

What You Need to Know About Financial Aid



High School Night

DUTCHESS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

What is FAFSA® and Financial Aid?

- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid-** Standard F R E E form that collects information about the student and the parent. You do not pay to submit the FAFSA.
- **Financial Aid** - Funds provided to students to help pay for educational expenses.



What is Cost of Attendance (COA)?

- Direct costs (tuition, fees, room & board)
- Indirect costs (transportation, personal expenses)
- Varies widely from college to college

What is Student Aid Index(SAI)?

Number resulting
from the evaluation
of a student's
(and family's)
approximate
financial resources
for a student's
postsecondary
education



Student contribution

Parent contribution
(for dependent students)

What is Financial Need?

Cost of Attendance

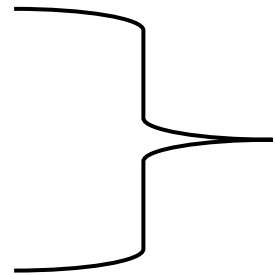
– Student Aid Index

= Financial Need

Types of Financial Aid

Scholarships

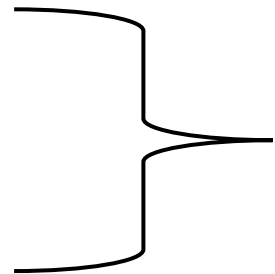
Grants



Gift Aid-Does not have to be paid back

