

## FIORELLO H. LAGUARDIA HIGH SCHOOL OF MUSIC & ART AND PERFORMING ARTS



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## COLLEGE NEWSLETTER No. 8

### Special focus- FAFSA Resources (& 12 common mistakes!)

October 24, 2017

## SCHOOL NEWS

Mini-Grants for Clubs and Faculty Led Projects Application Deadline: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 @ 3pm  
Submit Signed Applications to the A&F Office, Room 853

Alumni & Friends (A&F) is pleased to announce the opportunity for LaGuardia students, faculty, and staff to apply for an A&F Mini-Grant. A&F Mini-Grants provide up to \$500 for clubs or faculty led extracurricular projects. Funding is limited and decided by the A&F Grants Committee. Requests for support must provide detailed information about how the funds will be used AND meet the following criteria:

- Clubs must have a faculty advisor, and the designated faculty advisor must be present at all club meetings and events
  - Funding is for activities or projects that are not funded by the DOE
  - Mini-Grants do not fund sports teams or food and beverages
  - Benefit eight or more students

Mini-Grant Applications can be found [here](#).

The application will need to be completed as an online form, then printed so that it can be signed by a faculty advisor or AP, and finally submitted to the Alumni & Friends office in Room 853. If you are awarded a Mini-Grant, you must submit receipts associated with your project in order to be reimbursed by March 15, 2018. Any requests for reimbursements after March 15, 2018, will not be honored and all money will be forfeited. Questions? Please contact us at 212-595-1301 or [leigh@alumniandfriends.org](mailto:leigh@alumniandfriends.org) or come to room 853.

## College Fairs

**Columbia University** will be hosting its Fall 2017 Splash! program - November 4th, 2017 from 9 AM to 6 PM. Put simply, the Splash! program lets undergraduate and graduate students teach a class on virtually any subject they like to high school students (Grades 8 to 12). It began at MIT, and has since spread across college campuses such as that of Yale, Stanford, Princeton, and of course, Columbia. We would love to see your students at our next Splash for a chance to learn something new on our campus! Some of the classes we will offer include:

- Why People Believe Weird Things: An Introduction to Anomalistic Psychology
- The (Hu)Man In the Mirror: A History of Self Portraits from Durer to the Modern Selfie It's a Conspiracy!
- From Aliens to the XYZ Affair Secret Sharing and Cryptography 80,000 Hours:

- How to choose a meaningful career Introduction to Feynman Diagrams

The full catalog can be found here: [https://columbia.learningu.org/learn/Splash/2017\\_Fall/catalog](https://columbia.learningu.org/learn/Splash/2017_Fall/catalog)

There is an admissions fee of \$25 for this event. However, we do offer full financial aid with an application on our website. Lunch will be included in this fee. The registration link can be found here: <https://columbia.learningu.org/learn/register.html>.

Registration closes on Friday, October 27th at 11:59 pm. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns at [ESP.Columbia@gmail.com](mailto:ESP.Columbia@gmail.com)!

All teens and their families are welcome to attend the 15th Annual College Fair at the **American Museum of Natural History**! The most up-to-date list of schools attending can be found at <http://www.amnh.org/collegefair> <http://www.amnh.org/collegefair>.

Also check out our college readiness info session schedule

- <http://www.amnh.org/collegereadiness> <http://www.amnh.org/collegereadiness>

The American Museum of Natural History is offering a series of information sessions and workshops focused on making informed choices about preparing for, applying to and paying for college, and learning to manage your own money in the process. Online pre-registration is requested, and links to register will be available approximately one month before each information session.

