

**FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**

**Contact OSFA**

Toll-free Federal Loans:  
1-800-366-3475

Locally Federal Loans:  
1-850-410-5200

E-mail: [OSFAStudentLoans@fldoe.org](mailto:OSFAStudentLoans@fldoe.org)

Toll-free State Programs:  
1-888-827-2004

E-mail: [OSFA@fldoe.org](mailto:OSFA@fldoe.org)  
Visit our [Web site!](#)



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# OSFA News for Counselors

YOU SHOULD KNOW

JANUARY THRU MARCH 2014

## Free Application for Federal Student Aid

The *2014-15 Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is now available. Students assisted by parents may complete the FAFSA for consideration of federal and state financial aid for the 2014-15 academic year. This user-friendly application provides built-in edits which help prevent costly errors. The FAFSA also implements skip logic to prevent the applicant from answering unnecessary questions. In addition, applicants also have the


ability to link information from students' and parents' most recent tax returns to the FAFSA beginning February 1st.

Remember, the FAFSA may be completed using estimated data (with the expectation that it will be updated upon completion of the 2013 income tax form). Visit the FAFSA [website](#) for answers to questions you may have or call toll-free at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 1-319-337-5665.



# CGS!Florida

The Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance is hosting College Goal Sunday this year! **Florida's College Goal Sunday** events run February 22-24, 2014. During this weekend, high school seniors and families in your area will be able to receive FREE expert assistance completing the *Free Application for Financial Aid* (FAFSA). **For more information on CGS! Florida, or alternative dates** for assistance with completing the FAFSA, please visit the [website](#).



Join us for CGS!Florida in early 2014 for:

- Personalized FAFSA completion assistance
- Learn about other financial aid resources
- PLUS, you may be eligible to enter a drawing to win a CGS!Florida Scholarship

**According to an article from the Florida College Access "only 55% of all Florida high school graduates completed the FAFSA during the 2012 - 13 school year."**

**Help us by spreading the word!**



# Financial Aid Toolkit

The U.S. Department of Education's office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) announced a new resource available to high school counselors, college access professionals and those interested in learning more about the financial aid arena. The Financial Aid Toolkit provides a wealth of information and resources to promote a successful financial aid night which includes a presentation, posters, fact sheets, videos, and PowerPoint presentations. Counselors are encouraged to explore the [Search Financial Aid Tools and Resources](#) page. Viewers can filter resources by audience, topic, seasonality (time of year), and type of resource. For more condensed information use the [Financial Aid Toolkit Checklist](#).

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**Federal Student Aid**  
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**Financial Aid Toolkit**

Learn About Financial Aid | Conduct Outreach | Get Training | Search Financial Aid Tools and Resources

Help students and parents prepare for college or career school.  
*The Financial Aid Toolkit provides federal student aid information and outreach tools for counselors, college access professionals, nonprofit mentors, and others.*

<p><b>LEARN ABOUT FINANCIAL AID</b></p> <p>Understand the basics of federal student aid, the FAFSA, and loan repayment.</p>	<p><b>CONDUCT OUTREACH</b></p> <p>Get tips on hosting events; sample financial aid night PowerPoint presentations; and suggested messages for social media, e-mails, or newsletters.</p>	<p><b>GET TRAINING</b></p> <p>Find training or conference opportunities and learn about the National Training for Counselors and Mentors (NT4CM) program.</p>	<p><b>SEARCH TOOLS AND RESOURCES</b></p> <p>Search our resource library by content, audience, topic, and time of year.</p>
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ANNOUNCEMENTS | WELCOME TO THE FINANCIAL AID TOOLKIT





## Updated Resources Available



The Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance is pleased to provide products and services to middle and high school counselors to support our mission of facilitating higher education access.

Visit our [updated site](#) and take advantage of the free tools offered to assist you in serving the student body at your school.





# Florida Choices– Free Resource!!

**Easy Set-up!**

Florida CHOICES ([www.flchoices.org](http://www.flchoices.org)) is the state's career information delivery system. It provides career and educational exploration information for counselors, students, and parents.

To begin, set up the free profile according to your role (high school student , college student , adult learner , parent of student or counselor). Next, proceed through the website. You may obtain information on topics such as Career Planning, High School Planning, College Planning, and Financial Aid Planning. Many other selections are also available.

Florida CHOICES includes assessments for interests, skills, and values as well as information on careers and postsecondary education. Accountability reports for management of student usage are retrievable from the Professional Center of CHOICES.

Florida CHOICES is available for use by all Floridians at no charge. Schools can be set up with their own accounts. If you have questions or need assistance with the CHOICES program, please contact the CHOICES Team at [choices@fldoe.org](mailto:choices@fldoe.org) or 800-342-9271.





## \$100 Million in Pell Grants Left Behind



research • communication • advocacy • support

Too many Florida students are not applying for Federal Aid. Only 55% of all Florida high school graduates completed the *Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* during the 2012-13 school year.

This following brief from the Florida College Access Network provides an overview of the FAFSA completion data at the specific school including state levels over the past two school years. This tool is helpful in monitoring our state's progress.

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



## Winter Events

- January 2014 – The *2014-15 Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is now available.
- January 20th State Offices Closed for MLK Holiday
- Remind students of approaching ACT & SAT testing dates and locations.
- Early evaluation of Bright Futures eligibility.
- February 2014 – College Goal Sunday workshops are available in your area.

**Contact an OSFA Outreach Representative about your high school's needs. We'll be glad to help!**

**The January 2014 NyFF E-News is available for your students.**

Just visit [January 2014 Financial News for Students!](#)  
In this month's E-News issue:

- *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is now available
- College Goal Sunday Information
- Frequently Asked Questions about the FAFSA



Please visit [www.NavigatingYourFuture.org](http://www.NavigatingYourFuture.org) and select "Current E-News" to access this vital information.

*Have you missed an issue of the  
OSFA News for Guidance Counselors?  
You may visit our [archives](#) for prior editions.*

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