

Completing the FAFSA/CADAA:

For Youth with Experience in Foster Care or
Homelessness



JOHN BURTON
Advocates
for Youth

December 6, 2023

John Burton Advocates for Youth

- Education
- Housing
- Health
- Economic Security



Logistics

- This webinar is being **recorded** and will be posted on www.jbay.org.
- Attendees may turn on or disable **closed captioning**.
- Submit questions in the **“Q&A”** at any time. Please do not utilize the chat for questions.

Presenters

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AGENDA

- 1** Why Financial Aid Matters
- 2** What's New
- 3** How to Apply for Financial Aid
- 4** After the FAFSA/CADAA
- 5** Helpful Resources

Why Financial Aid Matters

Financial Aid Makes a Difference

High school seniors who complete the FAFSA are **63 percent more likely** to enroll in higher education.

Foster youth who received the Chafee grant were almost **2.4 times** more likely to complete a degree!



YOU Make a Difference

Foster youth who reported receiving “**a lot of encouragement**” to continue their education beyond high school had a greater likelihood of completing college.



What's New

FAFSA Simplification

- FAFSA and CADAA release delayed until December
- Totally new form!
- Income limited to income reported on taxes
- More options for verifying foster and homeless status
- Foster and homeless status does not need be reverified each year
- And more!



This Webinar



Focuses on independent single students

Covers the highlights only

Information may change

How to Apply for Financial Aid

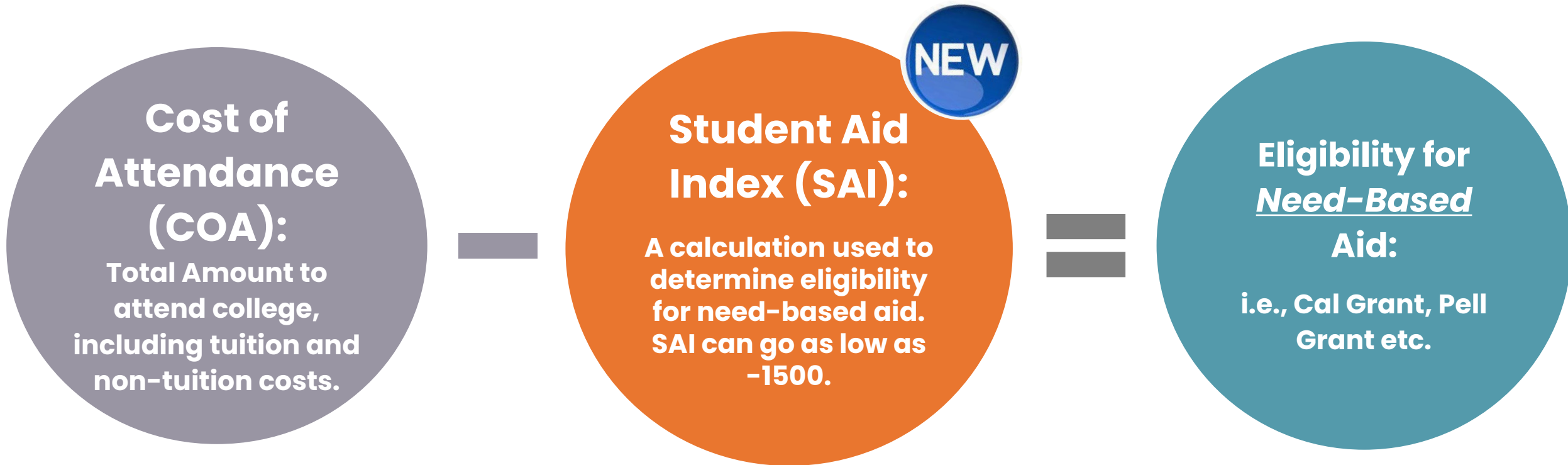
FAFSA

- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid**
- **U.S. Citizen, a permanent resident or other eligible non-citizen**
- **Apply at fafsa.gov (mobile option available)**
- **Available in English or Spanish online**
- **Federal and State aid**



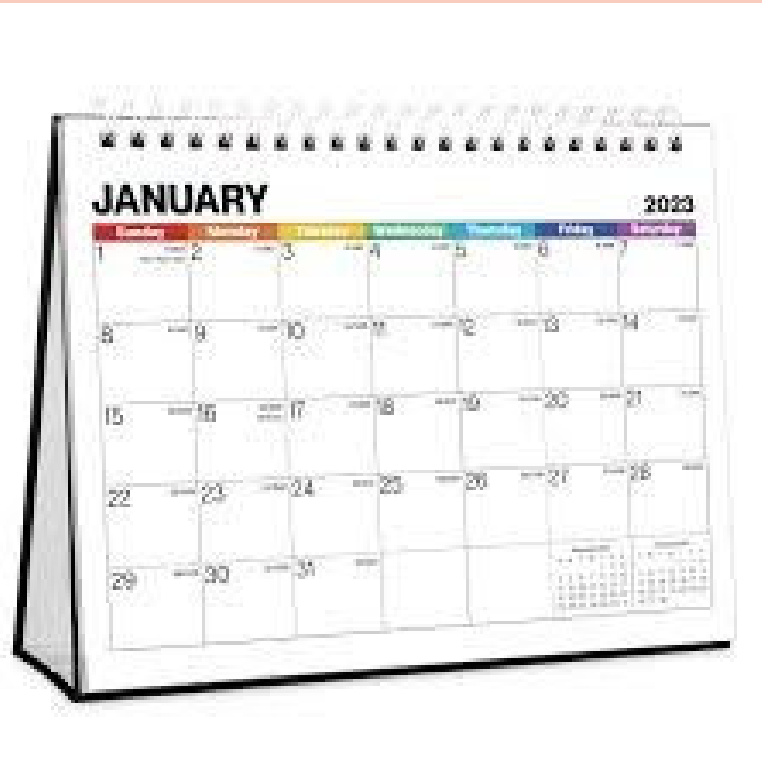
- **Eligibility: AB 540, Temporary Protected Status or U Visa.**
- **Apply at dream.csac.ca.gov**
- **Available in English only online (paper Spanish application)**
- **State aid only**
- **Qualifies students as CA residents**

How is Eligibility Determined?



