



Financial Aid 101

AGENDA

March 15 (In-Person) & March 22 (Virtual), 2024

8:30 – 9:25	WELCOME & KEYNOTE: What We’ve Learned About the New Better FAFSA Presenter: Mila Tappan, FAME		
9:30 – 10:20	A. Pathways to Fund Education After High School Presenter: Panel Moderator: Jessica Whittier, FAME	B. Student Loan Update Presenter: Martha Johnston, FAME Moderator: Mila Tappan, FAME	C. FSA ID Creation & Troubleshooting Presenters: Michelle Radley and Nikki Vachon, FAME
10:20 – 10:35	B R E A K		
10:35 – 11:25	D. The Student Aid Index (SAI) Calculation Presenter: Mila Tappan, FAME Moderator: Mary Dyer, FAME	E. Pathways to Fund Education for Adult Learners Presenter: Panel Moderators: Michelle Radley and Nikki Vachon, FAME	F. FAFSA Basics & Demonstration Presenter: Jessica Whittier, FAME Moderator: Floreka Malual, FAME
11:30 – 12:30	LUNCH BREAK & FAME Update Presenter: Martha Johnston, FAME		
12:40 – 1:30	G. Pell Grant Eligibility and Transparency Presenter: Mila Tappan, FAME Moderator: Mary Dyer, FAME	H. FAFSA Pathways for Unique Situations Presenter: Nikki Vachon, FAME Moderator: Michelle Radley, FAME	I. New Mainers Website Overview/ Student Panel Discussion with ELL Students Presenter: Floreka Malual, FAME Moderator: Jessica Whittier, FAME
1:30 – 2:00	CLOSING & 🎉 PRIZES! 🎉		

Financial Aid 101: Session Descriptions & Presenters

March 15 & 22, 2024

Keynote: What We've Learned About the New Better FAFSA

Presenter: Mila Tappan, College Access and Outreach Manager, FAME

Two months after a bumpy rollout of the 2024-2025 FAFSA, where do things stand? It is really a better FAFSA? What challenges have people experienced? What's the current status? During this keynote we'll review what we've learned, share tools and tips to make filing the FAFSA easier, and address your lingering questions.

A. Pathways to Fund Education After High School

Presenter: Panel

Moderator: Jessica Whittier, College Access Counselor, FAME

Maine has been blessed with a number of great higher education funding options over the last several years. In this session, we'll hear from the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System about initiatives they offer to increase affordability for Maine students. We'll also learn more about the Worthington Scholarship and how it is increasing higher education affordability to an even broader number of schools in Maine.

B. Student Loan Update

Presenter: Martha Johnston, Director of Education, FAME

Moderator: Mila Tappan, College Access and Outreach Manager, FAME

Federal student loans have re-entered repayment after a three-year pause. Martha Johnston, FAME Director of Education, will share critical information and helpful tips to make sure you know about the availability and benefits, flexible repayment options, loan forgiveness programs, and tax credits. You'll also learn about the latest news and updates impacting federal student loans.

C. FSA ID Creation, Tips & Troubleshooting

Presenters: Michelle Radley & Nikki Vachon, College Access Counselors, FAME

A working and matched FSA ID is critical to a smooth FAFSA experience. Unfortunately, challenges abound for some students and parents when it comes to the FSA ID. In this session we'll offer tips to help avoid problems, followed by problem-solving strategies to try when the FSA ID has become locked, doesn't work, or the username and password have been forgotten. We'll also cover how the FSA ID has changed with the Better FAFSA.

D. The Student Aid Index (SAI) Calculation

Presenter: Mila Tappan, College Access and Outreach Manager, FAME

Moderator: Mary Dyer, Financial Education Programs Manager, FAME

Have you ever wondered what really impacts financial aid eligibility? We know income matters, but what about assets, family size, number in college, current debt, and other factors? In this interactive session, we'll walk through the new SAI formula so you can feel confident when sharing with families what counts and what doesn't. We'll also highlight what's different from the old Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to help answer questions as we make the transition to the new Better FAFSA.

E. Pathways to Fund Education for Adult Learners

Presenter: Panel

Moderators: Michelle Radley & Nikki Vachon, College Access Counselors, FAME

Maine has many workforce development programs that help adult learners fund and successfully earn their degree. Join us as we hear from a few of the great educational support programs in Maine to see what's available, who is eligible, and how to apply.

F. FAFSA Basics & Demonstration

Presenter: Jessica Whittier, College Access Counselor, FAME

Moderator: Floreka Malual, New Mainer Specialist, FAME

The Better FAFSA has arrived! The process flow has changed, the terminology and questions have changed, and navigating the site after submission (to find the FSS and make corrections) has definitely changed! In this session, we'll walk through the current FAFSA and highlight the sections that present the most questions and confusion.

G. Pell Grant Eligibility and Transparency

Presenter: Mila Tappan, College Access and Outreach Manager, FAME

Moderator: Mary Dyer, Financial Education Programs Manager, FAME

The Federal Pell Grant program has been expanded! There are now additional ways students can qualify for a Pell Grant beyond having an eligible Student Aid Index (SAI). We'll discuss these additional pathways and share tools to help students determine eligibility before a FAFSA is filed. We'll also share other changes to the Pell Grant, including eligibility for less than full-time students and students with atypical enrollment patterns.

H. FAFSA Pathways for Unique Situations

Presenters: Nikki Vachon and Michelle Radley, College Access Counselors, FAME

Some of today's prospective college students are preparing for their higher education journey without family support. They may be homeless, self-supporting, and/or dealing with difficult family circumstances. In this session, we'll discuss the financial aid process for students in these situations, including how to file the FAFSA and communicate their circumstances to the financial aid office. Bring your questions and examples!

I. New Mainers Website Overview/Student Panel Discussion with ELL Students

Presenter: Floreka Malual, New Mainer Specialist, FAME

Moderator: Jessica Whittier, College Access Counselor, FAME

This session will start with an overview of the New Mainer section of the FAME website, where many tools and resources exist. Next, a panel of ELL students will discuss pathways for federal-aid-eligible students as well as strategies for students not qualifying for federal financial aid. We'll have an overview from representatives who administer different scholarship programs including Prosperity Maine, USM's Promise Scholarship, and Maine Community Foundation's Adult Learner Scholarship. Join us to learn more about the challenges faced and opportunities available to our new Mainer students!