

2022-2023

# FAFSA COMPLETION GUIDE



**FutureMakers Coalition**

# INTRODUCTION

## **WHAT IS A FAFSA?**

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students submit the FAFSA to apply for financial aid for college from the federal government, state government and most colleges and universities. Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, student employment and student loans.

## **WHO SHOULD COMPLETE A FAFSA?**

Anyone planning on attending college in the next academic year should fill out the FAFSA. The FAFSA takes the average student less than an hour to complete

## **WHY SHOULD YOU COMPLETE A FAFSA?**

Every year, the U.S. Department of Education gives over \$120 billion in federal grants, loans and work-study funds. Information submitted on the application can qualify students for other nonfederal grants--from state governments, private entities, and colleges themselves--that are available to students from higher-income households as well. It's simple: If you don't file, you won't qualify for most financial aid.

## **WHEN SHOULD I COMPLETE THE FAFSA?**

You can [submit your FAFSA](#) for the 2022-2023 academic year starting Oct. 1, 2021. The deadline to complete the FAFSA to be considered for state aid is March 15, 2022. The final deadline is June 30, 2023.

## **WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO COMPLETE THE FAFSA?**

- Student Social Security Number or alien registration number if you are a U.S. permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen
- Parent's legal name, date of birth, social security number and marital status date
- Student's Driver's license number (if applicable)
- Student and parent(s) 2020 W-2 Forms and other records of any money earned
- Student and parent(s) 2020 Federal Tax Return (1040), Puerto Rican tax or foreign tax return
- Any untaxed income received in 2020 – e.g., payments to tax deferred pension and savings plans, tax exempt interest and child support received
- Any current bank statements
- Investment information, business and farm records, stocks, bonds, 529/prepaid plans, etc.
- List of schools the student is interested in attending

## **WHY USE PRIOR-PRIOR (2020) TAX YEAR INFORMATION?**

By using two-years prior tax information on the FAFSA, it will increase the form's accuracy and give you an earlier and more accurate idea of your anticipated financial aid and college costs.

### **Benefits:**

- You and your parents will have completed your taxes by the time you fill out your FAFSA
- You can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) to import tax information directly into the FAFSA

## STEP 1: CREATE AN FSA ID

Video: [How to create an FSA ID](#)

### **WHAT IS AN FSA ID?**

The FSA ID is a username and password you use to log into U.S. Department of Education (ED) online systems. The FSA ID is your legal signature and shouldn't be created or used by anyone other than you—not even your parent, your child, a school official or a loan company representative. You'll use your FSA ID every year to fill out your FAFSA.

### **WHO NEEDS AN FSA ID?**

- Student -in order to electronically sign and submit your FAFSA
- Parent- one of your parents will also need to create an FSA ID to be able to electronically sign your FAFSA application

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO CREATE AN FSA ID?**

You will need your Social Security number, full name, and date of birth. You'll also be required to provide either your email address or your mobile phone number.

#### **Reminders:**

- ✚ A Social Security number, email address, and mobile phone number can only be associated with one FSA ID
- ✚ Write down your username and password, you will need to renew your application each school year!
- ✚ Providing a mobile phone number **and** email address will make it easier to log in and allow additional account recovery options should you forget your password
- ✚ Do not share your FSA ID

### **HOW DO I CREATE AN FSA ID?**


1. Go to [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and select "Create Account"
2. Select "Get Started" and follow the steps
3. Verify your account with the secure codes sent to your mobile phone number and email address

### **FORGOT USERNAME AND PASSWORD**

If you forget your FSA ID username and/or password, select "Forgot My Username" or "Forgot My Password". You will be able to request a secure code or Answer my challenge questions to retrieve your information. We recommend that you request a secure code. If you use the "answer challenge questions" option, your account will be locked for 30 minutes and you will not be able to access your account until that time expires.

## STEP 2: LOGIN INTO THE FAFSA APPICATION (FAFSA.GOV)

1. If you are starting the application for the first time on [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov), select “I am a student and want to access the FAFSA form” and then select “Log In to Continue”. If the parent is completing the FAFSA **without** the student, they should select “I am a parent filling out a FAFSA form for a student” and enter the student’s personal identifiers on the login page.
- 2.



