

East Aurora District 131



**EAST AURORA**  
**HOME OF THE TOMCATS**

**Class of 2025:**  
**SENIOR NIGHT**



— EAST AURORA SCHOOL DISTRICT 131 —

**Matt Sheahan**

EAHS Counselor

[msheahan01@d131.org](mailto:msheahan01@d131.org)



# Graduation Requirements

Credits Required	Subjects
4	English
3	Math (Algebra, Geometry, Additional Course)
2	Science
1	American History
½	American Government
1	Social Studies Elective
½	Consumer Education

Credits Required	Subjects
½	Health
½	Driver Education
3	PE / NJROTC / Band
1	World Language, Fine & Performing Arts, or Career & Technical Education
5	Reading & Electives

Total Credits Required	Additional Tasks
22	State Mandated Testing (SAT & Constitution) + FAFSA



# Available Supports

- Counselors
  - Every student has a counselor assigned to them to support through their senior year, helping them meet graduation requirements, apply to college, seek scholarships, and figure out next steps for after graduation
- Credit Recovery Options and Support
  - Night School, E-Learning during Zero Hour and the rest of the day with dedicated E-Learning Faculty
  - Graduation Coaches
- Testing Support
  - SAT fee waivers available for students interested in retaking the exam
    - ACT fee waivers available
  - Placement testing for Waubonsee
- Tutoring
  - After school Monday-Thursday, 3:30-4:30 PM, Library
  - Tutorme.com, 24/7 online tutoring support. sign in through Class Link
- SchooLinks
  - Online platform that allows students to research colleges, careers, and scholarship opportunities. Through SchooLinks, students will organize their college applications and work collaboratively through the process with the teachers and counselors.



# Ongoing Programing and Activities

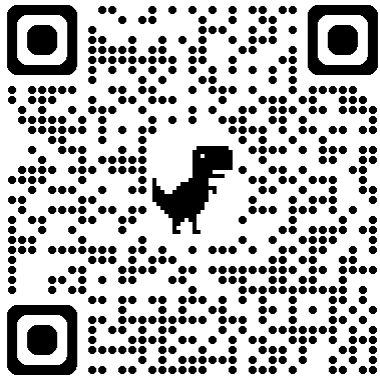
- College admission representatives routinely visiting during lunch periods throughout the entire school year
- ISAC Financial Aid support every Thursday
- College Transition Advisor available every Wednesday and Thursday
- Career and industry professional presentations and field trip opportunities
- College and Career Fairs
- College campus visits
  - Waubensee Community College, Aurora University, Lewis University, Northern Illinois University, North Central College and more to come
- Counselor staffing available for drop-in student support during all lunch periods in the CCC
- Counselor lead workshops
  - Scholarships, Essay Writing, Application Support, etc.
- Off-Site leadership and support opportunities
- Early College courses
- Financial Aid Nights and Workshops



# Class of 2025 Resources

## Class of 2025 Google Classroom

- Important Information for all Seniors
- Class code: `jvr6das`



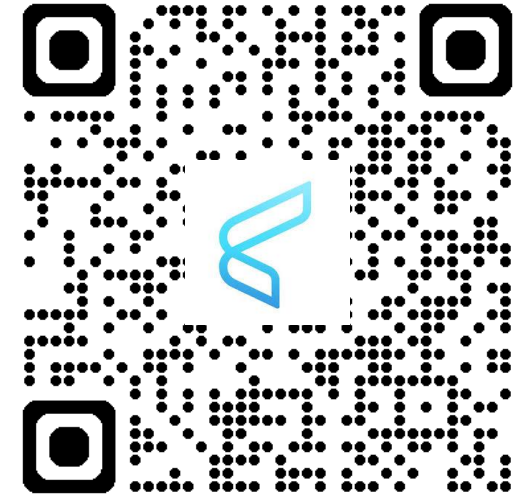
## The Tomcat College and Career Center (CCC)

- College Rep Visits
- Scholarship Programming
- Career Exploration
- College and Career Field Trips
- Financial Aid support and Workshops
- Website routinely updated



# Common Application

- Used at over 900 colleges and universities
  - 50 colleges in Illinois, including all 12 Illinois public universities
- Once set up Common App automatically syncs with your SchooLinks account
- Request application fee waiver at every school at once
- Depending on the schools you identify, you may need as many as two teacher letters of recommendation
- Most information you only have to fill out once, but individual schools may require supplemental information to complete their application
- Common App has essay prompts, but will also allow you to submit something you have already written



