How-to guide: Using class time for financial aid for college completion

FEBRUARY – JUNE 2020

Once per week from February through June, set aside class time for seniors to work on their financial aid applications. This can be easily done during study halls, civics classes or college prep courses if your school holds them — but it is important to make sure that class time is reserved for all seniors whether or not they are in college prep courses. Please note that students should not be using their parents' FSA ID without the parent being present, so they will need to use the class time to work on pieces of their financial aid applications that do not require the parents' FSA ID. To get the most out of this time:

- Let students — and parents/families — know in advance that they'll be using class time for financial aid application completion and to respond to any verification requests students receive. Give students the list of materials they may need from the **FAQ** on pages 15-18 of this Toolkit, so they can bring what they need to complete their applications.

- Ensure that students will have privacy to complete their applications. They will have to submit private financial information, so it is vital that they have the space to do that.

- Ensure all students will have access to a computer, laptop or mobile phone and reliable internet.

- Have a school counselor available to answer questions students may have.

- Students who have already submitted their applications should use the time for college applications or other work related to identifying and planning for their next steps after graduation.

- Celebrate completion rates — post the percentage of students from your school who have completed their applications at the front of the room. You can look up your school's completion rates at the **NYS FAFSA Completion Initiative website** or at **www.NYFAFSAChallenge.org**.

- Make sure students know about other opportunities to get support completing their applications and responding to verification requests — mention your school's financial aid for college completion night date as well as upcoming office hours.

NY FAFSA Challenge

The Education Trust—New York