

Media Guide

Welcome to the Alabama FAST media guide! In this guide, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) partners will find ways to share important information and deadlines with students and families. Use these resources from September 2022 through May 2023. Share these suggestions during your FAFSA communications and outreach efforts. They are ideal for the following:

- Email messages
- Email blasts
- Newsletters
- Blogs
- Websites
- Social media
- Other channels

Adapt the materials to meet your needs. We value your help sharing this critical FAFSA awareness information with your families, friends, partners, and clients.

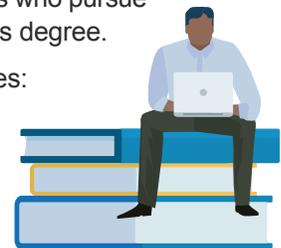
Visit the Alabama FAST website/toolkit (www.aces.edu/fafsa) to access the comprehensive Student and Family Guide to FAFSA, informative publications, and downloadable posters, bookmarks, social media graphics, 4 x 6-inch promotional cards, and other resources.

Download images at <https://www.aces.edu/fafsa/alabama-fast-social-media-graphics/>.



Graphics for Media

- FAFSA Financial Aid Timeline
- FAFSA Apply Today
- Don't miss out on free money
- Alabama FAST: FAFSA Application Survival Toolkit
- FAFSA Myth Buster Series
 - FAFSA is for low-income families.
 - FAFSA is only for federal grants and scholarships.
 - FAFSA is not for students who work to pay for school.
 - FAFSA is only for those who want need-based scholarships.
 - FAFSA is only for students who pursue an associate or bachelor's degree.
- Additional Materials/Resources:
 - ALFAST page: www.aces.edu/fafsa



Social Media Tips

Include links.

- aces.edu/fafsa
- <https://studentaid.gov>

Use hashtags.

- #ALFAST connects to Alabama FAST.
- #ACES connects to the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.
- #HSEACES connects to Human Sciences Extension.

Tag appropriate pages in your post to improve your reach. For example, tag your school, board of education, county commission, or other community partners.

Connect with Alabama Extension on social media:

Twitter: @ACESedu

YouTube: @alcoopextensionvideo

Facebook: @AlabamaCooperativeExtensionSystem

Instagram: @alabamaextension

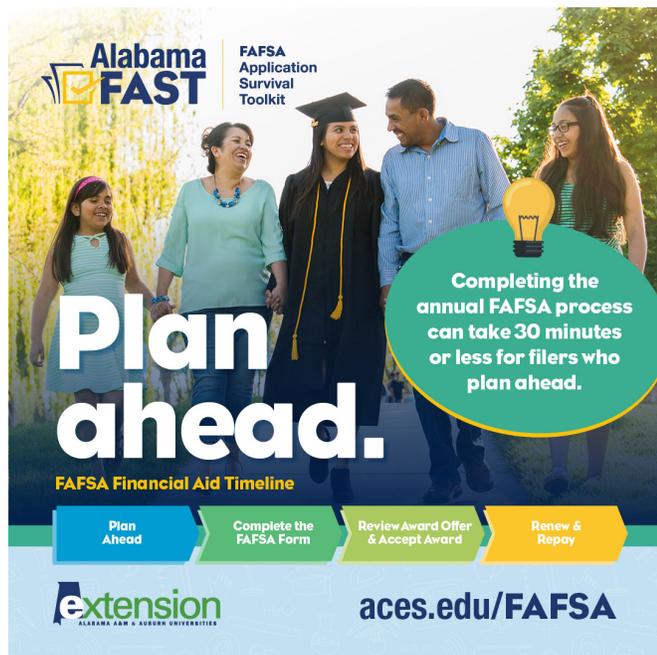
Flickr: flickr.com/photos/alabama_extension

LinkedIn: Alabama Cooperative Extension System



Email Messages

One way to communicate important FAFSA information with students and families is through email. Following are four suggested messages to be sent at different times during the FAFSA application process. Pair them with graphics you can download at www.aces.edu/fafsa. You can also use the graphics and messages in a template for email marketing platforms such as Mailchimp and Constant Contact.



