

# 3 STEPS

## TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS COMPLETE THE FAFSA

**90% of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA go to college immediately after graduation** — compared to just 55% of seniors who do not complete the FAFSA. And New Yorkers are missing out on an estimated \$150 million in federal financial aid by not filling out the form — plus state TAP grants and Excelsior Scholarships. We know what works to help low-income and first-generation college hopefuls complete the FAFSA and get the financial aid they need. High schools can make a big difference.

### HERE ARE 3 STEPS EVERY HIGH SCHOOL CAN TAKE:



**1 HELP YOUR SENIORS MAKE A PLAN TO COMPLETE THE FAFSA**  
Set aside time in the school day to help every eligible senior make a plan to complete the FAFSA. It's important to break down the process into simple steps and remind students when deadlines are coming up. Schools should prompt students with clear reminders. School counselors can be a critical resource.



**2 HOLD A FAFSA COMPLETION EVENT**  
Hold a FAFSA completion event at a time and place that eligible parents and students can attend in order to provide individual assistance filling out the form. Here's a guide to help you get started: <https://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/outreach/host-event.jsp>. You can also make a calendar of other local FAFSA completion events. It is important to follow up with each student to make sure they submit the FAFSA in case they do not finish it at the event. To request free support with the hosting of a FAFSA completion event at your school or organization, visit [www.hesc.ny.gov/fafsaevent](http://www.hesc.ny.gov/fafsaevent).



**3 SET TARGETS AND TRACK THE DATA**  
Visit [www.edtrustny.org/FAFSA](http://www.edtrustny.org/FAFSA) for weekly updates on the number of FAFSA applications completed by your seniors. For even more up-to-date student-level data, join the NYS FAFSA Completion Initiative data access program organized by the state's Higher Education Services Corporation: <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/partner-access/high-school-counselors/fafsa-completion-initiative.html>.

### NEED SOME HELP? CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

- **NUDGES, NORMS, AND NEW SOLUTIONS.** A guide of "nudge" strategies to help get students to and through college: <https://nudge4.ideas42.org>.
- **DATA INSIGHT PARTNERS.** National data and great resources for schools: <https://national.fafsatracker.com/schoolresources>.
- **BETTER MAKE ROOM.** A free texting tool to provide personalized support to students: <https://www.bettermakeroom.org/up-next>.
- **SAY YES BUFFALO.** See how one partnership designed to provide one-on-one help works: <http://sayyesbuffalo.org/scholarships/fafsa-completion-project>.

**GET MORE AT [WWW.NYFAFSACHALLENGE.ORG](http://WWW.NYFAFSACHALLENGE.ORG)**



**The Education Trust–New York**

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