COLLEGE PLANNING/FINANCIAL AID

EducationQuest has new and enhanced college and career planning features:

Activities Resume: www.educationquest.org/activities-resume/
College Funding Estimator: www.educationquest.org/college-funding-estimator./
College Profiles: www.educationquest.org/college-profiles/
ScholarshipQuest: www.educationquest.org/scholarshipquest/
Reality Check: www.educationquest.org/realitycheck/ A new tool that lets students estimate how much they will have to earn to support their future desired lifestyle.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY EDUCATIONQUEST

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.

Check out these *free* FAFSA tools and resources
Visit the "Completing the FAFSA" section at www.educationquest.org where you'll find:

- **FAFSA Checklist** – This resource helps a student determine his or her dependency status and then provides a list of required documents for the FAFSA.
- **College Funding Estimator** – Families can use this tool to estimate their FAFSA results.
- **FAFSA Tutorial** – The updated tutorial provides user-friendly clarification of each FAFSA question. Families can easily access the tutorial while completing the FAFSA.
- **"Guide to College Funding" Video** – This video uses a typical family to explain the financial aid process, the types of financial aid, and when to apply.

Follow these steps to complete the FAFSA:

Complete and file the FAFSA
Complete and file the FAFSA at **fafsa.gov**. The colleges you list on the application will receive the results.

Request a PIN
Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for you and one for a parent at **pin.ed.gov**. The PIN is your signature for the electronic FAFSA and is used to track your financial aid application.
Complete your taxes early as the FAFSA requires current tax information. Approximately two weeks after you and your parents electronically file your tax forms, your IRS data will be available to retrieve and transfer into your FAFSA. See the "Paying for College" section at **EducationQuest.org** for more details about IRS Data Retrieval.

Gather these student and parent items:
- 2013 federal income tax forms and, if applicable, Schedule K-1 (Form 1065)
- 2013 W-2 forms
- Student's driver's license number
- Social Security numbers
- Birth dates
- Date parents were married, separated, divorced or widowed
- Current cash, savings and checking account balances
- Current investment values (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, CDs, etc.) excluding your home and retirement accounts
- Value of business (if more than 100 employees)
- Value of investment farm (Do not include the value of a family farm that you or your parents live on and operate.)
- 2013 child support (paid and/or received)
- 2013 Workers' Compensation
- Other untaxed income in 2013 such as housing/food/ living allowances for military and clergy
- Alien Registration Number for eligible non-citizens

Be prepared to answer the following FAFSA question:
Did you or anyone in your household receive any of the following federal benefits?
- Supplemental Security Income
- Food Stamps
- TANF
- Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- WIC

If you're filing the FAFSA for the first time and would like *free* personal help, call the EducationQuest location nearest you to set up an appointment. Call the Kearney office at 800-666-3721, Lincoln at 800-303-3745 or Omaha at 888-357-6300. Call *now* as appointments for February and March are quickly filling up.

What happens after you submit the FAFSA?
If you're a college-bound senior, you and your parents may have already submitted the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – or will soon do so. Here's what will happen next:

Expect your SAR and Award Notification
You will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) after you submit the FAFSA. This acknowledges that your form was processed and can be used to make corrections to your FAFSA. You'll need the PIN you used to file the FAFSA to make corrections online.

The colleges you listed on the FAFSA will send you a financial aid award notification (by mail or email) detailing the assistance they're offering. They may offer a combination of scholarships, grants, work-study and student loans.

Compare award notifications
Compare award notifications from the colleges. Calculate your out-of-pocket expenses for each school to get the whole financial picture. Use the *Award Letter Comparison Calculator* at **EducationQuest.org** to determine which school offers the best financial aid package. Respond to each notification keeping in mind that most students accept all award packages until they make their final college selection.

Keep looking for scholarships! Many local, state and national scholarships have deadlines in March, April and May.

Know How to Go Nebraska: www.knowhow2gonebraska.org

COLLEGE BOUND NEBRASKA PROGRAM

If you are a Nebraska resident who meets admission requirements for the University of Nebraska, and if you are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, you can attend the University of Nebraska and pay NO tuition. This fall, the program has been expanded to cover students who are just beyond PELL eligibility – eligibility varies depending upon a number of factors, as a general rule a student from a typical family of four with one child going to college, having a family income of $50,000 or less, will meet the guidelines for Collegebound Nebraska funding. There is no scholarship application beyond the FAFSA form. Visit www.collegeboundnebraska.com, for information.

NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM PROGRAMS

NCSC Advantage – This program guarantees that first-time freshmen who receive federal Pell grants will pay no tuition at one of the state colleges. Applicants must be a Nebraska resident, a Federal Pell Grant recipient and a first-time freshman. Apply online at: www.nscs.edu Click on the STUDENTS button and then NSCS Advantage.
Priority deadline is June 1.

ACE Scholarship

Authorized by the Nebraska Legislature in 2007, the Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship Program Act (LB 192) pays tuition and mandatory fees for qualified, low-income **high school** students to enroll in college courses from Nebraska's colleges or universities, either through dual-enrollment or early enrollment agreements with these institutions. High school students may apply for funding under this program by completing the ACE Student Application, which is reviewed by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) for award consideration.
There are two basic criteria for high school students to qualify for the ACE Scholarship. Students must either be eligible to receive assistance under a variety of federal government programs or

the student and his or her family must have experienced a recent hardship. The application for the ACE Scholarship is now completely online. Below are some instructions about the process to apply. If you have questions, please see your counselor in the Counseling Center.

To qualify for the ACE scholarship, you need to qualify for at least one of the following federal benefit programs: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Food Stamps, Free and Reduced Lunch, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Other Extreme Hardship.
*********What you will need before you begin*********

- An email address
- You will need electronic documentation from federal program qualifies you. This file can be in a PDF, GIF, TIFF, JPEG, or PNG format. For example, a PDF file of your free and reduced lunch letter from the school district.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will also need electronic documentation showing that you are a legal alien under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act. Acceptable Documentation can include I-327, I-551, I-571, I-766, Certificate of Citizenship, Naturalization Certificate or I-94.
- A Password-Password must be 8 characters long and is case sensitive. It must include 1 digit and have 1 upper and lower case letter.

To register you can go to:
http://www.ccpe.state.ne.us/PublicDoc/Ccpe/Financial%20Aid/ACE/default.asp

Click on Register as Student and follow the steps. You will chose "ACE Scholarship" this is for high school students NOT the "Ace Plus Scholarship" The ACE Plus scholarship is for students that have qualified for an ACE scholarship in High School and are now in college. If you have questions or need computer access, please see your counselor ASAP.