

Unit 6: Paying for College

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Scholarships

Scholarships are free money to your students for college and can be used for tuition and fees, room and board, and textbooks. Under each college in the previous unit is a list or link to scholarships provided by the foundation or institution.

There are six things students should know about applying for scholarships.

1. There is something for everyone.
 - a. No matter what your student's interests are, they will be able to find a handful of scholarships in programs they are interested in.
2. Start early with applying, and do not stop!
 - a. To increase your student's chances of receiving a scholarship, make sure they start their search no later than their first year of high school. Many scholarships allow students to apply way earlier than that, like the Doodle for Google \$10,000 scholarship.
3. Do not apply to every single scholarship.
 - a. Have your students focus on three to five scholarship applications per month. This will give them more time to revise and make sure they submit their best work.
4. Be creative and original with the scholarship applications.
 - a. Never start the essay with the scholarship prompt.
 - b. Avoid using quotes unless it is a part of the essay instructions.
 - c. Watch out for plagiarism!
 - d. Stay on topic.
5. Do not expect to receive every scholarship.
 - a. Make sure your students do not get discouraged if they do not receive a scholarship right away.

6. Applying for scholarships does not have to stop when your students reach college.
 - a. Students can apply for scholarships up to their senior year of college and even further if they choose to continue their education.

Check out these scholarship finders below to help with the process.

- [Big Future College Board](#)
- [CareerOneStep Scholarship Finder](#)
- [ScholarshipOwl](#) - Designed to help speed up the scholarship application time by narrowing down matches based on personality, grades, lifestyle, and more. Once the scholarships are narrowed down, ScholarshipOwl will take the students' initial application information and insert it in the appropriate places on the scholarships of their choice.

Wyoming Community Foundation Scholarships

The Wyoming Community Foundation (WYCF) helps serve donors and communities by connecting them with causes they care about to build a better Wyoming. Not only has WYCF granted nearly \$100 million to charitable causes, but they also provide scholarships to youth around Wyoming. On the WYCF website, there is a step-by-step guide for applying to their scholarships with a list of the scholarships available. Check out the step-by-step guide and scholarships [here](#). They also include a [Common Applications Question document](#) to help youth answer the core questions found on all WYCF scholarship applications. Along with the common application questions, there is also a [Financial Need Affidavit](#) to help with the scholarship application process.

Hathaway Scholarships

Hathaway Scholarships help Wyoming students pursue their college aspirations. "The scholarship has its roots in Governor Stanley Hathaway's 1974 decision to create the state of Wyoming Permanent Mineral Trust Fund. The fund's income would support state government operations – including higher education in Wyoming" (*About*). Back in 2005, a \$400 million permanent endowment scholarship fund was created for qualified Wyoming high school graduates who plan to attend one of the community colleges or the University of Wyoming. "The Hathaway Scholarship program has turned Governor Hathaway's dream of building a better Wyoming into a reality by making attending college possible through merit- and need-based scholarships for qualified Wyoming high school graduates" (*About*).

The Hathaway scholarship offers four different scholarships, Honors, Performance, Opportunity, and Provisional, plus a need-based scholarship as an addition to the four other scholarships. Every Wyoming middle and high school student is automatically eligible. “By maintaining a certain GPA, test scores, and class requirements throughout high school, students have the opportunity to graduate with the Hathaway Scholarship” (*About*). The offers and requirements for each tier are:

	HONORS	PERFORMANCE	OPPORTUNITY	PROVISIONAL
MAX AWARD AMOUNT	\$1,680 per semester	\$1,260 per semester	\$840 per semester	\$840 per semester
	8 full-time semesters			4 full-time semesters. Students with a certificate can extend for an additional 4 full-time semesters at a community college.*
WHERE YOU CAN USE IT	May be used at a WY community college or UW			Must start at a WY community college
LANGUAGE ARTS	4 Years			Current HS graduation requirements
MATH	4 Years <small>Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry and one "additional math" course taken in grades 9-12</small>			Current HS graduation requirements; at least 2 of these courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry
SOCIAL STUDIES	3 Years			Current HS graduation requirements
SCIENCE	4 Years <small>One year may include an "additional science" course</small>			Current HS graduation requirements
Fine and Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education or Foreign Language	4 Years <small>2 years must be a sequenced pathway***</small>			2 years of CTE, FPA or FL <small>(2 years foreign language must be sequenced)</small>
ACT SCORE	25	21	19	17 <small>(Or score a 12 on WorkKeys)</small>
HIGHSCHOOL GPA	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.5

(*Hathaway Scholarship Requirements*).