The screenshot shows the FAFSA login interface for a student. At the top left, there is a radio button icon and the text "I am a student and want to access the FAFSA form." To the right is a graduation cap icon. Below this, there is a large blue button labeled "Log In to Continue". Underneath the button is the text "Create an FSA ID" followed by "or" and then "Use personal identifiers to access the FAFSA form."

3. Enter your FSA ID Username and Password and Log In

Log In 

FSA ID Username, Email, or Mobile Phone

newuser73

[Forgot My Username](#)

Password

\*\*\*\*\*

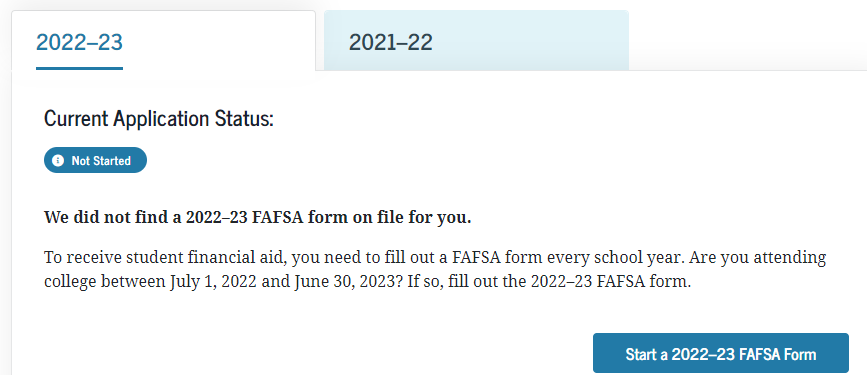
[Show Password](#)

[Forgot My Password](#)

Log In

or

4. Select “Start a 2022-23 FAFSA Form”



The screenshot shows the FAFSA application status page. At the top, there are two tabs: "2022-23" (selected) and "2021-22". Below the tabs, the text "Current Application Status:" is followed by a blue button labeled "Not Started". Below this, the text reads: "We did not find a 2022-23 FAFSA form on file for you." followed by: "To receive student financial aid, you need to fill out a FAFSA form every school year. Are you attending college between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023? If so, fill out the 2022-23 FAFSA form." At the bottom right, there is a blue button labeled "Start a 2022-23 FAFSA Form".

**Reminder:**

- ✚ Students who plan to get an early start and begin college in summer 2022, will need to complete the 2022-23 and the 2021-22 FAFSA applications.

5. **Create a “Save Key,”**. This allows the student to save and return to their application and/or make corrections later. It also allows the student to share access to their *FAFSA* application with their parent if they need to add information or sign it.

**TIP:**

- ✚ Choose a key that you will easily remember. The key must be between 4 and 8 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers and/or uppercase and lowercase letters.

**Create a save key.**

The save key is for temporary use for you or your parent to return and complete this specific FAFSA form.

Create a Save Key

 Show ?

Reenter Save Key

 Show ?

Previous

Continue

## STEP 3: FILLING OUT THE FAFSA

Video: [FAFSA Overview](#)

Video: [FAFSA Form and Tips](#)

**Introduction – 2022-2023 FAFSA** - is an overview of the FAFSA application process. You can review the resources listed for help with completing your FAFSA application. Click “Continue” when ready to proceed.

The FAFSA is broken down into 7 sections highlighted in blue. The application will automatically save the progress as you complete a section. If at any time you need to save in the middle of section and come back later, make sure to click the “SAVE FAFSA Form” button located at the top of the page. For additional help answering the questions, click the symbol ? located to the right of each question.

### 1. **Student Demographics**

Handout: [Tip Sheet for Undocumented Students](#)

Video: [What is Work-study?](#)

- Personal Information for Student** - information has been pulled over from the students FSA ID. Update any information that has changed and fill in any blanks.
- Student Email and Phone**- do not use your high school email address, you will not have access to that email after you graduate
- Student Address**- use your permanent mailing address
- Student Residency and Eligibility**
  - Have you lived in Florida for at least 5 years? If no, you will be prompted to enter your state of legal residence and the date you became a resident of that state.

