

# What is the FAFSA?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the application that students must complete to be considered for financial aid. Financial aid is money for college that comes in the form of grants, scholarships, loans and/or work-study. Financial aid comes from many sources—the federal and state government, the college, and/or outside organizations. The FAFSA is the key that unlocks all of these funding sources for your student.

## It is required!

Most institutions require that students complete the FAFSA to be considered for all types of financial aid. In Tennessee, you must complete the FAFSA to be considered for the HOPE Scholarship and/or TN Promise.

## It is free!

You should never pay to file the FAFSA. If you need help completing the FAFSA, contact your student's high school counselor or the college where you student plans to attend.

## It is easy!

The FAFSA can easily be completed on FAFSA.gov, or you can download the myStudentAid app from the Apple App store (iOS) or Google Play (Android).

# FAFSA Myths

- **My student is going to pay for their own college. My information is not needed for the FAFSA.**  
**FALSE!** The FAFSA requires parental information. Unless the student has an extremely special circumstance, parental information will be required for your student to complete the FAFSA. Without this information, your student's FAFSA will be incomplete, and your student will not be able to receive financial aid.
- **I don't file taxes so I can't complete the FAFSA.**  
**FALSE!** If you did not file taxes for 2018 because you were not required to file (e.g. disabled, unemployed), you will select "Not Going to File" when asked by FAFSA and proceed answering the remaining questions.
- **I'll get audited by the IRS if I complete the FAFSA.**  
**FALSE!** While the FAFSA does ask for IRS tax information, completing the FAFSA does not increase your chances of being audited.
- **My student is a US citizen but I'm not, so I can't file the FAFSA.**  
**FALSE!** If your student is a US citizen or eligible non-citizen, they can still complete the FAFSA. Parents who do NOT possess Social Security Numbers (SSN) will enter 000-00-0000 for their SSN when asked by FAFSA and proceed answering the remaining questions.
- **I make too much money to get financial aid.**  
**FALSE!** There is no limit to the parents' income for the HOPE Scholarship, Wilder Naifeh, or TN Promise; however, a student must complete the FAFSA to receive these awards.