HOW TO FUND YOUR FUTURE

Barron Collier Counseling Department

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Agenda

1) Florida Bright Futures Application – State Merit Scholarships
2) FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid
3) FSA ID – Who needs an FSA ID?
4) CSS Profile – What is it and who needs to complete it?
5) Collier Community Foundation – Scholarship Connector

Bright Futures Scholarship Program

- Criteria Review – Handout
- Deadline to meet eligibility criteria – Graduation Day! (Application and final test scores must be received by August 31, 2026)
- Complete FFAA application at floridastudentfinancialaid.org
- Creating your student account provides you access to check your eligibility status throughout senior year. This is the student responsibility!
- If eligible, students have two years to access scholarship funds.

Reminder: Bright Futures can only be used at Florida institutions of higher learning!

Going out of state? Ask your institution if they will match Bright Futures.

FAFSA
Free Application for Federal Student Aid

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UupEQdS2VMY

Why do you need to submit a FAFSA?

It is the gateway to grants, scholarships and loans – including institutional fund and merit aid

When do I submit the FAFSA?

The application opened on October 1, 2025, and should be completed as soon as possible. Review your college financial aid priority deadlines and make sure FAFSA is completed well before these deadlines.

How often do I complete the FAFSA?

FAFSA is completed every year you are taking part in post-secondary education (if you want financial aid consideration).

