

Educator Guide: How to Launch Financial Aid Applications

Goal

Students will launch the FAFSA/CADAA application from CaliforniaColleges.edu in order to apply for financial aid and track their progress from within their account on CaliforniaColleges.edu.

Student Materials

This activity does not include a lesson plan. Instead, it is a resource worksheet for students applying to college and tracking this process from within their accounts on **CaliforniaColleges.edu**.

Tips for Educators

1. Ensure that students know how to log in to **CaliforniaColleges.edu**.
2. Encourage students to complete **Module 1: Complete Prep Work for Your FAFSA or CADAA**. Students will find this module by signing into **CaliforniaColleges.edu**, hovering over **My Plan**, clicking on **Lessons**, and selecting the **Financial Aid** tab. In this module, students will:
 - Learn which application is the right one for them.
 - Get a customized plan to help with FAFSA or CADAA.
 - Get a FAFSA/CADAA checklist so they can be ready to apply as soon as the application opens.
3. Review these step-by-step tutorials to see each of the steps your students will take on CaliforniaColleges.edu: [How to Use the Interactive Tutorials](#), [How to Launch Your Financial Aid Application](#), and [How to Track Your Financial Aid Application](#).
 - Review Download PDFs of video tutorials in landscape orientation to create a printable packet with step-by-step instructions.
 - Not familiar with the type of tutorial liked above? Review [How to Use the Interactive Tutorials](#).

Tracking Application Completion

- The first **FAFSA/CADAA** launch date and application status are populated for students when they launch **FAFSA/CADAA** from within their accounts on **CaliforniaColleges.edu**. Educators have associated reports.

Launch Applications Directly from CaliforniaColleges.edu

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Students will launch the FAFSA/CADAA application from CaliforniaColleges.edu in order to apply for financial aid and track their progress from within their account on CaliforniaColleges.edu.

What are FAFSA and CADAA?

Financial aid makes college cost less. You can only qualify for financial aid if you apply for it. There are two financial aid applications:

- **FAFSA** stands for **Free Application for Federal Student Aid**.
- **CADAA** stands for the **California Dream Act Application**.

What should I do before I launch FAFSA/CADAA?

On **CaliforniaColleges.edu**, complete **Module 1: Complete Prep Work for Your FAFSA or CADAA**. You will find this module by signing into **CaliforniaColleges.edu**, hovering over **My Plan**, clicking on **Lessons**, and selecting the **Financial Aid** tab.

- You'll learn which application is the right one for you.
- You'll learn which parent/guardian you need to add to the application.
- You'll get a FAFSA/CADAA checklist so you can be ready to apply as soon as the application opens.
- You'll get a customized plan to help you with your FAFSA/CADAA and throughout the financial aid process.

How do I launch FAFSA/CADAA?

Watch the interactive tutorial [How to Launch Your Financial Aid Application](#) or follow these steps:

1. Sign in to **CaliforniaColleges.edu**.
2. Hover over **My Plan** at the top of the page and click on **Lessons**.
3. Click on **Financial Aid**.
4. Click on **Module 2: Launch and Submit the FAFSA or CADAA** and open the first lesson. This lesson helps you:
 - You will be able to launch your FAFSA/CADAA application once the application window opens. You'll be taken to the FAFSA or CADAA website to complete your application (you will only fill out only one form: either the FAFSA or the CADAA).
 - Get guidance on how to complete your application.
 - Get in contact with a financial aid expert.
5. Finish your application as soon as you can. You might get more money if you submit early!
6. Be sure to submit no later than **March 2** in order to qualify for the Cal Grant.

How do I track FAFSA/CADAA?

Watch the interactive tutorial [How to Track Your Financial Aid Application](#) or follow this step:

Click the **Info** button () next to the **Launch FAFSA/CADAA** button to see the following information:

- The FAFSA/CADAA launch date.
- Information on whether or not you have submitted or completed your FAFSA/CADAA.
- Information on whether your school district submitted your Cal Grant GPA.



Note: It is recommended that you use a personal email that you check regularly – not your school-issued email address – when you create your financial aid account.

Not sure how to use the tutorial linked above? Review [How to Use the Interactive Tutorials](#).