

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

Applying for financial aid is an important and separate part of the college application process. Your family may need assistance meeting the annual cost of tuition, books, fees, room, and board. The following steps will help you organize the financial aid application process:

Look at scholarship information in the Career Center, use the Scholarship Resources on Naviance Student and run a scholarship search on the Internet either in the Career Center or at home. Check out the updates in your weekly Career Center News, that is sent to all students and parents/guardians.

Continue to investigate scholarship opportunities throughout your senior year.

Find out what forms your colleges require and what the deadlines are. This information is available in the Career Center, on college web sites, or directly from the college financial aid office.

Attend a financial aid workshop for an explanation of the financial aid process and for directions on filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA opens October 1 and should be completed during your senior year whether you go to a 2- or 4-year college. South Lakes has an annual Saturday FAFSA Completion Workshop each fall. FAFSA and/or Scholarship Workshops are provided throughout the county at FCPS high schools. For more information go to: For more information about College Access programs hosted throughout the county, visit www.collegeaccessfairfax.org.

Review the Student Aid Report (SAR) which will arrive several weeks after you file the FAFSA. Check the SAR very carefully and make necessary corrections.

Complete and return the CSS Profile application in the fall of senior year if applying to colleges that require it.

Carefully compare financial award letters when they arrive in the spring. Once you have decided which college to attend, notify the financial aid office of your decision to accept all, part, or none of the financial award.

Planning Ahead for College Costs?

Every college has a Net Price Calculator on their website. These are helpful to see what type of aid or scholarships you may be awarded at that specific school. Also try <https://myintuition.org/> for a quick college cost estimator, collegescorecard.ed.gov, and theFAFSA4caster at <http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov> for estimations of your Expected Family Contribution (EFC).