The Chafee Grant is **EXCLUDED** from the calculation of eligibility for unmet need starting in 2024-2025

Deadlines



To qualify for state and institutional aid

- 4-year university: **April 2**
(extended for 2024 only)
- CA Community College:
September 2

Step #1: Create an FSA ID if completing the FAFSA

- Create at least a week in advance of submitting FAFSA. **Available NOW!**
- Email address and social security number required
- Make sure students enter their name exactly as it appears on their Social Security Card
- Students should create a system to safely store their username and password.

NEW

NEW

Log In ➔

Email, Phone, or FSA ID Username

raya.tran

Password

.....

Show Password

Log In

[Forgot My Username](#)

[Forgot My Password](#)

[Create an Account](#)

<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>

What a student needs to apply



List of at least one and up to 20 colleges



FSA ID log-in information (FAFSA only)





Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) (*Optional on CADAA only*)



Information about current assets, such as cash checking and savings accounts

Federal Tax Information (FTI)

-  Students must approve & consent to importing data from the Federal Tax Information (FTI) (even if no tax return was filed).
-  Students who do not file will no longer be required to provide a Verification of Non-Filing Letter from the IRS.

Select "Approve" to consent to using your tax information to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. If you select "Decline," you will not be eligible for federal student aid.

Previous

Decline

Approve

Student College or Career School Plans



Students who took “dual enrollment” courses in high school should select “First Year (freshman)”



For returning students, this is based on units completed, not the number of years enrolled

FAFSA[®] FORM 2024–25 Student Raya Tran Save FAFSA Menu

1 Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Student College or Career School Plans

When the student begins the 2024–25 school year, what will their college grade level be?

First Year (freshman)

Second Year (sophomore)

Other undergraduate (junior or senior)

College graduate, professional, or beyond (MBA, M.D., Ph.D., etc.)

When the student begins the 2024–25 school year, will they have their first bachelor’s degree?

Yes No

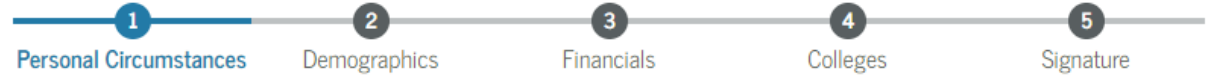
Previous Continue

Student Personal Circumstances

❖ Determine if a student is “Independent”

❖ Populates for ALL students. 

❖ Student can select all that apply. 



Student Personal Circumstances

Select all that apply.

- The student is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training.
- The student is a veteran of the U.S. armed forces.
- The student has children or other people (excluding their spouse) who live with them and receive more than half of their support from the student now and between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025.
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.
- At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.
- The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- The student is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their state of residence.
- None of these apply.

Current & Former Foster Youth



At any time since the student turned 13, they were an orphan (no living biological or adoptive parent).

At any time since the student turned 13, they were a ward of the court.

At any time since the student turned 13, they were in foster care.

The student is or was a legally emancipated minor, as determined by a court in their state of residence.

The student is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their state of residence.

None of these apply.

How is foster youth status verified?

- Financial aid offices can automatically verify through a data match with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS); however, this doesn't always happen, and a letter may be required.



- Once verified, does not need to be redetermined if at the same institution



- Help students get their ward of the court verification letter before high school graduation.

To Get a Foster Youth Verification Letter:

- **Current foster youth:** Contact the social worker or Independent Living Program (ILP)
- **Former foster youth:** May also contact the Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsperson: 877-846-1602.

Who can provide verification?

The financial aid administrators must accept any of the following:

- Court order or official State documentation that the student received Federal or State support in foster care;
- Verification of eligibility for a Chafee Grant
- A phone call, written statement, from:
 - A State, county, or Tribal agency administering a program under part B or E of title IV of the *Social Security Act*;
 - A State Medicaid agency; or
 - A public or private foster care placing agency or foster care facility or placement.
 - An attorney, or Court Appointed Special Advocate
 - A financial aid administrator who documented the student's circumstance in the same or a prior award year.

Unaccompanied Homeless Students



Student Other Circumstances

At any time on or after July 1, 2023, was the student unaccompanied and either (1) homeless or (2) self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

Yes

No

Unaccompanied =
Not in the physical
custody of a parent
or guardian



Homeless = Lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing

OR

Self-supporting = student pays for living expenses
AND
At risk = student's housing may cease to be fixed, regular,
& adequate

“Lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing” includes students who:

1

are staying with other people temporarily due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (i.e., couch-surfing)

2

are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations

3

are living in emergency shelters

4

are living in their car, sleeping outside, or staying someplace not normally meant for human habitation.



- ❖ More options for verification!
- ❖ FAAs must accept documentation, including a documented phone call from these entities unless there is “documented conflicting information.”
- ❖ Status does not need to be redetermined every year



Homelessness Determinations

Did any of the following determine the student was homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?

Select all that apply.

