

Financial Aid

Grants, Loans, Scholarships

In addition to federal financial aid, you may also be able to get financial aid from your state government, your school or a private scholarship. Research nonfederal aid early (ideally, start in the spring of your junior year of high school). Be sure to meet all deadlines!

Intro to Financial Aid

Most financial aid is provided by the federal and state governments. Colleges, scholarship organizations, and employers are also important aid sources.

Financial aid can include:

- "Self-help", consisting of interest-subsidized loans and work-study.
- "Gift aid", consisting of grants and scholarships. Gift aid is more attractive, of course, because it doesn't have to be paid back and doesn't place additional demands on the child.

The amount and type of financial aid offered is based on two factors:

- The student's financial need
- The student's merit (scholastic, athletic, musical, etc.)

Financial Aid Eligibility

Three basic ingredients determine how much need-based aid your child is eligible for.

- **The Cost of Attendance (COA).** Every school calculates its "cost of attendance" based on federal guidelines.
- **The Student's Resources.** This is the dollar amount provided to the student from outside sources such as scholarships or tuition paid directly to the college by a grandparent or employer. The student's resources reduce the COA, and therefore the need-based aid award, on a dollar-for-dollar basis.
- **The "expected family contribution" (EFC).** This is the amount your family will be expected to pay for college based on your particular financial circumstances.

To qualify for federal student aid (grants, loans, and work-study funds), you have to meet certain requirements.

Click [HERE](#) to read more about basic eligibility criteria.

Grants

The federal government provides grant funds for students attending colleges, career colleges and universities. Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid. Click the links below to learn more about grant programs available for eligible students pursuing a postsecondary education.

- [Federal Pell Grant](#) – Up to \$5,775*
- [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant \(FSEOG\)](#) – \$100 to \$4,000*
- [Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant \(TEACH Grant\)](#) – Up to \$4,000*
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant](#) – Up to \$5,311.71*
- [Institutional Grants](#)

**Annual Awards limits for 2015-16 (subject to change)*

Financial Aid: Grants, Loans, Scholarships, *continued.*

Campus-Based Aid

Campus-based aid programs are administered directly by the financial aid office at each participating school which has a specific amount of funds allotted to administer each year. When the money for a program is gone, no more awards can be made for that year. Apply for federal student aid as early as you can. Each school sets its own deadlines for campus-based funds, and those deadlines are usually earlier than the Department of Education's deadline for filing a FAFSA. There are three forms of campus-based aid:

- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Federal Perkins Loan programs

Not all schools participate in all three programs. Check with your school's financial aid office to find out which programs they participate in.

How much aid you receive from each of the programs depends on:

- Your financial need
- The amount of other aid you receive
- The availability of funds at your college or career school

Student Loans

Federal student loans allow students and their parents to borrow money to help pay for college. They have low interest rates and offer flexible repayment terms, benefits, and options. Click the links below to learn more about Federal loan programs.

- [Direct Stafford Loans](#)
 - Direct Subsidized Loans
 - Direct Unsubsidized Loans
- [Direct PLUS Loans for Parents, Graduate and Professional Degree Students](#)

Note: Before July 1, 2010, Stafford, PLUS, and Consolidation Loans were also made by private lenders under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFELSM) Program. As a result of the *Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010*, no further loans will be made under the FFEL Program as of July 1, 2010. All new Stafford, PLUS, and Consolidation Loans come directly from the Department under the Direct Loan Program.

- [Student Loans Review](#) – Reviews and ranks student loan lenders. Check out the side-by-side comparison.
- [Edvisors Student Loan Network](#) – Site that connects you to multiple private student loan providers. The website also provides a lot of information on financial aid, loans and loan consolidation. Edvisors is a member of the Better Business Bureau and is not a loan originator.

Loan Consolidation

A **Direct Consolidation Loan** allows a borrower to consolidate (combine) multiple federal student loans into one loan with a fixed interest rate for the life of the loan. Generally, you are eligible to consolidate after you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the direct loan consolidation program.

Financial Aid: Grants, Loans, Scholarships, *continued.*

cuStudentLoans (now called Lendkey) is a network of not-for-profit credit unions that launched in February 2011 offering student loans and student loan consolidation with common underwriting and pricing. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program was created to encourage individuals to enter and continue to work full-time in public service jobs. Under this program, you may qualify for forgiveness of the remaining balance due on your eligible federal student loans after you have made 120 payments on loans under certain repayment plans while employed full time by certain public service employers.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

Financial Aid Estimator Tool - FAFSA4caster

The [FAFSA4caster](#) helps you understand your options for paying for college and provides you with an estimate of your eligibility for federal student aid.

To access [FAFSA4caster](#), visit: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm?execution=e1s1>

Scholarship Search Resources

It's never necessary to pay someone to do a scholarship search for you. Carefully review the site's privacy policy prior to using to make sure you can opt out of email advertisements and the sharing of your personal information. Click the links below to learn more:

- [Student Aid on the Web](#) (Federal Student Aid portal)
 - [Learn more about finding and applying for scholarships](#)
 - U.S. Department of Labor's [FREE Scholarship tool](#)
- [College Board's Scholarship Search](#) This online tool to help you locate scholarships, internships, grants, and loans that match your education level, talents, and background.
- [Free Student Scholarship Search](#) - provides students and parents with a FREE searchable database of college scholarships and grants. No registration is required and new scholarships are updated daily.
- [Scholarships.com](#) is a FREE website established in 1999 which has assisted millions of students, parents and counselors with scholarship search on the internet.
- [FinAid!](#) website provides a FREE guide to student aid including a personalized scholarship search.
- Avoid scams! Click [HERE](#) to learn how to avoid scams while searching for scholarships, filling out the FAFSA, and giving personal information to schools and lenders.

Free Help

Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) staff, 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243), will answer your federal student aid questions and provide help in filling out the FAFSA and understanding Student Aid Report.

The websites listed are not owned or associated with Robert W. Baird & Co. We have provided the links as a convenience and do not endorse any of the sites.