# **Shape, rectangle Description automatically generatedFAFSA/W****AFSA Opt-Out Form**

Financial aid is money to help pay for education and training beyond high school. This money comes from the federal and state governments, colleges and universities, banks, and organizations. It includes grants, loans, work study, and scholarships.

National research shows that 90% of students who complete a financial aid application attend college and that the main reason students do not complete one is they think it’s too complex or they are not eligible for aid.\* Millions of financial aid dollars are left unclaimed each year by Washington’s seniors who could get help!\*\*

\*https://www.ncan.org/page/WhyInvestFAFSA \*\*https://wsac.wa.gov/update-2019-02-14-FAFSA-IssueBrief

**To get aid, you must apply.**

Applying for financial aid is a separate process from applying for admission to a school or a program. You need to do both steps. In Washington, there are two different applications for financial aid, but you only need to complete one:

* Complete the [FAFSA](https://fafsa.gov/) (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) if you are a U.S. citizen or [eligible non-citizen](https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/non-us-citizens).
* Complete the [WASFA](http://wsac.wa.gov/wasfa) (Washington Application for State Financial Aid) if you are not eligible to complete the FAFSA due to immigration status, defaulted federal loans, or other issues with federal aid. Learn more and apply on the [WASFA page](https://wsac.wa.gov/WASFA).

Our goal is to give all seniors the knowledge needed to apply for financial aid to help reduce costs associated with further education and training after high school. For seniors who do not plan to attend college right after high school, learning the financial aid process now can help them afford to attend college later in life as their career interests change. Information about financial aid and the next steps can be found at [www.wsac.wa.gov/actionplan](http://www.wsac.wa.gov/actionplan).

Additionally, there are virtual and in-person financial aid events to help students and families complete the FAFSA/WAFSA. Please reach out to the GEAR UP Coordinator to schedule an appointment to learn more.

It is a state requirement that all families be informed of aid opportunities and provided assistance in completing a financial aid application (RCW [28A.300.815](http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.815)). Seniors over the age of 18, or a senior’s parent or guardian, may sign this form and decline to participate in completing a financial aid application. In choosing to opt-out, know that all seniors still need to complete the required financial aid portion of their High School and Beyond Plan, which includes information about sources of financial aid and how to access them.

This opt-out form permits a pupil to opt out of the completion of a FAFSA or WASFA form. Please complete this form and return it to your high school counselor or GEAR UP Coordinator.

Submitting a Financial Aid Application Opt-Out Form does not prohibit a student from completing and submitting a financial aid application at any time in the future.

**Questions? Contact:**

**GEAR UP Coordinator:**

**Email:**

**Phone:**

## **INITIAL & SIGN BELOW**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Student**  **Initials** | **Parent/Guardian**  **Initials** | **I acknowledge my understanding of the following:** |
|  |  | If I am eligible for the College Bound Scholarship, I am aware that by not completing a financial aid application I will lose any funds that I am entitled to. |
|  |  | Washington resident students are eligible to pay in-state tuition and get state financial aid. **Both U.S. citizens and non-citizens, including undocumented students,** can be Washington residents and get state aid. |
|  |  | GEAR UP staff are available to support my family in completing the FAFSA/WAFSA. |
|  |  | Financial aid offered through the FAFSA/WAFSA can be used at any accredited postsecondary program, including trade schools, apprenticeship programs, two-year colleges, and four-year colleges and universities. |
|  |  | There is no family income limit to complete the FAFSA/WAFSA. Over 80% of all college students receive financial aid to help them pay for college. |
|  |  | Students and families can use the [financial aid calculator](https://portal.wsac.wa.gov/a/aid-calculator/) to estimate potential financial aid. There are many sources of money and kinds of aid available to continue your education—the only way to know for sure if you qualify is to complete a financial aid application. |
|  |  | Financial aid isn’t just student loans. It includes grants, scholarships, and work study, which do not have to be paid back if you successfully complete your coursework. |
|  |  | [WA Grant](https://wsac.wa.gov/wcg) is one of the most generous financial aid programs in the country. Recent high school graduates and working-age adults from many low- and middle-income families can qualify to receive free money toward career training, college, and apprenticeships. |
|  |  | Some private, college, and state scholarships/grants, including the Washington State College Bound scholarship, require completion of the FAFSA/WAFSA to be eligible for aid. |
|  |  | All seniors are still required to complete the financial aid portion of their High School and Beyond Plan, which includes information about types of financial aid and how to access them. |

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Parent/Guardian Signature Printed Name Date

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Student Signature Printed Name Date

**Post-High School Plan:**

**(OPTIONAL)**

* Reason for opting out:
* Do you anticipate taking a gap year and needing assistance in the future?