

FAFSA *Completion*

AND COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE



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HELPLINE**

LOUISIANA'S NON-PROFIT RESOURCE FOR FAFSA COMPLETION & COLLEGE ACCESS

2017-18 *Edition*



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INTRODUCTION TO LELA


Who Is Lela?

The Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela) is Louisiana's non-profit resource for free FAFSA completion and college access, and is a division of the Louisiana Public Facilities Authority (LPFA)—a non-profit public trust established to bring financing assistance and advantages to the people of Louisiana. With a focus on FAFSA completion, Lela's mission is to develop projects and programs which provide resources for college access and statewide outreach initiatives to help ensure students' success on their path to and during college. Lela specialists are available to coordinate and conduct free FAFSA Completion events at high schools upon request or assist families one-on-one with FAFSA Completion at our college planning center or through our FAFSA HELpline. (see pg. 3)



Website: www.askLela.org



Follow AskLela on:    

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FAFSA CHECKLIST

Class of 2018

What will I need to file the 2018/19 FAFSA?

- ☐ FSA ID - Student's electronic signature - create an FSA ID prior to FAFSA submission at fsaid.ed.gov
- ☐ FSA ID - One parent's electronic signature - create an FSA ID prior to FAFSA submission at fsaid.ed.gov
- ☐ Your Social Security Number
- ☐ Your Parents' Social Security numbers if you are providing parent information
- ☐ Your driver's license number if you have one
- ☐ Your Alien Registration Number if you are not a U.S. citizen
- ☐ 2016 Federal tax information or tax returns including IRS W-2 information, for you (and your spouse if you are married), and for your parents if you are providing parent information
- ☐ Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veterans non-education benefits for you and for your parents if you are providing parent information
- ☐ Information on cash, savings and checking account balances, investments including real estate but not including the home in which you live; and business and farm assets for you and for your parents if you are providing parent information
- ☐ File your FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov

Questions? Contact a Lela specialist today for assistance!

info@lela.org · (844) GO FAFSA or (844) 463-2372

2017-2018 IMPORTANT TESTING DATES FOR LOUISIANA HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SENIORS

2017-2018 SAT® TEST DATES

TEST DATE	REGISTRATION DATE
August 26, 2017	July 28, 2017
October 7, 2017	September 8, 2017
November 4, 2017	October 5, 2017
December 2, 2017	November 2, 2017
March 10, 2018	February 9, 2018
May 5, 2018	April 6, 2018
June 2, 2018	May 3, 2018

Source:

WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG

Enter LOSFA's TOPS code for SAT: 9019

2017-2018 ACT® TEST DATES (National)

TEST DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
September 9, 2017	August 4, 2017
October 28, 2017	September 22, 2017
December 9, 2017	November 3, 2017
February 10, 2018*	January 12, 2018
April 14, 2018	March 9, 2018
June 9, 2018	May 4, 2018
July 14, 2018*	June 15, 2018

Source:

WWW.ACT.ORG

Enter LOSFA's TOPS code for ACT: 1595

What is the **FAFSA?** The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This free form is the first step toward getting federal financial aid to help pay for college and can be filed at **www.fafsa.gov**.



FAFSA Completion

Louisiana's Non-Profit Resource for FAFSA Completion & College Access

Lela is committed to doing its part to increase FAFSA completion rates in Louisiana. As a member of the Louisiana Department of Education's Financial Aid Working Group and as a partner in NCAN's FAFSA Completion Challenge Grant for the City of Baton Rouge, Lela is committed to providing free assistance to students and their families in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Through one-on-one assistance in Lela's College Planning Center, our FAFSA HELpline (844-GO-FAFSA) and FAFSA Completion Workshops at high schools throughout the state, we strive to make a huge impact in Louisiana. Every student deserves the chance to attend college and receive the financial aid needed to help defray its cost. For more information, please contact us at info@lela.org.

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH SITES

Scholarship Opportunities and Resources

www.askLela.org
www.lela.org/freemoneysearch
www.lela.org/financialliteracy
www.osfa.la.gov
www.collegegreenlight.com
www.careeronestop.org
www.fastweb.com
www.scholarships.com
www.actprofile.org
www.louisianabelieves.com
www.fedmoney.org
www.unlockmyfuture.org
www.bigfuture.org



WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to remove the obstacles that keep students from pursuing a post-secondary education.

WHY WE DO IT

We believe that every student deserves to sit across from a caring, knowledgeable college & career coach who will help them overcome and steer around any obstacles keeping them from post-secondary success.