(include full pdf:)

<https://edu.wyoming.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-Hathaway-Requirements-Flyer-for-Hathaway-Website-1.pdf>).

These are the current Hathaway awards for the 2021-22 academic year. The Legislature has the authority to change the amount and criteria in the future.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA is a form that students need to fill out to receive any financial aid for college from the federal government. Many other scholarships and grants also require students to complete the FAFSA. Students will be asked questions about their own and family's finances, including tax return information, so they will need help from their parents to complete it correctly. Many colleges also use the FAFSA to help determine which students will receive aid and how much aid they will receive. FAFSA has distributed more than \$120 billion in grants, work-study, and loans to over 13 million students who file each year.

Some facts about FAFSA:

- Submitting the FAFSA is the most important thing students can do if they want financial aid.
- The FAFSA is free—students do not need to pay anyone to prepare it for them.
- Students need to submit a new FAFSA before each academic year they want to get aid.
- Make sure students use a permanent email address on the form, not their high school email, so they can use their FAFSA account throughout college.

(College Board).

Wyoming has a great FAFSA website that includes a link to the [application](#), [video resources](#) to help throughout the process, [common questions](#) asked by students and parents, and a link to the [FederalStudentAid App](#). Students will find:

- The complete FAFSA form
- Access a personalized dashboard summarizing their aid, highlighting upcoming loan payments, and providing relevant content and checklists
- A view of their aid summary and detailed loan and grant information
- Notifications about their account and your financial aid
- The status of feedback and borrower defense cases
- Completed documents

Use access the Wyoming FAFSA website, [click here](#).

Additional Resources for FAFSA

- [Apply for Financial Aid / Complete the FAFSA Form](#), Federal Student Aid - U.S. Department of Education
- [Completing the FAFSA: Everything You Should Know](#), U.S. News
- [Filing the FAFSA: A Quick and Easy Guide for the 2021-2022 FAFSA](#), Edvisors
- [FAFSA Tips & Common Mistakes to Avoid](#), National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)

Grants

Grants are financial aid that does not have to be repaid. They are issued by colleges, private and nonprofit organizations, and state and federal governments. There are a few things students should know about grants.

Most grants are need-based and are awarded based on the student's and their family's financial situation. At any point, if their financial need is reduced, perhaps by other financial awards, they may no longer qualify for the grant.

Students will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to qualify for grants. Because most grants are need-based, students must show evidence of their financial needs. Having students complete FAFSA will provide all the information required to prove their level of need.

Grants may have requirements to maintain eligibility. These requirements will vary, but in most cases, eligibility requirements include finishing a program (earning the degree or certificate), keeping a full-time course load, or not fulfilling a service obligation relevant to the grant.

Students may have to repay a grant if they do not maintain their eligibility. Check out the U.S. Department of Education's [Grants page](#) for more details about these specific situations.

(College and Career Readiness Toolkit 147).

The U.S. Department of Education offers a variety of federal grants to students attending four-year colleges or universities, community colleges, and career schools. Below are a few grants the U.S. Department of Education offers.

- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grants

Federal Pell Grants

Federal Pell Grants usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need. These types of grants do not have to be repaid, except under certain circumstances (for example, dropping too many credit hours). Students need to fill out the FAFSA application discussed above to apply for Pell Grants. To maintain a Pell Grant, students must maintain enrollment in an undergraduate course of study at a nonforeign school to receive a Federal Pell Grant. Additionally, they will have to fill out the FAFSA form every year in school to stay eligible for federal student aid. Once students have earned a baccalaureate degree or their first professional degree or have used up all 12 terms of their eligibility, they are no longer eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant. The amount of money awarded depends on:

- Your student's [Expected Family Contribution](#)
- The cost of attendance (determined by your school for your specific program)
- Your student's status as a full-time or part-time student
- Your student's plans to attend school for a full academic year or less.

