

Financial Aid Forms and Deadlines

FAFSA

The FAFSA is required by every college in the country to help determine your aid eligibility. You may not file the FAFSA before January 1st of your senior year. The FAFSA uses the prior year's tax information on the form. However, it is extremely important that it is filed in a timely fashion. Although schools vary slightly as to when they recommend filing, you should plan on filing by *February 1st*. To meet this deadline you and your parents may need to estimate your taxes. You will have the opportunity to update your information when you receive your SAR.

It is preferred that the FAFSA be filed online. The first step to filing online is to register for a PIN (Personal Identification Number). This will be your electronic signature for the FAFSA and can be registered for well before the January 1st filing deadline at www.pin.ed.gov. The online FAFSA itself will be filled out at www.fafsa.ed.gov. **DO NOT USE www.fafsa.com** - this is a private website that will charge for a service that should be free!! Filing online gets information to your colleges faster and reduces the potential for making mistakes. A limited number of paper versions of the FAFSA are available directly from your college.

TAP Form (NYS Tuition Assistance Program)

This form is automatically generated and sent to you if you listed a college in New York State on your FAFSA. This does not guarantee that you will receive TAP money but your application, once submitted, will be considered.

CSS/Financial Aid Profile

Although this form is not required by all schools, it is mandatory to fill it out if your school uses it in determining financial aid awards. You can find the list of schools that use this form as well as register at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. You can (and should) complete the Profile earlier (usually by November 1st) than you can the FAFSA. It is important to give yourself plenty of time to fill out the Profile as it often asks much more in-depth financial questions than the FAFSA. Also, unlike the FAFSA, there is a fee for filing the CSS Profile.

School Specific Forms

Even after you have filled out the FAFSA and the CSS/Financial Aid Profile, some schools will still require that a brief, school specific form be filled out. Just like the other forms mentioned it is very important that these be filled out and returned in a timely fashion to ensure that you get the money you deserve.