# Support for the Financial Aid Process

- Expert support from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) in the CCC every Thursday during lunch periods starting in September
- Evening workshops for parent and family support with the process, including helping families complete and file the application
  - Information Night on November 19
  - Filing Workshops on December 10, January 9, January 22, February 20, March 20, April 24, and May 8
  - Every workshop will be staffed to support our Spanish speaking families
- Families can file on their own, but support is available for those that would prefer assistance
- Scholarship Night on October 29

Reach out to our ISAC Specialist any time:

**Maggy Campos**  
**Maggy.Hernandez@illinois.gov**  
**(630) 740-0803**





# Stephanie Valerio

High School Transition Advisor

Waubonsee Community College

[svalerio@waubonsee.edu](mailto:svalerio@waubonsee.edu)





# Understanding Educational Pathways: Degrees and Trade Schools

A Comparison of Associate, Bachelor's Degrees, and Trade Schools

**By: Stephanie Valerio**





# Associate's Degree

**Definition:** An associate degree is a two-year undergraduate program that provides students with basic academic knowledge and skills in a specific field. It is typically earned at community colleges or technical schools and can lead to entry-level jobs or serve as a stepping stone to a bachelor's degree.

**Usually 2 years full-time.**

**Equivalent to about 60 credit hours.**

**Some programs may offer accelerated tracks or part-time options for working students.**

## **Advantages:**

**Associate degrees are generally more affordable than bachelor's degrees, with lower tuition costs and a shorter completion time, helping students save money on education.**

**Since an associate degree typically takes only two years to complete, students can enter the workforce sooner and start earning earlier compared to those pursuing longer degree programs.**

# DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

## Transfer, Career and General Programs

[www.waubonsee.edu/majors](http://www.waubonsee.edu/majors)

### Transfer Education

Finish one of Waubonsee's transfer-oriented associate degrees today, and then transfer the credit to gain an edge at a four-year school tomorrow.

- *Associate in Arts (AA)*
- *Associate in Science (AS)*
- *Associate in Engineering Science (AES)*
- *Associate in Fine Arts (AFA)*

While there are just four types of degrees, there are more than 30 areas of concentration (similar to majors). Choose one of the programs listed here, or create your own with the help of a Waubonsee counselor and your intended four-year school.

Art (AA)	Geography (AS)
Aviation Pilot (AS)	Geology (AS)
Biology (AS)	Graphic Art (AA)
Business (AS)	History (AA)
Chemistry (AS)	Liberal Arts (AA)
Clinical Laboratory Science (AS)	Mass Communication (AA)
Computer Science (AS)	Mathematics (AS)
Criminal Justice (AS)	Music (AA)
Early Childhood Education (AS)	Nursing Transfer for BSN (AS)
Economics (AA)	Organizational Communication (AA)
Education (AS) ~ Elementary ~ Secondary ~ Special	Philosophy (AA)
Engineering Science (AES)	Physical Education (AS)
English (AA)	Physics (AS)
Fine Arts (AFA)	Political Science (AA)
Fitness Leadership (AS)	Psychology (AA)
General Science (AS)	Social Work (AS)
	Sociology (AA)
	Theatre (AA)

### MORE INFO

*Dial (630) 466-7900 and the four-digit extension.*

**5756** Admissions  
**Academic Divisions**  
*Transfer and career programs are divided into six academic divisions.*

**2263** Business and Career Technologies  
**2921** Communications, Humanities and Fine Arts

**5706** Developmental Education and College Readiness

**2350** Health Professions and Public Service

**2319** Mathematics and Sciences

**5734** Social Sciences, Education and World Languages

# Bachelor's Degree

**Definition:** A bachelor's degree is an undergraduate degree typically offered by colleges and universities. It provides in-depth knowledge in a specific field of study and often includes general education courses in areas like humanities, mathematics, and sciences.

**Duration:** Typically 4 years full-time  
**Requiring about 120 credit hours**

## Advantages

- **Higher Earning Potential:** On average, bachelor's degree holders earn significantly more than those with an associate degree or high school diploma.
- **Career Advancement:** A bachelor's degree is often required for professional roles in various industries.
- **Flexibility in Careers:** Graduates have access to a broader range of job opportunities across different sectors.