Director or designee of an emergency or transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness

The student's high school or school district homeless liaison or designee

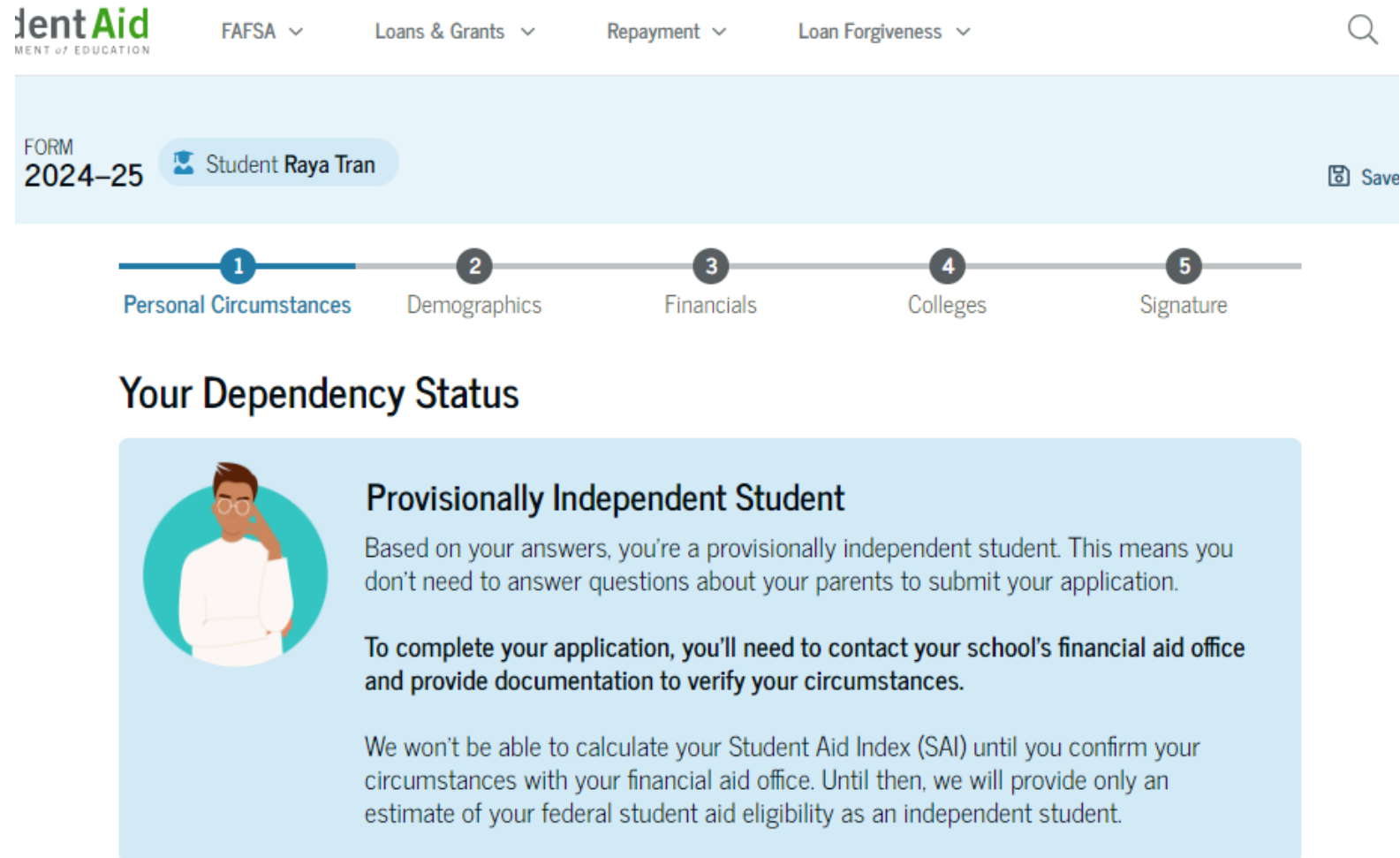
Director or designee of a project supported by a federal TRIO or GEAR UP program grant

Financial aid administrator (FAA)

None of these apply.

- If “None of these apply”, the student can complete the FAFSA but must contact the financial aid office.
- FAA’s MUST make a determination based on a written statement, or documented interview, with a student.

Homelessness Determinations




StudentAid
MENT of EDUCATION

FAFSA ▾ Loans & Grants ▾ Repayment ▾ Loan Forgiveness ▾

FORM 2024-25 Student Raya Tran Save

1 Personal Circumstances 2 Demographics 3 Financials 4 Colleges 5 Signature

Your Dependency Status

 **Provisionally Independent Student**

Based on your answers, you're a provisionally independent student. This means you don't need to answer questions about your parents to submit your application.

To complete your application, you'll need to contact your school's financial aid office and provide documentation to verify your circumstances.

We won't be able to calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI) until you confirm your circumstances with your financial aid office. Until then, we will provide only an estimate of your federal student aid eligibility as an independent student.

Student Unusual Circumstances

If a student has “unusual circumstances, they will be “Provisionally Independent” and will need to contact their FAA to make a final determination.

Student Unusual Circumstances

This information will help us evaluate the student's ability to pay for school.

Do unusual circumstances prevent the student from contacting their parents or would contacting their parents pose a risk to the student?