Download this image at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

SUGGESTED IMAGE: Plan Ahead Social Media Graphic

SUBJECT: Help Your Seniors Find Money for College

WHEN TO SEND: Early October 2022

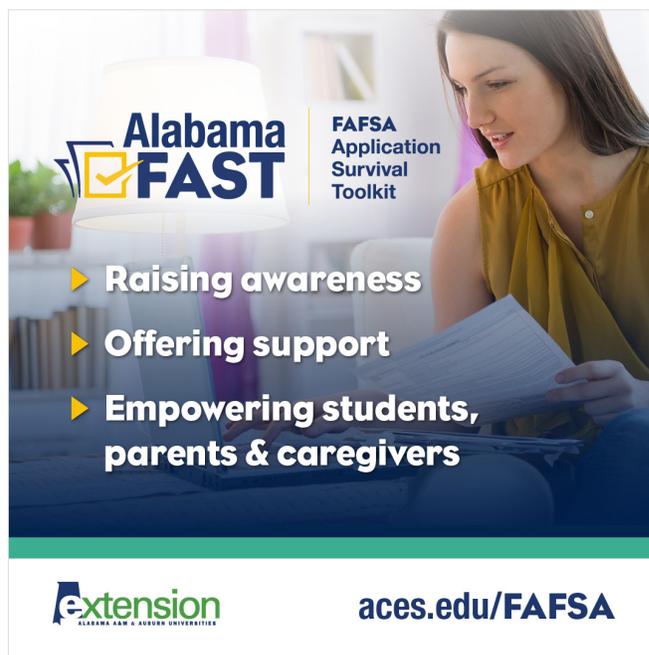
Dear Families,

October is FAFSA Completion Month in Alabama. Each year on October 1, students can start submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In 2020–21, more than \$234.9 billion in total FAFSA aid was awarded to students through grants, federal loans, tax credits, and federal work-study.

Most students in Alabama qualify for the Pell Grant. These grants do not need to be repaid and can award up to \$6,495 annually. Don't leave money on the table! Complete FAFSA.

Throughout the school year, we will send more information and support to help your students and families make informed FAFSA decisions. Check our school newsletter and social media for FAFSA updates. Look for additional FAFSA materials in the Alabama FAST toolbox at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

Let's work together to help all of our seniors make informed FAFSA completion choices.



Download this image at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

SUGGESTED IMAGE: Alabama FAST Social Media Graphic

SUBJECT: Destroy FAFSA Misconceptions

WHEN TO SEND: In advance of an Alabama FAST Student Workshop—FAFSA Awareness: Rest, Set, Go

NOTE: To schedule an Alabama FAST workshop, contact Portia Johnson at (334)707-4778 or johnsonpl@auburn.edu.

Dear Families,

Common misconceptions often prevent students from qualifying for college money. Last year, \$3.75 billion in Pell Grants went unclaimed because students did not complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Your students will learn FAFSA facts and more at an upcoming in-school workshop: **FAFSA Awareness: Ready, Set, Go**. Learn more about the event at www.aces.edu/fafsa. Contact [NAME] for FAFSA questions or assistance.

Don't let common misconceptions stand in your way. Learn the facts:

- Many non-citizens (such as those with a Green Card, arrival-departure record, T-visa, or battered immigrant status) are eligible for FAFSA.
- Eligibility for several merit-based scholarships and priority for work-study opportunities require FAFSA completion.
- Students pursuing 2-year associate degrees and some other programs may qualify for free aid.
- A family that earns more than \$200,000 may still qualify for financial aid. FAFSA financial need is determined by the cost of attendance (COA = the amount it will cost a student to attend school) and the expected family contribution (EFC = an index number calculated using family financial information).

Check our school newsletter and social media for more important FAFSA updates and information. Let's work together to help all of our seniors make informed FAFSA completion choices.



Download this image at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

SUGGESTED IMAGE: Don't Miss Out on Free Money Social Media Graphic

SUBJECT: We've Got FAFSA Answers

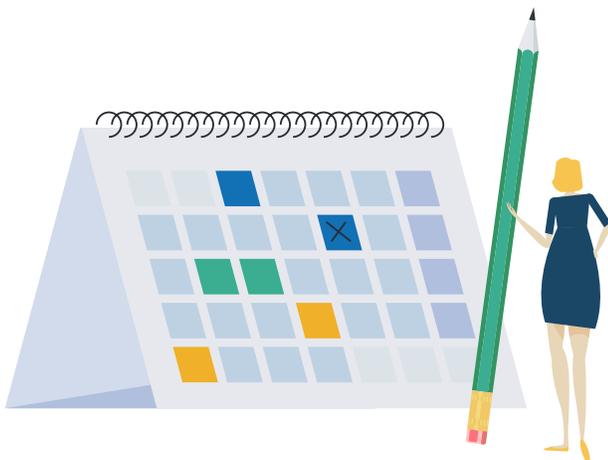
WHEN TO SEND: In advance of a school-sponsored FAFSA completion event

Dear Families,

If your senior has not yet completed FAFSA, please join us on [date] from [time] at [location]. We will be holding a [financial aid completion night]. Our [career coaches, counselors] and other experts will assist parents with [verifications requests, completing FAFSA forms, applying for FSA IDs]. [Computers and WiFi] will be provided. We will also offer [snacks] for families that attend. Please bring [tax, financial, and personal identification forms] to make the most of the event.

Contact [NAME] to set up an appointment or to ask any FAFSA questions you may have.

Let's work together to help all of our seniors make informed FAFSA completion choices.



Download this image at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

SUGGESTED IMAGE: Types of Financial Aid Social Media Graphic

SUBJECT: FAFSA—It's Not Too Late

WHEN TO SEND: March 2023 or later to families who have not completed or opted out of FAFSA completion

Dear Families,

Earning a post-secondary degree or credential is increasingly essential. Research shows that more than 90 percent of high school seniors who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) go to college after graduation, while only 55 percent of seniors who do not complete FAFSA go to college after graduation.

