

# Parent Checklist: Preparing for College Financial Aid

Use this checklist to stay organized as you prepare to apply for financial aid. Completing these steps early will save you time and stress.

- ■ Mark FAFSA and CSS Profile opening dates on your calendar.
- ■ Gather Social Security numbers for parent(s) and student.
- ■ Collect tax returns (from two years prior), W-2s, and income records.
- ■ Write down current bank account balances and investment information.
- ■ Check each college's website to see if the CSS Profile is required.
- ■ Create a spreadsheet to track deadlines for each college.
- ■ Explore state aid deadlines—many are earlier than federal deadlines.
- ■ Talk to your student about searching for outside scholarships.
- ■ Plan to reapply for financial aid every year your student is in college.
- ■ Double-check all entries before submitting the FAFSA to avoid delays.