



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATIE HOBBS
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

April 2, 2024

Dear Arizona's Superintendents, Principals, Counselors, Educators and Community Partners:

As we approach the end of the school year, I am reaching out to enlist your support in a crucial initiative that directly impacts the future of our graduating seniors: completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

April marks "**Finish Line to the FAFSA Month**," and I am reaching out to educational leaders like yourself, along with school counselors, nonprofits, colleges, universities, students, and families, to join forces in ensuring that as many students as possible successfully navigate the FAFSA application process.

Filling out the FAFSA is the first step to qualify for federal financial aid and for many scholarships, including the Arizona Promise program. However, this year has presented unique challenges and delays for FAFSA submissions. As a result, Arizona's student submissions are down significantly from this same time last year.

This decline translates to nearly 11,000 fewer Arizona seniors who have completed the FAFSA compared to 2023—a staggering figure with potentially far-reaching consequences for our students' higher education aspirations. In light of these challenges, it's imperative that we come together as a community to reverse this trend and ensure that our students receive the financial support they need to pursue their educational goals.

This is a pivotal moment that necessitates the collaborative efforts of our entire community to ensure that more Arizona students complete the FAFSA before graduation. I am asking for your partnership to raise awareness about the FAFSA, organize events, and provide support to graduating seniors.

There are a number of ways that you can help, including:

- **Hosting a FAFSA completion event** for students and families
- **Integrating FAFSA completion activities into the school day**, if feasible, to facilitate student participation.
- **Collaborating with partners**, such as college resource centers, nonprofits, or postsecondary institutions to support students with their FAFSA applications.
- **Sharing resources** with your students and families (see below)

In addition, Arizona offers numerous resources to aid your students and their families in completing their FAFSA, including:

- **Virtual Workshops and 1-1 Meetings** - Arizona's universities provide weekly virtual workshops and 1-1 virtual appointments.
- **Chat Bot (Ask Benji)** - Students can text "Hi Benji" to 602-786-8171 for free digital assistance with FAFSA inquiries and receive prompt responses.
- **FAFSA Hotline** - Expert assistance is available via the Arizona FAFSA Hotline from 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday, at 1-833-293-2372.
- **College Access Centers** - Arizona is also home to a number of college access centers throughout the state who offer events and programs to serve students and families.

These resources are readily available to support our students and their families through the FAFSA completion process. You can direct them to CollegeReadyAZ.com/FAFSA for comprehensive assistance and guidance, a calendar of events, and tools to help you communicate.

Your partnership in this endeavor is invaluable, and I am deeply grateful for your commitment to our students' success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KH', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Katie Hobbs
Governor
State of Arizona