
Spring is on the way!

Can you believe it is already the end of February? Just a few more weeks and it will be spring (a.k.a. Mud Season).

As we move into this part of the school year, students will have more questions about financial aid and paying for college. This edition of *The Educator* is intended to help you with all things financial aid related.

April is Financial Literacy Month

As part of Financial Literacy Month, FAME plans to expand our financial literacy programs by offering two new publications and creating a new section on our web site.

The *Money Management Tool Kit* will provide helpful information to high school and college students. Topics such as understanding your credit score, obtaining a credit report and budgeting are addressed.

The other publication currently being designed is for elementary aged students. This workbook style publication will have fun characters and games to keep younger students engaged.

A Money Management section will be added to the FAME web site and will include tools and calculators that students can use to create a budget, understand the true costs of credit card use and other important resources and links.

“Get A Life” Online

Our popular “Get A Life” program is now available [online](#). Students can “spin the wheel”, be given a career and make life choices in the context of establishing a budget. This is a great option for teachers and counselors who want to promote financial literacy with their students, but do not have a great amount of time to spend on the topic. The online game was created to target middle school students, but can be used for high school students as well.

FAME staff are still available to come to your school to conduct a “Get A Life” program in-person.. [Contact us](#) if you would like more information.

Wednesday Webinar

Our March Webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10 at 10:00 a.m. The March training will focus on what happens after students file the FAFSA - comparing financial aid awards and understanding loans.

Registration information will be available soon. Contact [Mary Dyer](#) if you have questions about FAME’s Wednesday Webinar program.

MaineCAN!

There is one message we consistently hear from school counselors and college access advisors: “There are so many great programs and organizations helping Maine students prepare for and go to college. I wish I could find them all in one place!”

Many months ago, a small group of higher education advocates met to discuss how we could bring together all of the programs in Maine, share ideas and learn from each other. The group felt that the best way to accomplish this goal was to create a collaborative web site. Because of that meeting, the Maine College Access Network ([MaineCAN!](#)) was created.

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The purpose of the site is for everyone to share ideas. While FAME administers the site, there is no “owner” and you are encouraged to join. Having “members” is simply to prevent marketing from for-profit organizations and to eliminate spam.

The site is still in its early stages and your input is needed to make the site useful. If you have a program that you want others in the state to know about, let us know! Become a member and post information yourself. This FREE web site is a great opportunity for us that work to promote postsecondary education opportunities to our Maine students.

Join us today at [MaineCAN!](#)

College Goal Sunday

Thank you to everyone who helped promote and support College Goal Sunday. This year, 505 families received help completing the FAFSA. In addition, 20 students were randomly selected to receive a \$500 scholarship. Scholarship recipients will be notified in writing.

More information about the recipients can be found online at www.collegegoalsundaymaine.com.

We are looking for ways to improve the College Goal Sunday event for next year and welcome your comments. If you have suggestions to better help Maine students, please e-mail Angela Dostie at adostie@famemaine.com.

Update on Predatory Marketing Law

A public hearing is expected to be scheduled within the next two weeks. It is being recommended that the current law be repealed and new legislation drafted.

You can read more about the law and its status at:

http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/billtexts/SP064901.asp

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/10/title10ch1055sec0.html>

We will keep you posted as we learn more about the hearing and its developments.

Do you know who is considered to be a “Preparer” on the FAFSA?

Only a person who is paid a fee to help a student complete the FAFSA is considered a preparer. Those who advise students without charging a fee, such as high school counselors, college access advisors and financial aid administrators, are not preparers.

Preparers are required to include their name, company name (if applicable), address and SSN or EIN (Employer Identification Number).

Preparers must also:

- Clearly inform each individual upon initial contact, including via the Internet or phone, that the FAFSA is free and can be completed electronically or on paper without professional help and without paying a fee.
- Include in any advertising clear and conspicuous information that the FAFSA is free and can be completed electronically or on paper without professional help;
- Link their web site, if they use one to advertise or provide information or services to consumers, to FAFSA on the Web;
- Not produce, use, or disseminate any form other than the FAFSA for the purpose of applying for Title IV aid.

A preparer who knowingly provides false or misleading information on the application is subject to penalties, including fines and/or jail time.

A preparer is not allowed to collect source information from a student or parent, including IRS tax forms, in providing assistance with the FAFSA.

If you have any questions about preparers or other financial aid topics, please [contact us](#).

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Questions or comments? [E-mail](#) or call 800-228-3734.