



Accessing the Scholarship: Frequently Asked Questions

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SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

1. *What are the College Bound Scholarship requirements?*

As part of the College Bound sign-up process, students pledge to:

- Graduate from a Washington State high school or approved homeschool program with a cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher.
- Have no felony convictions.
- Apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid).

In order to receive the scholarship, students must fulfill the pledge and:

- Be income-eligible, as determined by their college with the information from their FAFSA or WASFA.
- Be accepted to an eligible college and begin attending within one year of high school graduation.
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen and Washington resident, or have DACA status.

2. *Do I have to graduate with my high school class to receive College Bound?*

No. You may graduate earlier or later than your original high school class, but you must graduate—a GED does not qualify.

3. *I am a Running Start student and will receive my high school diploma from the college where I am taking classes. Do I meet the requirement?*

Yes. However you will need to provide WSAC with a transcript to confirm that you have met the graduation requirement.

4. *I attend an alternative high school and we do not receive grades. How will I know I have met the 2.0 GPA requirement?*

Ask your principal or registrar to send a letter to WSAC stating that you met the 2.0 GPA requirement.

5. *I am a home-schooled student. What do I have to do?*

In order to assess your academic readiness for college and ensure that you meet the GPA (RCW 28B.118.010), you must provide your results from at least one standardized test to the Washington Student Achievement Council. Acceptable tests include PSAT, SAT, Plan/ASPIRE, ACT, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Tests.

6. Do I have to enroll in college right after I graduate from high school to receive the scholarship?

No. However, you must enroll and earn college credit(s) no later than the fall term (as defined by the college) one academic year following high school graduation. For example, if you graduate by August 2017, you have until fall 2018 to enroll and earn college credit. Be sure you meet all the college's deadlines for class registration and financial aid to complete enrollment.

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

7. Which application should I file?

File the FAFSA if you are a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the most common category of eligible non-citizen is that of permanent resident (someone with a "green card"), but there are other categories as well. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education's website at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/non-us-citizens>.

File the WASFA if you are ineligible for federal financial aid due to immigration status. Find more information at www.readysetgrad.org/WASFA.

8. When do I need to file the FAFSA or WASFA?

The FAFSA and WASFA will open October 1, 2016 for the 2017-2018 academic year. If you plan to attend college in the 2017-18 academic year, you should complete the FAFSA or WASFA as soon as possible after October 1 and should follow the specific deadlines of the college of your choice. This will ensure that you will receive maximum award you are eligible for.

Your college may have additional forms they require for financial aid. To see a list of Washington colleges' financial aid deadlines, visit the Washington Financial Aid Association's website at http://wfaa.org/docs/toc_counselors.html

9. Should I file the FAFSA or WASFA if I'm not sure I'm going to go to college or I'm not sure where?

Yes, both the financial aid applications are free and take less than an hour to complete. If there's any chance you may attend college in the 2016-17 academic year, file the form.

Never pay to complete the FAFSA or WASFA. There are many resources available to help you. Ask your school counselor or visit www.readysetgrad.org/cgw-info for a list of free, statewide financial aid filing events.

10. Do I have to file a FAFSA or WASFA every year I am in college?

Yes.

11. How will the colleges know I am a College Bound student? Do I have to tell them?

No. Colleges will access WSAC's secure portal to determine if you are College Bound. This will happen automatically. Be sure to list every college you are considering on the financial aid application.

12. Is the FAFSA or WASFA the only financial aid form I have to complete?

No. Completing your financial aid application is only the first step of the financial aid process. Your college will likely have other financial aid forms for you to complete. Check the with the financial aid office at the college you wish to attend.

13. What happens after I file my FAFSA or WASFA?

WSAC will match your original College Bound application with your FAFSA or WASFA and notify you by email (the one listed on your financial aid application) if the match was successful. Your parent/guardian will also receive a copy of this email.

If you do not receive an email within two weeks of submitting your FAFSA or WASFA, call us at 888-535-0747, option 1 or email collegebound@wsac.wa.gov.