A student may be experiencing unusual circumstances if they

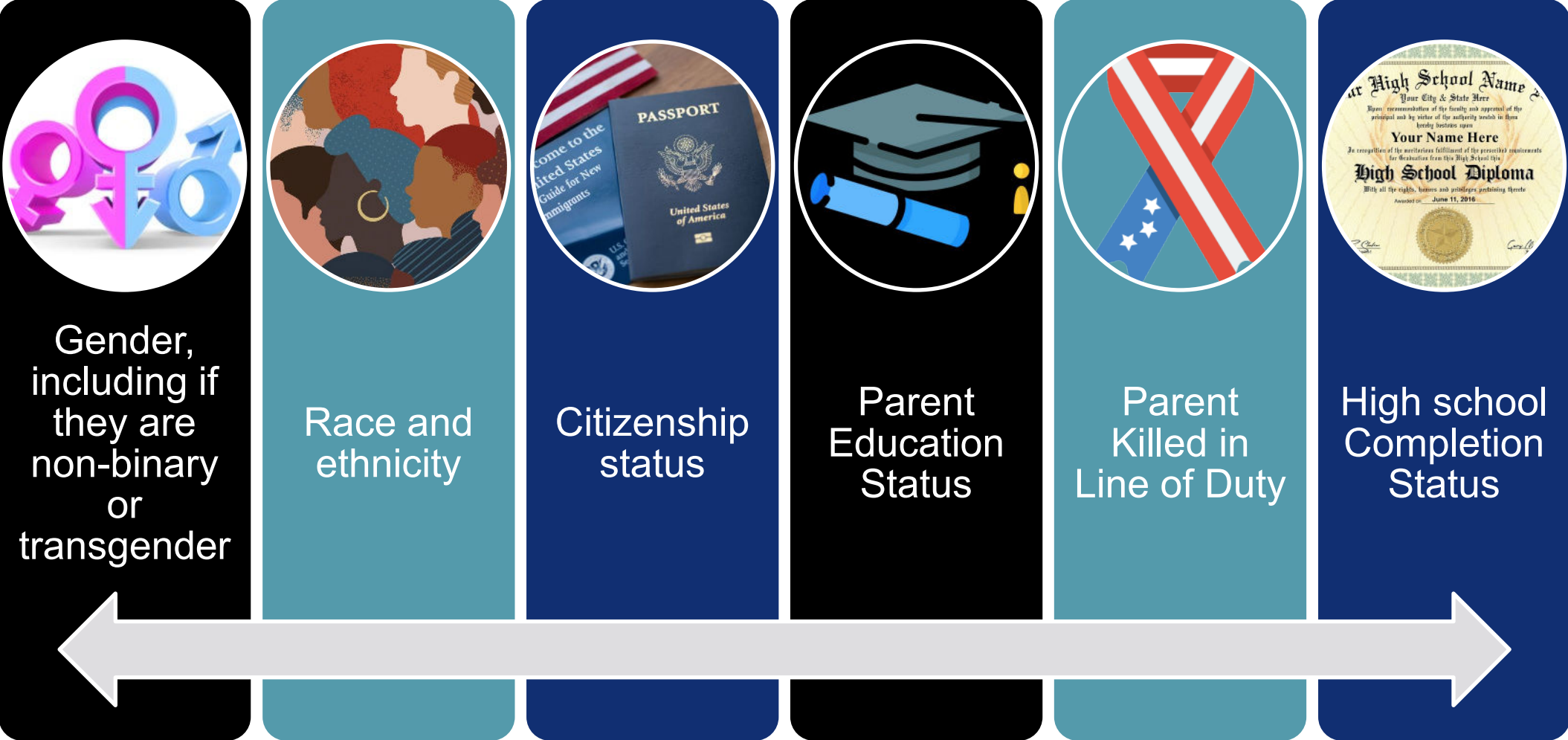
- left home due to an abusive or threatening environment;
- are abandoned by or estranged from their parents;
- have refugee or asylee status and are separated from their parents, or their parents are displaced in a foreign country;
- are a victim of human trafficking;
- are incarcerated, or their parents are incarcerated and contact with the parents would pose a risk to the student; or
- are otherwise unable to contact or locate their parents.

If the student's circumstances resulted in not having a safe and stable place to live, they may be considered a homeless youth and should review the answer to the previous question about being unaccompanied and homeless.

Yes

No

Demographics Section: Overview



Demographics Section: Tips

Students may select “*prefer not to answer*” to questions about gender, race and ethnicity and parent(s) education status and it does not impact eligibility for aid.

Proactively create a safe space for students before asking questions about gender.

If a student is an eligible non-citizen, they will be asked to enter their Alien Registration Number.

If the student completed high school, use the search function to find their high school to ensure it is entered correctly.

Students who were homeschooled or received a high school equivalency certificate (i.e. GED) are eligible for aid.

Financials Section: Federal Benefits Received

- Students are encouraged to check the boxes that apply to them about any federal benefits received.
- This may make the student exempt from reporting current assets.

TIP!

In California:
Medicaid = MediCal
SNAP = Cal Fresh
TANF = CalWorks

Federal Benefits Received

Responses Don't Affect Federal Student Aid Eligibility

Your answers to these questions will not negatively affect the student's eligibility for federal student aid or these federal benefits.

At any time during 2022 or 2023, did the student or anyone in their family receive benefits from any of the following federal programs?

Select all that apply.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Federal Housing Assistance

Free or Reduced Price School Lunch

Medicaid

Refundable Credit for Coverage Under a Qualified Health Plan (QHP)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

None of these apply.

Tax Information

Amount of College Grants, Scholarships, or AmeriCorps Benefits Reported as Income to the IRS (optional)

The student paid taxes on these grants, scholarships, or benefits. These usually apply to those renewing their FAFSA® form, not to first-time applicants.

\$.00
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Student Assets

When asked about current student assets, student financial aid, such as grants or scholarships, does NOT need to be reported.

Annual Child Support Received

Enter the total amount of child support the student received for the last complete calendar year.

\$.00

Student Assets

Current Total of Cash, Savings, and Checking Accounts

Don't include student financial aid.

\$ | .00

Current Net Worth of Investments, Including Real Estate

Don't include the home the student lives in. Net worth is the value of the investments minus any debts owed against them.

\$.00

Current Net Worth of Businesses and Investment Farms

Enter the net worth of the student's businesses or for-profit agricultural operations. Net worth is the value of the businesses or farms minus any debts owed against them.

\$.00

Previous

Continue

Selecting Colleges

FORM 2024-25 Student Raya Tran

Progress: Personal Circumstances, Demographics, Financials, **Colleges**, Signature

Where should we send your FAFSA?

