

Hi Heidi,

Here are the updates I presented today on behalf of WFAA (Washington Financial Aid Association) EAC (Early Awareness Committee):

- Both the 25/26 FAFSA and WASFA applications are open and processing. Students can access them at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> and <https://wsac.wa.gov/wasfa>
 - Remember the FAFSA applies for BOTH federal and state aid and the WASFA applies for state aid only. IF a student who otherwise would be eligible for federal and state aid but chooses to apply for state aid only they could be missing out on a significant amount of federal funding. If a student is not sure which application they should use please direct them to this WSAC page where it gives information on both applications <https://wsac.wa.gov/wasfa>
- Legislative Updates
 - Context - Washington is facing a significant budget deficit. This is due to several factors that include lower projected revenues, increased costs to maintain existing programs, and end of pandemic federal funding.
 - There is also a new Governor and several changes to the leadership on postsecondary legislative committees.
 - With that said, there is interest and bills connected to FAFSA/WASFA support for students.
 - In the House [HB 1136](#) has a substitute and has passed out of committee and is with the appropriation committee. This focus outreach and support for students pursuing college and apprenticeship opportunities. Funding would be focused on districts with some of the lowest FAFSA filing rates in the state.
 - There is a similar bill in the Senate that also has passed out of committee, [SB 5164](#).
 - In the House - [HB 1557](#) - would expand Guaranteed Admission program
 - There are also several other bills that are connected to Promise programs and expanding eligibility to the Washington College Grant. It is still early in the process to know what might continue to move through the process.
- WSAC Financial Aid Outreach Toolkit <https://wsac.wa.gov/fa-toolkit>

Please feel free to reach out with questions and also with suggestions on ways we can offer support to our partners in the important work you all do as you work with students.

April