- Are you a US citizen? [Citizenship Status](#)- to be eligible for financial aid, the student must be a US citizen or an eligible non-citizen. If you select, eligible non-citizen, enter your Alien Registration number
- e. Student Education**
- High School completion status- select high school diploma
  - What college degree or certificate will you be working on? - select First bachelors if attending a four-year institution or Associates degree if attending a two-year school (community college) or certificate/diploma if attending a trade or technical school
  - Will you have your first bachelor's degree before you begin - select No
  - What will your college grade level be- select "Never attended college/1<sup>st</sup> yr", even if you have earned your associate's degree or other college credits through dual enrollment, AP, etc.
  - Are you interested in [work-study](#)- We recommend the student answer yes.
- f. Student Selective Service** - Are you male or female- enter your gender assigned at birth not your gender identity. If you're a male between the ages of 18 and 25 and you haven't registered with the Selective Service System, select "Yes" when asked if you would like to be registered.
- g. Student Driver's License**- enter the students driver's license and state if they have one.
- h. Student Foster Care and Parent Education Completion**
- Are you a foster care youth or were you at any time in the foster care system- answer yes if at anytime in your life you were in foster care even if you are not currently in foster care.
  - Highest school completed by Parent 1 and Parent 2- **For this question only**, parent means your birth or adoptive parent. Don't answer this question about a stepparent, legal guardian, or foster parent. If your parent(s) has not completed a four-year degree, the highest level completed would be high school. This question is used to determine the student's eligibility as a first-generation college student for state aid.

## 2. **School Selection**

### TIPS:

- ✚ You do not need to wait until the students applies to a school to add that school to the FAFSA
- ✚ The student can add up to 10 schools and change them at any time. Schools will not be able to see the other schools that you listed or the order you added them to your FAFSA.
- ✚ Add at least one Florida state college or university to the application even if the student is planning to go out of state. This allows your information to be shared with the Florida Department of Education which determines eligibility for state financial aid.

**Resources:** [Florida College and Universities FAFSA Codes](#)  
[FAFSA Florida School Code List](#)

- Add your High School**- search for your high school and select it from the list that appears
- Confirm Your High School**- verify information is correct and continue.
- College Search**
  - Add the colleges and universities that you are interested in attending utilizing the "Add more schools button". Add all of the colleges you are interested in attending, even if you haven't applied or been accepted yet. You can search by name of the school or use the schools six-digit federal code
  - Housing Plan- select where you plan to live when you begin college: on campus, with parent (commuting from home to school) or off campus

3. **Dependency Status** - The FAFSA will ask a series of questions to determine if the student is dependent or independent for purposes of federal student aid. Independent students are not required to provide parental information on the FAFSA. Not living with parents or not being claimed by your parents on their tax return does not make the student independent for purposes of applying for federal student aid. The federal government has decided that it's the parents' primary responsibility to pay for college.

Video: [Am I a dependent or independent student](#)

Handout: [Students in Unique Situations- Tips for Completing the FAFSA](#)

**TIP:**

- ✚ These questions refer to the student not the parent! Because the FAFSA form belongs to the student, "you" and "your" always (unless otherwise noted) refers to the student. Carefully answer the questions.

- a. **Student Marital Status**- What is your marital status as of today? If the status is anything other than single, you will be prompted to enter the date when you were married/separated/divorced/widowed
- b. **Does the student have dependents?**
  - Does the student have or will have children who will receive more than half their support? Select "Yes" if you're expecting a child who will be born before or during the award year, and you will provide more than half of the child's support.
  - Does the student have or will have dependents who live with them and will receive more than half their support?
- c. **Student Additional Dependency Questions**-select all that apply or check none of the above for the following:
  - Are you currently serving on active duty in the US Armed Forces....?
  - Are you a veteran of the US Armed Forces?
  - At any time since you turned age 13, were both parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
  - As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor? This question refers to a student under the age of 18 who petitions the court to be declared independent from their parents/guardians. This is not the same as emancipation from child support obligations in a divorce decree.
  - Does someone other than your parent or stepparent have legal guardianship of you, as determined by a court in your legal state of residence? This is not the same as a custody agreement. The court paperwork must state "legal guardianship". If the student is not with their parent(s) but doesn't have legal guardianship documents, refer to F below.
  - None of the above
- d. **On or after July 1, 2021, were you homeless or were you self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?** If you select yes, the student should work with their high school to obtain a letter from the McKinney Vento liaison.
- e. **Dependent Student Status**- based on the students answers to the above questions, a determination will be made. If the student is deemed a dependent student, they must provide parental information on the FAFSA. The student will select either
  - I will provide information about my parent(s)
  - I am unable to provide information about my parent(s)
- f. **Special Circumstances Qualifications**- If the student does not meet the criteria outlined above to be considered an independent student, the student can decide to proceed without parental information. Three options will be presented:
  - I will provide information about my parent(s)

- I have a special circumstance and I am unable to provide information about my parents. If the student has a unique situation that prevents them from providing their parents information, they should select this option and reach out to the school's financial aid office for additional guidance.
- I do not have a special circumstance, and I am submitting my FAFSA form without parental information to apply for an unsubsidized loan only.

