

Counselor Connection

February 2021



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Students, parents should take FAFSA verification seriously

The federal government requires many students who submit the FAFSA to verify the information they submitted. In many cases, their parents will also have to provide information. Students requiring verification are chosen by the U.S. Department of Education.

“Higher education and technical training should be accessible to every Kentuckian who wants to further their learning after high school. While it may take additional time, verification ensures that federal financial aid goes to the students who really need help,” Gov. Andy Beshear said. “It’s a process that makes sure the information entered on the FAFSA reflects what students and parents reported on their federal income taxes. It helps ensure that the students who need assistance most are able to receive it.”

KHEAA advises students and parents to take the verification process very seriously. Students chosen for verification must complete the process before they can receive any financial aid. As soon as they are contacted, they should provide any information that is required. Putting it off will only lead to frustration if the process isn’t finished when classes are ready to start.

Colleges may do the verification themselves, or they may contract with an agency to handle the process. KHEAA provides verification services to over 30 schools, about half of them in Kentucky.



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KHEAA publishes the *Counselor Connection* to share information about student financial aid, college preparation and college planning. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please send them to publications@kheaa.com.

KHEAA continues hosting social media outreach

KHEAA Outreach will continue to provide live help in March via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The schedule is:

- **March 2:** Empowering Yourself for Success: Knowing Your Strengths, **Facebook**
- **March 3:** Empowering Yourself for Success: Silver Lining Your Year, **Twitter**
- **March 4:** Empowering Yourself for Success: Stress Management Toolbox, **Instagram**
- **March 9:** Best Practices: College Access, **Facebook**
- **March 10:** Best Practices: Financial Literacy, **Twitter**
- **March 11:** Best Practices: Organizing Yourself in 2021, **Instagram**
- **March 16:** Pot of Gold: Scholarship Party with KHEAA's Lucky Charms, **Facebook**
- **March 17:** Pot of Gold: Grants, **Twitter**
- **March 18:** Pot of Gold: Loans, **Instagram**
- **March 23:** KHEAA Spotlight: Advantage Education Loan, **Facebook**
- **March 24:** KHEAA Spotlight: kheaa.com, **Twitter**
- **March 25:** KHEAA Spotlight: KHEAA's Role in Kentucky Student Aid, **Instagram**
- **March 30:** Myth Busting: Financial Aid, **Facebook**
- **March 31:** Myth Busting: College Life, **Twitter**
- **April 1:** Myth Busting: Admissions, **Instagram**

All sessions begin at 3 p.m. Eastern, 2 p.m. Central.

The links are:

www.facebook.com/KHEAA/

www.twitter.com/KHEAA

www.instagram.com/kheaaoutreach/?hl=en



KHEAA to hold webinars about financial aid

During the spring semester, KHEAA Outreach is offering a series of webinars about financial aid and financial literacy.

The schedule is:

- ***It's Money, Baby!: Your Guide to Financial Literacy***, Thursday, April 1, 7 p.m.
- ***Getting In: High School Juniors' Guide to College***, Thursday, April 15, 7 p.m.
- ***Surviving College: A Guide to Persisting to Graduation***, Thursday, May 6, 7 p.m.

All times listed are Eastern time.

To register, visit <https://kygoestocollege.com/>. That page also has links to videos of previous webinars.

Education commissioner sets virtual tour dates

Kentucky Commissioner of Education Jason E. Glass will hold virtual tour dates during April and May to hear Kentuckians' views about public education in the state.

Nine evening sessions will be held across the state. Each session will last about 90 minutes. All sessions will start at 6 p.m. local time.

[Pre-registration is available](#) for a date you think will work best for you. If you are not sure which date will work for you at this time and would like an invitation for more than one of the sessions, please select all of the dates that may work.

The sessions are scheduled for:

- **April 6:** Greater Louisville Educational Cooperative
- **April 8:** West Kentucky Educational Cooperative (Murray)
- **April 15:** Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (Bowling Green)
- **April 20:** Southeast/South-Central Educational Cooperative (Richmond)
- **April 22:** Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative (Lexington)
- **April 27:** Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Education Services (Cold Springs)
- **April 29:** Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (Shelbyville)
- **May 4:** Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (Hazard)
- **May 6:** Kentucky Educational Development Cooperative (Ashland)



Research highlights financial benefits of college degrees

New research from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education shows that college degrees and other credentials provide a substantial boost to lifetime earnings.

For example, Kentuckians with a four-year bachelor's degree may expect to earn close to \$1 million more during their working lives than those with nothing past a high school diploma.

Even without a degree, having some education after high school adds nearly \$200,000 to the median lifetime earnings of high school graduates. Earning an associate's degree provides another bump of nearly \$200,000.

Even though the overall benefits on lifetime earnings are clear, CPE's research also identified sizable disparities based on gender, race and ethnicity. CPE will release those findings over the coming weeks.

The report can be accessed at <http://cpe.ky.gov/data/publications.html>.

Students may apply for Student Advisory Council

Public school students in grades 10–12 are invited to apply for 14 vacant positions on the 2021–2022 Commissioner's Student Advisory Council, a group that provides input to the Kentucky commissioner of education.

The Commissioner's Student Advisory Council is a year-long program. The group will meet with the commissioner and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff to discuss how state decisions affect students throughout Kentucky. Members will also provide feedback on critical issues impacting Kentucky students and schools.

KDE is seeking students for the council who have ideas and insight into how schools and student achievement can be improved. Students who represent the diverse academic, geographic, demographic and school-size variables for Kentucky are encouraged to apply.

The application deadline is March 12. Interested students should use this [Google form](#) to apply.

Follow these tips to do better on the ACT

Juniors in Kentucky public high schools will take the ACT in March as part of the state's accountability efforts.

“While far from the only measure of a student's potential, the ACT is an important tool to gauge a student's academic readiness if they wish to pursue higher education after completing high school,” Gov. Andy Beshear said. “That's true for those who want to earn a credential in a trade or technical field, just as it is for students who plan to pursue a four-year college degree.”

These tips may help students do better on the test.

- Most of the ACT is based on reading. The more you read, the better you'll do.
- Take advantage of any free ACT prep courses offered by your school or by local colleges and libraries.
- Take practice tests online or buy practice tests for use at home.
- Familiarize yourself with the sections and directions.
- Get plenty of rest the night before, and eat a good breakfast that morning.
- Remember to take No. 2 pencils and a calculator if your school doesn't provide them.
- Do the questions you can answer easily first, then come back to the harder questions, especially in the math portion.
- Guess if you have no idea what the answer is. Guessing doesn't hurt your score.



SAT drops subject tests, optional essay

The College Board, which administers the SAT college entrance exam, will no longer offer subject tests to students in the United States. Students in the U.S. who have signed up for the subject tests this spring will automatically have their registrations canceled and their fees refunded.

In addition, the board will no longer offer the optional essay except in states that require it as part of their accountability standards.

Students can take the SAT with the essay through the June 5 SAT administration. Students who have registered for the essay this spring can cancel that portion at any time, free of charge.

As announced last year, the board will continue to work on developing a digital version of the SAT.

Scholarship Spotlight

Kentucky Association of Government Communicators

KAGC Scholarship

Eligibility: Must be a senior at a public high school the year the award is made, plan to study communications or journalism at any postsecondary school and apply online at www.kagc.net/scholarship.

Award: \$500; nonrenewable

Deadline: March 12

Number: 1

Contact: KAGCScholarship@gmail.com with “Question” in the subject line