

December 19, 2017

Dear Senior Parents,

The seniors have been busy this fall submitting their college applications. If your senior is still undecided about college plans, I strongly urge them to meet with Ms. McGlenn or me. Regular decision deadlines for the majority of colleges are coming soon, and it is important to be aware of those dates. Please contact us if you need help with this.

I want to make sure all senior parents are aware of the necessity of filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This is done online at <https://fafsa.ed.gov> and should be completed as soon as possible. FAFSA applicants will need their 2016 tax information to fill out the application. It is important that students check their school's priority deadlines so they don't miss out on any aid opportunities.

Some colleges also require students to fill out the CSS Profile, an online application that collects information used by colleges and scholarship programs to award non-federal aid. A student guide for the CSS Profile which gives basic information to complete the application may be accessed at <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/pdf/css-profile-student-guide.pdf>.

Prior to filling out the FAFSA, both student and one parent will need a FSA ID, which can be obtained at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/fsaid>. Please note that it can take up to three days for you to receive your FSA ID. All students who plan to attend a two-year or four-year college or vocational school should fill out the FAFSA, regardless of ethnicity, academic, or financial status. The FAFSA is a free federal application; make sure you do not use any website other than the website given above.

In addition to the FAFSA, I encourage all students to apply for the College Opportunity Fund (COF), created by the Colorado Legislature to provide a stipend to eligible undergraduate students. The stipend pays a portion of in-state tuition when a student attends a Colorado public institution or participating private institution. Even if a student attends college out of state, the COF can be used if the student attends summer classes at a local university. Students can apply for the COF at this website: https://secure.collegeincolorado.org/Home/COF/College_Opportunity_Fund.aspx

College in Colorado provides several financial aid calculators that can help students and their families compare financial aid award letters, calculate Expected Family Contribution, and determine the monthly payments for student loans based on future potential career choice. https://secure.collegeincolorado.org/Financial_Aid_Planning/Financial_Aid_Calculators/Financial_Aid_Calculators.aspx

Finally, below are other websites that you might find helpful:

This site will help you to compare aid awards online: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid-awards/compare-aid-calculator>.

The Western Undergraduate Exchange Program (WUE) allows certain students to pay 150% of the receiving school's resident tuition, thereby saving significantly over the standard nonresident tuition in schools located in the western region of the United States. <http://wiche.edu/wue>

If you need help filling out the FAFSA, the college counseling office has resources that you might find helpful.

Sincerely,

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