# Undergraduate Majors

Accounting (BS)  
Actuarial Science (BS)  
Biology (BS)  
Biology for Secondary Education Licensure (BS)  
Business Administration (BA)  
Chemistry (BS)  
Chemistry for Secondary Education Licensure (BS)  
Communication (BA)  
Computer Science (BS)  
Criminal Justice (BA)  
Cybersecurity (BS)  
Data Engineering (BS)|  
Early Childhood Special Education with Bilingual/ESL (BA)  
Elementary Education (BA)  
English (BA)  
English for Secondary Education Licensure (BA)  
Environmental Studies and Sustainability (BA)  
Exercise Science (BS)  
Finance (BS)

Finance (BS)  
General Studies (BA)  
Graphic Design (BA)  
Healthcare Administration (BS)  
Health and Wellness (BS)  
Health Science (BS)  
History (BA)  
History for Secondary Education Licensure (BA)  
Human Animal Studies (BS)  
Marketing (BS)  
Mathematics (BS)  
Mathematics for Secondary Education Licensure (BS)  
Music (BA)  
Nursing (BSN)  
Parks and Recreation Leadership (BS)  
Physical Education (K-12) Teacher Licensure (BA)  
Political Science and Public Policy (BA)  
Psychology (BA)  
Secondary Education (supplemental major)  
Social Work (BSW)  
Sociology (BA)  
Spanish (BA)

# Master's Degree

**Definition: A master's degree is a graduate-level program that offers advanced knowledge and skills in a specific field. It is typically pursued after completing a bachelor's degree and is designed to provide a deeper understanding of the subject matter**



- Typically 1.5 to 2 years full-time
- Some programs offer part-time, accelerated, or online options, which may vary the duration

## Advantages

- **Career Advancement:** Many senior or managerial positions require or prefer candidates with a master's degree.
- **Higher Earning Potential:** Master's degree holders tend to earn more than those with just a bachelor's degree.

# Graduate Programs at Aurora University Online

Doctor of Education (EdD) in Leadership in Educational Administration or Instructional Leadership: Coaching and Mentoring

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Master of Educational Leadership (MAEL) with Principal Endorsement

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Master of Science in Digital Marketing and Design (MSDMD)

Master of Science in Exercise Science (MSES)

Master of Social Work (MSW) Tracks in addictions, child welfare, forensic, gerontology, health care, leadership administration, military and veteran social work, school social work

Post MSW: Illinois Professional Educator's License with School Social Work Endorsement

Master of Social Work/Master of Business Administration Dual Degree

Master of Social Work/Master of Public Administration Dual Degree

Special Education Endorsement (LBS1)\*

Superintendent Endorsement\*



# Certifications

**Varies widely depending on the certification. Some can be completed in a matter of weeks, while others may take several months.**

## Advantages

- **Cost-Effective:** Certifications are generally less expensive than degree programs, making them a more affordable option for gaining new skills
- **Specialized Skills:** Certifications focus on specific skills or knowledge areas, making them ideal for job-specific training or career advancement in specialized fields
- **Flexibility:** Many certification programs are available online or through short-term, part-time courses, allowing professionals to continue working while they study



# Career Focused Programs At Waubonsee

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Accounting  
Auto Body Repair  
Automation Technology  
Automotive Technology  
Business Administration  
Computer Aided Design and Drafting  
Computer Information Systems  
Construction Management  
Cybersecurity  
Early Childhood Education  
Emergency Medical Technician  
Fire Science  
Health Information Technology  
HVAC



Human Services  
Legal Interpreting  
Machine Tool  
Technology  
Management/HR  
Massage Therapy  
Medical Assistant  
Music (Audio  
Production)  
Nurse Assistant  
Nursing  
Paralegal  
Phlebotomy  
Technician  
Welding Technology  
Website Development

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**Svalerio@waubonsee.edu**

**Wednesdays/Thursdays**

**College and Career Center**

**Thank you!**

# Leo Flood

ISAC Corps Member

Illinois Student Assistance Commission

[Leo.Flood@illinois.gov](mailto:Leo.Flood@illinois.gov)



# The Financial Aid Process

Leo Flood  
ISAC Corps Member, Waubensee Community College District  
Illinois Student Assistance Commission  
[Leo.Flood@illinois.gov](mailto:Leo.Flood@illinois.gov)  
Phone # (630)-723-7948

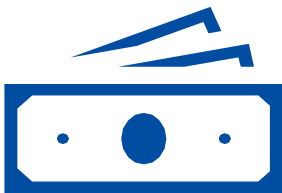


# About ISAC

## The college access and financial aid agency in Illinois



- Administers different types of financial aid programs
  - Grants
  - Scholarships
  - Prepaid tuition
  - Student loan repayment & forgiveness



- Our mission is to provide students with information and assistance to help make education beyond high school accessible and affordable



# Ask Questions!

- There are many things to consider
- Some common questions include:
  - How much does college cost?
  - What is financial aid?
  - When and how do I apply?
- What other things come to mind?
- Ask me, I'm here to help!



