

Financial Aid and Scholarships

A Guide for Lincoln High School Students



Getting money to help pay for college requires time and patience!

Paying for college will be one of your biggest investments. Start investing in your college career by reserving time to look for grants and scholarships (about 10 hours a week). Scholarships and grants come from the following sources: Federal Government, State Government, companies and businesses, clubs, labor unions, foundations, non-profit organizations, and colleges and universities.

Lincoln's Educational Planning Center (EPC) is your resource for grant and scholarship information. Seniors should visit the EPC in January and periodically check for new local scholarships throughout second semester. You can also request being put on the EPC email list and receive the scholarship database. Some local scholarships found in the EPC include Tod Anton, Boosters, LHS Alumni foundation, Kari Bernneise, and Iacopi, Lenz and Company.

Important dates:

January 1: start date for filing the FAFSA.

March 2: deadline to file the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form.

Create an email account to use for college and financial aid applications.



Financial Aid and Scholarships

GETTING ORGANIZED

Create a personal calendar and keep track of deadlines and the awards to which you are applying. Allow large chunks of time for college searches. Although it is well advertised that there are millions of dollars in scholarships available, many of them take time to find.

TYPES OF AWARDS

Grants (Federal and State money that you do not have to pay back)

Federal: The most common Federal award is called the Pell Grant. Students must fill out the FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA is the most important financial aid form you will fill out! Financial need and family demographics are the primary factors for getting a Pell Grant. Even if you think you may not qualify for a Federal Grant, you should fill out the FAFSA because the resulting analysis is also used for loans and other types of awards. Get a FAFSA Pin # at www.pin.ed.gov and apply online after January 1 at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

The U.S. Department of Education uses a standard formula to analyze the information a student supplies. This formula produces an Expected Family Contribution (EPC) figure, which will determine if the student is eligible for a grant. Applicants must be undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's degree. An applicant must be a U.S. citizen, or an eligible noncitizen, and needs to have a high school diploma or a GED, or must demonstrate the ability to benefit from the program. The maximum Pell Grant for 2009/10 is \$5,350.

State: Financial need and a student's GPA are used when determining awards. Students must file both the FAFSA and GPA Verification Form to be considered for State grants. Other requirements: students must be a resident of California and must attend school in California. There are three types of California State grants:

Cal Grant A can be used for tuition and fees at public and private colleges as well as some private career colleges. At CSU Cal Grant A covers fees up to \$3,354; at UC the maximum amount is \$7,788 (2009/2010 school year). If you are attending a private college, it pays up to \$9,708 toward tuition and fees. To get Cal Grant A, you need to be working toward a two-year or four-year degree.

Cal Grant B provides low-income students with a living allowance and assistance with tuition. Most first-year students receive an allowance of up to \$1,551 for books and living expenses. After freshman year, Cal Grant B also helps pay tuition and fees in the same amount as a Cal Grant A.

Cal Grant C awards help pay for tuition and training costs at occupational or career technical schools. This \$576 award is for books, tools, and equipment. You may also receive up to an additional \$2,592 for tuition at a school other than a California Community College. To qualify, you must enroll in a vocational program that is at least four months long at a California Community College, private college, or a career technical school. Funding is available for up to two years, depending on the length of your program.

Check the status of your Cal Grant at <http://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/logon/asp>.

Scholarships

- ❖ Merit Based - Based on a student's talents and skills such as high academics, athletics, community service, and artistic abilities.
- ❖ Need Based - Financial need.
- ❖ Student Specific - Student attributes such as race and ethnicity.



- ❖ Career Specific

MONTHLY REMINDERS

November:

Attend the LHS Financial Aid workshop - go to the EPC for details.

December:

Gather information. Set up a filing system for financial aid and scholarship applications. Save all documents and information in one place. Prepare a Student Background Sheet (available in the LHS Student Handbook, at the LHS website, and at the Educational Planning Center). **Carefully print in black ink or type information on the background sheet.**

Create a personal email account that you will use for college and scholarship applications. Be sure the email address does not include inappropriate words. Check this address often. Be careful about your exposure on social web blogs such as Facebook and MySpace. College admissions and scholarship committees also have access to these personal postings and have been known to reject applications because of inappropriate content.

