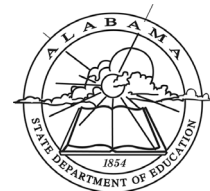




STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

January 10, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Alabama Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion Project and Non-Participation Waiver for the Graduating Class of 2024

On April 8, 2021, the Alabama State Board of Education approved a resolution to amend the *Alabama Administrative Code* so that, effective with the graduating Class of 2022, the following requirements shall be fulfilled on behalf of the graduating senior as part of the graduating senior's transition into postsecondary education, training, or the workforce:

1. Submit to the United States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
2. Certify a non-participation waiver, in writing, to the superintendent of the local education agency if the graduating senior chooses not to complete and submit FAFSA. Certification of the non-participation waiver may be completed by a parent, legal custodian, legal guardian, or a minor legally emancipated or of the legal age of majority.

Local school district staff members must provide support and assistance with completing the financial aid application process to students in Grades 11-12 and their families. Additional assistance with completing the financial aid application process is also available through the Alabama Community College System, Alabama Commission of Higher Education, Alabama Possible, and other community partners. Attached you will find the FAFSA Frequently Asked Questions and the FAFSA Non-Participation Waiver for the Class of 2024. Upon the recommendation of the school principal and school counselor and approval by the local superintendent, a copy of the non-participation waiver must become part of each student's cumulative record.

If you have questions regarding the Alabama FAFSA Completion Project, please contact Dr. Monica P. Mack by email at monica.mack@alsde.edu or Mrs. Cathy Lankford by email at cathy.lankford@alsde.edu.

EGM/SJS

Attachment

cc: Mrs. Angela Martin
Dr. Melissa Shields
Dr. Jimmy Hull
Mrs. Shanthia Washington
Mr. Sean J. Stevens
Dr. Monica P. Mack
Mrs. Cathy Lankford

FY23-2016

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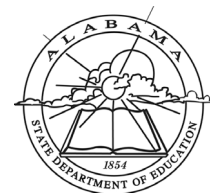
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STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

**FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) NON-PARTICIPATION WAIVER
GRADUATING CLASS OF 2024**

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----|-------------|--|
| School District Name: | Tuscaloosa County School System | | | | |
| School Name: | Tuscaloosa County High School | | | | |
| Student First Name: | | | | | |
| Student Middle Name: | | | | | |
| Student Last Name: | | | | | |
| Parent/Legal Guardian Name: | | | | | |
| Date of Birth: | | | | | |
| Home Address: | | | | | |
| City: | | State: | AL | ZIP: | |
| Telephone: | | Email Address: | | | |

I have read the information on page 2 and understand that requesting a non-participation waiver does not prohibit my student from completing and submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at any time in the future. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the student listed above, or I am the student listed above and I am at least 18 years of age, or I am a legally emancipated minor.

| |
|--|
| Signature: |
| Printed Name: Date: |

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

| |
|----------------------------|
| School Principal: |
| School Counselor: |
| LEA Superintendent: |

Frequently Asked Questions about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

What is the FAFSA?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the online application that allows a student to apply simultaneously for federal student aid (including the Pell Grant, work-study opportunities, and federal student loans). Many colleges and universities also use it for their scholarship programs as well.

Isn't the application too long and difficult to complete?

Most applicants complete the FAFSA in 30 minutes or less. If you have questions, talk to your school counselor. Help is also available for FREE from Alabama Possible (www.alabamapossible.org).

If I want to learn a trade, can the FAFSA still be of assistance to me?

The FAFSA is not just for associate's or bachelor's degree programs. Students may receive need-based Pell grants, federal student loans, and other federal student aid, including career and technical education programs at community colleges and at many other schools and training programs. Students may check with the school they want to attend or use the federal government's online College Navigator tool to find out which institutions participate in the programs: <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>.

Does my family make too much money to benefit from the FAFSA?

Financial aid is left on the table every year by students who did not apply because they erroneously thought they were ineligible. You really don't know until you apply! Income and assets are factors in determining your eligibility, but so are things like the number of students in the family who are in school and the age of the parent(s). For students from families that do make too much to qualify for need-based grant aid, the FAFSA may still be helpful, since it's needed for work-study, or a federal student loan. Your college may offer aid based on your FAFSA info too, and your eligibility may be different depending on your school. Additionally, some scholarship programs use information from the FAFSA as part of the application process. As most financial aid is awarded in date order based on FAFSA filing date, it is a very good idea to complete the FAFSA as early as possible. Your "place in line" may be used for opportunities that come up later, and also may be used if family financial circumstances suddenly change.

What if I don't want a student loan?

Filing the application does not commit you to anything. You will just find out whether you might be eligible for aid!

How is FAFSA data protected?

I don't want my information sold, and I don't want my school to have it. By law, your personally identifiable Information (PII) included in the FAFSA may only be used in furtherance of administering financial aid, including research. Although your high school will know whether you completed the FAFSA, it will not have access to the information that you provide on your FAFSA.

If I choose to file an application, how will I know that my application is complete?

Once you submit the FAFSA, you will receive a confirmation of receipt at the email address you provided in the application. This will allow you to demonstrate that you've met the requirement of filing an application even if there are circumstances that will need to be addressed with the college/university's financial aid office later.