

EducationQuest Foundation

College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

March 2010

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 electronic corrections.

The colleges you listed on the FAFSA will send you a financial aid award notification (by mail or electronically) 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. Talk to your guidance counselor about scholarships that meet your criteria. For local and state scholarships, visit [ScholarshipQuest](#) at **EducationQuest.org**.

Juniors: It's time to start your campus visits

Start looking at colleges your junior year so you can narrow your choices by the time you're a senior. Follow these tips for successful campus visits:

Explore your career interests. Before you determine which colleges you want to visit, think about your career interests and then research colleges that fit your interests. Ask your guidance counselor about career assessment tools at your school. To find colleges that offer your desired major, see the [Index of Majors](#) at **EducationQuest.org**.

Visit your top college choices while the schools are in session. You won't get the true flavor of the school during breaks or finals week.

Schedule your visits at least two weeks in advance. Ask for appointments with an admissions representative, financial aid counselor, and a faculty member in your area of interest.

Talk to a faculty member about upper-level classes in your anticipated major. Many students change majors because they don't understand the subject matter or the degree of difficulty.

Ask the financial aid counselor how the college may offset tuition costs and about college-based scholarship applications and deadlines.

Check out college Web sites. You'll find admission requirements, academic and social information, and campus photos or a virtual tour.

Helpful resources at EducationQuest.org

Check out these free resources and tools at **EducationQuest.org** to help you find the college that's the best fit for you:

"College Selection" section – walks you through steps you should take during the college search process.

College Profiles - has information about colleges in Nebraska and across the country.

"Find the Right Fit" video – follows two high school seniors as they search for colleges that fit their career interests.

March "To Do" List

Seniors

- If you haven't already done so, complete your FAFSA!
- Expect financial aid notifications during March and April.
- Continue applying for scholarships.

Juniors

- Register by March 5 for the April 10 ACT.
- Register by March 31 for the May 1 SAT.
- Schedule campus visits.

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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