

What's the FAFSA?

Welcome to "College Prep News" – helpful tips on how to plan -- and pay for college from EducationQuest Foundation.

Hi! My name is Les from EducationQuest and today's topic is the FAFSA or Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

If you're a senior in high school, or currently in college, the term FAFSA might sound familiar to you. It's the form you complete to apply for state, federal and college-based financial aid. That can include grants, a work-study job on campus, student loans, and even some scholarships.

You should complete the FAFSA after January 1st since you need current tax information. Contact the colleges you applied to and ask for their FAFSA priority date. Complete the FAFSA *before* that date to get the best financial aid package available.

You can complete the FAFSA online at **fafsa.ed.gov**. It doesn't cost anything to complete the form, so beware of any Web sites that charge a fee for this service. .

While the FAFSA may look complicated, it's actually pretty easy if you're prepared.

The first thing you should do is apply for a Department of Education PIN for you and one for a parent at **pin.ed.gov**. You'll use your PIN to electronically sign the online FAFSA.

Keep your PIN secure and *keep track of it* as you'll need it to complete the FAFSA each year that you're in college.

You will also need to gather your income and asset information including your W-2s and tax returns. Visit EducationQuest.org for a complete list of items needed to file the FAFSA -- and to use our online FAFSA Tutorial which provides user-friendly explanations for each FAFSA question.

That concludes this segment of *College Prep News*. Thanks for listening!

For free help with college planning, visit EducationQuest.org for information and resources - and to find the EducationQuest location nearest you.

EducationQuest Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a mission to improve access to higher education in Nebraska.