



Financial Aid 101

AGENDA

OCTOBER 31, 2025 • VIRTUAL SESSIONS

Session:	Option 1	Option 2
8:30 – 9:00	Keynote: Changes to Federal Student Aid • Presenter: Mila Tappan Zoom will send a personalized link to join this session after registration	
9:05 - 9:55	A. Mastering StudentAid.gov Accounts: Tips & Troubleshooting for a Smoother FAFSA Experience Presenter: Jessica Whittier Moderator: Floreka Mananga	B. CSS Profile Overview Presenter: Mila Tappan Moderator: Karin Parsons
9:55 - 10:05	BREAK	
10:05 - 10:55	C. FAFSA Demonstration: Navigate the New Look with Confidence Presenter: Jessica Whittier Moderator: Mary Dyer	D. Navigating the FAFSA in Unusual Circumstances Presenter: Nikki Vachon Moderator: Steve Kautz
11:00-11:50	E. After the FAFSA: Next Steps Presenter: Mila Tappan Moderator: Mary Dyer	F. Scholarship Strategies & Tools Presenter: Nikki Vachon Moderator: Karin Parsons
12:00 -12:30	CLOSING AND 🎁 PRIZES! 🎁	

Financial Aid 101:

Session Descriptions & Presenters

October 31, 2025 • Virtual Sessions

A. Mastering StudentAid.gov Accounts: Tips & Troubleshooting for a Smoother FAFSA Experience

Presenter: *Jessica Whittier*

Moderator: *Floreka Mananga*

A verified and accessible StudentAid.gov account (commonly known as an FSA ID) is essential for completing the FAFSA and accessing federal student aid. However, many students and parents encounter roadblocks when creating or using their accounts. In this session, we'll share proactive tips to help prevent common issues and walk through effective solutions for problems like locked accounts and forgotten login credentials. We'll also explain the process for contributors who do not have a Social Security number. This session will equip you with the tools to troubleshoot with confidence.

B. CSS Profile Overview

Presenter: *Mila Tappan*

Moderator: *Karin Parsons*

You asked, and we listened! Here is a session dedicated to the CSS Profile. In this session, we'll cover the most common questions we receive about the form, discuss how it differs from the FAFSA, and share what you need to know when working with students. We'll also take a look inside the form and provide targeted tips and general insight on getting the CSS Profile completed.

C. FAFSA Demonstration: Navigate the New Look with Confidence

Presenter: *Jessica Whittier*

Moderator: *Mary Dyer*

The FAFSA received a glow up! With updated terminology and a redesigned process flow, the form's look and feel have evolved over the past couple of years. This year's most notable change is a simpler, more streamlined way for contributors to be invited and provide their information. In this session, we'll walk through the FAFSA step-by-step, focusing on the sections that commonly raise questions—especially around contributor roles, consent, and data sharing.

D. Navigating the FAFSA in Unusual Circumstances

Presenter: *Nikki Vachon*

Moderator: *Steve Kautz*

Some 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.

E. After the FAFSA: Next Steps

***Presenter:** Mila Tappan*

***Moderator:** Mary Dyer*

Filing the FAFSA is the first, not the last step in the financial aid process. During this session we'll cover what needs to happen AFTER the FAFSA is submitted and share resources to support both you and your students. Topics to be discussed include financial aid offers (when to expect them and how to interpret and compare multiple offers), appeals, verification, and follow-up documentation for unique circumstances. We'll provide an update on FAME's FAFSA Portal, a tool that can be used to track student's FAFSA filing status, and share other resources.

F. Scholarship Strategies & Tools

***Presenter:** Nikki Vachon*

***Moderator:** Karin Parsons*

Today's college goers have access to more scholarship opportunities than ever before. However, staying on top of the scholarship application process can sometimes feel overwhelming. In this session we'll provide resources to help your students build their scholarship application plan. We'll also explore scholarships for different student populations and learn how to best use the Scholarship Information Tracker worksheet.