It is not too late if your student has not yet completed FAFSA. However, financial aid is available on a first-come, first served basis. Join our [career coach or counselor] this month during office hours to get help. Office hours are [dates] from [start time] to [end time]. Students and families can also request an appointment at a more convenient time.

Please contact [NAME] to set up an appointment or to ask any FAFSA questions you may have.

Let's work together to help all of our seniors make informed FAFSA completion choices.

Social Media Messages

Use the power of social media to reach students and families with important FAFSA information and deadlines. Download graphics at www.aces.edu/fafsa and pair them with the following social media messages:

High school seniors in Alabama must complete a FAFSA graduation requirement. Learn more at <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/finance-career/file-fafsa-or-opt-out-in-alabama/>

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid opens October 1, 2022. Apply at <https://studentaid.gov/>. Follow these steps to prepare: <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/finance-career/completing-fafsa/>

Planning ahead can lessen the time it takes to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Follow this checklist to prep for FAFSA: <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/finance-career/fafsa-timeline-checklist/>

Don't miss out! June 30 is the last day to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Apply at <https://studentaid.gov/>

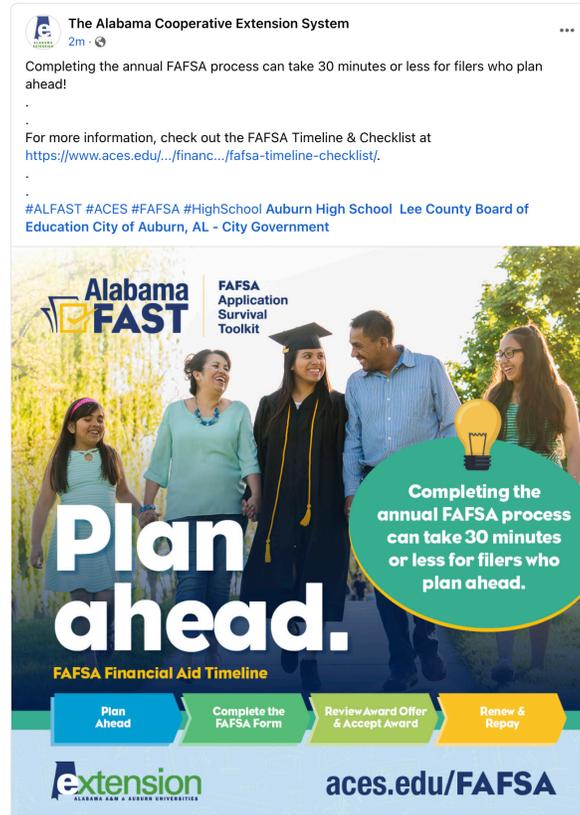
Free is in the name! Avoid scams when submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Find more tips at <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/finance-career/avoiding-fafsa-scams/>

More than \$120 billion is awarded to college students yearly through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Apply at <https://studentaid.gov/>

Myth: FAFSA is for low-income families. Fact: Households with incomes of more than \$200,000 could qualify for some forms of aid. For more on these and other common FAFSA myths, visit www.aces.edu/fafsa

Myth: FAFSA is only for those who want need-based scholarships. Fact: Many merit-based scholarships also require FAFSA completion. For more on these and other common FAFSA myths, visit www.aces.edu/fafsa

Myth: FAFSA is only for students who plan to pursue an associate or bachelor's degree. Fact: Several programs at 2-year community or technical colleges qualify for aid. For more on these and other common FAFSA myths, visit www.aces.edu/fafsa



Sample social media post.

Download the image at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

ALFAST Mythbuster Social Media Graphics



Download these images at www.aces.edu/fafsa.

Alabama FAST Promotional Materials

Advertise and promote your FAFSA activities and materials by downloading and printing these 4"x 6" cards. Send them to students and families. One is writable, allowing you to enter specific details of your activity. Find these at <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/finance-career/alabama-fast-promotional-cards>.

Alabama FAST FAFSA Application Survival Toolkit

- ▶ Supporting FAFSA decision-making
- ▶ Offering support to educators, administrators, counselors & career coaches
- ▶ To request more information or schedule a FAFSA Informational Workshop: [aces.edu/go/FAFSAsworkshop](https://www.aces.edu/go/FAFSAsworkshop)

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www.aces.edu

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Download this image at www.aces.edu/afsa.

Alabama FAST FAFSA Application Survival Toolkit [aces.edu/FAFSA](https://www.aces.edu/FAFSA)

FAFSA Informational Workshop: Get Ready, Get Set, Go!

Location

Date & Time

Details

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Alabama FAST FAFSA Application Survival Toolkit

- ▶ Raising awareness
- ▶ Offering support
- ▶ Empowering students, parents & guardians

[aces.edu/FAFSA](https://www.aces.edu/FAFSA)

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