

[Insert Date]

Dear Parents,

As this semester comes to an end, your student is getting closer and closer to graduation and pursuing his/her postsecondary ambitions. The last four years have surely been challenging and rewarding as your student has progressed academically and personally toward graduation day. The next step for your student, after applying to colleges, is to begin preparing for the financial aid process.

To qualify for financial aid, your student must submit The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) starting October 1<sup>st</sup>. In order for students to receive the maximum award they are eligible for, they should try to complete their application as soon as possible, preferably before the state priority deadline on March 15<sup>th</sup> (some colleges may have earlier deadlines).

To properly fill out the FAFSA or TASFA it is highly recommended that you and your student file your 2015 taxes before beginning the financial aid application. **Therefore, the earlier you file your taxes, the earlier your student can submit his/her financial aid application and receive his/her award letters.**

If you need help filing your taxes you may be eligible to attend a free community help center in the Dallas County area. For more information and a checklist of items you will need to bring, please visit <http://foundcom.org/financial-stability/dallas-tax-preparation/>.

The closest location to (insert name of school) is at:

[Insert location and time here]

Do not let your student pass up the chance to get money for college. Visit (insert website link) for information on scholarships and Financial Aid workshops that will take place in February.

Good luck,

\*If there will be school-specific incentives or a large incentive across the county, please include in parent letter

[Insert Date]

Dear Parents,

With the stresses of the college application process behind you, you and your student are most likely in the midst of playing the waiting game. You're waiting to hear back from schools, waiting to hear back from scholarships or recruiters and possibly trying to figure out how to afford it all.

Completing the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** or **Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)** is the most important step to qualify for all types of financial aid for college, including grants, low-interest Federal loans, and work-study funding (TASFA filers are limited to state aid). Last year, about 5,300 Dallas County seniors each left about \$5,660 dollars in grant aid on the table by not filing a FAFSA<sup>1</sup>. Please, do not make that same mistake.

The state priority deadline to file a FAFSA is on March 15<sup>th</sup>; however, students should check for earlier deadlines with the colleges they're applying to, especially those who are filing a TASFA.

If you need help filling out the FAFSA or TASFA, you can receive **free, one-on-one, expert assistance at one of the Financial Aid workshops that are taking place in February**. Don't miss this chance to have your questions answered by Higher-Ed financial aid experts, obtain guidance on next steps after submitting your FAFSA or TASFA, and gain scholarship search and application information.

***The nearest workshop location for your child is at:***

***[Insert Location date/time]***

*What you need to bring to the workshop?*

Collect the documents/information below for you and your parent(s)/guardian(s), unless you qualify as an independent according to the Department of Education (visit [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) for more information).

#### Personal Information

- **FAFSA ONLY:** Social Security number (if applicable)
- **FAFSA ONLY:** Driver's license number (if applicable)
- **FAFSA ONLY:** Alien Registration Number (for non citizens)
- **TASFA ONLY:** (For males age 18-25) Proof of selective service registration

#### Financial Documents

- 2014 (or most recent) federal income tax returns and W-2s
- **TASFA ONLY:** Copy of IRS tax transcript
- Records of untaxed income (ex. Social security benefits, welfare benefits, or veteran benefits)
- Bank statements and records of investment (if applicable)

Bringing all of the information listed will give you a better chance of your applications. If you don't have all the information gathered, you are still welcome to come but will be unable to complete the application.

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<sup>1</sup> Calculated by the weighted average grant aid per student in 2011 dollars. In 2013 there were at least 5,942 seniors that were economically disadvantaged that didn't file a FAFSA.

**Do I qualify for the FAFSA or TASFA?**

<b>Residency Status<sup>i</sup></b>	<b>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</b>	<b>Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA)</b>
I am a U.S citizen. <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/">http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/</a>	✓	
I am a permanent resident with an Alien Registration Card (I-551).	✓	
I am a conditional permanent resident with a visa type (I-551C).	✓	
<p>I am an eligible noncitizen with an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94) showing one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refugee</li> <li>• Asylum granted</li> <li>• Parolee (for a minimum of one year)</li> <li>• Cuban-Haitian entrant</li> </ul>	✓	
I do not meet one of the statuses above; however, I have been classified as a Texas resident and therefore am eligible to pay the Texas in-state tuition rate. My classification as a Texas resident is NOT due to an in-state scholarship or assistantship.		✓

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.aie.org/pdf/TASFA-Instructions-2014-2015-English.pdf>