# Postsecondary Education

- An institution of higher education that awards a degree or credential post-high school graduation
- Includes, but is not limited to, universities, colleges, and trade schools

<b>Vocational/Trade</b>	▪ Up to 2 years
<b>Associate's Degree</b>	▪ 2 years
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	▪ 4 years
<b>Master's Degree</b>	▪ Bachelor's plus 1-3 years





# What is financial aid?

- Money to help students pay for college
- There are different types of aid (not just student loans)
- Comes from different sources
- Can be ***given, borrowed, or earned***
- Helps cover the gap between what you can afford to pay and the cost of college

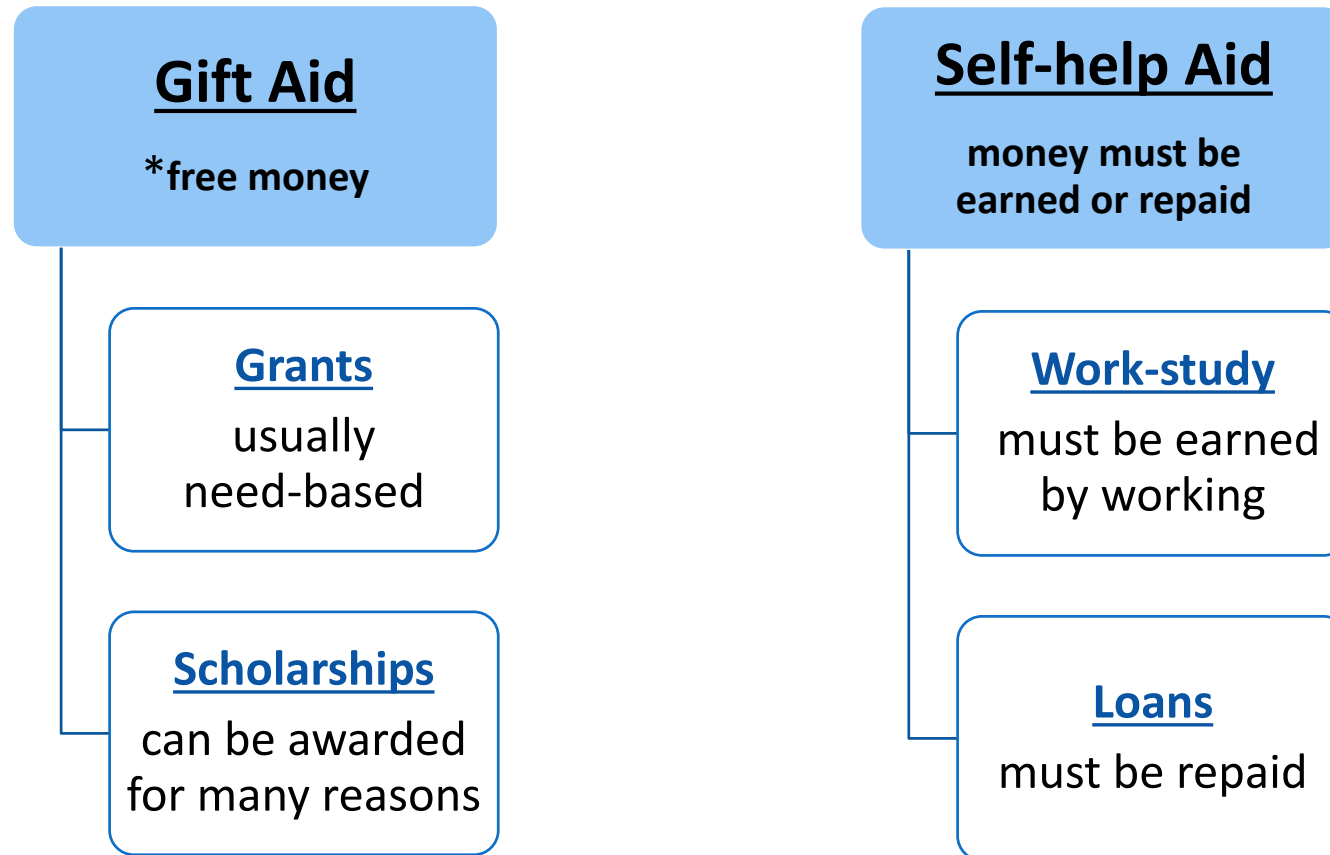
# Cost of Attendance

A budget created by colleges to show the total cost for the school year

- **Direct expenses** must be paid directly to the institution
- **Indirect expenses** must be paid, but not always to the institution