The current schedule of information sessions (subject to change) is:

- November 18, 2017 - Paying for College <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/grades-9-12/teen-programs/paying-for-college-information-session>
- February 3, 2018 - Building Your Potential College List <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/grades-9-12/teen-programs/building-your-potential-college-list-information-session>
- March 3, 2018 - Full STEM Ahead: Tips for Students on a STEM Track <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/grades-9-12/teen-programs/full-stem-ahead-tips-for-students-on-a-stem-track-information-session>
- March 17, 2018 - Evaluating and Negotiating Financial Aid Offers <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/grades-9-12/teen-programs/evaluating-and-negotiating-financial-aid-offers-information-session>
- April 21, 2018 - The Secrets to NOT Being a Broke College Student: Managing Your Money <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/grades-9-12/teen-programs/the-secrets-to-not-being-a-broke-college-student-information-session>

## COLLEGE NEWS

At **Beacon College**, we have a distinctive mission focused on the success of students who learn differently. If any of your students would thrive at Beacon, please consider referring them to our unique programs. To learn more, call us at **855-220-5376** or email [admissions@beaconcollege.edu](mailto:admissions@beaconcollege.edu).

**Texas A&M** announced this week that they will extend their deadline for both admissions and scholarships to Jan. 2 for all applicants. UT Austin still has the deadline of Dec. 1, but will now accept supporting documents through Dec. 31.

Did you know that nearly 93 percent of our undergraduate students receive some form of financial aid—and 86 percent of them, scholarships and grants?

With exciting new programs like our **Adelphi** Enhanced Assistance Grant and our Adelphi Honors Scholarship (read more below), we are always focused on minimizing our students' out-of-pocket costs while maximizing student outcomes.

We pride ourselves on our ability to deliver customized counseling for each family, as we recognize that no two families are the same. Affordability is top of mind for us—and we want you and your students to know that our team is ready to guide each student through the maze of questions that often accompany financial planning and aid packages.

Tools like the College Scorecard and Financial Aid Shopping Sheet and policy shifts like Early FAFSA all attempt to make transparent the very complex issue of college costs. But even the most advanced of tools cannot replace the one-on-one guidance found within small, personal settings such as the Office of Student Financial Services at Adelphi University.

**This fall, Bentley University welcomed a diverse group of talented students to campus. The incoming group is academically talented and their activity outside the classroom is just as impressive. From philanthropists to entrepreneurs and authors to accomplished athletes, the class of 2021 is going to leave their mark on Bentley and the world.**

SAT 1260- 1390; ACT 28- 30; 47% Students with A's & 39% A's and B's in core classes.

75 % of aid is Bentley funded; 93% of financial need is met with the average aid package 70% receive financial aid or scholarship.

With high graduation rates, low student loan debt and a solid alumni network of 127,000, it's no wonder **Binghamton University** keeps appearing in the headlines... **#15 best value college in the nation** - *Forbes*, 2016

**Top 40 among public universities** - *U.S. News & World Report*, 2018

A "premier public university"- *Fiske Guide to Colleges*, 2014

**#33 of 700 best colleges for your money (highest-ranked SUNY!)** -*MONEY magazine*, 2017

**HUNTER** will be hosting an arts showcase event for prospective students and families on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm. Students will get to hear some short performances, speak with current Hunter students and meet key faculty members at a reception. Art, Music, Dance, Theatre, and Film will be represented. We know that we have received some extraordinary students from LaGuardia in the past, so we figured we would alert your interested (any year in HS is fine). The link to register for the event is at the top of the page here: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/admissions/visit-campus>

**Wesleyan** now accepts the [Coalition Application!](#)

Wesleyan has been a partner with [QuestBridge](#) for 10 years and was an original member of the [CommonApp](#); we hope that our partnership with the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success will allow students greater access, flexibility, and choice as they engage in the application process. As a reminder, we are a score optional institution, (you may find the [Profile of the Class of 2021](#) helpful as you advise students) and application [fee-waivers](#) are readily available.

## SUMMER PROGRAMS

**Summer Discovery & Discovery Internships** [info@summerdiscovery.com](mailto:info@summerdiscovery.com) via cp20.com

Here at [Summer Discovery](#) and [Discovery Internships](#) we're ready for another year of creating exceptional educational experiences for middle and high school students. We're pleased to announce our 2018 [application is open](#).

