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| CAREER CRUISER | Getting Financial Aid |

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| **Step 4** | Make a Personalized Career and Academic Plan (PCAP) |
| **Driving Question** | How can I get help paying for postsecondary training? |
| **Goal** | Explore financial aid options and apply. |
| **Standard** | Develop a budget and plan to pay for postsecondary training. (CR.2.4) |

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| **FOR TEACHERS** |

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| **Timeframe** | 1 to 5 roughly hour-long lessons (depending on how much time students will spend researching and applying to financial aid opportunities). |
| **Materials** | Internet access and digital devices.  |
| **Xello** | [Xello](https://xello.world/en/florida-college-career-ready/), Florida’s official K-12 public school career planning and work-based learning coordination system, has tools you can use on this topic! Navigate to ‘Plans,’ ‘College Planning,’ and ‘Local Scholarships’ to get started learning more about scholarship opportunities.  |
| **Overview** | **Beginning*** Reassure students that the U.S. Federal Government provides over [a quarter of a trillion dollars a year](https://research.collegeboard.org/trends/student-aid/highlights) on undergraduate and graduate aid in the form of grants, federal loans, tax credits, and federal work-study. There’s money out there!

**Middle*** Students will learn about different ways of paying for postsecondary training.
* Students will use the FAFSA website to estimate their Federal Student Aid package.
* They will also gather and, as time permits, apply to FAFSA.

**End*** Have students discuss with a partner what scholarships, grants, work-study or loan opportunities they are most interested in learning more about.

**Extension*** Have students review the [Pay for College in Florida](https://www.floridashines.org/go-to-college/pay-for-college) and the [Affordable Education Option](https://www.floridashines.org/affordable-education-options) pages of [FloridaShines.org](https://www.floridashines.org/) and identify scholarships, grants, work-study opportunities and other ways to pay for postsecondary training. Then, have the students create a list of the top five opportunities they are interested in, how much money they offer, and a description of how and when the student applies.
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| **FOR STUDENTS** |

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| **Learn** |

**Financial Aid Options**

While it is common for students to be surprised at how much postsecondary training can cost, there are many options available to help pay for it! The U.S. Federal Government provides [over a quarter of a trillion dollars a year](https://research.collegeboard.org/trends/student-aid/highlights) on undergraduate and graduate aid in the form of grants, federal loans, tax credits, and federal work-study. And, that’s just Federal dollars! There’s also state, private, philanthropic and institutional funds that can help students pay for postsecondary training! There’s money out there! Given that, how much a training program costs should not be an initial determining factor – first see how much financial aid you can get and then weigh your options. Below is an overview of your options to help pay for school.

 **Options for Paying for School**

* **Free Money**
	+ Scholarships **–** money given to students to help pay for schooling, often given because of a student’s accomplishments. This money does not have to be paid back.
	+ Grants – money given to students to help pay for schooling, often given because of the student’s financial need. This money does not have to be paid back.
* **Savings**
	+ Personal or donated money that you have saved up can help pay for school expenses.
* **Earnings**
	+ You could work during school to help pay for tuition and fees.
	+ Schools sometimes offer jobs, such as through the Federal Work-Study Program.
* **Loans**
	+ You can borrow money to pay for school. There are two main ways of doing this:
		- Federal loans – this is money that comes through the U.S. Dept. of Education. You have to pay the money back plus interest. The interest you have to pay back is almost always lower than with private loans.
		- Private loans – this is money from banks and other lenders that are not a part of the government. You have to pay this money back with interest. These types of loans cost more and are less flexible than Federal loans.

You have options! Many, many billions of dollars flow in the U.S. every year to help students pay for school!

**Florida Scholarships**

A number of scholarships exist for Florida students. Complete the [Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA)](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPHome/SAPHome?url=home) to determine eligibility. This includes the [Florida Bright Futures Scholarship](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPBFMAIN/SAPBFMAIN), which covers significant amount of school expenses for many Florida students.

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| **Do** |

**Get Ready to Apply to FAFSA & FFAA**

The Federal Government provides many billions of dollars every year to help students get postsecondary training. This money benefits both students and the economy. [Go to the Federal Student Aid website for Filling Out the FAFSA Form](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out) and answer the below questions. Applying for FAFSA is your first step in getting financial aid! There are a number of steps involved so stick with it!

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| **Reflect** |
| **Estimate Your Federal Student Aid:** Using FAFSA’s “[Estimate Your Federal Student Aid](https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/)” website, how much Federal Student Aid would you receive? You will likely need to speak with a parent or guardian to get income and asset info. |  |
|  **Due Date**: When is FAFSA due for your state? [Visit the FAFSA Deadline page to find out.](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/fafsa-deadlines)  |  |
| **Gather Documents for the FAFSA**: List all of the documents the FAFSA website says you need to gather. |  |
| **Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Criteria**: Visit [the Office of Student Financial Assistance’s Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program site](https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/SAPBFMAIN/SAPBFMAIN) and review the criteria for the different Bright Futures scholarships. List the eligibility requirements of the scholarship most relevant to you.  |  |