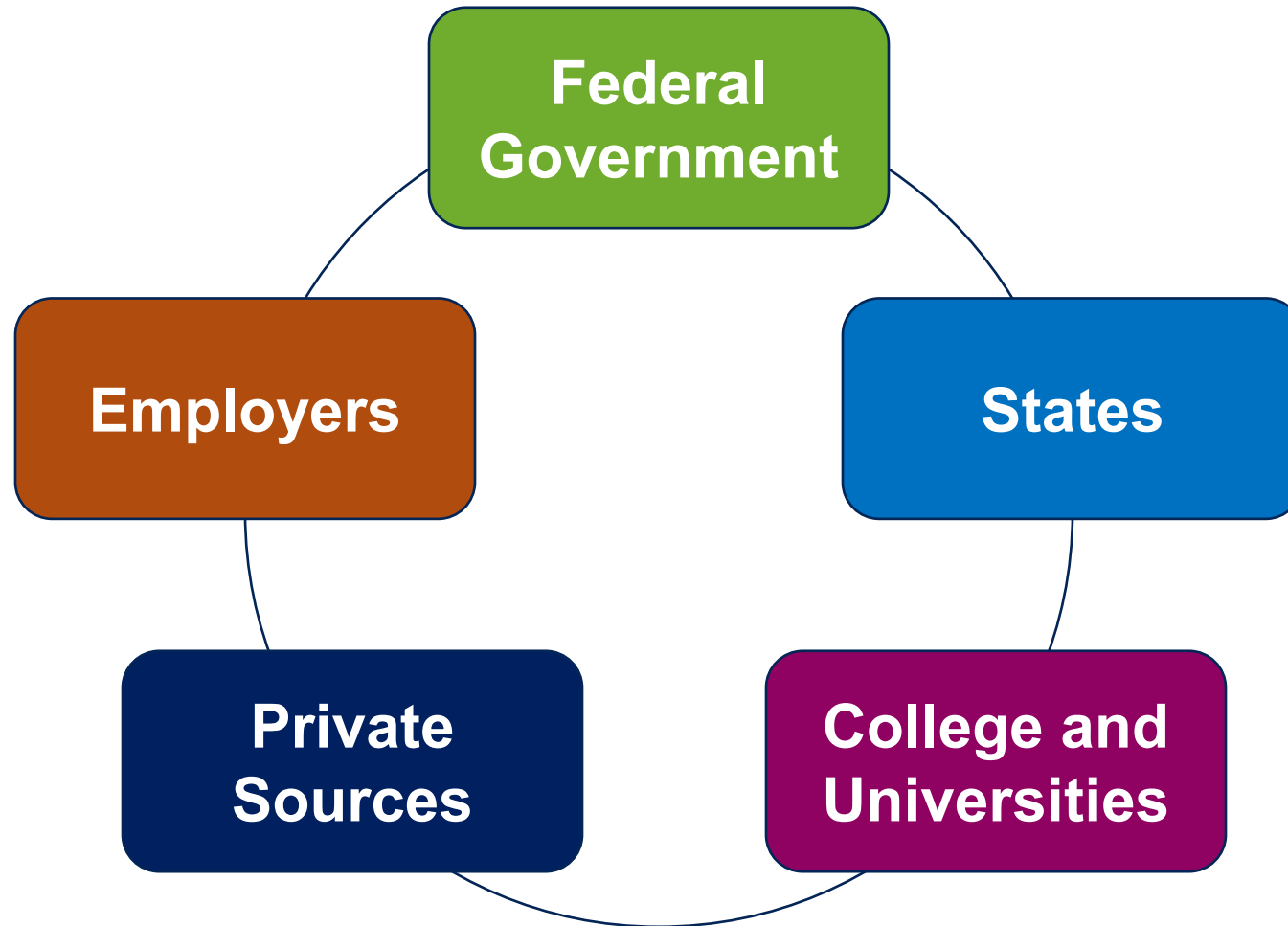
Loans

Employment



Self-Help Aid-Loans Do have to be paid back. Employment does not come off tuition bill

Sources of Financial Aid



Federal Student Aid Programs

- Federal Pell Grant
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Direct Student Loans (Direct Loans)
- Federal PLUS Loans

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- The number of questions on the FAFSA is less than 50
- Information used to calculate the **Student Aid Index**(SAI)
 - Measure of **2025** taxable and untaxable income and **current** assets of both student and parent
 - Also based on family size and other demographic info such as marital status
- Colleges use the **SAI** to determine financial aid eligibility
- For the 2027-2028 academic year, the FAFSA may be completed beginning **October 1, 2026**

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- **Re-apply** every year
- The earlier you file, the earlier you may receive your aid offer and the more aid you may be offered
- Most colleges set **FAFSA filing priority dates**
- Admissions process vs. Financial Aid process