Search for the colleges to which you'd like to send your FAFSA® information.
You can add up to 20 colleges to your FAFSA form.

0 of 20 Schools Selected [View Selected Schools](#)

Search by School Name Search by School Code

State:

School Name - optional:

[Search](#)

FORM 2024-25 Student Raya Tran [Save](#)

Progress: Personal Circumstances, Demographics, Financials, **Colleges**, Signature

Selected Colleges

These are the colleges you want to receive your FAFSA information
Review these schools and confirm your selection.

12 of 20 Schools Selected

Showing 1 to 10 of 12

University of California Northridge, CA	Federal School Code G03453	Remove View Info
University of California Northridge, CA	Federal School Code G03453	Remove View Info
University of California Northridge, CA	Federal School Code G03453	Remove View Info

Confirmation Page & FAFSA Submission Summary

Once submitted, students will receive a **confirmation page** with their estimated “**Student Aid Index (SAI)**”

The SAI is used to determine eligibility for federal student aid. It is not how much aid the student is eligible to receive.

Typically, students receive a **FAFSA Submission Summary** indicating that their FAFSA was processed in 1–3 days.*

*Applications submitted in January may not receive their FAFSA Submission Summary until February.

The screenshot shows the FAFSA confirmation page for Student Raya Tran. The page features a celebratory banner with a hot air balloon illustration and the text: "Congratulations, the FAFSA® form is complete!". Below this, the student's name "Raya Tran" is displayed with a graduation cap icon. A table provides key submission details:

Completion Date	Date Release Number	Estimated Student Aid Index
10/12/2024	2572	000,000,000


Below the table, a note states: "The SAI is NOT a measure of how much student aid you'll receive or how much you'll pay for college. Schools use your SAI to determine your federal student aid eligibility." A white box at the bottom contains the following text: "Based on the eligibility criteria, you may be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant of up to 000,000.00. You may also be eligible for other federal, state, or institutional grants, scholarships, and/or work-study programs."

After the FAFSA/CADAA

Chafee Grant Overview & Eligibility

- Current or former foster youth who was a dependent or ward of the court between 16-18
- Up to \$5,000 for up to 5 years until age 26.
- Can be used at public or private colleges, universities or career and technical schools in California or out of state.
- Must be enrolled at least half-time.





CALIFORNIA CHAFEE EDUCATION
AND TRAINING VOUCHER
PROGRAM

for Foster Youth

Chafee Grant Application Tips

- A separate application is required for *first time* applicants in addition to the FAFSA/CADAA (chafee.csac.ca.gov)
- Apply as soon as possible- students can apply now.
- Planned School of Attendance refers to *one* college the student plans to attend. If the school isn't listed, contact CSAC.
- Depending on the availability of funding, students may be wait-listed.

Create a Webgrants 4 Students Account at: mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov

- Wait until their FAFSA/CADAA is processed. It can take 1-2 weeks for the FAFSA to process and link to WebGrants.
- If there are issues, contact the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC):
 - (888) 224-7268 or 1-800-735-2929 (TTY)
 - studentsupport@csac.ca.gov



The image shows a screenshot of the WebGrants 4 Students website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'For Students', 'For Schools & Counselors', 'Outreach', 'Reports & Publications', 'News & Events', and 'About'. The main banner features a smiling student with a backpack and the text 'WebGrants 4 Students' with 'Login' and 'Create an Account' buttons. Below the banner is a yellow notification bar with a calendar icon and text about checking the status of 2019-20 Cal Grant renewal awards. The page is divided into three columns: 'INFORMATION', 'FORMS/APPLICATIONS', and 'RESOURCES', each with a list of links.

WebGrants 4 Students

Login
Create an Account

Please check the status of your 2019-20 Cal Grant renewal award on or after July 8, 2019. Once your renewal award is processed, you may request a school change through WGS if your school changed. The 2019-20 middle class scholarship awards will be processed in August 2019.

INFORMATION

- How to Apply for a Cal Grant Award
- Understanding My Cal Grant
- Eligibility Fact Sheet
- Cal Grant / Chafee Updates
- Grant Deadlines
- Application Information

FORMS/APPLICATIONS

- Cal Grant Participant Forms and Applications
- GPA Verification Form
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- CA Dream Act Application (CADAA)
- Chafee Application

RESOURCES

- Search for a Cal Grant Eligible School
- Financial Aid Programs
- Foster Youth Resources
- Other Financial Aid Resources and Important Links



WebGrants To Do's for Students



Check award status for Cal Grant, Middle Class Scholarship and Chafee Grant



Verify if there are any “pending” items or forms that still need to be completed



Confirm that school of attendance is accurate



Verify that your GPA has been received. If not, contact high school counselor or CSAC

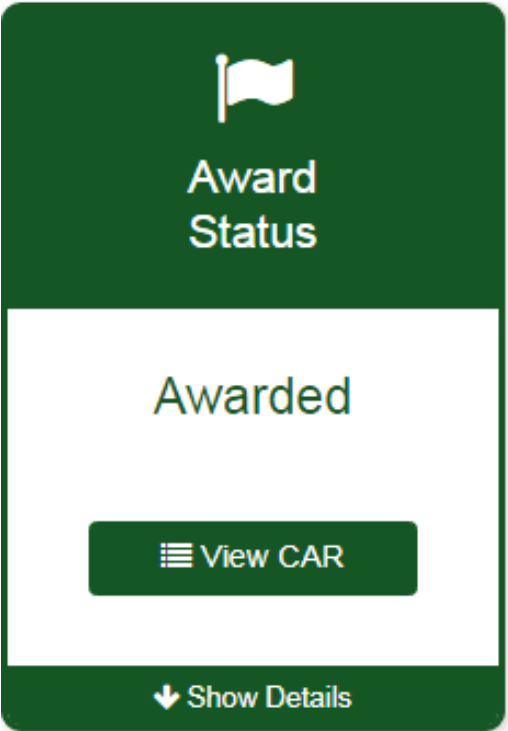


Enter high school graduation date (available on the 1st day of the month of graduation month.

