

# Florida FAFSA Completion Toolkit: 2015

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## College Goal Sunday (CGS!Florida)

Link(s): <http://www.navigatingyourfinancialfuture.org/CGS!FLORIDA/>

*In partnership with the Florida Association of Financial Aid Administrators (FASFAA), the Florida Department of Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) has announced 59 host sites for College Goal events in 2015. These host sites represent 30 counties and provide more coverage for our students in Florida. To view the locations in a county near you, please visit the link above.*

## First Lady's FAFSA Completion Commencement Challenge

Link(s): <http://www.whitehouse.gov/reach-higher/fafsa-commencement>

*With FAFSA season here, First Lady Michelle Obama is calling on every high school senior in America to complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) starting on January 1st, and for students, principals, teachers, school counselors, and administrators to show how their school is taking action to get more students to fill out their forms. The prize? First Lady Michelle Obama will give the commencement speech at your high school graduation! The deadline for submissions is March 16, 2015.*

## Florida FAFSA Finish Line Data Dashboard

Link(s):

[https://public.tableausoftware.com/views/FloridaFAFSAFinishLine/BySchool?%3Aembed=y&%3Adisplay\\_count=yes&%3AshowVizHome=no](https://public.tableausoftware.com/views/FloridaFAFSAFinishLine/BySchool?%3Aembed=y&%3Adisplay_count=yes&%3AshowVizHome=no)

*The Florida FAFSA Finish Line data dashboard features the FAFSA completion rates for 12<sup>th</sup> graders at over 500 public schools in Florida, including district- and state-level figures. Included in the dashboard are 11 different filters that can help counselors and administrators chart the progress of their schools and track progress statewide.*

## Financial Aid Toolkit

Link(s): <http://www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/>

*The Financial Aid Toolkit, a resource from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid, provides information and outreach tools for counselors, college access professionals, nonprofit mentors and others. It includes videos, infographics, how-to guides, presentation templates and a variety of other financial assistance resources.*

## Webinar: It's FAFSA Season, Let the "Funds" Begin!

Link(s): <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/event/its-fafsa-season-let-the-funds-begin/>

*On January 16, the Florida College Access Network hosted a webinar featuring panelists Lori Auxier, Director of Outreach Services, Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), Florida Department of Education; Ralph Aiello, Supervisor, School Counseling, BRACE and Academic Advisement, Department of College and Career Readiness, Broward County Public Schools; and Bill Mills, Vice President, Florida Prosperity Partnership. The webinar recording, slides, slides are available through the above link.*

## Free Tax Preparation Help with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

Link(s): <http://www.freefltaxsites.org/>

*Florida Prosperity Partnership (FPP), a statewide nonprofit partnership, is once again teaming with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), United Ways, and other partners around the state to provide free income tax preparation to low and moderate income Floridians. Through, [www.FreeFLTaxSites.org](http://www.FreeFLTaxSites.org), Floridians can find a location near them as well as the Facilitated Self Assistance (FSA) website link to complete their tax return from the comfort of their own home with IRS certified volunteers standing by to answer their questions. The VITA Program generally offers free tax help to people who make \$53,000 or less and need assistance in preparing their tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation and free electronic filing to qualified individuals.*

## Policy Brief: \$100 Million in Pell Grants Left behind: FAFSA Completion in Florida

Link(s): <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/FAFSA-Completion-in-Florida.pdf>

*The U.S. Department of Education makes available over \$150 billion in federal student aid to college students each year, yet tens of thousands of Florida students failed to complete the form needed to access these funds. Analyzing state and federal data, Florida CAN estimated that Florida students graduating in 2013 left behind over \$100 million in Pell grants, simply because they didn't complete the form. The December 2013 policy brief highlighted this and other findings, including resources available to students as well as recommendations moving forward.*

## Pell Grants Lost by Florida School District

Link(s): <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Printable-2014-Summit-FAFSA-Completion-Data.pdf>

*This analysis of FAFSA completion data was provided to attendees of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summit on Florida College Access and Success in October 2014. It includes a district-level breakdown of Pell Grants left behind for Florida students graduating in 2013.*

## National College Access Network Training Resources

Link(s): <http://www.collegeaccess.org/Elearning>

*The National College Access Network (NCAN) provides e-learning resources to college access professionals, with select modules focusing on federal student aid programs, financial aid and FAFSA completion. The modules are self-paced, available year-round, and reflect evidence-based practices.*

## The FAFSA Completion Project: An Annotated Bibliography

Link(s): <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/FAFSABibliography.pdf>