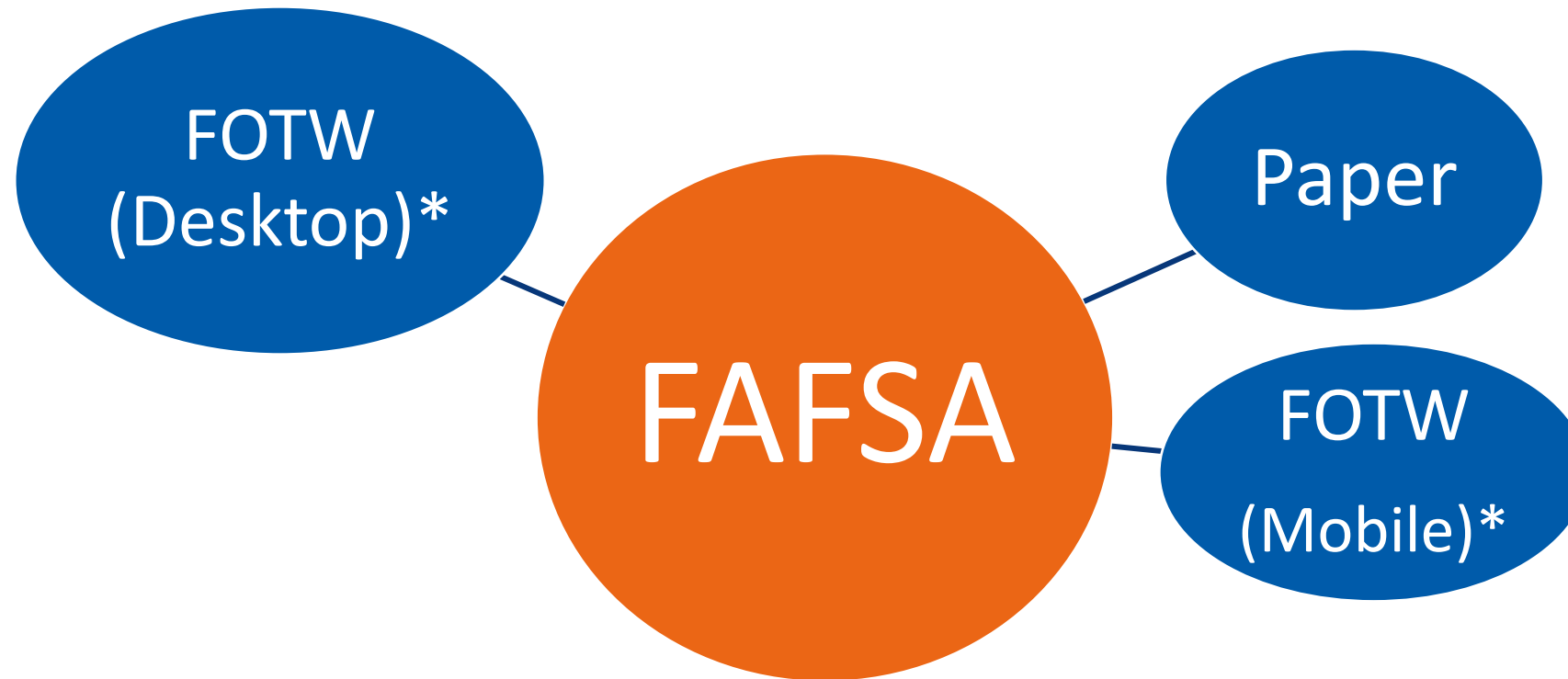
FAFSA for 2027-2028

- The Custodial Parent on your FAFSA will be the parent who provides you with the most financial support
- Students, spouses, parents, and stepparents will need to provide their consent in the new *Consent to Retrieve and Disclose Federal Tax Information* section of the FAFSA for federal student aid eligibility.
 - This consent will allow the IRS to share Federal Tax Information (FTI).
 - If any party to the FAFSA form does not provide consent, submission of the form will still be allowed. However, a Student Aid Index (SAI) will not be calculated.

WHO is the Parent for the FAFSA?

- **Biological or Adoptive Parent(s)**
 - If not married BUT living together report BOTH parents
- **If parents are divorced:**
 - Provide information for the parent who provided you the most financial support during the last 12 months
- **Include Step-parent information**
 - Regardless of any 'agreements'
- **If parents are married but filed separate tax returns**
 - Both parents will need to be listed as contributors on the FAFSA

MULTIPLE WAYS TO COMPLETE FAFSA



*IRS FTI Can Be Used

FAFSA

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid>

Apply for Financial Aid

The most vital step in applying for federal grants, work-study, and loans for college is the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form.

[Learn About the FAFSA® Form](#)

Aid Application Process

Take these steps to apply for federal student aid.

01

Get Prepared

[Gather the documents you'll need.](#)

02

Complete FAFSA® Form

[Apply early to maximize your aid.](#)

03

Review *Student Aid Report*

[Make corrections, if necessary.](#)

04

Respond to Aid Offer

[Accept the aid you want.](#)

05

Receive Aid

[Get your aid from your school.](#)

06

Renew Your FAFSA® Form

[Reapply each year.](#)

FAFSA on the Web (FOTW)

- Built-in edits to prevent costly errors
- Skip-logic allows student and/or parent to skip unnecessary questions
- Option to use Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Federal Taxpayer Information tool (FTI) to import tax data
- More timely submission process
- Detailed instructions
- Real Time ID Checks (Prevent Fraud)

