FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

- ✓ Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov
- ✓ Click on "Before Beginning the FAFSA"
- ✓ Click on "Apply for a PIN" Students and parents should both apply for a PIN number. Expect it to take a few weeks to receive your PIN.

While waiting on your PIN...

- ✓ Gather the following materials

  - o Your Social Security Number
  - o Your driver's license
  - o Your W-2 Forms from the previous year and other records of money earned
  - o Your (and your spouse's, if you are married) Federal Income Tax Return from the previous year - IRS Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ
  - o Your parents' Federal Income Tax Return from the previous year
  - o Your untaxed income records from the previous year - Social Security, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, welfare, or veterans benefits records
  - o Your most recent bank statements
  - o Your most recent business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond, and other investment records
  - o Your alien registration number or permanent residence card

  When gathering your materials, keep in mind that you and your parents must complete tax forms but do not have to file them. Although employers do not have to provide the W2 until the end of January, most information to complete the tax forms can be completed with the last paycheck of the year.

- ✓ Print FAFSA worksheet, and complete the paper copy first.
- ✓ Go to "Filling out the FAFSA."
- ✓ Click on "First Time FAFSA on the Web." You may save it and come back later if you need to do so.
- ✓ Create a folder to keep and label it FAFSA (and the year). Keep a copy of everything that you do including the following:
  - o FAFSA worksheet
  - o Copies of your W2's and tax forms
  - o Copies of any saved material from the web including a printed copy of the FAFSA that you submitted online.
  - o Any correspondence related to the FAFSA (such as yours and your parents' PIN number paperwork)
  - o Copy of your SAR
  - o Copy of your Financial Aid Package from your school(s)

  Keep in mind that applicants are randomly chosen each year for audit/verification, so you should keep everything in your folder for easy access. Each year create a new folder and keep them from year-to-year.

- ✓ Re-file your FAFSA each year that you are in school. Money available to you will change as your finances change and loan amounts may increase as you progress through school.