

August 26, 2019

Dear Parent(s) of the Class of 2020 and 2021.

Your child's junior and senior year can be a very busy and overwhelming time. Many seniors have already been applying to colleges and career programs. An important question that keeps coming up from students and parents is: *How are we going to pay for college?* To help answer this question, we ask you to attend a Financial Aid Presentation given by Grace Rathjen, a representative from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). ISAC is an agency of the State of Illinois that administers grant and loan programs. This Financial Aid Presentation will be held on **Wednesday, October 23, 2018 at Greenfield High School in the LMC at 6:00.**

Immediately after the presentation, senior parents are welcome to stay and get help completing the FAFSA on the computer. In years past, the FAFSA could not be completed until January 1st. This year, students and parents will be able to apply as early as October 1st. Illinois funds run out fast, so it is essential to fill the FAFSA out as early as possible.

If your son or daughter is at all considering an education beyond high school, please plan to attend this presentation. This presentation will help answer questions such as:

- Can my child afford to go to college, and how?
- What if I cannot contribute money to my child's education?
- How does my child apply for financial aid?
- Wouldn't it be cheaper for my child to attend a school with lower tuition costs?

This presentation will provide you with an understanding of how the financial aid process works, as well as give an overview of the different forms of financial aid available (grants vs. loans, etc.) You will also learn about the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Brochures and hand-outs will be available for you.

On the back of this letter, there is information regarding the FAFSA detailing what you will need to bring with you if you plan to stay with us and fill the FAFSA out with us.

If you have any questions, or if you would like some more information, please call the high school at: 217-368-2219. We hope to help you and your child through the college planning process.

Sincerely,

Melissa Struif
School Counselor
Greenfield High School

FAFSA completion night is **October 23, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.** You can get a FSA ID that night, but it would be best to have one prior to that night. Since you will be filling out your FAFSA online, students AND parents will need a way of signing it. A FSA ID is an electronic signature. See below for instructions on obtaining a FSA ID. It takes a few days to process so do that now.

The earlier you fill out the FAFSA, the better your chances are of getting money. Illinois funds run out early and have been running out quicker every year, so keep that in mind. Another thing to keep in mind is that you have to fill out a FAFSA every year in order to obtain aid. We will do that with you for your senior year, but next year, while you are in college, you will be responsible for doing that yourself.

What is the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and is the first step in the financial aid process. A FAFSA is used to apply for state and federal financial aid programs. In addition, some colleges use it to award institutional aid. Some loans require it as well. The application is available at no fee.

The 2010-2021 FAFSA is available online starting October 1, 2019 at www.fafsa.gov

What Information Do I Need to Complete My FAFSA?

- **Social Security Number**, for yourself and your parent(s) *
- **Records of income**, such as income earned from work and business, child support paid or received and any other untaxed income. If available, refer to the W-2 forms or Federal Tax Return IRS 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ.
- **Information about assets**, such as savings, certificates of deposit, stock options, bonds, 529 plans and other college saving programs; and investment real estate, business and farm.
- **Driver's license number**, if you have one.
- **Dates of birth**
- **Alien Registration Number**, if you (student) are not a U.S. citizen.

Notes

- Parent information is required unless you are at least 24 years of age, or meet the criteria for filing as an independent student as described on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Refer to www.fafsa.gov
- You must report income and assets for yourself and for your parents(if you are a dependent student) or your spouse(if you are married)

Getting a FSA ID

In order to complete the FAFSA online you (students AND parents) will need to get a FSA ID for an electronic signature. To receive your FSA ID visit fsaid.ed.gov. This FSA ID will be used to fill out the FAFSA; however, it expires after 18 months, so you will need to create a new one after 18 months. Parent FSA IDs can be used on multiple students if more than one student is attending college.