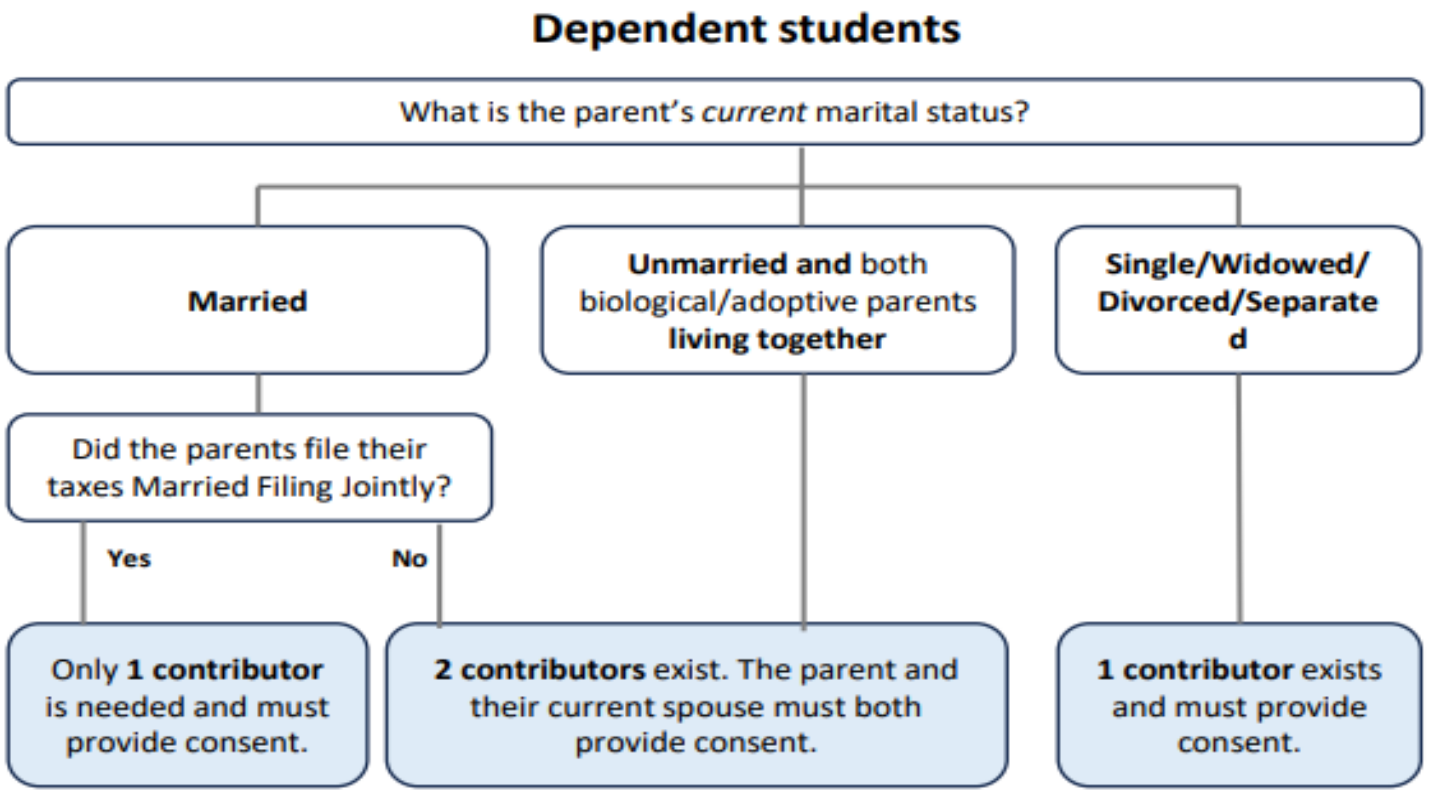
FSA ID – how to create

- All contributors must create an ID (student/parent(s) or guardian(s))
- This FSA ID is used to log in, access, and file your FAFSA
- Visit:

  StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch

- Student will create an FSA ID and your parent/guardian will create an FSA ID. The chart on the following slide shows which parent(s) need to create an ID.
- SAVE your FSA ID information! You will use it every year you complete a FAFSA.

Which Parent(s) Need an FSA ID?

