The U.S. Department of Education announced that the revamped Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or **FAFSA**, would be available to students "by December 31," three months later than usual.

What can you and your family do in the meantime?

1. **Gather Financial Documents Early:** Collect tax returns from two years prior, W-2s, bank statements, and other income records. Organizing these documents in advance will expedite the FAFSA process.

2. **Create an FSA ID:** Both the *student* **and** the *parent* need an FSA ID for the FAFSA. Create yours at Federal Student Aid - FSA ID. (note: this FSA ID can take up to five days to process; it's a good idea to create one now)

3. **Understand the FAFSA Questions:** Familiarize yourself with the FAFSA by reviewing the form at FAFSA Preview.

4. **Review Your Financial Situation:** If significant changes have occurred since the tax year used for FAFSA, be prepared to provide additional documentation. The FAFSA Guide offers more information

5. **Research Schools' Financial Aid Policies:** Investigate the financial aid requirements of the colleges your child is interested in. For schools requiring the CSS Profile, visit CSS Profile.

6. **Stay Informed** by regularly visiting Federal Student Aid for the latest FAFSA information and updates

7. **Explore Scholarship Opportunities:** Several resources have been posted to the *College Guidance Google Classroom*.

8. **Departmental Websites**: If the student has a specific major in mind, check the department's website of that major at the college. Some scholarships are specific to departments or fields of study. Also, check out local Rotary Clubs and town scholarships.