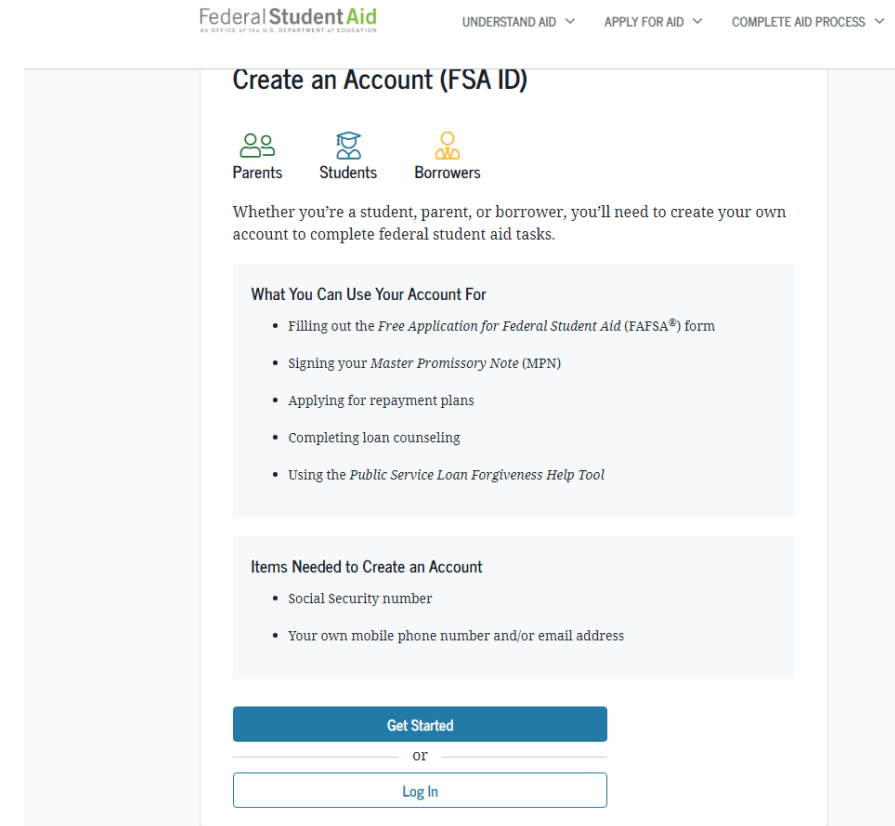
FSA ID

<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/>

- The FSA ID is the electronic signature for the FAFSA
- Used by students and parents throughout financial aid process, including subsequent school years
 - FAFSA Corrections
 - FAFSA Renewal
 - Student Loan Promissory Note Signatures
- Only the owner should create an FSA ID
- Each student must have their own FSA ID
- At least one parent must have their own FSA ID
 - In some situations, both parents must each have their own FSA ID

FSA ID

- **Name**
- **Date of Birth**
- **Email address**
 - Not High School Email
 - May only use an email one time
- **Mobile Phone Number**
 - May only use a mobile number one time



The screenshot shows the 'Create an Account (FSA ID)' page from the Federal Student Aid website. At the top, the 'Federal Student Aid' logo is on the left, and navigation links 'UNDERSTAND AID', 'APPLY FOR AID', and 'COMPLETE AID PROCESS' are on the right. Below the title, there are three icons: 'Parents' (two people), 'Students' (a person with a graduation cap), and 'Borrowers' (a person with a dollar sign). A paragraph states: 'Whether you're a student, parent, or borrower, you'll need to create your own account to complete federal student aid tasks.' Below this, a section titled 'What You Can Use Your Account For' lists five bullet points: 'Filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form', 'Signing your Master Promissory Note (MPN)', 'Applying for repayment plans', 'Completing loan counseling', and 'Using the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Help Tool'. Another section titled 'Items Needed to Create an Account' lists two bullet points: 'Social Security number' and 'Your own mobile phone number and/or email address'. At the bottom, there is a blue 'Get Started' button, followed by the word 'or', and then a white 'Log In' button with a blue border.