Tuition & Fees	Direct
+ Living Expenses (Food & Housing)	Direct or indirect (e.g., dorm v. apartment)
+ Books, Course Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	Indirect
+ Transportation	
+ Miscellaneous Expenses	
<b>= Cost of Attendance (COA)</b>	

# Types of Financial Aid



\*always read the fine print – free money may have conditions/strings attached



# Financial Aid Sources

- Federal government → U.S. Department of Education (ED)
  - State government → ISAC
  - Colleges and universities → Your institution
  - Private sources → Anyone else that doesn't fit into one of the above
- 
- **Tip #1:** to look for scholarships, think about what you buy, eat, wear
  - **Tip #2:** local scholarships = less competition (smaller applicant pool)
  - **Tip #3:** be careful with **scholarship scams** (don't pay for free money!)

# Federal Gift Aid

## **Pell Grant**

- Need-based
- Up to \$7,395

## **FSEOG**

(Federal Supplemental  
Educational Opportunity  
Grant)

- Need-based & campus based
- Ranges from \$100 to \$4,000

# Federal Self-Help Aid

## **Federal Work-Study**

- Campus-based (only available at participating schools)
- Amounts are determined by the college

## **Federal Subsidized Loan**

- Need-based
- Student is responsible for repaying
- Federal government pays interest while: in school, grace period, or authorized period of deferment

## **Federal Unsubsidized Loan**

- Not need-based
- Student is responsible for repaying
- Student is always responsible for the interest

## **PLUS Loan**

- Credit-based
- Parent (or graduate student) is responsible for repaying

# Illinois Gift Aid

## **MAP Grant**

(Monetary Award Program)

- Need-based
- Up to \$8,400 (only for tuition and fees)

## **IVG**

(Illinois Veteran Grant)

- Tuition & fees

## **ING**

(Illinois National Guard Grant)

