How-to guide: Using class time for financial aid for college completion

OCTOBER 2022 - JUNE 2023

Once per week from October – June, set aside class time for seniors to work on their financial aid applications. This can be easily done during study halls, civics classes, or college prep courses if your school holds them — but it is important to make sure that class time is reserved for all seniors whether or not they are in college prep courses or planning to attend college. Schools should consistently emphasize that they are committed to supporting students throughout the financial aid process regardless of immigration status. It is also important to provide private space for students to share their immigration status.

Please note that students should not be using their parents' FSA ID without the parent being present, so unless the parent is present during the remote class time, students will need to use the class time to work on pieces of their financial aid applications that do not require the parents' FSA ID. To get the most out of this time:

GENERAL TIPS AND TO DOS

Let students — and families — know in advance that they'll be using class time for financial aid application completion and to respond to any verification requests students receive. Give students the list of materials they may need from the FAQ on pages 31-37 of this Toolkit, so they can gather what they need to complete their applications.

Celebrate completion rates — post the percentage of students from your school who have completed their applications on your school website, and talk about it during class time. Beginning in late January, you can look up your school's completion rates at the NYS FAFSA Completion Initiative website or at **www.NYFAFSAChallenge.org**.

NY FAFSA
Challenge

○ Students who have already submitted their applications should use the time for college applications or other work related to identifying and planning for their next steps after graduation.

○ Make sure students know about other opportunities to get support completing their applications and responding to verification requests — mention your school's financial aid for college completion night as well as upcoming office hours.

○ Ensure that students will have privacy to complete their applications. They will have to submit private financial information, so it is vital that they have the space to do that.

○ Have a school counselor or another staff person who has attended a financial aid for college training available in-person to answer questions students may have.

○ Ensure all students will have access to a computer, laptop, or mobile phone, and reliable internet.

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