FAFSA Information

General Student Information	Information About Student	Information About Parents of Dependent Students
Social Security Number	Tax, income, and other financial information	Tax, income, and other financial information
Citizenship status	Receipt of means-tested federal benefits	Receipt of means-tested federal benefits
Legal Residence	Assets	Assets
	Untaxed income	Untaxed income
		Marital Status

Net worth of investments (As of 'today')

- **Cash, Savings, and Checking**
- **Investments/Business/Farm Value**
 - Current/market value minus debt = Net Worth
 - Real estate (not home you live in), trust funds, money market and mutual funds, CD's, stocks, bonds, commodities
 - Child support received.
 - Education benefits/savings accounts (Coverdell, 529 Savings Plans, & refund value of prepaid tuition plans)
 - Asset of the parent not student
 - Parents only need to list the value of the accounts for the student whose FAFSA is being completed

Assets NOT included on the FAFSA

- Value of your primary residence
- Value of Life Insurance
- Traditional Retirement Plans

How Assets Impact the FAFSA

- **Income vs. Assets:**

- Income is the primary factor in determining your Student Aid Index (SAI).
- Assets play a secondary role and are assessed at different rates depending on ownership.

- **Parent Assets vs. Student Assets:**

- **Parent Assets:** Assessed on a sliding scale up to a maximum of 5.64% of net asset value. (*Excludes primary home equity, retirement accounts, life insurance, and qualified family-owned small businesses*).
- **Student Assets:** Assessed at a flat 20% rate with no asset protection allowances.
- **Reportable Items:** Cash, savings, checking, investment accounts, second homes, and parent-owned 529 plans.

How Assets Impact the FAFSA

- **Documentation & Verification Authority:**

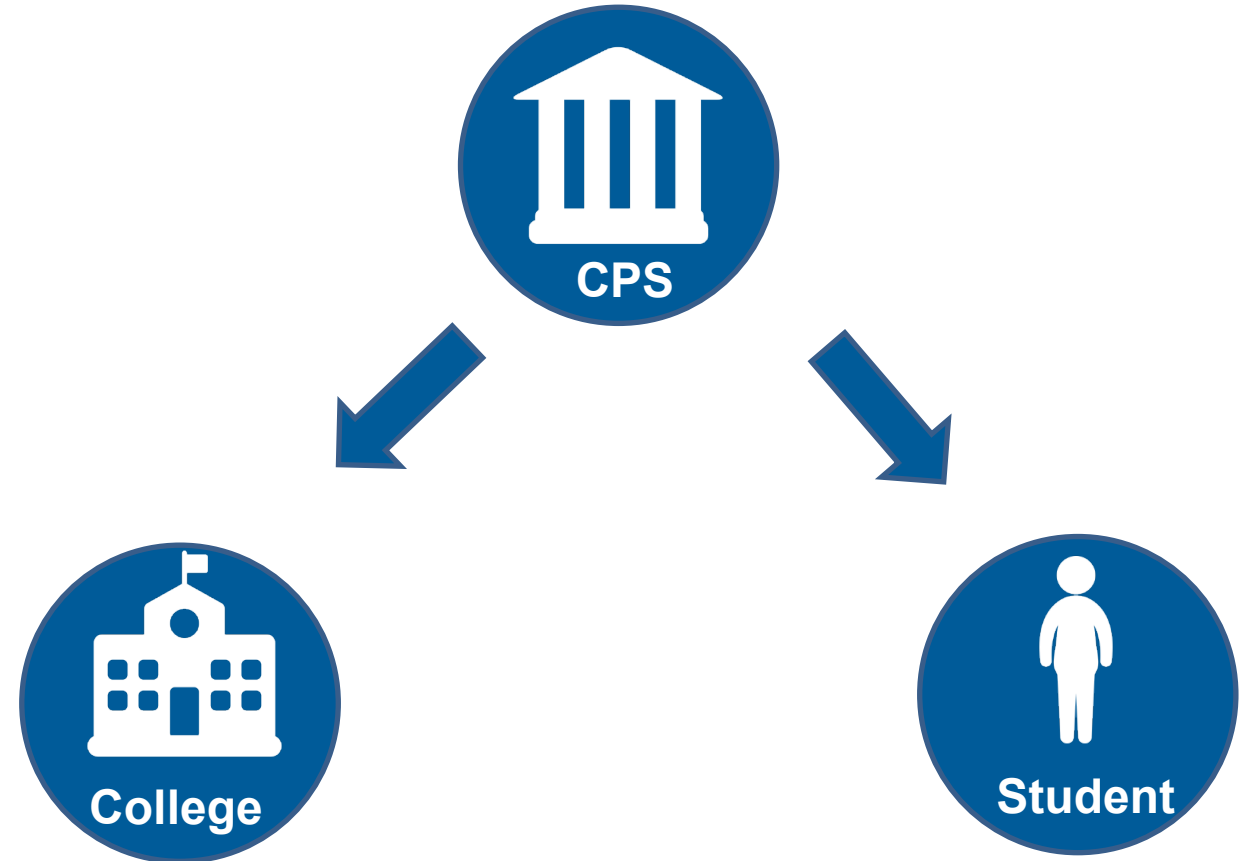
- Under federal regulations, financial aid offices have the authority to request **any documentation** needed to verify the accuracy of the data reported on the FAFSA.
- Common requests include bank/brokerage statements, tax schedules, or business valuations to resolve conflicting information.

