

Financial Aid Calendar

March – April

Here are tips to share with your high school seniors and juniors to help them plan and pay for college or career training.

{ Seniors }

MARCH

- Submit the FAFSA if you haven't already done so.**
- Look for your Student Aid Report to arrive by mail or e-mail**, if you provided an e-mail address on your FAFSA.
- If you don't receive your Student Aid Report within four weeks after submitting your FAFSA**, call the Federal Student Aid Information Center toll free at 800.433.3243.
- Respond promptly to any requests for additional information** from your college or private scholarship organizations.

California students only:

- Be sure to submit the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 Cal Grant application deadline.** You can call a Commission Customer Service Representative on Thursday, March 1 and Friday, March 2 from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. with your Cal Grant application questions. Call toll free 888.224.7268 or 888.CA.GRANT.
- If you miss the Cal Grant application deadline, you should still submit your FAFSA.** Other kinds of financial aid may be available. Be sure to ask your high school counselor about other opportunities.

{ Juniors }

MARCH

- Continue investigating scholarships and other financial aid opportunities.** Ask teachers, counselors and coaches for leads. Next, check out the free scholarship directories and search engines on the Web. Also, browse the scholarship directories in your school or local library.
- Register and begin studying for your college entrance exams**—the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), SAT Reasoning or Subject tests (www.collegeboard.com), ACT (www.ACTstudent.org) or other exams. You'll find practice questions and tips at these Web sites.
- Begin scheduling visits to your top college choices.** If appropriate, arrange for an interview or an overnight stay. Also, find out if a local organization sponsors a college tour during spring break.

- Keep up your grades.** Begin thinking about which teachers, counselors, friends or family members you might ask to write letters of recommendation for your college admissions or financial aid applications.
- Get involved in activities at your school or in the community.** A number of colleges look at grades as well as outside interests and activities when determining which students to admit.
- Continue exploring colleges or career training programs** on the Web or in the catalogs at your school or local library.

{ Seniors }

APRIL

- Watch your mail or e-mail for college acceptance and financial aid award notifications.**
 - Carefully review your financial aid offers.** When comparing offers, be sure to ask:
 - ▶ How much of the aid is “free money,” such as grants and scholarships? Are the grants or scholarships renewable each year? Will the dollar amount increase if tuition rises? Are there any specific terms and conditions, such as maintaining a certain GPA?
 - ▶ How much loan aid is offered? Are the loans subsidized? When will you need to start paying back your loans?
 - Check with the college about the details for accepting or declining financial aid offers.**
 - Consider grants, scholarships, work-study and other aid you don’t have to repay first.** If you’ll be borrowing for college, borrow only what you need.
-
- Make your final decision and send in any required deposit by the deadline (May 1 for many colleges).**
 - Notify those colleges you were accepted to but won’t be attending.**

California students only:

- If you applied for a Cal Grant by the March 2 application deadline,** you should receive a letter from the California Student Aid Commission by April 30 telling you if you qualify for a Cal Grant or not. If you don’t receive a letter by April 30, call the Commission toll free at 888.224.7268 or 888.CA.GRANT, or e-mail the Commission at studentsupport@csac.ca.gov.

{ Juniors }

APRIL

- Consider taking any Advanced Placement or SAT Subject tests while the information is fresh.**
 - Continue studying for your college entrance exams.** Look into taking an SAT prep course, get a study guide from your library or bookstore, or go online and work on the practice questions at www.collegeboard.com. You’ll find practice questions for the ACT at www.ACTstudent.org.
-
- Begin thinking about the essays you will need to write for some college admissions and scholarship applications.**