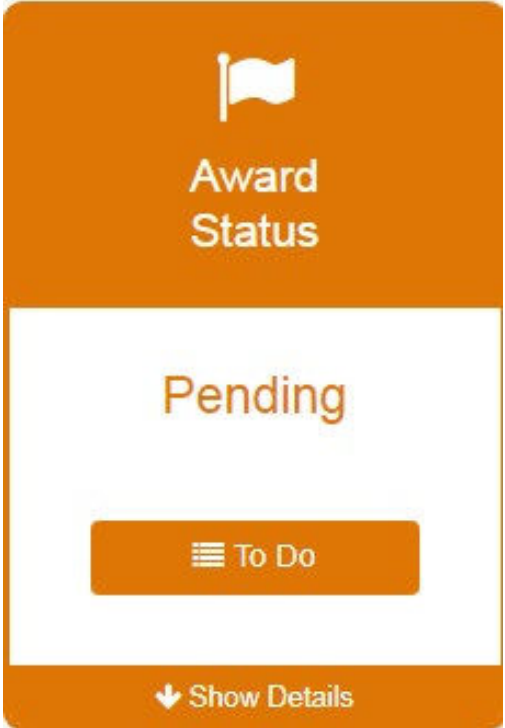


If you applied for Chafee Grant, check that “Department of Social Services Record” is verified.

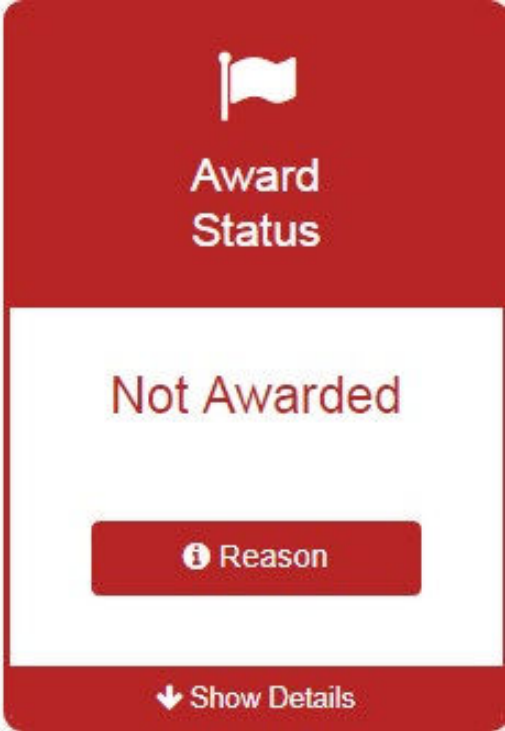
Check Your Award Status



A card with a dark green header and footer. The header contains a white flag icon and the text "Award Status". The main body is white and contains the text "Awarded" in green, a green button with a list icon and "View CAR", and a white button with a downward arrow and "Show Details".



A card with an orange header and footer. The header contains a white flag icon and the text "Award Status". The main body is white and contains the text "Pending" in orange, an orange button with a list icon and "To Do", and a white button with a downward arrow and "Show Details".



A card with a dark red header and footer. The header contains a white flag icon and the text "Award Status". The main body is white and contains the text "Not Awarded" in dark red, a dark red button with an information icon and "Reason", and a white button with a downward arrow and "Show Details".

Example: Award Pending for Chafee Grant

Chafee Grant Application Status (2019-2020)

FAFSA


Status	Received
Complete	10/08/2018

Chafee Application

Status	Received
Complete	10/08/2018

Department of Social Services Record

Status	County
Incomplete	Complete your Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form BUTTE



Understanding Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students who fail to meet their institution's SAP standards for two consecutive terms will lose eligibility for most financial aid.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Completing in a reasonable time



SAP



Passing enough classes along the way



Completing with a high enough GPA



Educate Students About SAP & How to Maintain Financial Aid

1

Inform

students about how SAP works

2

Refer

students to an academic counselor to ensure they register for proper classes

3

Advise

students to talk to a counselor before withdrawing from any classes

4

Educate

students about the appeal process if they fail to meet SAP

5

Connect

students to resources early - be proactive, not reactive

Expanded Financial Aid for Foster Youth

Student Success Completion Grant for Foster Youth

- Administered by Community Colleges
- In effect 2023-2024 academic school year. No additional application required.
- **Grant award of \$5,250 per semester, if enrolled in 12+ units.**
 - Non-foster youth students receive \$1,298 per semester (12-14 units), and \$4,000 per semester (15 units).
- **Eligibility:**

Dependency established on or after age 13

Enroll in 12+ units

Receive Cal Grant B or C

CA resident or meet non-resident tuition exemption

Must meet SAP standards

No age cap

Learn more at: jbay.org/resources/2023-fact-sheet-financial-aid/

Middle Class Scholarship (MCS) for Foster Youth

- Award amounts are based on each college's Cost of Attendance (COA).
- For *independent* students, in 2023/2024 the MCS provided roughly 36% of the remaining unmet need after accounting for other federal, state, and institutional aid and a "self-help" student contribution of \$7,898.
- **100% of the remaining unmet is funded for current and former foster youth after accounting for the self-help contribution & other existing aid.**
- Eligibility

Low-to-middle income undergraduate students at a UC, CSU or CCC.

Dependency established on or after age 13

Submit a FAFSA or CADAA by priority deadline

California resident (or meet non-resident tuition exemptions)

Must meet SAP standards.