LOUISIANA'S NONPROFIT AUTHORITY ON COLLEGE AND CAREER ACCESS



**CAREER
COMPASS**

WWW.CAREERCOMPASSELA.ORG



FIVE REASONS WHY FILLING OUT THE FAFSA IS A REALLY GOOD IDEA:

- 1 It's how the government and colleges decide your financial need and award institutional aid in some cases for all income levels.
- 2 If you have all of your documents, it only takes approximately 30 minutes, and you can do it online for FREE! (See checklist page 2)
- 3 You might be eligible for federal grants, which you don't have to pay back! (See below)
- 4 Even if you don't think you'll need a loan, it can't hurt to have a backup plan in place. If you do borrow, only borrow what you need. Loans must be paid back.
- 5 Work-study jobs are mostly on campus, and you become qualified to apply based on your FAFSA information.

Types of Aid:

Annual Award Totals for 2017-2018

Federal Pell Grant	(up to \$5,815)
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant – FSEOG	(up to \$4,000)
TEACH Grant	(up to \$4,000)
Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant	(up to \$5,382)
Direct Subsidized Loan	(up to \$5,500)
Direct Unsubsidized Loan	(up to \$20,500)
Federal Perkins Loan	(up to \$5,500)
Direct PLUS Loan for Parents	(cost minus other aid)

NOTE: These amounts were current at the time this publication was printed.

SOURCE: Please visit studentaid.gov/types for detailed information.

*Grants in blue text do not have to be paid back and are determined by financial need.

Pursuing a TOPS Award?

Here's Why You Should Create a LOSFA Student Hub Account:

- The TOPS Tracker shows progress toward a TOPS award.
- ACT scores and TOPS Core GPA are displayed.
- Parent accounts may also be created.
- After graduation, TOPS eligibility notices, award letters, and Rights and Responsibilities will be posted in the Student Hub.
- Upon entry into postsecondary education, notices and TOPS status updates will be in the Student Hub.
- Create your account at:

<https://www.osfa.la.gov/studenthub.html>

(2017-18 Ninth Graders cannot create an account until after November 15, 2017)



Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance
A program under the Board of Regents
PO Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202
www.osfa.la.gov
(800) 259-5626
custserv@la.gov



2 WAYS TO WIN Lela Scholarships!

1 FAFSA COMPLETION

[TEN \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!]

\$10,000 in Scholarships to be Awarded!

Louisiana High School Seniors, complete your FAFSA and register for a chance to win a **\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP!**
RANDOM MONTHLY DRAWINGS: OCTOBER - MAY.

Register @ askLela.org

DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2018

Winners must provide a copy of their FAFSA confirmation page.

2 QUARTERLY DRAWING

[FOUR \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!]

\$4,000 in Scholarships to be Awarded!

Win a **\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP!**
RANDOM DRAWINGS HELD: SEPTEMBER 30,
DECEMBER 31, MARCH 31, AND JUNE 30.

Register @ askLela.org

DEADLINE: JUNE 30, 2018

NEED HELP Completing the FAFSA?

Call the AskLela FAFSA HELpline: 844-GO FAFSA or 844-463-2372



The Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela) is Louisiana's Non-Profit Resource for FAFSA Completion and College Access. Lela is a division of the Louisiana Public Facilities Authority (LPFA).

Students & Parents

Get Free **HELP** with your **FAFSA**

- When do I file?
- How much money can I get?
- What Tax Year do I use?
- Am I Independent or Dependent?
- Who qualifies as a Parent?
- I forgot my FSA ID password!



FAFSA HELpline

Louisiana's Non-Profit Resource for FAFSA Completion & College Access

844-GO FAFSA
or 844-463-2372

M - F: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA), BOTH STUDENT AND ONE PARENT SHOULD CREATE AN FSA ID.

You will need to know the following items to set up your FSA ID:

- Social Security Number
- Working personal email address (*Students, please DO NOT use your parent email address.*)
- Cell phone number

Get started creating your FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov.*

Student Username: _____

Student Password: _____

Email Address: _____

Challenge Questions/Answers:

#1 _____

#2 _____

#3 _____

#4 _____

Parent Username: _____

Parent Password: _____

Email Address: _____

(Do not use the same email address that your child used.)

Challenge Questions/Answers:

#1 _____

#2 _____

#3 _____

#4 _____

*Note: It is important for you to retain your username, password and related access information. Keep it in a secure location and do not share it with anyone. The security of this information is important because it will be needed each year to renew your FAFSA, to access your personal records and serves as your electronic signature.

**DON'T
WAIT!**
Get Your
FSA ID



college Financial Aid PROCESS

◀ 2017-18 ▶



Start



APPLY and be
ACCEPTED
for admission to
your top colleges



Senior and Parent –
Create your FSA ID at
www.FSAID.ed.gov



On or after October
1, 2017-Complete
the FAFSA at
www.fafsa.gov
using your 2016
Federal Tax
Return.
*(Recommended to
use the IRS Data
Retrieval Tool)*

Once accepted to
the college, you
will need to set up
your online account
via their website's
student portal.



