

# EducationQuest Foundation

# College Planning Bulletin

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

February 2015

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## It's FAFSA Time!

If you're a college-bound senior, you must complete the [FAFSA](#) (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to apply for state, federal and college-based financial aid. Submit the form before your college's FAFSA priority date (typically between March 1 and April 1) as some financial aid is awarded first-come, first-served. Check with your college to learn their specific date.

## Follow these steps to complete the FAFSA:

**Complete your taxes early** as the FAFSA requires current tax information. Within three weeks after you and your parents file your tax forms, your IRS data should be available to retrieve and transfer into your FAFSA through the [IRS Data Retrieval](#) process.

## Gather these [student and parent items](#):

- 2014 federal income tax forms and, if applicable, Schedule K-1 (Form 1065)
- 2014 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.)
- 2014 child support (paid and/or received)
- 2014 Workers' Compensation
- Other untaxed income in 2014 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
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- TANF ((Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)
- Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children)

**Complete and file the FAFSA** at [FAFSA.gov](#). The colleges you list on the application will receive the results.

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: Omaha – 888.357-6300, Lincoln - 800-303-3745, Kearney - 800-666-3721, or Scottsbluff – 800.303.3745, ext. 6654.

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## Join EducationQuest for a FAFSA Completion Webinar

This free webinar will walk you through the FAFSA and help you complete the form.

### EducationQuest FAFSA Completion Webinar

Tuesday, February 24 - 7 p.m. (CT)

[Webinar link](#)

To join the webinar, click on the link. The password is **college**.

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## Check out these *free* FAFSA tools

Visit the "[FAFSA Tools](#)" section at **EducationQuest.org** where you'll find:

- **College Funding Estimator** – estimates your FAFSA results
  - **FAFSA Demo** – walks you through the online FAFSA
  - **FAFSA Checklist** – provides a list of items you need to gather before you complete the FAFSA
  - **FAFSA Tutorial** – explains each FAFSA question
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## Apply for EducationQuest's Scavenger Hunt Scholarship!

Apply **by March 31** for EducationQuest's *Scavenger Hunt Scholarship*. You could earn \$500 toward your college education! Here's how it works:

1. If you haven't already, complete a profile in [ScholarshipQuest](#) at **EducationQuest.org**. *ScholarshipQuest* is a scholarship search tool with over 2,000 Nebraska-based awards.
  2. If you are a Nebraska resident in grades 9-12, you will see the *EducationQuest Scavenger Hunt Scholarship* as one of the scholarships that will appear on your results page.
  3. "Scavenge" around the EducationQuest website to find answers to questions in a survey.
  4. EducationQuest will draw a winner from those who answer all questions correctly. The winner will receive \$500 to invest in a NEST 529 College Savings Plan.
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## February "To Do" List

### Seniors:

- \_\_\_ Complete student and parent 2014 tax returns.
- \_\_\_ Complete the FAFSA at [FAFSA.gov](#).
- \_\_\_ Continue to apply for scholarships.

### Juniors:

- \_\_\_ [Register](#) by February 13 for the March 14 SAT.
  - \_\_\_ [Register](#) by March 13 for the April 18 ACT.
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For free help with college planning, contact the EducationQuest location nearest you:

#### Kearney

308-234-6310  
800-666-3721

#### Lincoln

402-475-5222  
800-303-3745

#### Omaha

402-391-4033  
888-357-6300

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