

NEWS FROM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Filing FAFSA early gives students better chance at state grants

Alabama students who plan to attend an in-state college or university beginning in fall 2010 should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after Jan. 1, according to KHEAA–Alabama. The FAFSA is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

The FAFSA is used to determine a student's eligibility for federal aid programs, such as Pell Grants, work-study, and student loans. The information from the FAFSA is also used to determine eligibility for the Alabama Student Assistance Program Grant and for many scholarships offered by colleges.

Information provided on the FAFSA determines a student's expected family contribution (EFC), which is how much each student's family is expected to pay toward the student's college expenses. The EFC is based on a formula set by Congress.

While the FAFSA requires the same information needed for federal income tax returns, you don't have to wait until you file your taxes to submit the FAFSA. You can provide estimates on the FAFSA, then file an amended version if you need to. The U.S. Department of Education verifies the information on about a third of all FAFSAs submitted each year, so you should be as accurate as possible when you file.

KHEAA–Alabama has helped thousands of students pay for college. For more information about financial aid and college planning, visit www.alstudentaid.com; write KHEAA–Alabama, 100 North Union Street, Suite 390, Montgomery, AL 36104-3761; or call 334-265-9720, toll free (800) 721-9720.