No age cap, but up to 4 years depending on educational level

Learn more at: jbay.org/resources/2023-fact-sheet-financial-aid/

There is money available!

Community College sample package for full-time student (12 units) without dependents

	Foster Youth	Homeless
Federal Pell Grant	\$7,395	\$7,395
FSEOG	\$400	\$400
Cal Grant Access Award	\$6,000	\$1,648
CA College Promise Grant	\$1,104 (tuition)	\$1,104 (tuition)
Chafee Grant	\$5,000	N/A
Student Success Completion Grant (SSCG)	\$10,500	\$2,596
EOPS or NextUp Grant	\$3,000	\$1,000
Total:	\$33,399	\$14,143

Resources

JBAY Financial Aid Resources

Financial Aid Guide (English & Spanish)

FAFSA/CADAA Visual Guides

High School Counselor Toolkits

Recorded Webinar



All
resources for
the 2024-25
FAFSA/CADAA
will be released
in January
2024!

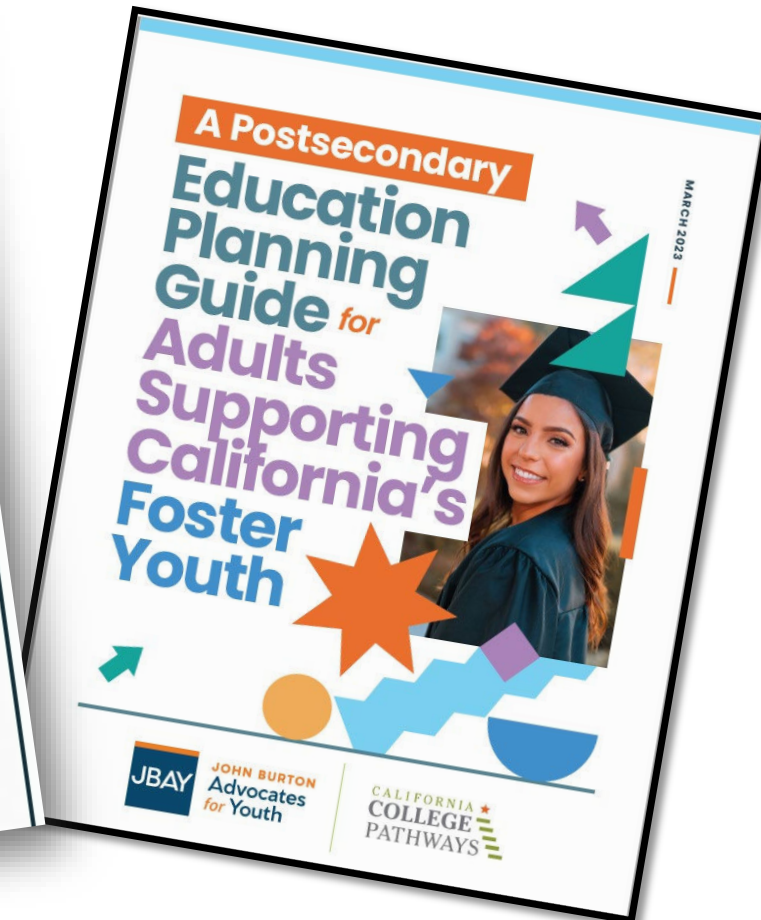
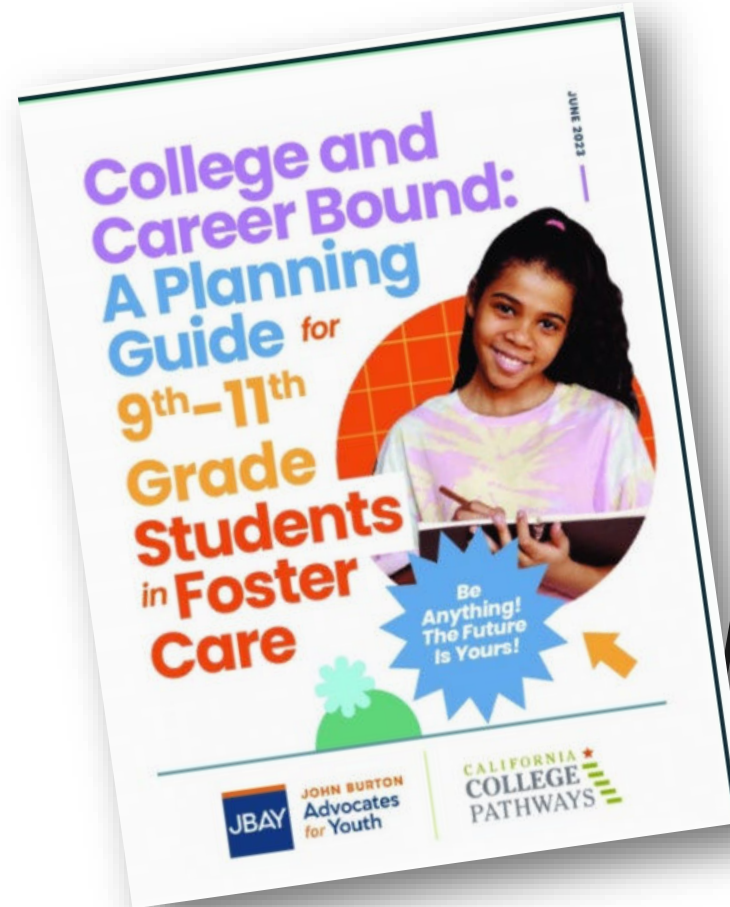
jbay.org/resources/financial-aid-guide/

JBAY's Step-by-Step Postsecondary Education Planning Guides for Foster Youth

jbay.org/resources/ed-planning-guide/

- Available in English and Spanish for adult supporters of youth in grades 6–12 and for youth in grades 9–12.
- Includes downloadable checklists & student spotlight videos!