#### 4. **Parent Demographics:**

##### **Reminder:**

✚ The following people are **not** your parents unless they have legally adopted you: grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, older brothers or sisters, uncles or aunts, and widowed stepparents. Do not list them as your parent on the FAFSA.

Handout: [What is the Marital Status of your parents?](#)

Handout: [Who's my parent when I fill out the FAFSA?](#)


Handout: [Who and Why I have to Include my Parent on the FAFSA](#)

#### **a. Whose Information Should I provide?** Review the guidance listed below each option.

My parents live together (married or unmarried).	⌵
My parents are divorced or separated, and I live with one parent more than the other.	⌵
My parents are divorced or separated, and I live with both parents equally.	⌵
I was legally adopted.	⌵

- Parent Marital Status-** As of today, what is the marital status of your parents? This is the marital status of the parent the student used on the FAFSA as of the day they submit the form. For example: If the biological parents are divorced but the parent on the FAFSA is remarried, you will enter the date the parent married the stepparent.
- Enter Information for Your First Parent.** Make sure you use their legal name as it appears on their social security card.
  - The parents' citizenship status does not affect the student's ability to complete the FAFSA form. If the parent(s) does not have an SSNs, they must enter 000-00-0000
- Enter Information for Your Other Parent-** if applicable
- Parents State of Legal Residence** -Have your parents lived in Florida for at least 5 years? If no, you will be prompted to enter your state of legal residence and the date they became a resident of that state.
- Enter Information for Your Parents' Other Dependents**
  - How many other dependent children do your parents have?
  - How many other dependents do your parents have? People who live with the student's parent and currently receive more than half their financial support.
- Parent Household Information**
  - A visual summary of the breakdown of the student's household size will appear based on their prior answers



	<b>Your household size is 6.</b>			
	You:	Your Parents:	Other Dependent Children of Your Parent(s):	Other Dependents of Your Parent(s):
	1	2	2	1

- Number in College- out of the # of dependents listed in your parent's household, how many will be college students? Do not include your parents in this number.

## 5. Parent Information

The students' parents 2020 tax filing status and current marital status may be different. Use the information below as a guide when these situations occur:

- Parent is now married but was not married in 2020 (and therefore did not file taxes as married), take the current spouse's 2020 income and add it to the parent's income and report the combined income.
- Married in 2020 but is no longer married, the former spouse's income will need to be subtracted.
- Married in 2020, divorced from the spouse listed on the joint return and is now married to someone else. Subtract the ex-spouse's income, then add the new spouse's income.

### TIPS:

- ✚ Will file should not apply, as we are referring to 2020 taxes!
- ✚ Don't guess on how much the parents earned. Use W2's to accurately report this amount!
- ✚ Use the IRS Data Retrieval (IRS DRT) if presented. (The IRS Data Retrieval Tool may not show as an option based on prior answers)
- ✚ The IRS DRT "Get My Federal Income Tax Information" name and address must match the 2020 tax return exactly. For example, if it says Street on the tax return you cannot use the abbreviation St.
- ✚ When using the IRS DRT, if the tax filer has moved, enter the address on the return not the current address.
- ✚ Payments to tax-deferred pension and retirement savings plans appear on box 12 of the W-2. These amounts are reported on the W-2 form in boxes 12a through 12d, codes D, E, F, G, H, and S. **Don't include** amounts reported in code DD

