

Support Universal FAFSA

To access state and federal grants and loans, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Each year, more than 13 million students across the country have access to \$120 billion dollars in federal aid, work-study, and low-interest federal loans. Universal FAFSA initiatives seek to decrease gaps in postsecondary enrollment by requiring that all graduating high school students submit the FAFSA.

FAFSA Completion = Increased College Enrollment

Students who complete the FAFSA by the end of their senior year are 84% more likely to enroll in college. Yet, just under 60% of Massachusetts high school students completed the FAFSA in 2022. Eligible students who did not complete the FAFSA left \$48,438,897 of unused Pell dollars on the table in 2022.

FAFSA Completion Key to College Access

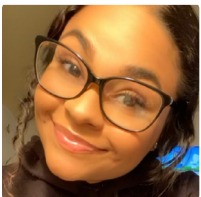
In fall 2021, 4,333 fewer Massachusetts high school graduates enrolled in college than fall 2019, with the largest declines happening for low-income and BIPOC students. Nearly 81% of students in high-income districts enroll in college immediately after college compared to 47% of students from low-income districts. Furthermore, in 2021, just 29% of Latino males and 45% of Black males enrolled in college immediately after high school, compared to 60% of white males. Students reported that cost was a barrier to attendance.

FAFSA Legislation has Proven Impact

Louisiana became the first state to implement a universal FAFSA policy, requiring seniors to complete a federal aid application to graduate. The state's policy closed the gap in completed applications between high- and low-income school districts by 87 percent in one year. Within two years, the gap was closed completely.

Pass Universal FAFSA

To ensure Massachusetts students access financial aid, **pass HB1294 requiring high school students to submit a FAFSA prior to receiving their high school diploma**. Students can waive the requirement, and school districts would be required to provide students with FAFSA submission support and information about state financial aid.



“When I was getting ready to graduate high school, I didn’t know what financial aid was. I almost didn’t go to college. Students should be completing the FAFSA before graduation.”

-Mabel, Simmons University