

Public Act 101-180 (effective 6/01/20) requires that, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, public high school students must complete the FAFSA or, as eligible, the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, as a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma. A waiver provision basically allows a parent, guardian, or the student – if 18 or emancipated – to opt out for any reason.

Pursuant to the law, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will lead these efforts. However, because of ISAC's deep experience in assisting students across the state with college planning, the financial aid process and FAFSA completion, ISAC will be supporting these efforts.

Making FAFSA completion part of an expectation for high school graduation can increase the number of students who are aware of the resources available to help them afford education or training after high school. This information can also help some students decide to attempt college when they might not otherwise have done so, and it may help some students limit student loan debt and take a fuller course load to more quickly complete a degree or credential. Below are some free resources and training available to high schools, counselors and other professionals to help them help students and families meet the new FAFSA Mandate.

Financial Aid Forms:

Free Application for Federal Student Aid: <https://www.fafsa.gov/>

Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid: <http://www.isac.org/AlternativeApp>

FAFSA Mandate –ISBE Information and Documents:

FAFSA Non-Participation form:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/FAFSA-Non-Participation-Form.pdf>

Do not forget, our virtual financial aid night is October 20th!!! This is a great opportunity to learn more about financial aid and ask any questions that you may have.