

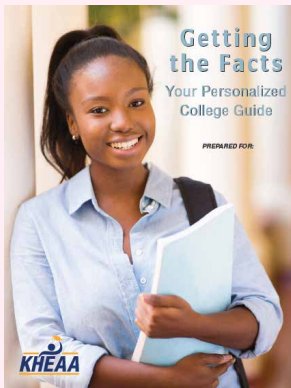


# COUNSELOR CONNECTION

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## Free ‘Getting the Facts’ from KHEAA available



Kentucky students and their families can get a free, personalized “Getting the Facts” report to help them choose the right college.

“Getting the Facts” provides estimates of how much the family can expect to spend and how much financial aid the student may receive.

Students can get estimates for up to six colleges across the United States.

To get their free report, students must log into or set up an account at [www.kheaa.com](http://www.kheaa.com). They should then select their state of residence, enter the date they expect to graduate from high school and click on the “Getting the Facts” link.

Students and parents must provide information about estimated income and assets, and students must provide their Social Security number to set up the account.

For more information, call a member of the KHEAA College Access Team at 800-928-8926.



## Secretary of state’s essay and slogan contest open

Students in grades 6–12 can now submit entries in the 2018–19 essay and slogan contest sponsored by Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes.

The slogan contest is open to students in grades 6–8; the essay contest is for students in grades 9–12. Cash prizes will be awarded to students in both divisions, including \$1,000 awards for the first-place slogan and for the winning essay at each high school grade level.

A \$500 prize will be awarded to the school with the highest participation rate.

The entry deadline is Dec. 21. Visit <https://www.sos.ky.gov/civics/essayslogan/Pages/default.aspx> for more information and entry forms.

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](mailto:publications@kheaa.com).





## Number of students taking the SAT reaches record total

More than 2.1 million students in the national class of 2018 took the SAT, an increase of 25% over the class of 2017, according to the 2018 SAT Suite of Assessments Program Results. This is the largest number of students in a graduating class to take the SAT.

The SAT School Day Program, which allows students take the SAT during regular school hours, continues to expand. Thirty-six percent of the class of 2018 participated in the program.

Students in the 2018 graduating class had an average total SAT score of 1068, a slight increase over last year's class average of 1060.

The full data for the class of 2018 can be found [here](#).

## College Board launches college planning process national scholarship program

The College Board recently launched the [College Board Opportunity Scholarship](#), a national scholarship program that guides high school students through the college planning process and offers them a chance to earn money for their education for each action they complete.

The new program lays out six simple steps all students can take to get to college. Completing each step will earn a chance for a scholarship; doing all six steps will earn students a chance for \$40,000 for their college education.

The six steps are:

- Building a college list: students get started by exploring colleges they're interested in.
- Practicing for the SAT: students use Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy.
- Improving SAT scores: students show how practice pays off by improving their scores.
- Strengthening their college list: students make sure their list has a mix of academic safety, fit, and reach schools.
- Completing the FAFSA: students fill out the free government form to apply for financial aid.
- Applying to colleges: students apply to the colleges they want to attend.

Drawings for the scholarships will take place monthly. Students who complete all six of the actions will be eligible for one of 25 Complete Your Journey scholarships worth \$40,000 each.

The program will launch in December for the class of 2020. For more details, visit

<https://opportunity.collegeboard.org/>.



## Students should not delay filling out 2019–20 FAFSA

Students who have not yet submitted the FAFSA need to do so as soon as possible.

Financial aid is available only to those who complete the FAFSA early. The longer a student waits, the less money there is available.

It's now more convenient than ever for students to fill out the FAFSA by either downloading the new myStudentAid app or by completing the form on the mobile-ready [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).

Now is the time for students to get a jumpstart on financing their education. Things can get busy this time of year, with tests to take, games to watch, and shopping to get done. But first, students should take a few minutes to fill out the FAFSA so they can get the money they need for a good education.

Students can download the myStudentAid app (available for iOS and Android) and fill out the FAFSA form today.

## Students should learn about credit scores

Students should be familiar with credit scores.

A credit score is a three-digit number that has a long-lasting effect on a student's buying power. When applying for credit, a student's credit score will be checked. The higher the credit score, the better the chances students will be approved.

Although there are several scoring methods, the most widely accepted one comes from FICO. A FICO score ranges from 300 to 850. These items make up a FICO score:

- **35 percent is based on payment history.** Early payments will have a higher number than on-time payments, which will have a higher score than late payments.
- **30 percent is based on outstanding debt.** This outstanding debt is how much a student owes on car loans, mortgages, credit cards, etc. The number of credit cards a student has and if those cards are near the maximum borrowing limit will hurt their score.
- **15 percent is based on the length of time with credit.** The longer a student has been borrowing money and paying it back in a timely manner, the better the score.
- **10 percent is based on new credit.** If a student has opened several new accounts, that will have a negative effect on their score. Also, the more inquiries on their credit report in a year, the lower the score.
- **10 percent is based on the types of credit currently had.** It helps to have a mix of loan types. If a student has a credit card, an installment loan will even the credit out.





## STLP regionals highlight student tech skills

More than 7,400 Kentucky students will demonstrate their innovative ideas and technological savvy at regional events as part of the Kentucky Department of Education's Student Technology Leadership Program.

During regionals, teams of K-12 students present their projects to volunteer judges, who then determine whether the teams will earn an invitation to compete at the state championship in the spring. If invited, they will continue to develop and implement their projects throughout the school year, taking into consideration the judges' comments.

### Upcoming Regional Showcase Dates, Locations

- Dec. 4, Western Kentucky University, Diddle Arena
- Dec. 5, Eastern Kentucky University, Virtual Event
- Dec. 6, University of Kentucky, Gatton Student Center
- Dec. 11, East Kentucky Expo Center, Pikeville
- Dec. 13, The Center for Rural Development, Somerset

## Scholarship Spotlight

### Kentucky Association of School Business Officials Scholarship

**Eligibility:** Must be a high school senior; plan to major in education or business; and submit completed application, counselor verification and two letters of reference.

**Award:** \$2,500

**Number:** 3

**Deadline:** Mid-December; see website

**Contact:** Counselor or KASBO website

**[www.kasbo.com/recognition-scholarship/student-scholarships/](http://www.kasbo.com/recognition-scholarship/student-scholarships/)**