22222		Employee's social security number		OMB No. 1545-0008	
b Employer identification number (EIN)		1 Wages, tips, other compensation		2 Federal income tax withheld	
c Employer's name, address, and ZIP code		3 Social security wages		4 Social security tax withheld	
		5 Medicare wages and tips		6 Medicare tax withheld	
		7 Social security tips			
d Control number		9		10 Dependent care benefits	
e Employee's first name and initial Last name Suffix		11 Nonqualified plans		12a	
		13		12b	
		14		12c	
				12d	
f Employee's address and ZIP code		15 State wages, tips, etc.		16 Local wages, tips, etc.	
15 State wages, tips, etc.		17 State income tax		18 Local income tax	
16 Local wages, tips, etc.		19 Local income tax		20 Locality name	

Form **W-2 Wage and Tax Statement** 2020 Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service  
Copy 1—For State, City, or Local Tax Department

### a. Parent Tax Filing Status

- For 2020, have your parents completed their IRS income tax return or other tax return? Select already completed, will file or not going to file.
- What type of income tax return did your parents file for 2020? U.S. tax payers file the IRS 1040.
- For 2020, what if your parents' tax filing status according to their tax return?
- IRS Data Retrieval Tool- allows students and parents who filed a U.S. tax return with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to access the IRS tax return information and to transfer the data directly into their FAFSA form.



RECOMMENDED

### IRS Data Retrieval Tool

Applying is faster and easier if you transfer your tax return information into this FAFSA® form with the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT)!

For your protection, your tax return information will not display on the IRS website or on the FAFSA® form.

- Select Proceed to the IRS
- Parent Leaving the FAFSA Form- Provide parent FSA ID credentials and Proceed to the IRS
- A pop will appear- select OK
- Sign in using the parent FSA ID and password
- Select Proceed to IRS Site and OK and OK
- Get My Federal Income Tax Information-enter the name and other information exactly as it appeared on the 2020 tax return and select submit.
- Check the box for “Transfer My Tax Information into the FAFSA form” and select “Transfer Now” You will receive a message that states “You have successfully transferred your 2020 IRS tax information” if used successfully.

#### Reminders:

- If the parent chooses not to use or is not able to use the IRS Data Retrieval tool, they will need to manually enter all of the financial information using the tax return and W-2's. Utilize the ? icon for assistance.
- If the parent has used the IRS DRT, the values in sections will be prepopulated.
- The FAFSA form may eliminate certain questions/sections based on prior answers.

#### b. Parent IRS Information

- What was your parents adjusted gross income for 2020?

#### c. Parent Income from Work- Read the instructions carefully. Income is often reported incorrectly!

- How much did your Parent 1 earn from working in 2020?
- How much did your Parent 2 earn from working in 2020? (if applicable)

#### d. Parent Simplified Path Determination

- Did your parents file a Schedule 1?  
[Learn more about Schedule 1 Reporting](#). There are scenarios when a Schedule 1 has been filed but you will be instructed to answer No.
- Are either of your parents a dislocated worker? This refers to being lost their job, unemployed, laid off or receiving unemployment benefits
- In 2020 or 2021, did you, your parents, or anyone in your parent's household receive benefits from any of the federal benefits programs listed below. Check all that apply!

#### e. Parent Skip Remaining Question? If presented with this option, select YES.

#### f. Parent Additional IRS Info

- Enter the amount of your parent's income tax for 2020




#### g. Parent Questions for Tax Filers Only- if nothing to report your answer should be zero.

- Combat Pay or Special Combat Pay

- Student college grant and scholarship aid reported to the IRS in your parent's income. Generally, you report any taxable portion of a scholarship, a fellowship, or other grant as part of the "Wages, salaries, tips" line of your tax return. If those amounts were not added as income on the tax return, do not enter an amount here.
  - Education Credits
  - Untaxed portions of IRA distributions and pensions
  - IRA deductions and payments for self-employed, SEP, SIMPLE, Keogh, etc.
  - Tax exempt interest income
- h. Parent Additional Financial Information for 2020-** if nothing to report your answer should be zero.
- Child support your parents paid
  - Earnings from work under a Cooperative Education Program \*
  - Taxable earnings from needs-based employment programs \*
- \*If the parent was not in college in 2020 and not in these programs, the amounts will be zero.
- i. Parent Untaxed Income in 2020**
- Child support received
  - Housing, food, and other living allowances paid to members of the military, clergy, and others
  - Payments to tax-deferred pension and retirement savings plans
  - Veterans noneducation benefits such as Disability; Death Pension
  - Other untaxed income not reported, such as workers' compensation, disability benefits, etc.
- Don't include** social security income!
- j. Parent Assets**
- As of today, does the total amount of your parent's current assets exceed \$5,900? If yes, additional questions will appear.
  - As of today, what is your parents' total current balance of cash, savings, and checking accounts?
  - As of today, what is the net worth of your parents' investments, including real estate (not your parents' home)? **Don't include**, the home you live in/primary residence.
  - As of today, what is the net worth of your parents' current businesses and/or investment farms? **Don't include** a family farm or family business with 100 or fewer full-time or full-time equivalent employees.