- **Important Advisory:**

- **Our Office:** We explain federal formula rules, filing definitions, and document requirements.
- **Your Advisor:** We cannot discuss personal investment positioning or tax sheltering strategies. Please consult a qualified financial advisor or CPA for personal investment planning.

FAFSA Processing Results

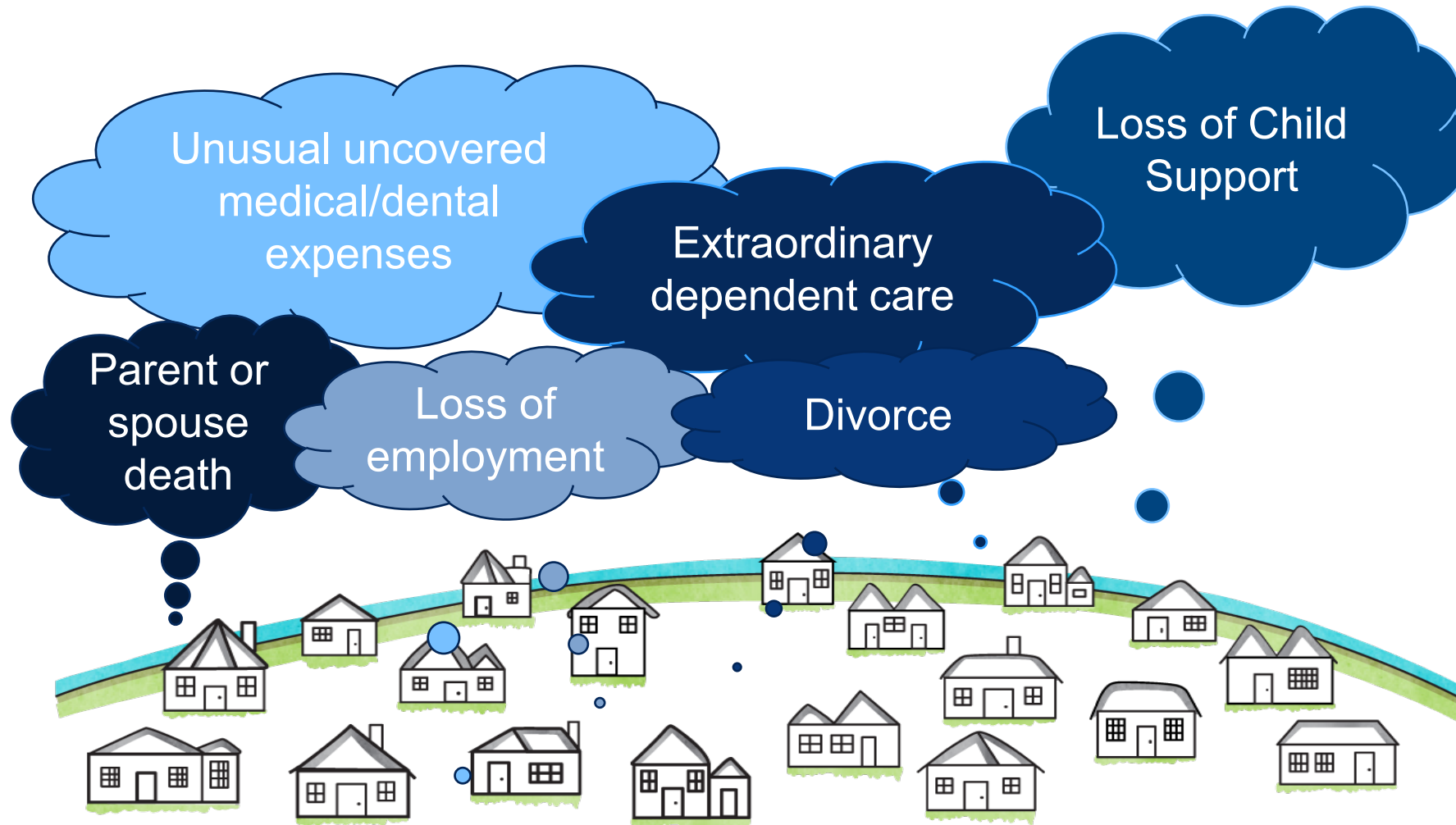
- FAFSA Results sent to colleges listed on FAFSA approximately 10 to 14 days after FAFSA is submitted



