FAFSA CHECKLIST FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Your Step-by-Step Guide to Securing Financial Aid

STEP 1: GET READY (BEFORE FAFSA OPENS)

- **Create Student FSA ID:** Go to StudentAid.gov to set up your username and password. Do this at least 4 days before filing.
- **Identify Your Contributors:** Determine which parent(s) or legal guardian(s) count as a financial contributor on your form.
- **Create Parent/Contributor FSA ID:** Your contributor must create their own separate FSA ID using their own email and SSN.

STEP 2: GATHER YOUR REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- **Social Security Numbers:** Have both the student's and contributors' exact SSNs or Alien Registration numbers handy.
- **Tax Returns & Financial Records:** Gather Federal Income Tax Returns, W-2s, and records of untaxed income from 2 years prior.
- **Asset Information:** Compile current bank account balances, investments, and business/farm asset details (excluding primary home).
- **College List:** Make a list of up to 20 colleges you want to receive your financial aid results.

STEP 3: FILL OUT AND SUBMIT THE FAFSA

- **Log In and Start:** Log in at StudentAid.gov using the student's FSA ID and select the correct academic year application.
- **Invite Contributors:** Enter the legal name, DOB, SSN, and email address of your parent contributor exactly as it appears on their ID.
- **Provide Financial Consent:** Approve the direct transfer of federal tax information via the IRS Data Retrieval system.
- **Review and Sign:** Carefully review all data summary fields, fix any typos, sign digitally, and officially submit the application.

STEP 4: NEXT STEPS & REVIEWING OFFERS

- **Check FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS):** Log back in within 3–5 days to download your FSS and look over your Student Aid Index (SAI).
- **Review College Financial Aid Letters:** Compare your total out-of-pocket costs across college acceptance packages.
- **Accept and Enroll:** Formally accept your grants, scholarships, and needed loans through your chosen college's student portal.