- Tuition & fees

## **Grant for Dependents of Police, Fire, and Correctional Officers**

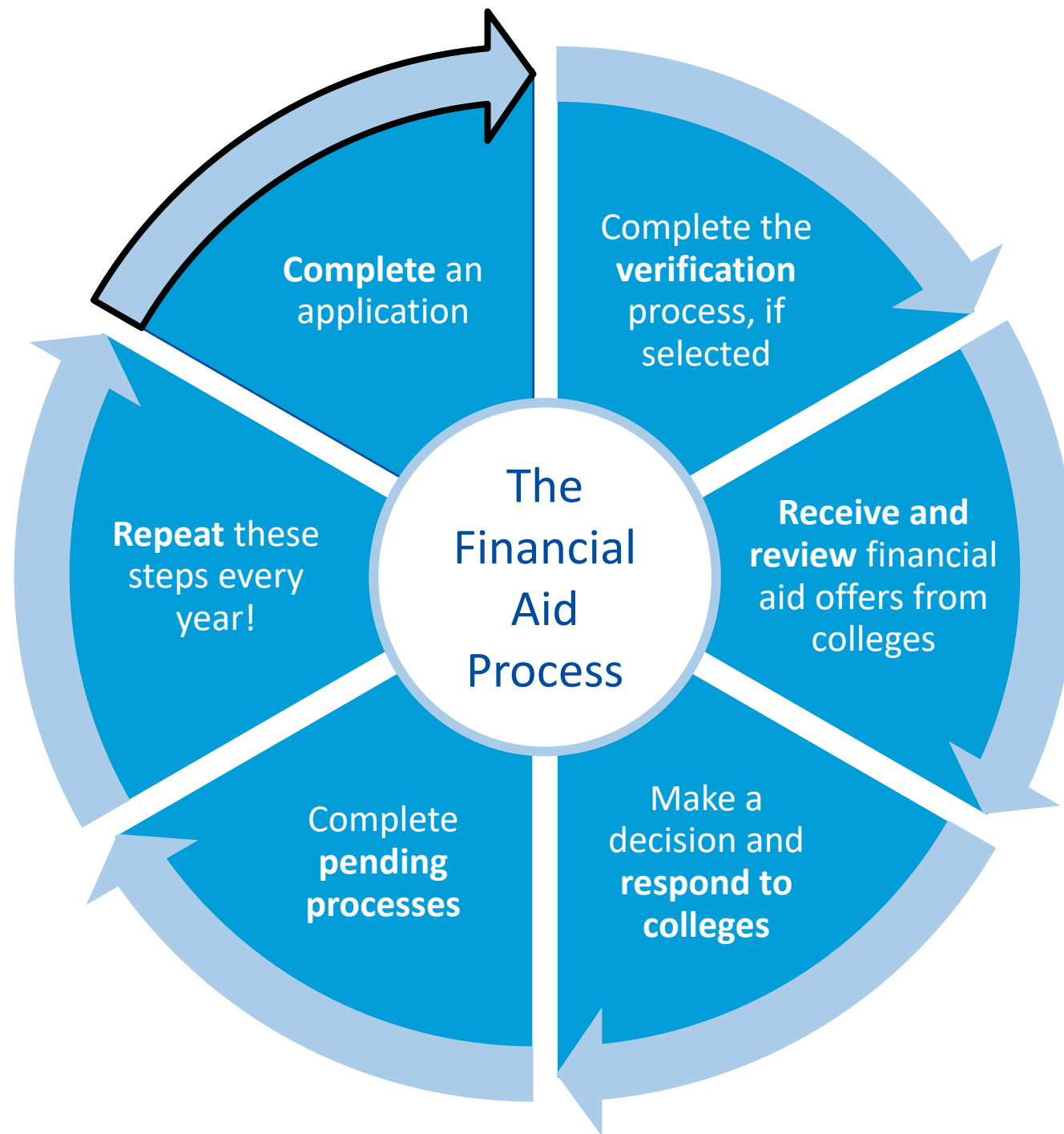
- Tuition & fees

# Gift Aid for Teaching

<b>TEACH Grant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Up to \$3,772</li><li>• Teaching requirement must be met or converts to loan</li></ul>
<b>MTI Scholarship</b> (Minority Teachers of Illinois)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Up to \$7,500 for tuition, fees, room, and board</li><li>• Teaching requirement must be met or converts to loan</li></ul>
<b>Illinois SETTW</b> (Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tuition waiver at public universities</li><li>• Teaching requirement must be met or converts to loan</li></ul>
<b>ECACE</b> (Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Covers cost of attendance after other financial aid received</li></ul>







# Step 1: Complete an Application

- **FAFSA** – the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*
  - The first step for most students – usually available October 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Used to apply for federal and Illinois financial aid
  - Free to file at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)
- **Alternative App** – the *Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid*
  - For qualifying undocumented students – available same day as the FAFSA
  - Used to apply only for Illinois financial aid
  - Free to file at [www.isac.org/alternativeapp](http://www.isac.org/alternativeapp)
- **Other forms** - vary by college
  - Institutional forms
  - Other applications like the CSS Profile
  - Used to apply for institutional aid

# Gather the Info You Need

- **FAFSA & Alternative Application**

- Federal tax returns, W-2s, and other records of income
- Banking statements and records of investments
- Records of untaxed income
- List of colleges student would like to attend

- **FAFSA Only**

- Student's Social Security Number (SSN), if parent doesn't have one it's okay
- Alien Registration Number, if students is not a U.S. Citizen
- Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID – students and parents must have their own

**Note:** neither application will ask about your parents' immigration status

# Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID

- To submit a FAFSA, you will need an FSA ID
- The FSA ID is a username and password used to access FSA websites
- It serves as your electronic signature
- Students and parents need their own
- It's best to create an FSA ID a few days before starting your FAFSA
- Go to [www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id](http://www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id) to get started
- Parents without a Social Security Number can create one and use one of the following processes to verify their identity
  - Knowledge-based Identity Questions (TransUnion)
  - Manual Verification
    - Attestation & Validation of Identity Form
    - Supporting documentation

# Parent Information

- Most students must report parent information until the age of 24, even if the student doesn't live with them
- For financial aid purposes, only parents listed below should provide info on the application

## Parents

- Biological
- Adoptive
- Stepparent, if married to a biological or adoptive parent

## Not Parents

- Legal guardians
- Foster parents
- Grandparents, siblings, aunts/uncles
- Friends or other relatives
- Other people, even if they claim student on their taxes