*Published in 2011 by the U.S. Department of Education, this annotated bibliography links to free resources available online to support school systems in their development of FAFSA completion programs and policies. The resources are grouped into categories by audience: research, policy, and programmatic studies and practical guides for principals and administrators; training and support materials, publicity, handouts, troubleshooting guides, and background information for counselors; and informational and supportive guides for students and their families. In addition, specific resources supporting a data-driven program are also included.*

## Line-by-line Training for 2015-16 FAFSA

Link(s): <https://mappingyourfuture.org/services/webinararchive.cfm>

*Mapping Your Financial Future offers various webinars to provide training and resources addressing various issues facing financial aid and education professionals. Above is a link to their archive, which features a recorded session of line-by-line training for the 2015-16 FAFSA for those who wish to provide assistance with the application.*

## NOSCA: National Office for School Counselor Advocacy

Link(s): <http://nosca.collegeboard.org/>

*The National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) promotes the value of school counselors as leaders in school reform, student achievement and college readiness. NOSCA hosts webinars, publishes reports and surveys and promotes the Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling, all of which can be found at their website.*

## Summer Melt Handbook

Link(s): <http://cepr.harvard.edu/sdp/resources/summer-melt/index.php>

*The Summer Melt Handbook, a resource from the Strategic Data Project at Harvard University, provides resources for education leaders interested in examining whether summer melt is occurring at their local education agency. Summer melt, a phenomenon in which college-bound students fail to enroll after high school graduation, has been estimated to effect 10-40% of students across the country. The handbook identifies low-cost, evidence-based interventions that can be utilized to increase college enrollment rates.*

## U.S. Department of Education's Homeroom Blog: Federal Student Aid

Link(s): <http://www.ed.gov/blog/topic/federal-student-aid/>

*Homeroom is the official blog of the U.S. Department of Education and publishes timely information and resources relevant to FAFSA completion and federal student aid. Some examples of blog topics, which are great for including in newsletters or emails to parents, include: 5 Things to do After Filing Your FAFSA, Top 5 FAFSA FAQs, 7 Common Myths about Financial Aid and 7 Common FAFSA Mistakes.*

## Office of Federal Student Aid Twitter Page

Link(s): <https://twitter.com/FAFSA>

*The FAFSA Twitter page, maintained by the U.S. Department's Office of Federal Student Aid, provides timely reminders of relevant information and deadlines related to federal student aid programs. The site hosts live question and answer sessions during "#AskFAFSA Office Hour" to allow students, parents and other the chance to get FAFSA and financial aid questions answered from federal officials.*

## Resources for Working with Undocumented Students

Link(s): [http://www.nasfaa.org/students/Student\\_Aid\\_Tips\\_for\\_Unique\\_Student\\_Populations.aspx](http://www.nasfaa.org/students/Student_Aid_Tips_for_Unique_Student_Populations.aspx) (Tips for Working With Undocumented Students, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators), <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/financial-aid-and-undocumented-students.pdf>, (help sheet from U.S. Department of Education), <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/JA-Memo-HB851-Out-of-state-Fee-Waiver-HS-Students-070314-2.pdf> (House Bill 851 memo on in-state tuition for undocumented Florida students with answers to frequently asked questions from Florida Department of

Education), <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/financial-aid/undocumented-students> (Advising Undocumented Students resources from College Board)

*These reports and resources help undocumented students navigate the financial assistance available to them.*

#### Florida Economic Security Report, Beyondeducation.org

Link(s): [http://beyondeducation.org/temp/ER\\_Report.pdf](http://beyondeducation.org/temp/ER_Report.pdf) (Economic Security report), <http://beyondeducation.org/> (report landing page), <http://esm.beyondeducation.org/esm/florida/> (accompanying workforce outcomes database),

*School counselors and educators faced with providing information to students about financial assistance for college are sometimes faces with questions such as, "Is college worth it?" In 2013, the Florida Legislature passed a bill to provide economic and workforce outcome data for graduates of all public postsecondary institutions in the state, which can be a useful resource when discussing the costs and benefits of a postsecondary education with students and families.*

#### Florida CAN updates, releases

Link(s): <http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org/contact/>

*The Florida College Access Network publishes a monthly e-newsletter, as well as information and resources for students, families, community leaders, and education professionals. Subscribe through the above link to stay in the know on college and career readiness, access and success issues in Florida.*

The Florida College Access Network's mission is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college & career preparation, access, and completion for all students. For more information, visit [www.floridacollegeaccess.org](http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org).

