Warren High School

Guidance Department
Senior Newsletter November 2024

130 Warrior Drive, Vincent, OH 45784
Phone: 740-678-2393, ext. 1804
Applying for Federal Financial Aid

THE FAFSA APPLICATION FOR 2025-2026 OPENS DECEMBER 1
FAFSA PRIORITY SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1

Step 1: Create an FSA ID account at studentaid.gov

You can use the account to:
- Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form
- Sign your Master Promissory Note (MPN) for a student loan
- Apply for repayment plans
- Complete required loan counseling

What you will need:
- Your Social Security Number
- Your own mobile phone number and/or email address for the student. Use a personal email not the WHS one.
- A separate phone number and email address for any parent or contributor.

Who needs an account?
- The student
- The parent or contributor

NOTE: Be careful to enter your name and Social Security number exactly as it appears on your card. Keep a record of all account login credentials.

Step 2: Log into the FAFSA application using the FSA ID.

The student is the one applying for financial aid, so be sure it is the student entering their FSA ID in the "I am a student and want to access the FAFSA form" section. **Do not** start the FAFSA form by supplying the parent's FSA ID in the student role.

Documents needed to apply:
- Your Social Security number
- Your parents' Social Security numbers if you are a dependent student
- Your driver's license number
- Federal tax information, tax documents, or tax returns, including IRS W-2 information, for you and your parents.
- Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veterans noneducation benefits.

Step 3: Create a SAVE KEY

Near the beginning of the FAFSA application, you will have to create a "SAVE KEY." It is a temporary password that allows you to start the application, save it without finishing it, and the open it again later to finish it. The benefit of the Save Key is that it can be shared between the student and parent to complete each part of the FAFSA at different times. The Save Key can be shared but the FSA ID should remain private.

TIP: Stay Organized! Keep all account credentials, documents, and other paperwork in its own folder. You will need this information to apply again next year.

Step 4: List colleges to receive FAFSA information

Up to 20 schools can be listed on your FAFSA application. At least one school is required. The order in which schools are listed does not matter in Ohio for state aid unlike some other states.

Step 5: Determining your dependency status

- Most students are "Dependent" and must enter their parent or contributor's information.

- Independent students must meet one of the following criteria:
  Be at least 24 years old, married, a graduate or professional student, a veteran, a member of the armed forces, an orphan, a ward of the court, someone with legal dependents, an emancipated minor, or someone who is identified as homeless or at risk of being homeless.

- If the student does not meet those criteria but there are special circumstances to consider, an appeal to the school can be made by providing documentation of your situation. The school will determine your dependency status.

Step 6: Which parent is a contributor on my 2025-2026 FAFSA?

1. Are your biological or adoptive parents married? – Both are contributors
2. Do your biological or adoptive parents live together? = Both are contributors
3. Did one parent provide more financial support in the last year?
   a. Yes – that parent is the contributor
   b. No – the parent with the greatest amount of financial assets is the contributor
4. Did the identified contributor remarry?
   a. Yes – the stepparent is also a contributor if taxes are filed separately
   b. No – the identified contributor is the sole contributor

Step 7: Providing Financial Information

- Tax information from 2023 is required on the 2025-26 FAFSA form.
- Changes to income can be made if your financial situation has changed since 2023 taxes were filed.
- Applicants and contributors are now required to give consent for the direct retrieval of tax information through the IRS Direct Data Exchange.

Step 8: Sign and submit your FAFSA application

- For quicker processing, use your FSA Id to sign and submit the application.
- If you prefer, you can print, sign and mail the application.
- Check your email frequently for messages from Federal Student Aid or your college.

What's Next?

- You will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) indicating the Student Aid Index (SAI) formerly called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The SAI is what determines the amount of aid you may receive. The SAI may be a negative number down to -1500.
- Schools will be sending aid offers beginning early February through mid-March.