Amounts for the Pell Grant change yearly. The maximum Federal Pell Grant award is \$7,395 for the 2023–24 award year (July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024).

For more information on Federal Pell Grants, click [here](#).

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)

The FSEOG is given to students with exceptional financial needs and awarded by the financial aid office at each school participating in the grant. However, not all schools participate in this grant. To get an FSEOG, students must fill out the FAFSA application first to determine the students' financial needs. Once the grant is received, it does not need to be paid back, except under specific circumstances.

Students can receive anywhere between \$100 and \$4,000 a year, depending on the student's financial need, when they apply, the amount of other aid received, and the available funds at the school. Each year, participating schools receive a specific amount of FSEOG funds from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid. Once a school distributes the total amount of FSEOG funds to students, no more awards can be made that year. This is different than the Federal Pell Grant Program because funds can be distributed to every eligible student.

For more information on the FSEOG, click [here](#).

Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants

A student might be eligible for an Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant if their parent or guardian died due to military service in these two countries. Students who may qualify for this grant are students who:

- They are not eligible for a Federal Pell Grant based on their Expected Family Contribution but meet the remaining eligibility requirements.
- Their parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. armed forces and died due to military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11.
- They are under 24 years old or enrolled in college at least part-time at the time of your parent's or guardian's death.

Students who wish to apply for this grant should first fill out the FAFSA application. The Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant award is equal to the maximum amount of the Federal Pell Grant for the year it is awarded.

For more information on the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants, click [here](#).

Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grants

The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant is different from other federal student grants. It requires the student to complete a teaching service obligation for receiving the grant. If that obligation is not met, the TEACH grant will turn into a loan and must be repaid with interest added. Students can receive up to \$4,000 a year who are completing coursework needed for a career in teaching. For students to be eligible for the TEACH Grant, they must:

- Meet the federal student aid program's basic eligibility criteria.
- Complete the FAFSA form.
- Be enrolled as an undergraduate, post baccalaureate, or graduate student at a school that gives TEACH Grants.
- Be enrolled in a TEACH Grant-eligible program.
- Meet specific academic achievement requirements.
- Receive TEACH Grant Counseling
- Sign an agreement to serve or repay.

For more information on TEACH Grants, click [here](#).

Loans

Unlike scholarships and grants, loans must be repaid, typically with interest. Some interest free loans are available from private organizations, such as Whitney Benefits (Sheridan and Johnson County students). For more information on Whitney Benefits, click [here](#).

Federal Student Loans

Federal student loans are made by the government. They have specific terms and conditions set by law and include many benefits. Some benefits are fixed interest rates and income-driven repayment plans.

Through the U.S. Department of Education, the federal student loan program is the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program. Under this program, there are four types of loans available: Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Direct PLUS Loans, and Direct Consolidation Loans. Direct Subsidized Loans are for eligible undergraduate students who show financial need to help cover higher education expenses. Direct Unsubsidized Loans are eligible to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students but are not based on financial need. Direct PLUS Loans are for graduate or professional students and parents of dependent undergraduate students to help pay for expenses. This loan is not based on financial need, and a credit check is required. Direct Consolidation Loans allow students to combine all of their eligible federal student loans into a single loan and single servicer. There are also Direct PLUS Loans for parents. The parent is responsible for paying these loans, even though they are taken out to benefit their student.

There are some benefits for students when considering federal student loans.

- Federal student loans have a fixed interest rate, and it is usually lower than private loans and credit cards.
- Students do not need a credit check or cosigner to receive most federal student loans.
- Students do not have to begin repaying their federal student loans until after college.
- If the student demonstrates financial need, the government will pay the interest on some loan types while the student is still in school and during some periods after they finish school.
- There are flexible payment plans and options to postpone the loan payments if the student has trouble making payments.
- Depending on the student's job and meeting certain conditions, they may be eligible to have part of their federal student loan forgiven.

For more information on federal student loans, click [here](#).

