP classrooms

October 1 – Early College Credit and Start College Now applications due for *second* semester course
October 1-2 – Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences
October 6-11 – Homecoming Week
October 7 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
October 11 – Western Technical College open house 4-7 PM (La Crosse campus)
October 17 – Senior classroom with counselors
October 22 – Jostens at OHS for Cap & Gown measurements, Empire at OHS for Senior Photo, During Resource
October 23 - College application completion help (1) during Resource
October 28 – Tentative campus tour/bus trip to U of M & UW Eau Claire
October 29 – ASVAB - Hilltopper Room
October 30- College application completion help (2) during Resource
October 30 – AP exam registration deadline (payment due November 7) - Select **Yes** or **No** in AP Classroom

November 3 – Academic Awards Night (6:30 pm) & NHS Induction (6:00 pm)
November 4 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
November 7 – AP exam payment due $99
November 7 – Registration deadline for December 13 ACT test
November 8 – SAT test (please see your counselor for additional test dates and info) Register by Oct. 24
November 12-13 – UW System Placement Pre-Tests (Math & English), During Resource
November 14 – Senior goal: Have **all** college applications submitted!

Beginning December 2025 – Apply for financial aid as soon as possible on FAFSA.gov (will need completed 2024 tax documents for student and parent(s)) - **See below for FAFSA help!**
December 2 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
December 13 – ACT test (Registration deadline November 7)

January 6 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
January 14-16 – Finals Week
January 16 – End of semester 1
January 29 – Local scholarship meeting/Application distributed

February 3 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
February 11-12 – FAFSA/Scholarship application completion help during Resource

February 18-19 – Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences

February 19 – Local scholarship application deadline 3:00 pm
February 27 – AP Macroeconomics exam registration deadline (payment due March 6)

March 3 - ASVAB
March 3 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
March 6 – AP Macroeconomics exam payment due $99

April 10 – Western Admissions/Career Coach at OHS
April 28 – Senior classrooms with Counselors
April 29 – Build My Future - Careers in construction event - OMNI Center

May 4 - 15 – AP testing
May 5 – Western Career Coaching
May 14 – Senior Night, 7:00 pm at OHS
May 15 – Seniors last day of classes, Senior Awards, Senior Walk
May 20 – Graduation practice 9:00 am, Elementary School Parades, Senior Scholarship Night 6:30 pm
May 23 – Class of 2026 **Graduation at 1:00pm**!

June 1 – Western Technical College Common Scholarship application deadline

Updated 9/3/2025

Class of 2026!