## 6. Student Financials


### TIPS:

-  Will file should not apply, as we are referring to 2020 taxes!
-  Don't guess on how much the student earned. Use W2's to accurately report this amount!
-  Don't report the parent's income as the student's income!

### a. Student Tax Filing Status

- For 2020, have you completed your IRS income tax return or another return? If yes, then
- What income tax return did you file for 2020?
- For 2020, what is your tax filing status according to your tax return?
- IRS Data Retrieval Tool- refer to parent financial section for more guidance on using this tool.

### Reminder:

-  If the student chooses not to use or is not able to use the IRS Data Retrieval tool, they will need to manually enter all of the financial information using the tax return and W-2's. Utilize the ? icon for assistance.

### b. Student IRS Info

- What was your adjusted gross income for 2020?

### c. Student Income from Work

- How much did you earn from working?

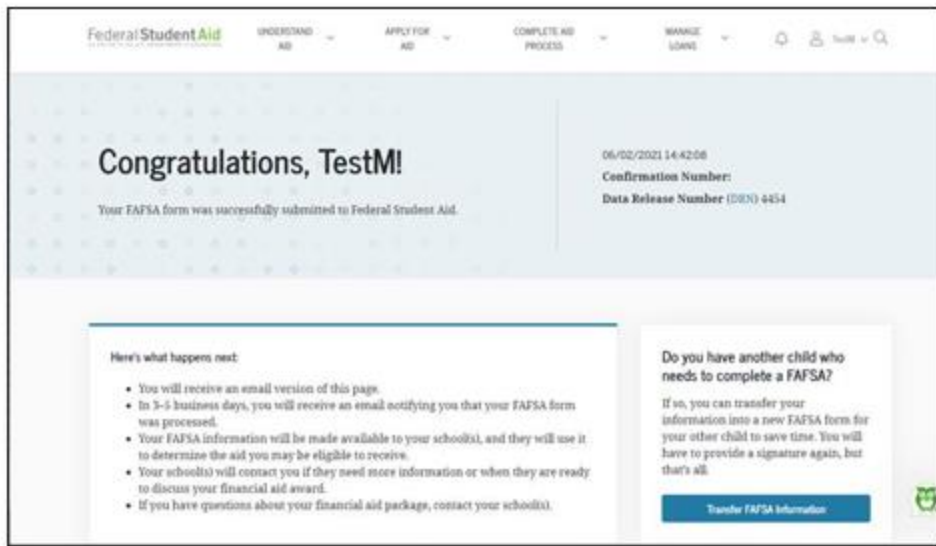
### d. Students Additional IRS Info

- Enter the amount of your income tax for 2020
- e. **Student Questions for Tax Filers Only**- if nothing to report your answer should be zero.
  - Combat Pay or Special Combat Pay
  - Student college grant and scholarship aid reported to the IRS in your parent's income. Generally, you report any taxable portion of a scholarship, a fellowship, or other grant as part of the "Wages, salaries, tips" line of your tax return. If those amounts were not added as income on the tax return, **do not** enter an amount here.
  - Education Credits
  - Untaxed portions of IRA distributions and pensions
  - IRA deductions and payments for self-employed, SEP, SIMPLE, Keogh, etc.
  - Tax exempt interest income
- f. **Student Additional Financial Information for 2020**- if nothing to report, your answer should be zero.
  - Child support you paid
  - Earnings from work under a Cooperative Education Program
  - Taxable earnings from needs-based employment programs (work-study)
- g. **Student Untaxed Income**
  - Child support received
  - Housing, food, and other living allowances paid to members of the military, clergy, and others
  - Payments to tax-deferred pension and retirement savings plans- Look at box 12 of the W2
  - Veterans noneducation benefits such as Disability; Death Pension
  - Other untaxed income not reported, such as workers' compensation, disability benefits, etc. **Do not include** social security income!
- h. **Student Assets**
  - As of today, what is your total current balance of cash, savings, and checking accounts?
  - As of today, what is the net worth of your investments, including real estate
  - As of today, what is the net worth of your current businesses and/or investment farms?