# Which Parent Should Report Their Information?

- Are the student's biological/adoptive parents married to each other?
  - Yes → Both parents' information
  - No → Go to next question
- If unmarried, do the biological/adoptive parents live together?
  - Yes → Both parents' information
  - No → Go to the next question
- Did one parent provide most of the financial support for the student in the last 12 months?
  - Yes → That parent's information (and their spouse's, if remarried)
  - No → The parent with greater income & assets (and their spouse's, if remarried)

# Signing Your Application

- The FAFSA
  - Sign using an FSA ID
  - Students and parents need their own
  - Create it at [www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id](http://www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id)
- The Alternative App
  - A personal identification number (PIN) will be used to sign electronically
  - Students and parents need their own
  - The PIN will be generated and sent via email by ISAC

# Student Aid Index

- The application will calculate your Student Aid Index (SAI)
  - If you file a FAFSA, you will see it on your confirmation page
  - If you file an Alternative App, you will not see it, you can ask your college
- This reflects what you can contribute towards your education
- It can be a negative number
- The SAI is used to determine eligibility for federal and IL financial aid
- Some colleges use it for institutional aid eligibility

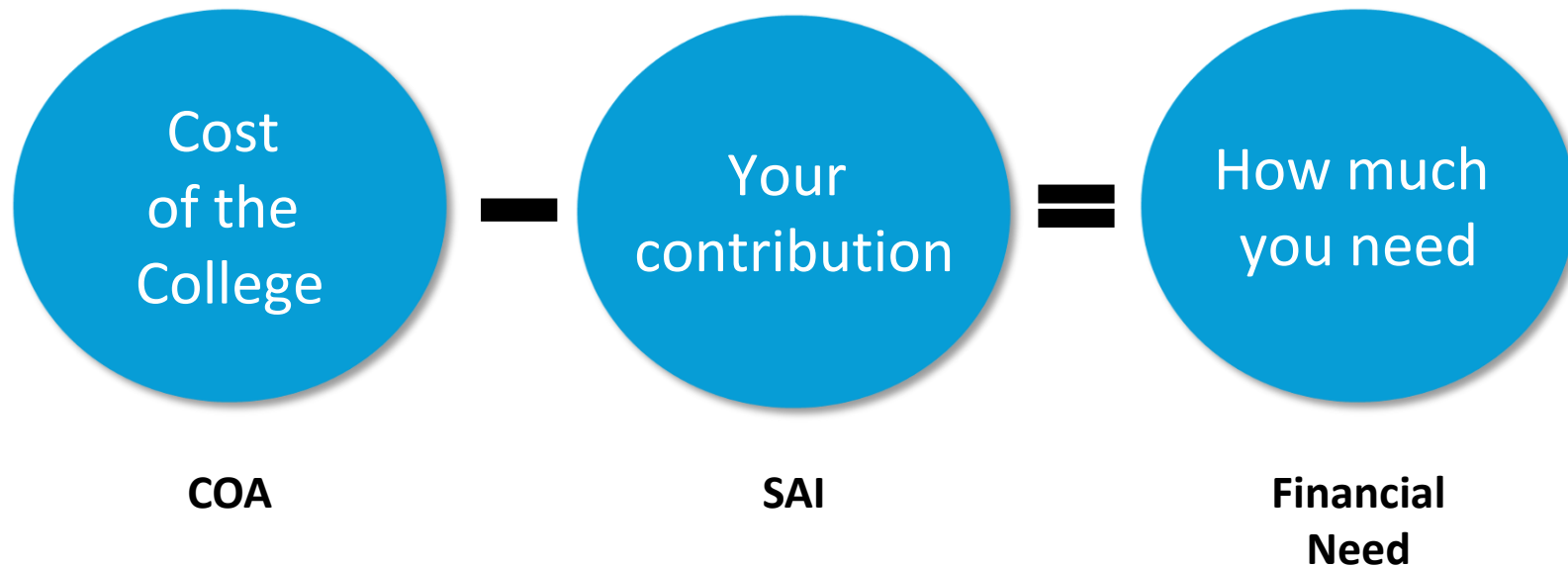


## Step 2: Verification (if selected)

- A process used by schools to confirm your application data is accurate
- Do not be alarmed! It's a common process.
- You may be asked to submit additional documentation.
- Provide only the information requested.
- Submit all documents on time.
- And keep copies of everything!

