Financial Aid *

Step 1: Student & Parent Apply for an FSA ID
✓ Both student and parent each need his/her own FSA ID, which can be obtained by registering at fsaid.ed.gov. You can also set up your FSA ID from within the FAFSA application itself.
✓ Allows access to Federal Student Aid sites and serves as your electronic signature.
✓ This system is similar to the unique ID, password, and security questions that you might use to log in to an online banking institution.
✓ Your identification will be cross-referenced and confirmed with the Social Security Administration's database comparing your name, birth date and social security number with their records, so make sure that they match the SSA.

Step 2: Complete FAFSA Form
✓ Use FAFSA on the Web Worksheet (available online) to help gather financial information before entering data online at www.fafsa.gov.
✓ If you have completed your IRS tax return and filed electronically, you may be able to use FAFSA on the Web to electronically view your IRS tax information and securely transfer it back into the FAFSA form. Use of this data retrieval tool is strictly voluntary, but highly recommended, as it decreases the likelihood of being selected for verification. The 2016-2017 FAFSA will utilize 2015 IRS tax return information.
✓ **Be sure to check your college's deadlines for scholarships and financial aid. Not all colleges have the same deadlines, so you will want to make a schedule of all the schools you are applying to.**
✓ Three to five days after you submit your FAFSA electronically, you should receive a copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR) electronically if you provided an accurate email address. The SAR summarizes the information you submitted on the FAFSA and provides your EFC (estimated Family Contribution). If you did not provide an accurate email address, your SAR will be mailed to you within seven to ten days.
✓ If you do not receive the SAR within a reasonable amount of time, call the federal processor at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).
✓ Review the SAR carefully for errors. If necessary, make any corrections to it by clicking **Make FAFSA Corrections**. You must enter your FSA ID to correct your FAFSA. Once your correction is submitted electronically it will be processed within three to five days and you will receive a new SAR.

Step 3: Special Circumstances
✓ Your financial situation may not be accurately reflected in your FAFSA information if your parent(s) lost a job or incurred unexpected medical bills or other emergency expenses. If so, contact the Financial Aid Administrator at your college to see if an appeal is appropriate. If the appeal is approved, you may have elements of your FAFSA changed, which may result in a different EFC, making you eligible for more aid.

Step 4: Search for Scholarships and Other Programs
✓ The scholarship list that is distributed by most guidance counseling offices represents a small portion of outside scholarships available. Also use each college's website for scholarship ideas. There are also large search engines available such as scholarships.com and fastweb.com, but keep in mind that you should never have to *PAY to apply for scholarships or other aid.
*However, some schools do require that you complete the College Board's CSS Profile, which does require a small fee.
✓ If necessary, you can apply for federal educational loans through your college. Both student and parent loans are available. Before accepting any loans, however, carefully consider and calculate an appropriate amount of debt to assume, and be careful not to exceed your limits

*Revised and reprinted