



Scholarship Information

🎓 **Classes of 2027 and 2028** 🎓

This newsletter has been created by the Baker County Education Foundation for the students and families of our junior and senior classes.

Parent Guide for Juniors and Seniors

The junior and senior years of high school bring excitement, opportunity, and some very important decisions. Soon, our students will leave Baker County High School and begin the next season of their lives.

For some students, that next step will be **college**. For others, it may be **technical or trade school, military service, an apprenticeship, or entering the workforce**. There is no single path that is right for every student. Our goal is to help families explore the options, ask good questions, make informed financial decisions, and develop a plan before graduation.

Parents and guardians continue to play an important role during this transition. Encourage your student to take ownership of the process while helping them keep track of applications, financial-aid requirements, deadlines, scholarships, testing, transcripts, and other important details.

Seniors Need to Take Action Now

Completing the FAFSA

One of the most important things families of college- or career-school-bound seniors can do this fall is complete the **2027–2028 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. The U.S.



Department of Education officially opened the 2027–2028 FAFSA to the public on **September 23, 2026**.

What is the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is the federal application used to determine eligibility for financial aid. FAFSA information may be used for:

- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal student loans
- Federal Work-Study
- State financial aid
- College and university grants
- Career and technical school financial aid
- Need-based scholarships
- Some privately funded scholarships

Completing the FAFSA is **free**. Families should use the official Federal Student Aid website rather than paying a third-party company to complete the application. [Complete the FAFSA at StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)

Don't assume your family earns too much. Families sometimes decide not to complete the FAFSA because they believe they will not qualify for financial aid. That can be a costly decision. FAFSA information is used for more than the Pell Grant, and colleges, states, and scholarship organizations may use FAFSA information when awarding their own aid. Federal Student Aid recommends that students seeking federal, state, or institutional financial aid complete the FAFSA regardless of family income.

What should families have ready?

Before beginning, students and families should gather:

- A [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) account for the student
- A separate [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) account for each required parent/contributor
- Parent or contributor email information
- Federal tax information
- Information about current cash, savings, checking accounts, investments, and other assets when required
- Child-support information when applicable
- A list of colleges, universities, technical schools, or career schools the student may attend

Federal Student Aid recommends that the **student begin the FAFSA first** and then invite the appropriate parent or other contributor. [FAFSA Checklist: What Students Need](#)

Important information for parents.

A parent who is identified as a FAFSA contributor must provide the required information, give consent for federal tax information to be transferred from the IRS, and sign his or her portion of the application. **Being a FAFSA contributor does NOT mean that the parent is agreeing to pay the student's college expenses or agreeing to take out a parent loan.** For divorced, separated, remarried, or other family situations, Federal Student Aid has a tool to help determine which parent should participate. [Federal Student Aid FAFSA Help for Parents](#)

After you submit the FAFSA...



Do not simply submit the application and forget about it. Students should review their **FAFSA Submission Summary**, confirm that all required contributors completed their sections, correct any errors, and monitor financial-aid messages from the schools to which they apply. The FAFSA Submission Summary provides the student's Student Aid Index and an estimate of possible federal aid; it is **not** the student's final financial-aid offer.

Scholarships: Small Applications Can Add Up to Big Savings

Scholarships should be treated almost like a part-time job during senior year.

A student who spends several hours completing scholarship applications may earn hundreds or thousands of dollars toward tuition, books, fees, housing, tools, or other educational expenses. Students should not limit themselves to one large national scholarship. Local scholarships often have a much smaller applicant pool.