As we look forward to our 52nd successful summer, we're committed more than ever to working with our university partners to deliver the most innovative and highest quality academic experiences. Here are some of the new programs and courses we're adding to our line-up:

- University of Colorado Boulder
  - [Medical Sciences & Research Academy](#)
- University of Michigan
  - [College Admissions & SAT Prep](#)
  - [Game Changers: Business Disruptors](#)
  - [EAT Ann Arbor](#)
- UCLA
  - [UCLA Bruin Leadership in Medicine](#)
  - [Hollywood Insider](#)
  - [College Admissions & SAT Prep](#)
- University of Texas at Austin
  - [Sports, Events & Entertainment Academy](#)
  - [Digital Business Academy](#)
- Cambridge University
  - [Global Business & Entrepreneurship Academy](#)

[Apply](#) and enroll by November 17th and save up to \$600.

[Apply today](#) or email us at [info@summerdiscovery.com](mailto:info@summerdiscovery.com) and we'll help you find the best fit program.

### Pick from 14 True University Partnerships

We pride ourselves on having genuine collaborative partnerships with our universities. We offer 300+ university taught course options in a variety of subjects including business & entrepreneurship, STEM, research, sport management, law, psychology, and more. Contact us today at [516-621-3939](#) or email us at [info@summerdiscovery.com](mailto:info@summerdiscovery.com) for program details.

### Great Books Summer Program- <http://www.greatbookssummer.com/>

Six distinguished campuses, acclaimed professors, and an exceptional summer experience for bright young minds. The Great Books Summer Program is an experience like no other in American education. For over fifteen years, GBSP has gathered exceptional middle and high school students from across the world to read, discuss and debate selections from the greatest works of literature. Students experience college-level seminars, engage in lively discussion, and enjoy summer fun with other literary-minded students. We offer summer camps at the University of Oxford, Amherst College, Stanford University, and Trinity College, Dublin. We're especially pleased to add University of Chicago and Stanford Center at Peking University in Beijing for summer 2017!

## ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

It is difficult to compare one school to another, and we would not want colleges to compare us to other schools. We, as is every school, are unique. For some colleges- even if it admitted EVERY graduating senior from their state, could not fill their entering class. So, there are many students from out-of-state. Because of that diversity and depending upon the strength of their academic program, (Like Michigan) it becomes one of the more selective public colleges. All colleges have institutional initiatives of which

only they are aware- they could be seeking more students who do community service in particular areas, or more students that serve internships in their field (to decrease transfer rates out of major or out of the institution). Those are admission “hooks” of which only the deans and directors are aware and sometimes, a student who is a little below profile may benefit from having those experiences and thus be admitted

As mentioned in newsletters and at the parent evenings- GPA alone is not an indicator to be used for Naviance. What is important is the rigor of courses that comprise that GPA. i.e. The Average accepted GPA at Brown from LaG is 96. However, those accepted had at least 2 or 3 AP's junior year and 3 or 4 AP's senior year. You cannot tell that from the scatter-grams.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

we've collected some of our favorite (and easiest) awards with deadlines coming in the next few weeks and hope this can be a resource you can share with students and parents. [collegexpress@members.collegexpress.com](mailto:collegexpress@members.collegexpress.com)

### Upcoming scholarships

\$1,000

**Scholarship:** [School Survey Sweepstakes](#)

**Due Date:** October 31

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\$1,000

**Scholarship:** [Active Life Scholarship to Tackle Your Weakness](#)

**Due Date:** October 31

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\$2,500

**Scholarship:** [Insureon Scholarship](#)

**Due Date:** November 30

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\$500

**Scholarship:** [Abacus Scholarship: Every Student Counts](#)

**Due Date:** December 15

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\$1,000

**Scholarship:** [A Better America Scholarship Program 2017](#)

**Due Date:** December 31

Recommended favorite Scholarship Search websites for students and parents:

Fast web

[Scholarshipexperts.com](#)

Scholly-it's an app

[Finaid.org](#)

[Scholarships.com](#)

## STANDARDIZED EXAMS

### The Slow, Steady Erosion of SAT Subject Tests

By [Scott Jaschik](#) October 23, 2017 Inside Higher ED

Colleges continue to drop requirements that were once the norm at competitive institutions. The exams have fans, but shift from required to recommended frustrates many counselors, who report applicant confusion.

A generation ago, the testing norm for elite colleges was to require applicants to have taken three of the SAT subject tests. The tests, previously called the SAT II or the achievement tests, are subject specific and test knowledge of mathematics, sciences, literature, history and languages.

In 2010, Harvard and Georgetown Universities [stopped requiring three of the tests](#), and they were the last institutions to do so. Even requirements to submit scores from two of the tests are going away. In September Rice University ended such a requirement. The University of Pennsylvania ended its requirement in 2015. Other institutions that have dropped requirements in the past few years include Amherst College, Columbia University, Dartmouth College and Carnegie Mellon University. Only a handful of colleges still require two of the tests, although some institutions that don't have general requirements do require those who have been homeschooled or those who are opting not to submit SAT scores to submit subject-test scores.

The colleges that still require the tests tend to be math and science oriented, places like [California Institute of Technology](#), [Harvey Mudd College](#), the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) and [Webb Institute](#) -- all institutions where perfect or near-perfect scores on the math SAT are common. These institutions generally require one of the two mathematics tests and one science exam. Some institutions, such as [Cooper Union](#), require the tests only of engineering students. Two institutions, [Cornell](#) and [Tufts](#) Universities, give their arts and sciences applicants choices on which subject tests to submit, but require mathematics and a science exam for engineering applicants. [Harvard University](#) continues to require two tests, but gives a choice as to which ones. More: [https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2017/10/23/admissions-officials-consider-impact-erosion-sat-subject-tests?utm\\_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm\\_campaign=011f715a43-AI20171023&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1fcfc04421-011f715a43-228964521&mc\\_cid=011f715a43&mc\\_eid=beb870792e](https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2017/10/23/admissions-officials-consider-impact-erosion-sat-subject-tests?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=011f715a43-AI20171023&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcfc04421-011f715a43-228964521&mc_cid=011f715a43&mc_eid=beb870792e)

## THE FAFSA

### THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

The 2018-19 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is now open. Encourage students to file for financial aid as soon as possible.

To view current data on FAFSA submissions and completions by high school and district, visit the [FAFSA Completion Tool](#).

In 2016, the following changes to the FAFSA went into effect:

- The FAFSA form is now available every year on Oct. 1.

- Applicants must use prior-prior year (PPY) tax information when reporting personal and family income.

[NACAC Members Discuss Implementation of Early FAFSA](#), a report from the National Association for College Admission Counseling, features summary findings based on interviews with professionals at both secondary schools and institutions of higher education before and after the change to “early FAFSA” and the use of prior-prior year tax information when applying for federal financial aid.

The following resources were created in 2016 to further assist professionals working with students and families about the changes to the financial aid application process:

- An [animated video](#) for students and fact sheets for [counselors](#), [admission professionals](#), and [students](#) (including a [Spanish language](#) version) are available.
- NACAC partnered with The College Board and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) to provide free webinars highlighting changes to the FAFSA: Counseling Series- [The 2017-18 FAFSA: What School Counselors Need to Know](#) (ASCA); [Planning for Changes Coming with the 2017-18 FAFSA](#) (The College Board); [Ethics and the Early FAFSA](#) (NACAC). Admission Series- [Practical Implications for the 2017-2018 FAFSA on Admission and Enrollment Management Offices](#) (AACRAO); [Essential Information for “Road Warriors”: Helping Admission Staff Talk with Students and Families about the 2017 – 2018 FAFSA](#) (NACAC); [Prepping for Prior-Prior Year: Key Questions for Admission Offices](#) (The College Board)
- Videos of two educational sessions presented at NACAC’s 2016 national conference can also provide answers as you help students and families navigate the financial aid application process: [The FAFSA: What You Need to Know for 2017-18; Prior–Prior Year and You.](#)

