

**FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION
PRESENTED BY:
PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT
(Revised October 2011)**

Federal Student Aid

Federal Student Aid is financial help for eligible students to pay for education expenses at an eligible postsecondary school (e.g., college, vocational school, graduate school). There are three categories of federal student aid: grants, work-study, and loans.

Step One: Complete the *Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA)*.

For *FAFSA on the Web*, go to www.fafsa.gov. Using *FAFSA on the Web* is faster and easier than using paper.

If you need a paper FAFSA, you can download a PDF from www.fafsa.gov, or order one from the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243. For the 2011-12 academic school year, it is essential that you complete your FAFSA between January 1, 2012 and March 1, 2012. Federal aid is limited, so getting your application in as early as possible is in your best interest.

For an estimate before official college enrollment, go to *FAFSA on the Web* and use the FAFSA4caster link.

Step Two: Review your *Student Aid Report (SAR)*.

After you apply, you'll receive a Student Aid Report, or SAR. Your SAR contains the information reported on your FAFSA and usually includes your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is an index used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Review your SAR information and make any corrections or changes, if necessary. The school(s) you list on your FAFSA will get your SAR data electronically.

Step Three: Contact the school(s) you might attend.

Make sure the financial aid office at each school, in which you are interested, has all the information needed to determine your eligibility. If you are eligible, each school's financial aid office will send you an award letter showing the amount and types of aid the school will offer you.

Questions?

Call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

Call 1-800-730-8913 (TTY for the hearing impaired)

E-mail: studentaid@ed.gov

Download a booklet/PDF www.michigan.gov/studentaid

Contact a college financial aid office.

Scholarship Search

Never pay money to get free money! There are plenty of free scholarship search engines and websites that are available. It will take personal time and energy to find the scholarships that apply to you. Below are a few options in accessing scholarship opportunities that PCHS seniors have found helpful.

Portage Central High School

Scholarships received by PCHS are posted on the website under the Counseling Department. Here is the link:

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/high/chs/counseling/scholarships>

Though paper applications are few, the ones we receive are available in the Counseling Office. They are listed on our website.

The Kalamazoo Foundation Scholarships

Scholarships through the Kalamazoo Foundation are available through their web site at www.kalfound.org. The listings include local, state and national scholarships. There is also general information on financial aid on the web site. (Please pay particular attention to the Remyse scholarship, which has a December 1st deadline.)

Internet Database Searches

www.fastweb.com

www.collegeanswer.com

www.zinch.com

Letters of Recommendation

When a letter of recommendation is requested as part of the application process, it is generally preferred that it comes from a core academic instructor unless otherwise stated. This letter should either be in a sealed envelope or mailed directly to the scholarship program by the recommender, not by the student.