Private Student Loans

Private loans are made by private organizations. Some organizations include banks, credit unions, a state-based organization, or a state-affiliated organization. The terms and conditions of these loans are set by the lender. They are generally more expensive than federal student loans. Private loans require a credit check to receive the loan. “Private loans differ by lender and by type of loan. Be sure you understand the terms of your loan and keep in touch with your lender about any questions you may have” (*Federal Student Aid*). Check out the links below to find private student loans.

- [Credible](#)
- [eStudentLoan](#)
- NerdWallet’s [18 Best Private Student Loans](#)

Chart of the Differences Between Federal and Private Student Loans

Topic	Federal Student Loans	Federal Parent Loans	Private Student Loans
When payments are due	Payments are not due until after graduation, the student leaves school, or their enrollment status changes to less than part-time.	The parent can choose to put off payments until their student graduates, leaves school, or changes enrollment status to less than part-time.	Many private student loans require students to make payments while in school, but some allow them to put off payments until they are finished with school.
Interest rates	They have a fixed interest rate. It is usually lower than interest rates for private loans and a lot lower than some credit card interest rates. Click here to view current federal student loans interest rates.	They have a fixed interest rate. It is usually lower than interest rates for private loans and a lot lower than some credit card interest rates. Click here to view current federal student loans interest rates.	Private student loans can have variable or fixed interest rates. They may be higher or lower than the interest rates for federal loans.
Subsidies	If the student has financial needs, they may qualify for a loan where the government pays the interest while the student is in school. This is called a subsidized loan.	These loans are not subsidized, and the parent will be responsible for all the interest.	These loans are typically not subsidized, and the student is responsible for all the interest.

Credit check	Students do not need a credit check to qualify, except for PLUS Loans.	The parent's credit will be checked before determining eligibility.	Private student loans often require established credit or a cosigner.
Tax benefits	Interest may be tax-deductible.	Interest may be tax-deductible.	Interest may be tax-deductible.
Consolidation and refinancing	Loans can be consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan. Click here to learn more about the options available.	Loans can be consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan. Click here to learn more about the options available.	These loans cannot be consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan but can be refinanced.
Postponement options	If the student is facing trouble repaying their loan, they may be able to temporarily postpone or lower their payments.	If the student is facing trouble repaying their loan, they may be able to temporarily postpone or lower their payments.	Have the student check with their lender to figure out postponement and loan payment options.
Repayment options	There are several repayment plans, so check out the options here .	There are several repayment plans, so check out the options here .	Have the student check with their lender to figure out repayment options.
Prepayment penalties	There is no prepayment penalty fee.	There is no prepayment penalty fee.	Check with the lender to make sure there are no prepayment penalty fees.
Loan forgiveness	Students may be eligible for some loan forgiveness if they work in public service. Check out the loan forgiveness programs here .	Students may be eligible for some loan forgiveness if they work in public service. Check out the loan forgiveness programs here .	Most private lenders do not offer loan forgiveness, but some student loans from state agencies can be forgiven under certain circumstances.
Receiving help	Contact the loan servicer .	Contact the loan servicer .	Contact your loan servicer first, and if difficulty persists, contact the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for assistance.

Work-Study

Work-study is a federally (or state) funded program that provides funding for part-time employment for students to help finance the cost of college. When students are part of a work-study program, they are paid no less than the federal minimum wage. Below are a few things students should know about work-study.

<p>Students need to complete the FAFSA to be eligible for work-study. On the FAFSA application, a specific section will ask the student if they would like to be considered for work-study.</p>
<p>All colleges and universities do not offer work-study programs, so make sure students check with the financial aid office to see if they are offered. "Around 3,400 colleges and universities</p>

have a Federal Work-Study Program, [according to](#) the U.S. Department of Education, but not all schools do. Check with the financial aid offices at the schools you're interested in to see if they offer work-study" (Nykiel).

Students need to find their own work-study-eligible job and work to earn the awarded amount. While a student's financial aid package may list the amount allocated to a work-study program, it is the student's responsibility to find a job and work enough hours to earn the amount awarded.

Students do not have to accept a work-study offer if they do not intend to use it.

For more information on work-study, check out [Work-Study Jobs](#) and [Federal Work-Study \(FWS\) Programs](#).

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