Create a scholarship folder and keep electronic copies of:

- An updated résumé
- Activities and honors
- Volunteer and work history
- An unofficial transcript
- SAT/ACT/CLT information, if applicable
- A general personal statement
- Several adaptable essays
- Recommendation letters
- FAFSA information
- A professional student email address

Most importantly: **watch deadlines carefully.**



Baker County High School

Class of 2027

IMPORTANT DATES FOR COLLEGE, CAREER, MILITARY & SCHOLARSHIPS

Plan Early | Meet Deadlines | Create Opportunities | Build Your Future

Different
Paths.
Bright
Futures.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026	OCTOBER 1, 2026	NOVEMBER 30, 2026	JANUARY 15, 2027	JANUARY 2027 (Exact dates TBD)
 2027–2028 FAFSA OPENS The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) opens for the 2027–2028 school year. - Create StudentAid.gov accounts for student and parent(s) - Gather required documents - Complete the application early studentaid.gov	 FLORIDA GATEWAY COLLEGE (FGC) BOARD OF TRUSTEES SCHOLARSHIP OPENS Application opens for incoming high school seniors. - For students planning to attend FGC - Tuition for two years (up to 12 credit hours per semester) - Must meet GPA, essay, recommendation, FAFSA, and enrollment requirements www.fgc.edu	 COLLEGE BOARD BIGFUTURE SCHOLARSHIPS DEADLINE Complete key BigFuture activities by November 30 for a chance to earn \$500–\$40,000. - No essay required - No minimum GPA - Complete college and career planning steps bigfuture.collegeboard.org	 UNF MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PRIORITY DATE For students entering UNF in Summer or Fall 2027. - Apply for admission early - Be automatically considered for qualifying merit scholarships - Meet the January 15 priority consideration date www.unf.edu	 COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR NORTHEAST FLORIDA SCHOLARSHIPS OPEN The 2027 scholarship opportunities are expected to open in early 2027. - Applications typically accepted January through March - Multiple scholarships for North Florida students www.jaxcf.org
FEBRUARY 1, 2027	MARCH 5, 2027	MARCH 2027 (Exact dates TBD)	SPRING 2027 (Check for exact dates)	THROUGHOUT SENIOR YEAR
 BAKER COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION GRANTS GO LIVE The Baker County Education Foundation (BCEF) scholarship application will be available on the Baker County School District website. - One application for multiple local scholarships - Open to BCHS seniors www.bakerk12.org	 BAKER COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION GRANTS CLOSE Completed applications must be submitted by March 5, 2027. - Do not wait until the last day - Allow time to gather materials - Meet all requirements www.bakerk12.org	 OKEFENOKE REMC SCHOLARSHIPS The 2027 scholarship application is expected to open in early 2027. - Open to students who reside in Baker County (and other eligible counties) - Historically awards multiple \$2,000 scholarships - Open to high school seniors, college students, and vocational/technical students www.oremc.com	 FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES & FLORIDA FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION (FFAA) Complete the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) during the appropriate application window to be considered for Bright Futures. - Deadlines vary by award type - Must meet GPA, test score, and service/work requirements - Apply by high school graduation www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org	 ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES - College and technical school application deadlines - Institution-specific scholarships - Local civic and community scholarships - Employer and trade organization scholarships - Military enlistment and ROTC opportunities - Apprenticeship and workforce training programs <i>Check the BCHS Scholarship page often for new opportunities!</i> bchs.bakerk12.org



FAFSA
studentaid.gov



Bright Futures & State Financial Aid
www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org



BCHS Scholarships
bchs.bakerk12.org



Baker County Education Foundation
www.bakerk12.org



FGC Scholarships
www.fgc.edu



BigFuture Scholarships
bigfuture.collegeboard.org



Community Foundation for Northeast Florida
www.jaxcf.org

Scholarships for Baker County High School Students

Mrs. Jaime Stokes, 904-259-6280, is the senior career counselor at Baker County High School. She posts every scholarship that comes through the guidance office to the 2027 Senior Google Classroom page. Students should check this Google Classroom regularly!



Baker County students have an opportunity that students in many communities simply do not have—the support of the **Baker County Education Foundation (BCEF)**. Did you know that BCEF has scholarships for students joining the military, going to work, or attending a trade school as well as scholarships for those going to college?

BCEF has been providing scholarships and educational support to Baker County students for decades. In 2025–2026 alone, the Foundation facilitated the awarding of approximately **\$80,000 in student scholarships** and another **\$3,000 in prior-graduate scholarships**. Over its history, BCEF has funded more than **1,000 student scholarships**.