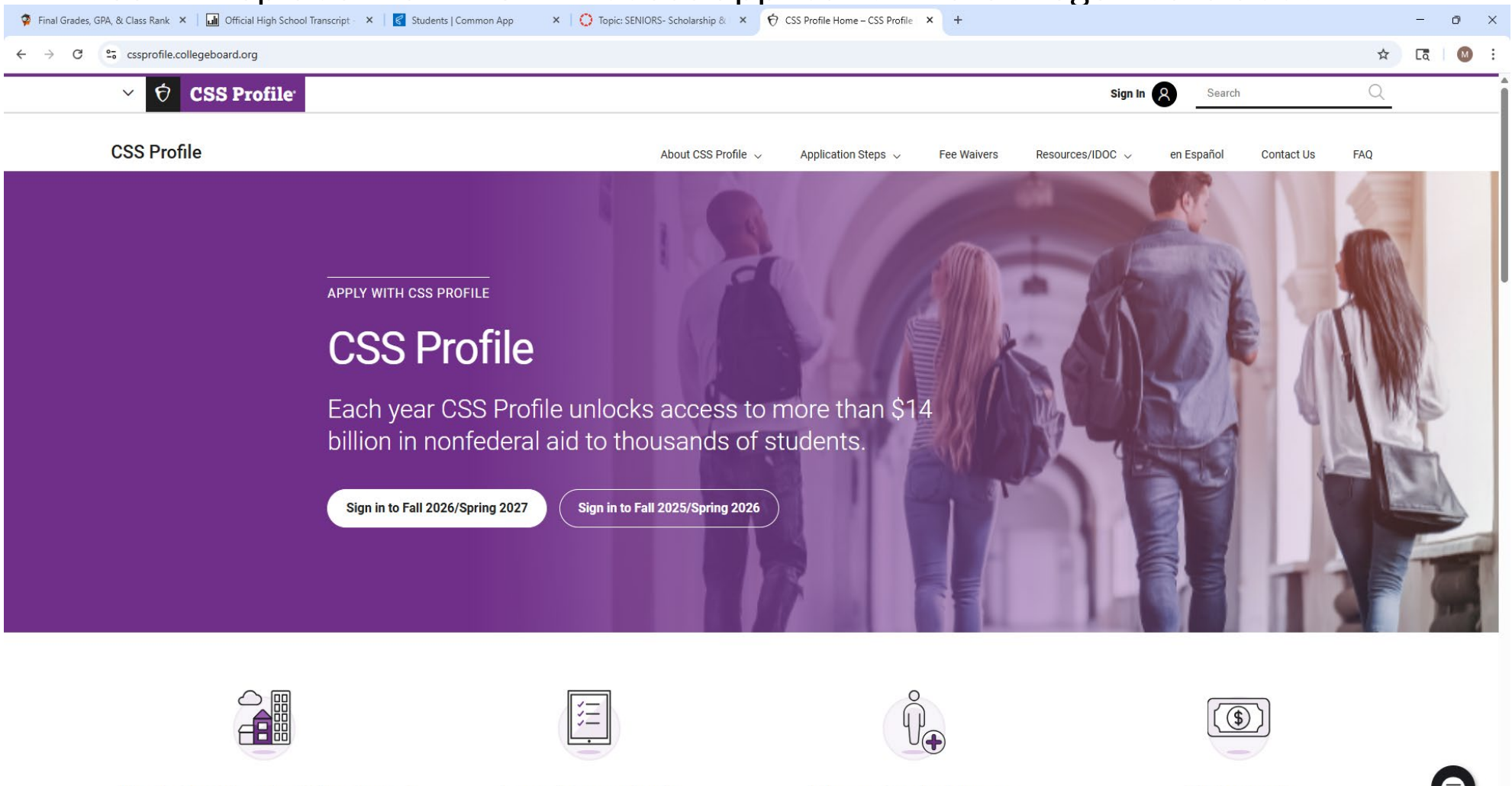


Other Important Things to Know About the FAFSA

- Provides consent for tax data to be shared directly from IRS (Internal Revenue Service).
- Tax data is always from previous (filed) tax year.
- Timely filing is important for meeting your institution's Financial Aid Priority Deadline
- FAFSA Completion Events in Collier county will be held for those needing more assistance.
- Supportive resources: school counselor, CPA/Accountant, Champions for Learning
- Your FAFSA Summary will be shared with the financial aid office at the colleges(s)/schools you provide on your application. The institutions use this to determine your aid package.
- You select which aid to accept or decline
- FAFSA must be completely yearly as financial pictures change (or students and parents)

CSS PROFILE – Needed for Institutional Aid (private and select)

- https://youtu.be/rGzbNhpYzag
- $25 application fee for initial institution and $16 for each additional institution
- Does not replace the FAFSA – Access application via College Board account



The Scholarship Connector

www.swflscholarships.org

- Click “Find Scholarships”
- Click “Start Your Search”
- Complete the short eligibility quiz
- Click “Find Matching Scholarships”
- Individual Scholarships can also be searched by name

- The Scholarship Connector is managed by the Collier Community Foundation – it is a search engine. Each scholarship listed will have its own link to direct applicants to the specific application process.

LUNCH & LEARN
with the
Collier Community Foundation

Tuesday – November 4th during lunch
in the AUDITORIUM

Bring your lunch and your laptop and learn how to navigate the Scholarship Connector

TIPS to remember:

Set aside time to research and apply for scholarships!

Stay organized and keep track of deadlines!



BOVENKERK SCHOLARSHIP

2025

HAROLD P. BOVENKERK SCHOLARSHIP FOR ENGINEERING AND NATURAL SCIENCES

Graduating seniors from Collier County, Florida high schools that have demonstrated excellence in advanced math, natural science or engineering and plan to pursue a 4-year college degree in one of these fields.

PREFERRED SCHOOL:

Scholarship is available for any school but preference may be given to students attending:

- University of Michigan
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- California Institute of Technology
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology

SCHOLARSHIP TIMELINE

Scholarship opportunity will be announced in January

RECAP: TO Do's

1) Complete the FAFSA

2) Complete the CSS Profile
(if applicable)

3) Apply for Bright Futures

4) Apply for local
scholarships! $$$$