

# EducationQuest Foundation

# College Planning Bulletin

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

February 2010

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## **It's FAFSA Time!**

If you're a college-bound senior, it's time to get serious about the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) - the application for state, federal and college-specific financial aid. February is typically the time to apply as many colleges have a March 1 priority filing date. (Contact the colleges you applied to and ask for their priority date.)

## **Follow these steps to complete the FAFSA...**

### **Step 1: Request a PIN**

Request a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for you and one for a parent at [pin.ed.gov](http://pin.ed.gov). The PIN is your signature for the electronic FAFSA and is used to track your financial aid application.

### **Step 2: Complete your taxes early**

The FAFSA requires current tax information so complete your taxes early.

### **Step 3: Gather these student and parent items:**

- 2009 federal income tax forms and, if applicable, Schedule K-1 (Form 1065)
- 2009 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 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.)
- 2009 child support (paid and/or received)
- 2009 Worker's Compensation
- Other untaxed income in 2009 such as veteran's benefits, housing/food/living allowances for military and clergy
- Alien Registration Number for eligible non-citizens

### **Step 4: Complete and file the FAFSA**

Complete and file the FAFSA at [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov). The colleges you list on the application will receive the results.

If you're filing the FAFSA for the first time and need help completing the form, 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. All services are **free**.

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## Online FAFSA enhancements make it easier to complete

As you and your parents prepare to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), be aware of some enhancements to the online form that may make it easier to complete. They include:

- better “skip logic” which skips unnecessary questions based on individual answers
- a new “help and tips” tool that follows each question
- clearly defined parent and student sessions

EducationQuest has several online tools that also make it easier to complete the FAFSA. They are available in the [“Completing the FAFSA”](#) section at **EducationQuest.org**.

- [“Guide to College Funding” video](#) – explains the financial aid process and the FAFSA
  - [“FAFSA Made Easy” video](#) – demonstrates, in a humorous way, that the FAFSA isn’t as difficult as it seems
  - [FAFSA Checklist](#) – provides a list of items needed to complete the FAFSA
  - [FAFSA Tutorial](#) – explains each FAFSA question
  - [Podcasts](#) – explain the FAFSA - and how to prepare
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## February “To Do” List

Complete these tasks during February to stay on the right college planning track.

### Seniors:

- \_\_\_ Apply for a [Department of Education PIN](#) (one for you and one for a parent).
- \_\_\_ Complete student and parent 2009 tax returns.
- \_\_\_ Complete the FAFSA.
- \_\_\_ Continue to apply for scholarships.

### Juniors:

- \_\_\_ Register by February 4 for the March 13 SAT (SAT Reasoning Test only).
  - \_\_\_ Register by March 10 for the April 10 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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