## 7. **Sign & Submit**

### Reminders:

- ✚ Parents without a social security number are not able to create an FSA ID and will not be able to electronically sign the FAFSA. Print and mail the signature page.
- ✚ If you do not see the Congratulations page, you have not submitted your FAFSA
- ✚ Print the confirmation page for your records
- a. **FAFSA Summary**
  - Carefully review your answers. If changes need to be made, click on the question and it will take you directly to the page to make the correction.
  - Print this page for your records
- b. **Read Before Proceeding**- read and then select "Sign FAFSA Form"
- c. **Parent Signature Needed Tile**
  - Select "Provide Parent Signature"
  - Which Parent are you? Choose which parent will be providing their signature and select "Provide Parent Signature"
  - Read before proceeding, agree and continue
  - Enter the parent's FSA ID and select "Sign and Submit FAFSA Form"
- d. If your parent is not able to provide an electronic signature, select "Other Options to Sign and Submit"
  - Select Print a signature page, print and mail to the address listed on the form.
- e. Select "Submit my FAFSA Form Now"
- f. The Congratulations page will display when successfully submitted



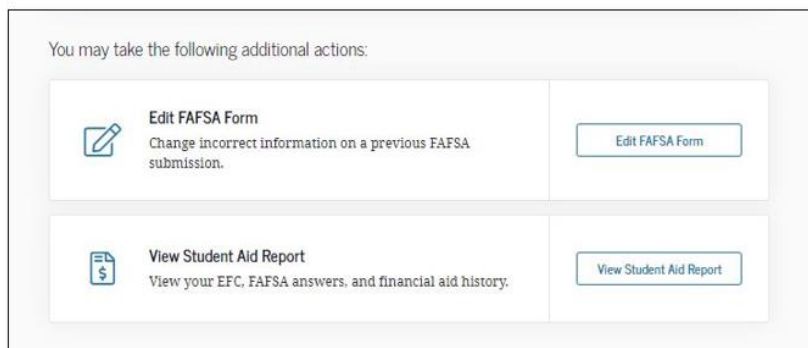
## STEP 4: AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR FAFSA

Video: [After you complete your FAFSA](#)

Webpage: [How to review my Student Aid Report](#)

Webpage: [How is my amount of federal student aid determined?](#)

In approximately, 7 to 10 days, the student will receive an email with a link to their **“Student Aid Report (SAR).”**



Carefully review this report as it contains important information including:

- The Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
- Items that may need immediate attention
- Estimated eligibility for federal student loans and Federal Pell Grants.
- It will list if the student is selected for a review process called “Verification” or if other documents are needed to determine their eligibility. The schools listed on the FAFSA will reach out to student directly for these required documents.

### Reminder:

- ✚ The Student Aid Report is not the students financial aid award letter. Financial aid award letters will be sent directly from the college/university after the student has been admitted.

## PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

The FAFSA does not provide families with a place to explain special circumstances affecting their ability to pay for the student's education. To remedy this, Congress has delegated to the school's financial aid administrator the authority to compensate for special circumstances on a case-by-case basis with adequate documentation. The financial aid administrator can best evaluate the family's situation and make appropriate adjustments if warranted. These adjustments may result in additional financial aid eligibility for the student.

### **Common Reasons for appeals include:**

Loss of employment/Reduction of income  
Retirement  
Loss/Reduction of untaxed income  
Separation/Divorce

Dependent Care Expenses  
Death of a parent  
One-Time taxable income distribution  
Unreimbursed medical/dental expenses

If the student's/parent's financial situation has changed significantly, have the student:

- Complete the FAFSA questions using the required 2020 tax and income information
- Contact each school they are interested in attending to discuss how their current financial situation has changed

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***For further assistance, please contact:***  
***Michelle Gonzalez***  
***Director of Enrollment Services Center***  
***Florida Gulf Coast University***  
***239-590-7699***  
***[mgonzalez@fgcu.edu](mailto:mgonzalez@fgcu.edu)***