14. If I make a mistake on my financial aid application or need to update my information, how do I do that?

If you wrote an incorrect email or mailing address, forgot to sign your application, or need to update your income, you may login to make those changes. If you filed the FAFSA and incorrectly reported your SSN, you must contact the Financial Aid office at the college.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

15. How do I know if my family meets the College Bound Scholarship income requirement?

Your family's income must be less than 65 percent of the median family income (MFI). For example, in 2015-16 the MFI for a family of four was \$55,500. To see the complete MFI chart with amounts for different family sizes, go to www.readysetgrad.org/cbs-mfi. Keep in mind that this number changes annually.

16. What does the scholarship cover?

The College Bound Scholarship is an early commitment of state financial aid to cover the projected amount of: estimated tuition at 15 credits (at comparable public rates), service and activity fees, and the equivalent of \$500 (for books). The specific amount will differ at each public institution based upon their specific tuition structure and will be a set amount for private institutions. The state financial aid programs that meet the

College Bound Scholarship commitment may vary by student and may include programs such as State Need Grant, Passport to College, Washington Opportunity Scholarship, the Washington State Opportunity Grant, among others. The 2016-17 maximum awards by institution are listed below:

Maximum CBS Award* 2016-2017		
Institutions		Award
Public Research	University of Washington	\$10,499
	Washington State University	\$10,260
Public Comprehensive	Western Washington University	\$7,031
	Central Washington University	\$6,913
	The Evergreen State College	\$6,825
	Eastern Washington University & Applied Bachelor's	\$6,453
Private Four-year Colleges & Universities		\$11,904
WGU-Washington		\$6,280
Public Community & Technical Colleges		\$4,300
Private Career Colleges		\$4,467

- ****When combined with other state financial aid such as State Need Grant (www.readysetgrad.org/sng). The College Bound Scholarship fills the gap after other state aid has been awarded to reach the maximum CBS award amounts listed above.***
- The other college costs such as room and board, transportation, personal expenses, etc. will be the student and family's responsibility and could be covered by a combination of the family's funds and federal grants, loans, scholarships and work-study.

17. How do I get my allowance for books?

It will be included in your College Bound financial aid award.

18. How much will I get from College Bound?

The amount of your scholarship depends on many factors such as your family's income, Expected Family Contribution (EFC), and the costs associated with the college you attend.

19. Can I attend a private college even though the tuition is more?

Yes. Typically, the College Bound Scholarship covers tuition at comparable colleges which for private four-year colleges would be similar to either the University of Washington (UW) or Washington State University (WSU).

20. What must I do to continue receiving my College Bound Scholarship once I'm in college?

You must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as determined by your college financial aid office– this varies among schools but is typically a 2.0 GPA. You must also file a new financial aid application each year to ensure that you meet the income requirement.

21. How many years can I receive my scholarship?

College Bound is a four-year scholarship (8 semesters, 12 quarters) that must be used within five years of high school graduation. For example, if you graduated in June 2016, you have until June 2021 to earn your certificate or degree. It is to your advantage to complete your bachelor's degree within four years. A bachelor's degree is the highest degree you can earn using the scholarship.

22. Can I use College Bound for:

- *Running Start classes?*
 - No. You must meet high school graduation requirements before you can receive College Bound.
- *Summer classes?*
 - Yes. However, you will use one quarter or semester of eligibility so be sure to take a full load to ensure that you will receive College Bound until you graduate.
- *Online classes?*
 - Yes but they must be at one of the eligible institutions.
- *Study abroad?*
 - Yes, but again, the program must be with one of the eligible institutions.

23. How does federal aid (the Pell, SEOG, etc.) affect my financial aid award?

Think of your financial aid as a complete package – it does not matter which grant pays which expense. Grant aid will combine to cover campus charges and anything remaining will pay for other expenses, such as housing or transportation. The college financial aid office will determine which funds pay tuition.

24. I may need to take a quarter or semester off school. Will I lose my scholarship?

As long as you are still income eligible, you can “re-start” the College Bound Scholarship. Remember two important things: a) The College Bound Scholarship is a four-year scholarship that must be used within five years of high school graduation; and, b) If you don’t take a full load, you are still using one of your quarters or semesters of eligibility.

25. What are college fees? Does College Bound pay for them?

There are various fees charged by the college. College Bound covers only service and activity fees, which are determined by each college. Check the college website for examples of service and activity fees.

26. My family made too much money this year to receive the scholarship, but my father may lose his job next year – could I receive College Bound then?