Students and parents should create a FAFSA Pin #. Go to www.pin.ed.gov.

January:

Gather financial information for the previous tax year, including W-2's, bank statements, and other documents. Students and the parents need to report income that was made the previous year.

Fill out the FAFSA online - go to www.fafsa.ed.gov. Check with the Educational Planning Center (EPC) to see if there are scheduled workshops to help you.

If you are applying to private colleges, check to see what financial aid forms they require. Some private colleges request a financial aid form called the *CSS Profile*.

Pick up a Cal Grant GPA Verification Form in the EPC.

Fill out the GPA Verification Form (**BLACK INK ONLY**) and bring it to the Student Service Center so your counselor can fill out the remainder of the information. Allow a 24-hour turn-around time (come back the following day to pick up your form).

Mail the GPA Verification Form and get a receipt of mailing. Although March 2 is the deadline, students should mail the form as soon as possible.



February:

Continue to check for local and national scholarships at the EPC. Most local scholarships require a Student Background Sheet. If you have not filled out this form, do it now.

If you have not submitted the FAFSA or the GPA Verification Form, do it now. Get a receipt of mailing and keep this mailing confirmation in a safe place.

March:

The deadline to mail the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form is March 2. Hopefully you mailed it before this time!

Continue to check for local and national scholarships at the EPC and apply.

Very important: write a personal thank you note or letter if you receive scholarships. Go to the EPC for a sample thank you letter or information about where to address your letter.

You will receive an online SAR (Student Aid Report) from the Student Aid Commission if you submitted your FAFSA in late January/early February. Carefully review the report, make corrections, and resubmit. If there are no errors on the SAR, print and put the it in a safe place.

April:

You may start hearing about financial awards from the colleges to which you applied. If so, get in touch with the financial aid offices at these colleges/universities.

There may still be local scholarships available - check with the EPC.

Let Mrs. Hernandez know (in the EPC) what scholarship awards you have earned so that she can include this information at Lincoln's annual Awards Night.

Don't forget to write thank you letters to organizations that sponsored your scholarships.

May:

Attend Lincoln's annual Awards Night.

Contact the Financial Aid Office of the college/university you plan to attend.

FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITES

Federal Student Aid

Establish a FAFSA Pin # (students and parents). You need to do this before filing the FAFSA.

www.pin.ed.gov

Submit the FAFSA (used for federal grants, state grants, loans, and some college grants). You may file as early as January 1. Although there is no deadline, the FAFSA must be completed by March 2 if you are also applying for a Cal Grant.

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Federal Student Aid Commission (information on federal grants and aid).

www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov

The FAFSA Forecaster. Help with predicting how much federal aid you might get.

www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov

Federal government information

www.students.gov

California State Financial Aid

California Student Aid Commission. Information about Cal Grants. The GPA Verification Form is available in the EPC, but you may also download it from this website.

www.csac.ca.gov

***Scholarship Search Services**

www.collegeplan.org
www.wirescholar.com
www.supercollege.com
www.finaid.org
www.fastweb.com
www.scholarships.com
www.californiacolleges.edu

***Scholarships for "Under-Represented" Students**

www.inroads.org
www.jesse-owens.org
www.hispanicfund.org
www.jackierobinson.org
www.blackcollegian.com
www.hispanicoutlook.com
www.aspira.org
www.collegefund.org

Private College Financial Aid Form

CSS Profile

profileonline.collegeboard.com

Other National/Regional Scholarships

Gates Millennium Scholarship
Coca-Cola Scholarship
Frank H. Buck Scholarship
Elks

www.gmsp.org
www.coca-colascholars.org
www.buckfoundation.org
www.elks.org/ENF/Scholars

*Lincoln High School does not endorse any particular scholarship search service or website. Students and parents should be careful when filling out forms and giving personal information. Students and parents should not pay for a scholarship search service. To get information about scholarship scams, go to www.ftc.gov/bcp.edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt009.shtm.