

## EducationQuest Foundation

# College Planning Bulletin

*A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students*

January 2005

---

### **Preparation key to applying for financial aid**

Preparation is the key to successfully completing and filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is the application for state, federal and college-specific financial aid. Even if you don't think you'll qualify for need-based financial aid, you should complete the FAFSA to qualify for low-interest student and parent loans.

Follow these steps to complete the FAFSA and the financial aid process:

**Ask your college(s) for their FAFSA priority deadline.** Because financial aid is awarded first-come, first-served, it's important that you submit the FAFSA before that deadline.

**Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN)** for you and a parent at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov). The PIN is your signature for the online FAFSA.

**File tax returns early** as the FAFSA requires current tax information.

### **Gather these student and parent items:**

- Personal Identification Numbers
- 2004 federal tax returns
- W-2s from employers
- Social Security Numbers
- Birth dates
- Date parents were married, separated, divorced or widowed
- Value of checking/savings accounts and investments
- Amount of 2004 untaxed income
- Student's driver's license number
- Student's Alien Registration Number for eligible non-citizens

**Complete and file the FAFSA** electronically at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) before your college's priority deadline.

**Expect a Student Aid Report** acknowledging that your form was processed. Use it to make FAFSA corrections.

**Expect Award Letters** from the colleges you listed on your FAFSA detailing the assistance they're offering (scholarships, grants, work-study, student loans).

**Apply for student and parent loans** through your college – if necessary.

For *free* help with FAFSA completion, make an appointment with EducationQuest or call with questions. Call now