Visit cacollegepathways.org for comprehensive college planning information for current and former foster youth.



Resources for Homeless Youth

- School House Connection
www.schoolhouseconnection.org/fafsa/

- ✓ Sample Verification Letters
- ✓ Screening tools
- ✓ Flowcharts
- ✓ And more!

- National Center for Homeless Education
nche.ed.gov/higher-education/
-

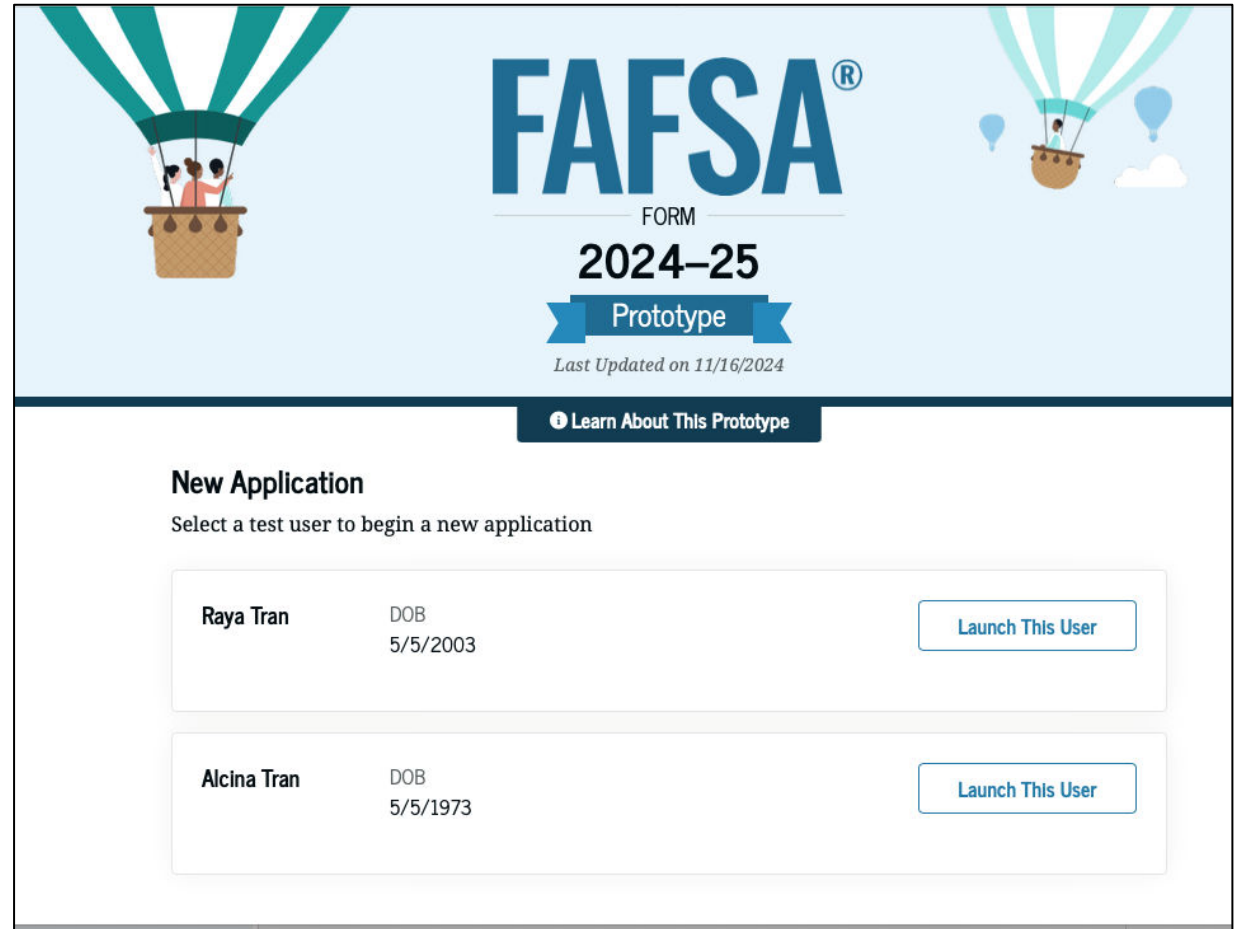
Other Resources

- ICanGoToCollege.com
ICanGoToCollege.com
 - National College Attainment Network
www.ncan.org/page/better-fafsa
 - Financial Aid for Justice-Involved Youth
ylc.org/resource/financial-aidfor-jj-youth
 - Immigrants Rising
immigrantsrising.org
-

FAFSA 2024-2025 Preview

<https://fsapartners.ed.gov/fafsa-prototype/2425>

**Access Code:
prototype2425**



The screenshot shows the FAFSA 2024-25 Prototype interface. At the top, there is a header with the FAFSA logo, the text 'FORM 2024-25 Prototype', and a note 'Last Updated on 11/16/2024'. Below the header is a dark blue button labeled 'Learn About This Prototype'. The main content area is titled 'New Application' and contains the instruction 'Select a test user to begin a new application'. There are two user selection cards. The first card is for 'Raya Tran' with a 'DOB' of '5/5/2003' and a 'Launch This User' button. The second card is for 'Alcina Tran' with a 'DOB' of '5/5/1973' and a 'Launch This User' button.

FAFSA[®]
FORM
2024-25
Prototype
Last Updated on 11/16/2024

[Learn About This Prototype](#)

New Application
Select a test user to begin a new application

Raya Tran	DOB 5/5/2003	Launch This User
Alcina Tran	DOB 5/5/1973	Launch This User

THANK YOU

Debbie Raucher

Debbie@jbay.org

JBAY.ORG

Jessica Petrass

Jessica@jbay.org

Sarah Pauter

Sarah@jbay.org