Review SAR
and make any
corrections for
the FAFSA.



Receive your Student Aid
Report (SAR) within 3-5 days
if provided email on FAFSA;
2 weeks if you submitted a
Signature Page for FAFSA.



A saved FAFSA
stays on system
only 45 days!



The financial aid office will post
required missing documents in
your student portal account so
remember to check it regularly
for important messages.



Some students will be
selected for a process called
verification. If so, you will be
asked to provide additional
documents to the Financial Aid
office to complete verification.



Receive
notification
of your
Award.



If you accepted a student
loan, you will be notified
to complete Entrance
Counseling and sign your
Master Promissory Note.
Remember to only borrow
what you NEED.



Accept, decline
or reduce the
financial aid
offers provided
in your Award
Notification.



This document was created by Lela and all information was current at the time of printing.



NEED HELP

Completing the FAFSA?

Get **FREE** Help Now!

Let the askLela team assist you in the following areas:

- Applying for Financial Aid / FAFSA Completion Step-by-Step
- FREE One-on-One Guidance
- Creating your FSA ID Username and Password
- Coordinating and providing FAFSA Completion Workshops

Scholarship Opportunities!
Register at askLela.org

Call Lela today for assistance!

- **Students & Parents:** one-on-one guidance in completing your FAFSA
- **School Counselors:** FAFSA completion workshops are available at your school

Lela's College Planning Center is now open in Baton Rouge!

Schedule your appointment @ info@lela.org
Mon-Fri: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information, contact us at:

844-GO FAFSA or 844-463-2372
address: 2237 South Acadian Thruway, Suite 603
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

web: askLela.org

email: info@lela.org | Follow us



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New!

LOUISIANA'S CLASS OF 2018 FINANCIAL AID ACCESS POLICY

LOUISIANA REQUIRES PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADUATING SPRING 2018 AND BEYOND TO TAKE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STEPS AS PART OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL GRADUATION PLAN:

- Complete the FAFSA at fasfa.gov; or
- Complete the Louisiana TOPS form; or
- A parent or legal custodian, or a student legally emancipated or of the legal age of majority, may certify a waiver in writing to the LEA (sample: non-participation LEA form/Letter); or
- Receive a waiver through the district hardship waiver process

Resource: Louisiana Department of Education | www.louisianabelieves.com



What you can use your FINANCIAL AID FOR

Tuition & fees
(including loan fees)

✓ YEP 😊

Books & supplies
(including a reasonable amount
for a computer)

✓ YEP 😊

Transportation
& child care
expenses

✓ YEP 😊

Concert tickets

✗ NOPE 😬

Spring break trip

✗ NOPE 😬

A shopping spree
at the mall

✗ NOPE 😬

Room & board

✓ YEP 😊

Source: Federal Student Aid studentaid.gov



11 COMMON FAFSA MISTAKES

- NOT COMPLETING THE FAFSA** – If you don't complete the FAFSA, you could lose out on thousands of dollars to help you pay for college.
- NOT USING THE CORRECT WEBSITE** – The official FAFSA website is fasfa.gov. Never pay to complete the FAFSA!
- NOT GETTING AN FSA ID AHEAD OF TIME** – Create your FSA ID early to avoid any delays.
- WAITING TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA** – Some financial aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis so get it done ASAP!
- NOT FILING BY THE DEADLINE** – Each school sets its own FAFSA deadline so be sure to check with your school.
- NOT USING YOUR FSA ID TO START THE FAFSA** – Sign in the FAFSA with your FSA ID to prevent common errors and for easier electronic signing.
- NOT READING DEFINITIONS CAREFULLY** – Take your time to read carefully to avoid processing delays.
- INPUTTING INCORRECT INFORMATION** – Be sure to enter your full name as it appears on your Social Security card and triple check your SSN.
- NOT REPORTING PARENT INFORMATION** – Dependency guidelines are determined by Congress, not IRS. Answer all questions on FAFSA carefully.
- LISTING ONLY ONE COLLEGE** – List all colleges you are considering even if you haven't applied or been accepted yet.
- NOT SIGNING THE FAFSA** – An unsigned FAFSA is incomplete. Sign electronically with your FSA ID which is faster than mailing a signature page.

Source: US Department of Education Blog



Committed to Louisiana students since 1984

FOLLOW US AND STAY CONNECTED!



Ask Lela



@askLela



askLelaCollegeResources



askLela.org

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