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To: College Bound Seniors & Their Parents

The Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), used by nearly all types of colleges and universities (two & four year) to determine student eligibility for need type financial aid, will be available on the web at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) starting October 1, 2016. 2015 tax returns are to be used for the 2017-18 school year. You will hear this called prior, prior year.

The completion of a FAFSA by the college bound student and his or her parents is a must in order to receive grants, loans, and money from work-study programs awarded on the basis of family income. The assets of the family are also used in determining the expected financial contribution for college expenses and the resulting need of the student for college financial aid.

The FAFSA can be completed electronically at **[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)**. The increased accuracy of electronic processing is due to built-in checks that can prevent some types of errors like skipping necessary items. Students without access to the Internet may ask the financial aid office at their chosen college whether the school can submit the FAFSA on their behalf.

Part of filing the FAFSA electronically involves requesting a FSA ID which replaces the Personal Identification Number (PIN) that you may have used in the past if you have older children. The FSA ID is used as an electronic signature for FAFSA on the WEB, Renewal FAFSA during the student's subsequent years of college, and FAFSA corrections. Both the parent and student need their own FSA ID and you can obtain it at <https://fsaid.ed.gov>  
NOTE: Parent and Student may NOT use the same email address for this process.

All students and their parents are being advised to establish a FSA ID, ASAP. Keep this FSA ID as this will be your electronic signature for future years as well.

Many colleges (not all, see list in this packet) have now established a February 15 priority deadline to complete the FAFSA. NOTE: For FAFSA 2017 (this year) the FAFSA filing window will open October 1, 2016 and use 2015 tax returns to assure families are able to meet priority deadlines set by the colleges.

Most colleges and universities recommend the FAFSA be completed and mailed as soon as possible. If the recommended filing date is missed the FAFSA should still be completed and mailed. Late filers may not get as much financial aid but filing late doesn't necessarily exclude a student.

An area financial aid programs called FAFSA Help Ohio will be available at Columbus Grove High School on November 20<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4 pm. The program is designed to provide free assistance in filing FAFSA