

Dear High School Counselors and Administrators:

As you may be aware, in 2014 President Obama announced the launch of the FAFSA Completion Initiative to help ensure that more of America's students take the first step towards college success: completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The FAFSA gives students access to grants, loans, and work-study opportunities that the federal government has available. In many states like Maryland, students are required to submit the FAFSA before they are considered for additional scholarship and grant opportunities. It is our goal in Maryland to partner with high schools and designated entities to increase the number of students that complete the FAFSA annually which is the gateway for students to be eligible for federal and state financial assistance.

The FAFSA Completion Initiative is designed to provide specific FAFSA information to Maryland high schools, school districts, and certain designated entities so that Maryland students are provided with the support that they need when completing the FAFSA.

We will fully implement the FAFSA Completion Initiative in Maryland beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year. Given that the 2017-2018 FAFSA will be available to students as early as October of this year, we are eager to provide you with details pertaining to this Initiative and the vital role that you serve in this process.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the FAFSA Completion Initiative you may contact me at [fafsa.mhec@maryland.gov](mailto:fafsa.mhec@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

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