Yes. Eligibility can be re-evaluated or restarted if you have a valid College Bound application, file the FAFSA or WASFA, and you met the other requirements.

27. We were selected for “income verification” by the college, what does that mean and why were we selected?

This process is a way for your college to confirm the data you reported is accurate, such as tax returns, on your FAFSA or WASFA. It is a random process and it is important that you contact the financial aid office immediately. Don’t delay – doing so could affect your financial aid award and whether or not you can attend college.

Be accepted to an eligible college and begin attending within one year of high school graduation.

FINANCIAL AID AWARD LETTERS

28. Will I receive my Award Letter(s) (offer of financial aid) in the mail or by email?

It depends on the school. Check the website to see if you will be sent an Award Letter or if you have to login and retrieve it from the business office.

29. I received notification that I filed my FAFSA or WASFA and that it matched with my College Bound application, but I still haven't received my financial aid award letter, why not?

POSSIBLE REASON	ACTION
Your FAFSA or WASFA is incomplete.	Check your email for messages from the Department of Education if you filed the FAFSA or with the Council for the WASFA at 1-888-535-0747, option 1.
You did not include the college name on your FAFSA or WASFA.	Check the list of schools on your financial aid application. Make updates if necessary.
You have been chosen for the Verification Process.	Contact the college's financial aid office and supply the requested information immediately.
Your high school graduation requirements have not been verified.	Contact the Council to find out if a copy of your final transcript is required. 1-888-535-0747, option 1.
Your family does not meet the income requirements.	Review the income requirements at http://www.readysetgrad.org/cbs-mfi
You missed the enrollment or financial deadline at the college.	Check the college's website to make sure you met the deadline.
The college has not prepared award letters yet.	Check the college's site for when award letters will be sent.

30. I don't understand my Award Letter. Where can I get help?

Check out your college's financial aid web page for an explanation of the Award Letter and an explanation of your options. Many colleges now use the "Shopping Sheet," a standardized financial aid Award Letter. To see an example of a standardized shopping sheet, go to studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/comparing-colleges.pdf

As you make your decision about which college you will attend, comparing award letters is recommended. You can use an online calculator at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/afsa/next-steps/comparing-aid-offers>.

31. I don't see the College Bound Scholarship on my award letter or it's not as much as I expected?

These are a few of the possible reasons; check with your college's Financial Aid office if you have questions.

- Your family's income does not meet the standard of 65 percent of MFI (\$55,500 for a family of four in 2016-17).

- Your financial aid award is greater than your 'need' as calculated by the FAFSA or WASFA
- Other state financial aid was offered that met the commitment of the College Bound Scholarship.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

32. Where can I use my College Bound Scholarship? Is there a list of eligible colleges?

There are 68 eligible institutions in Washington. They include public community or technical colleges, public four-year institutions, approved, independent colleges or universities, and private career colleges where you may use your College Bound Scholarship. Find the list at www.readysetgrad.org/eligible-institutions.

33. Can I attend college part-time?

Yes. However, your College Bound funds will be reduced. For example, 9 to 11 quarter credits is considered 3/4 time and College Bound will be reduced to a 75 percent award. Enrolling in 6 to 8 quarter credits will result in a 50 percent pro-rated award. 3 to 5 quarter credit enrollment will result in a 25 percent award.

34. What type of degree or certificate can I earn?

You may earn any approved degree or certificate offered by one of the eligible schools listed above. Funds may not be used for a Theology program at any school. The highest degree you can earn using the scholarship is a bachelor's degree.

35. When should I apply to college?

Every college has different application deadlines. For some large universities, you may begin applying up to one year prior to your high school graduation. For community college or technical college, you may need to apply several months before classes begin. For exact dates, check with the colleges you are considering.

36. What is a college application fee?

Some, but not all colleges, require an application fee when you apply. There are application fee waivers available. If you qualified for an SAT or ACT test waiver, you should also be able to receive the application fee waiver. Ask the Admissions office about waivers or search the college website.

37. Are there other forms and deadlines?

Yes. You will have to complete forms for the college's Financial Aid Office, Residential Life (housing and meal plan), etc. Respond to all requests immediately – delaying could affect your financial aid award, your housing assignment, or class schedule. So keep a calendar and check your mail or email often.