The Foundation's scholarships are made possible by local families, businesses, community organizations, memorial funds, and Baker County School District employees. Seniors should watch for the 2027 BCEF application.

The new Class of 2027 BCEF scholarship application has not yet been posted publicly. Families should monitor the BCHS Scholarship page during the school year. The Baker County Education Foundation scholarship application will open on February 1st.

For more information about the Foundation, see the following link: [Baker County Education Foundation](#). Additional scholarship information is available on the high school's website at: [BCHS Scholarship Page – Bookmark This Page!](#)

Parents: please encourage your senior to apply. Students sometimes look at an individual scholarship amount and decide it is "not enough" to justify completing an application. Please remember that \$500 can purchase textbooks, \$1,000 can cover significant fees, and several awards combined can substantially reduce the family's out-of-pocket cost. **Local scholarships matter.**

Click the link below to download the BCEF flyer that contains more information about the Foundations student scholarships.



26 27 Baker County Education Foundation Senior Student Scholarship Flyer.pdf

drive.google.com

Additional Scholarships to Consider

Several organizations have recently offered scholarships that specifically include Baker County students. **The 2027 applications for some of these programs have not yet opened**, so families should bookmark the sites and watch the BCHS Scholarship page for announcements.

Baker County Medical Services Scholarships

For the Class of 2026, Baker County Medical Services offered **two \$2,500 scholarships** through BCHS Guidance. Families should watch for a possible 2027 announcement.

Rotary Club of Baker County Scholarship

The Rotary Club of Baker County has historically awarded a scholarship to a graduating BCHS senior. Applications are typically shared through BCHS Guidance.

Okefenoke REMC Scholarships

This is one Baker County families should definitely remember. Okefenoke REMC's scholarship program specifically includes students who reside in **Baker County, Florida**. For 2026, OREMC awarded **10 scholarships of \$2,000 each**. Applicants could be high-school seniors, undergraduate college students, or vocational/technical students, and they did **not** have to live in a household served by OREMC as long as they resided within its eligible service-area counties.

Watch for the 2027 application. [Okefenoke REMC Scholarship Information](#)

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

The Community Foundation offers scholarships benefiting students throughout Northeast Florida.

Its **2027 scholarship opportunities are expected to open in early 2027**, with the annual scholarship cycle generally running from January through March.

A particularly interesting example from the 2026 cycle was the **Sam and Lydia Payne Scholarship**, which was open to graduating seniors from North Florida public or private schools and provided up to **\$12,000 over four years** to selected students meeting the eligibility criteria. [Community Foundation for Northeast Florida Scholarships](#)

Florida Gateway College Scholarships

In addition to scholarships offered by the Baker County Education Foundation. Students considering Florida Gateway College should pay particularly close attention to its scholarship opportunities available through that school's foundation. [Florida Gateway College Foundation Scholarships](#)



FGC's Foundation offers scholarships based on academic achievement, financial need, program of study, and other criteria. FAFSA completion is required for Foundation scholarship consideration.

FGC also offers a **Board of Trustees Scholarship** for incoming high school seniors. The scholarship can provide tuition for two years—12 credit hours per semester for four consecutive fall/spring semesters. The application traditionally opens October 1 and has a March deadline. Applicants must meet additional GPA, essay, recommendation, FAFSA, and enrollment requirements. [FGC Board of Trustees Scholarship](#)



University of North Florida

Students considering UNF should apply for admission early.

For students entering UNF in **Summer or Fall 2027**, UNF lists several merit-based scholarships for Florida residents. Incoming freshmen are automatically considered for qualifying merit scholarships based on admission information; UNF identifies **January 15** as an important priority consideration date.