## Changes on the 2018–19 FAFSA® Form

The 2018–19 FAFSA changes include the following:

- Tax information transferred from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) into the FAFSA form won't be visible. Instead, students and parents will see "Transferred from the IRS" in the appropriate fields on fafsa.gov, the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) web page, and on the *Student Aid Report*.
- The population of applicants and parents who are eligible to use the IRS DRT has expanded. Amended tax return filers are able to use the IRS DRT to transfer their IRS tax return information from their original tax return into the FAFSA form.
- The definition of "youth," as it pertains to homelessness, has changed. Students who are older than 21 but not yet 24, and who are unaccompanied and homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, qualify as independent students. They are able to complete the FAFSA form as independent students without Financial Aid Administrators performing a dependency override.

They (NACAC) will update this page throughout October 2017 as more materials become available.

## 2018–19 FAFSA® Materials and Websites

Below is a table showing sites, forms, worksheets, and other resources related to the FAFSA form itself. We've also prepared [a list of resources related to FAFSA outreach in general](#).

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<a href="http://fafsa.gov">fafsa.gov</a>	Available now
<a href="#">PDF FAFSA form (English)</a>	Available now
<a href="#">PDF FAFSA form (Spanish)</a>	Available now
<i>FAFSA on the Web Worksheet</i> (paper copy) (English and Spanish)	Late October 2017
<a href="#">FAFSA on the Web Worksheet PDF (English)</a>	Available Now
<a href="#">FAFSA on the Web Worksheet PDF (Spanish)</a>	Available now
<i>Student Aid Report</i> sample (English and Spanish)	October 2017
<i>SAR Acknowledgement</i> sample (English and Spanish)	October 2017
<a href="#">FAFSA demo site</a> updated for 2018–19	Available now
<a href="#">Completing the FAFSA® Form</a>	Available now
<i>fafsa.gov</i> screen shots (aka "FAFSA on the WebPreview Presentation")	October 2017
<a href="#">EFC Formula Guide</a>	Available now
<a href="#">FAFSA summary of changes (Summary of Changes for the Application Processing System)</a>	Available now
<a href="#">FAFSA4caster (English)</a>	Available now
<a href="#">FAFSA4caster (Spanish)</a>	Available now
<a href="#">Federal School Code List (English)</a>	Available now
<a href="#">Federal School Code List (Spanish)</a>	Available now

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## 12 Common FAFSA Mistakes

The [2018–19 FAFSA®](#) is now available! This year, the FAFSA launched on October 1, 2016. [share this video with students.](#)

Beginning this year, [you'll also be required to use earlier \(2016\) tax information](#) than in previous years. How does that benefit you? Since you've already filed your 2016 taxes, you'll be able to transfer your tax information into your FAFSA right away! (And you won't need to update your FAFSA after you file 2017 taxes.) These exciting changes are sure to save you time and make the FAFSA much easier to complete. Just make sure to take your time so you don't make one of these mistakes:

## 1. Not Completing the FAFSA

I hear all kinds of reasons: "The FAFSA is too hard," "It takes too long to complete," I never qualify anyway, so why does it matter?" It *does* matter. The FAFSA is not just the application for federal grants such as the Pell Grant. It's also the application for work-study funds, low-interest federal student loans, and even scholarships and grants offered by your state, school, or private organization. **If you don't complete the FAFSA, you could lose out on thousands of dollars to help you pay for college.** The FAFSA takes little time to complete, and there is help provided throughout the application. Oh, and contrary to popular belief, there is [no income cut-off](#) when it comes to federal student aid.

