



Fall 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians of High School Seniors,

As the college application season is in full swing, we want to remind you of important financial aid resources that can help make college more affordable for your child. Regardless of your income status, applying for financial aid can be a crucial step in understanding the opportunities available to your family. Even if you think you may not qualify, many colleges offer merit-based aid, and completing financial aid applications ensures your child is considered for all possible funding options.

Below are key resources and steps to guide you through the financial aid process:

1. Financial Aid Night at Bayport-Blue Point High School

Join us for our annual **Financial Aid Night**, where a representative from Hofstra University will give a general overview of financial aid resources, explain the financial aid process, provide guidance on completing applications, and answer any questions you may have.

- **Date & Time:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 7:00 pm
- **Location:** High School Auditorium

2. FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

The FAFSA is the primary application for federal financial aid, including grants, work-study, and loans. It is available free online at www.studentaid.gov.

- **All families are encouraged to complete the FAFSA**, even if they do not think they will qualify for federal aid. Many colleges also use FAFSA information to determine institutional aid.
- The **2025-2026 FAFSA** is now available (typically released around December 1).
- Both the student and at least one parent must create an **FSA ID** at www.studentaid.gov. The FSA ID is required to electronically sign the FAFSA and access federal student aid information. Be sure to keep track of your FSA ID for future use, as it will be needed for all FAFSA-related tasks.

3. CSS Profile

Some colleges may also require the CSS Profile to determine eligibility for institutional aid. This form is available at www.cssprofile.org and may require additional financial documentation.

- **Check with each college that your child is applying to**, as not all institutions require the CSS Profile.



Bayport-Blue Point High School

A National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

4. NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC)

For New York State residents, HESC offers additional resources and support. Key programs include:

- [TAP \(Tuition Assistance Program\)](#)
- [NYS STEM Incentive Program](#)
- [Excelsior Scholarship Program](#)

HESC also provides a variety of virtual events to help students and families navigate the financial aid process. Visit their website for specific information.

5. Jose Peralta New York State DREAM Act Application

For eligible undocumented students and those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), the New York State DREAM Act allows them to apply for New York State financial aid, including TAP.

- Apply online at www.hesc.ny.gov.
- This application is separate from the FAFSA and is required to access state-based aid.

6. Direct Communication with Colleges

We strongly encourage you to contact the financial aid offices of the colleges your child is applying to, especially if there are unique or changing financial circumstances in your family. Some schools may offer additional support or have special procedures for families facing significant financial changes due to medical expenses, job loss, or other situations.

Additionally, SUNY offers free [virtual FAFSA completion workshops](#) throughout December. These workshops can be a great, convenient resource for families seeking assistance with the application process.

Additional Tips to Keep in Mind:

- **Apply Early:** Financial aid can be competitive, and many colleges award funding on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Be Thorough:** Double-check all forms and documents for accuracy. Mistakes can delay your application.
- **Do not Assume You Won't Qualify:** Many families are surprised by the financial aid they receive, even if they think they are ineligible.

We are here to support you throughout the financial aid process. If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact your child's School Counselor.

We wish you and your student the best of luck as they take this exciting next step in their academic journey!

Sincerely,

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