Financial Aid Office reviews FAFSA

- **May request additional information**
 - Verification of Income
 - Household size/Number in college
- **Determines Financial Aid Award Offer**
 - Usually emailed
 - Amount of Aid awarded from each program
 - How and When aid is disbursed
 - Terms and Conditions of student's award

Special Circumstances



Special Circumstances

- Conditions exist that cannot be documented with the FAFSA
- Send written explanation and documentation to your college's financial aid office
- College will review and request additional information if necessary
- Decisions are final and cannot be appealed to U.S. Department of Education

CSS Profile

- CSS Profile Cost \$25 to file and \$16 per additional college. (Not all schools use the CSS Profile, Around 300)
- Institutional Aid Focus: Used primarily by private universities, whereas the FAFSA is required for all federal aid.
- Divorced/Separated Parents: Many CSS Profile schools require financial information from *both* biological or adoptive parents, regardless of marital status or custody agreements (often utilizing a separate Noncustodial Profile).
- Home Equity & Business Assets: Unlike the FAFSA, the CSS Profile typically requires families to report home equity on their primary residence and the net worth of business assets, regardless of the business's size.

New York State (www.hesc.ny.gov)

- Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)/Part-Time TAP
- Residency requirements apply
- Award aid based on both merit and need
- Uses information from the FAFSA to determine the award

New York State Excelsior Scholarship

- Combined Federal AGI of \$125,000 or less, as reported on 2025 Federal Tax Return
- Application Deadline usually July/August 2027 for Fall 2027
- 30 Credit Requirement in One Year
- Have to live & work (if employed) in New York after completing degree

State Aid Application

- **Best Practice:** Complete the TAP application after HESC sends the TAP application to the student.
- Have to create separate account for TAP
- OK if you do not know your student ID
- Parents can E-Sign through the NY DMV
 - If they cannot there is a printable signature page they can sign and mail in

Private Sources

- Foundations, businesses, charitable/civic organizations, churches, high school, web searches
- Deadlines and application procedures vary widely
- Begin researching private aid sources early
- Colleges and Universities- based on merit and financial need. May require institutional application

College Communications with the student

- Most colleges/universities use a **school portal**; an online resource that students can access to register for classes, view financial aid and billing.
- Most colleges/universities use a **school assigned email** account that students are required to activate and check regularly. Schools will begin to communicate with the student primarily through this email account.
- Once a student enrolls in college, their college record (academics and finances) become protected under FERPA and students would need to give parent/guardian permission to access this information if they choose.

Points to Remember

- Grades do count for financial aid
 - Talk to financial aid offices if dropping or failing classes
- Financial aid and state requirements may vary with institutions

Thank You

Contact Information

Office of Student Financial Services

Dutchess Community College

53 Pendell Road, Poughkeepsie NY 12601

845-431-8060

Financialservices@sunydutchess.edu

Phone Appointment: www.sunydutchess.edu/appointment