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## 2. Not Using the Correct Website

The official FAFSA website is [fafsa.gov](#). That's .gov! You never have to pay to complete the FAFSA. If you're asked for credit card information, you're not on the official government site.

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## 3. Not Getting an FSA ID Ahead of Time

An FSA ID is a username and password that you must use to log in to certain U.S. Department of Education (ED) websites, including [fafsa.gov](#). You AND your parent, if you're considered a [dependent student](#), will each need your own, separate FSA IDs if you each want to sign your FAFSA online.

Why is it so important to get an FSA ID early? Well, once you register for an FSA ID, you may need to [wait up to three days](#) before you can use it to sign your FAFSA. If you don't want your FAFSA to be delayed, [create an FSA ID now](#). If you're a dependent student, have your parent create an FSA ID too. Just DO NOT share your FSA IDs with each other!

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## 4. Waiting to Fill Out the FAFSA

If you want to get the most financial aid possible, fill out the FAFSA ASAP after October 1. Some financial aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and **some states and colleges run out of money early**, so even if your deadlines aren't for a while, get your FAFSA done ASAP. Now that you're required to use earlier (2015) tax information to complete the FAFSA, you have no excuse to wait!

Which brings me to...

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## 5. Not Filing by the Deadline

As I said, you should fill out the FAFSA as soon as you can, but you should DEFINITELY fill it out before your earliest [FAFSA deadline](#). Each state and school sets its own deadline. **Some priority deadlines will be earlier this year because the FAFSA is available earlier.** To maximize the amount of your financial aid, fill out your FAFSA (and any other financial aid applications that may be required by your state or school) by your earliest deadline, if not sooner!

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## 6. Not using your FSA ID to start the FAFSA

When you go to log in to [fafsa.gov](#), you will be given the option to "Enter your (the student's) FSA ID" OR "Enter the student's information." If you are the student, we highly recommend choosing the first option (highlighted below) if you can. If you log in with your FSA ID, a lot of your information (name, Social Security number, date of birth, etc.) will be automatically loaded into your application. This will prevent you from running into a common error that occurs when your verified FSA ID information doesn't match the information on your FAFSA. Additionally, you won't have to provide your FSA ID again to transfer your information from the IRS or to sign your FAFSA electronically.

## 7. Not Reading Definitions Carefully

When it comes to completing the FAFSA, you want to read each definition and question carefully, because sometimes, how the FAFSA wants you to answer certain questions is not how you'd intuitively answer the question. Here are some items that have very specific (but not intuitive) definitions according to the FAFSA:

- **Legal Guardianship:** One question on the FAFSA asks: "As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?" Many students incorrectly answer "yes" here. For [this](#)

[question](#), the definition of legal guardianship does not include your parents, even if they were appointed by a court to be your guardian. You are also not considered a legal guardian of yourself.

- **Parent:** The FAFSA has [very specific guidelines](#) for which parent(s) need to be reported on the FAFSA. (Spoiler alert: it has nothing to do with who claims you on their taxes.)
- **Your Number of Family Members (Household size):** The FAFSA has a specific definition of how [your](#) or [your parents' household size](#) should be determined. Read the instructions carefully. Many students incorrectly report this number, especially when the student doesn't physically live with the parent.
- **Number of Family Members in College:** Enter the number of people in [your](#) (or [your parents'](#)) household who will attend college at the same time you attend college. Don't forget to include yourself. Do not include your parents in this number. This number should never be greater than your number of family members.