UNF also offers Foundation, first-generation, departmental, STEM, and other scholarship opportunities through its scholarship system. [UNF Scholarship Opportunities](#)

Florida State College at Jacksonville

FSCJ Foundation scholarships support students in numerous academic and workforce programs. Students planning to attend FSCJ should investigate both institution-wide scholarships and scholarships connected to specific career programs. [FSCJ Foundation Scholarships](#)





Jacksonville University

[Jacksonville University](#) automatically considers incoming students for academic scholarships, with current first-year awards reaching as high as \$33,000 annually. Baker County students should also investigate JU's donor-funded named and endowed scholarships, Florida Bright Futures, EASE, outside scholarships, and other financial aid before comparing the actual cost of attendance. [Jacksonville University Financial Aid & Scholarships](#)

Don't Forget about Florida's Bright Futures Scholarships

Florida Bright Futures remains one of the most important scholarship programs available to Florida students.



Programs include:

- Florida Academic Scholars
- Florida Medallion Scholars
- Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars

Eligibility involves combinations of required coursework, GPA, qualifying test scores, and service and/or paid-work requirements depending on the particular award. BCHS also maintains information about documenting **volunteer service and paid work hours** for Bright Futures.

Seniors seeking a Bright Futures award must also complete the **Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA)** during the appropriate application window. Florida law requires students seeking an initial Bright Futures award to apply by high school graduation, subject to the special rule for midyear graduates.

Because requirements can change, families should use the current Florida Office of Student Financial Assistance information rather than relying on old charts found online.

[Official Florida Bright Futures Information](#)

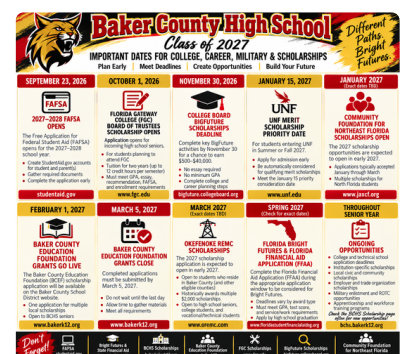
[Florida Financial Aid Application and State Scholarship Programs](#)

Simple Family Timeline

JUNIORS – START NOW

Explore careers and postsecondary options; build a résumé; begin scholarship searches; complete volunteer/work hours; investigate Bright Futures; visit colleges, technical schools, and employers; prepare for SAT/ACT/CLT testing when applicable; and discuss the family's realistic financial expectations.

SENIORS – FALL 2026



Complete the FAFSA now; apply to colleges and training programs; check institutional scholarship deadlines; complete the Florida Financial Aid Application when available for the appropriate award year; continue Bright Futures requirements; apply for BigFuture opportunities; and begin checking the BCHS Scholarship page weekly.

SENIORS — JANUARY THROUGH MARCH 2027

This will be one of the most important scholarship periods of the year. Watch closely for Baker County Education Foundation scholarships, Community Foundation for Northeast Florida scholarships, OREMC, local civic organizations, and other Baker County opportunities.

SENIORS — SPRING 2027

Review financial-aid offers carefully, compare actual out-of-pocket costs, complete remaining local scholarship applications, make the final postsecondary decision, submit required enrollment documents, request final transcripts, and make sure no scholarship or financial-aid requirements remain incomplete.

Links for Reference

The months ahead are about more than simply getting your child across the graduation stage. They are about helping a young adult begin life with **purpose, direction, and a realistic plan**. Talk about finances. Talk about careers. Ask questions. Visit programs. Meet employers and recruiters. Compare options. Encourage your student to complete applications even when the process takes time.

Most importantly, remind your child that success after high school does not look exactly the same for everyone.

Whether the next destination is **a university, state college, a trade program, an apprenticeship, the military, or a workplace**, the goal is the same: **Leave Baker County High School prepared to move forward.**

Keep These Links Handy

[BCHS Guidance Department](#)

[BCHS Scholarship Page](#)

[Baker County Education Foundation](#)

[Federal Student Aid / FAFSA](#)

[Florida Bright Futures and State Financial Aid](#)

[BigFuture Scholarships](#)

[Florida Gateway College Financial Aid](#)

[University of North Florida Scholarships](#)

[FSCJ Scholarships](#)

[Community Foundation for Northeast Florida Scholarships](#)

[Okefenoke REMC Scholarships](#)

[CareerSource Northeast Florida](#)

[Registered Apprenticeships](#)

[U.S. Military Enlistment Information](#)