# Step 3: Receive & Review Offers

- The formula below is used to determine your financial need
- Colleges will try to meet your financial need using all available aid
- All available aid will be packaged into a financial aid offer



# Compare Your Options

- Compare the offers before making a decision
- Financial aid offers will include Other Financial Assistance (OFA) from all available sources

	COA	SAI	OFA	Remaining Need
College A	\$13,357	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,357
College B	\$27,391	\$3,000	\$20,000	\$4,391
College C	\$39,573	\$3,000	\$35,000	\$1,573

## Step 4: Decide & Respond

- Once you make a decision, respond to all colleges
- Accept the offer from the college you will attend
  - This lets them know you plan to attend
  - Serves as confirmation you will receive the aid they offered
- Decline offers from the colleges you will not attend
  - Lets them know you will not attend
  - Frees up the financial aid to give to another student

# Step 5: Complete Pending Processes

- Submit all required forms
- Confirm you will attend (intent to enroll)
- Accept your financial aid offer
- Pay enrollment & housing deposits – or ask for waivers, if needed
- Check your college email/student account to see pending tasks

## Step 6: Repeat the Process Every Year

- Applying for financial aid is not a one-time process
- You must file a FAFSA or Alternative App every year you attend college
- Circumstances can change from year to year, it is important to reapply
  - E.g., loss of income, new family member, marriage, divorce, etc.
  - These things can all affect your eligibility

# Tips & Reminders

**Apply** as soon as applications become available  
(usually October 1<sup>st</sup>)

The FAFSA & Alternative App are **free** to complete  
do not pay anyone!

Keep track of **deadlines!** Missing one can delay your  
financial aid

It's never too early to apply for **scholarships!**

**Reapply** every year you will be in college!

# ISAC Student Portal

**ISAC**  
Student Portal

**COLLEGE PLANNING  
MADE EASY.**

[isac.org/studentportal](http://isac.org/studentportal)

**NOW PLAYING**

**COLLEGE PLANNING AND FINANCIAL AID VIDEOS**

Get quick tips and answers to college planning and financial aid questions. Check out ISAC College Minute videos and more at [www.isac.org/nowplaying](http://www.isac.org/nowplaying)

**APPLY FOR ISAC GRANT/SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS**

APPLY NOW

Create a student profile on the Portal to apply for some of ISAC's specialized grant and scholarship programs:

- Minority Teachers of Illinois (MTI) Scholarship
- Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW) Program
- Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG)
- Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant

You can also use the Portal to check your MAP Paid Credit Hours.

**ISAC**  
Illinois Student Assistance Commission




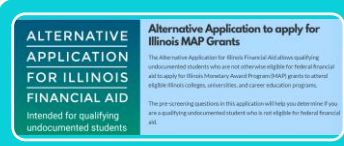
ISAC #F3737 09/21 (22-052-PP 40M 09/21) Printed by authority of the State of Illinois





# Trusted Websites

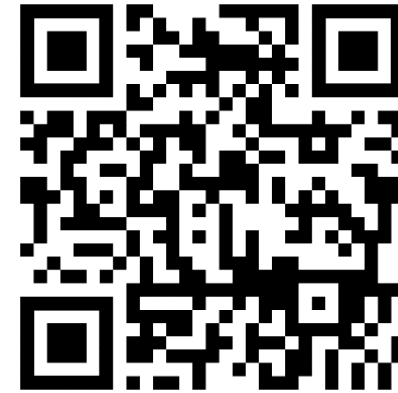
Stay up-to-date and learn more using these free, trusted sources of information

	<p><a href="http://studentportal.isac.org">studentportal.isac.org</a></p>
	<p><a href="http://studentaid.gov">studentaid.gov</a></p>
	<p><a href="http://fafsa.gov">fafsa.gov</a></p>
	<p><a href="http://isac.org/alternativeapp">isac.org/alternativeapp</a></p>



# Get on ISAC's Communication List!

- Get latest news and important updates
  - FAFSA
  - Alternative App
  - ISAC scholarships and grants
- Get notified when financial aid applications are available
- Use your personalized student StriveScan QR code to sign up or via the FGSN page
- Get a StriveScan QR code at [StriveVisit.com](http://StriveVisit.com)



# Thank You!

- Remember, you can get free help to complete an application!
- Find an ISACorps member near you: [studentportal.isac.org/isacorps](https://studentportal.isac.org/isacorps)

Leo Flood  
leo.flood@illinois.gov  
(630)723 7948

Maggy C. Hernandez  
maggy.hernandez@illinois.gov  
(630) 740 0803  
East Aurora High School  
ISACorps Member

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# Q & A Panel

East Aurora High School Graduates:

Xarely Chavez, '22

Sarai Gonzalez, '22

Lizeth Paloalto, '24