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## 8. Inputting Incorrect Information

Here are some examples of common errors we see on the FAFSA:

- **Confusing Parent and Student Information:** I know there are many parents out there who fill out the FAFSA for their child, but remember, the FAFSA is the student's application. When the FAFSA says "you" or "your", it's referring to the student, so make sure to enter [your](#) (the student's) information. If we are asking for your parent's information, we will specify that in the question.
- **Entering the Wrong Name (Yes, I'm serious):** You wouldn't believe how many people have issues with their FAFSA because they entered an incorrect name on the application. It doesn't matter if you're Madonna, or Drake, or whatever Snoop Lion is calling himself these days. You must enter [your](#) full name as it appears on your Social Security card. No nicknames.
- **Entering the Wrong Social Security Number (SSN):** When we process FAFSAs, we cross-check your Social Security number with the Social Security Administration. To avoid delays in processing your application, triple-check that you have entered the correct SSN. If you meet our [basic eligibility criteria](#), but you or your parents don't have an SSN, [follow these instructions](#).
- **Amount of Your Income Tax:** Here, we are asking for your assessed income tax liability, not the amount of income tax withheld, and not your adjusted gross income (AGI). I know this is complicated. To make it simple, either transfer your tax info into the FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool or [use this to find out which tax line number you should refer to when answering this question](#). (Note: It depends on which IRS form you filed.)

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## 9. Not Reporting Parent Information

Even if you fully support yourself, pay your own bills, and file your own taxes, you may still be considered a dependent student for federal student aid purposes, and therefore, you'll need to [provide parent information](#) on your FAFSA. Dependency guidelines for the FAFSA are determined by Congress and are different from those of the IRS. Find out whether you need to provide parent information by answering these

If you're considered a dependent student and don't provide parent information, [your FAFSA may not be processed, you may not receive an EFC and/or you may only qualify for unsubsidized loans](#).

## 10. Listing only one college

Two-thirds of precollege FAFSA applicants list only one college on their applications. Unless you are only applying to one college or already know where you're going to school, this is a mistake! Colleges can't see the other schools you've added, so you should add ANY college you are considering to your FAFSA, even if you aren't sure whether you'll apply or be accepted. You can add up to 10 schools at a time. If you're applying to more than 10 schools, [follow these steps](#).

**TIP:** *It doesn't hurt your application to add more schools. In fact, you don't even have to remove schools you later decide not to apply to. If you don't end up applying or getting accepted to a school, the school can just disregard your FAFSA. But you can remove schools at any time to make room for new schools.*

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## 11. Not Using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool

For many, the most difficult part about filling out the FAFSA is entering the financial information. But now, thanks to a partnership with the IRS, students and parents who are eligible can automatically transfer the necessary tax info

into the FAFSA using the [IRS Data Retrieval Tool](#). And this year, the tool will be available on the same day the FAFSA launches (you used to have to wait until February.)

Since we're requiring earlier tax information (2015 info instead of 2016 info), you'll already have filed your 2015 taxes by the time you start the 2017-18 FAFSA. This means you can transfer your tax info right away and you won't need to go back in and update your FAFSA with 2016 tax info. In fact, you can't update the application with 2016 tax info; 2015 is what's required.

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## 12. Not Signing the FAFSA

So many students answer every single question that is asked, but fail to actually sign the FAFSA with their FSA ID and submit it. This happens for many reasons —maybe you [forgot your FSA ID](#), or your parent isn't with you to sign with the parent FSA ID —so the FAFSA is left incomplete. Don't let this happen to you.

- If you don't know your FSA ID, select "Forgot username" and/or "Forgot password."
- If you don't have an FSA ID, [create one](#). (Note: You may need to wait up to three days for your information to be verified before you can use your new FSA ID to sign the FAFSA, but it's still faster than mailing a signature page.)

If you're not able to sign with your FSA ID, you and/or your parent have the option to mail a [signature page](#). If you would like confirmation that your FAFSA has been submitted, you can [check your status](#) immediately after you submit your FAFSA online.

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*Nicole Callahan is a Digital Engagement Strategist at Federal Student Aid.*