

March Senior Bulletin

March 24, 2026

Important Dates for Seniors

April 15	FAFSA 2026-27 Deadline
May 1	National College Decision Day – (read below)
May 4	AP Biology Exam – a.m.
May 5	AP Chemistry Exam – a.m.
May 6	AP English Lit Exam – a.m.
May 7	AP Statistics Exam – p.m.
May 8	AP US History Exam – a.m.
May 11	AP Calculus AB/BC Exams – a.m.
May 12	AP Psychology – p.m.
May 13	AP English Language – p.m.
May 18	Final Exams – periods 1, 2, and 3
May 19	Final Exams – periods 4 and 5
May 20	Final Exams – periods 6 and 7
May 21	Mass and Baccalaureate
May 22	Graduation

National College Decision Day

May 1 of each school year is National College Decision Day. This is the date on which many colleges ask you as prospective students to make a commitment to attend their school. Please check with your school(s) of interest to determine the deadline by which you need to commit. Visit their website or contact them directly. Decision Day typically includes making a non-refundable deposit to hold your spot in their freshman class. Some schools close admissions after this deadline. Even if you have been accepted to the school, they can deny you the opportunity to attend their school if you do not meet their Decision Day deadline.

Financial Aid – 2026-27 FAFSA

Families of seniors attending college next year should plan to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**) **2026-27** to secure need-based aid. Need-based financial aid includes loans, grants, scholarships, and work-based study. The filing window for the **2026-27 FAFSA** in Indiana is October 1, 2025 - April 15, 2026. Please note that colleges/universities typically have an earlier deadline. It is recommended that FAFSA be completed as early as possible. The FAFSA is submitted online and is available at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> and requires parent and student tax information from 2024. To complete a **2026-27 FAFSA**, you will need a student and a parent FSA ID, one for each. Create these at <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>. Once you have your FSA IDs you are ready to complete FAFSA at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. Below is information regarding FAFSA completion support.

Watch the Video on How to Create your FSA ID:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTb7hMVtzco>

Watch the Video on How to Complete the FAFSA:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=875Rbg6uca0>

PFW FAFSA Completion Events: Throughout the next several months, PFW will offer individual support to families completing the 2026-27 FAFSA, regardless of which college the student plans to attend. This is a service PFW provides to the community. Also, the student and a parent will need to each get an FSA ID prior to attending. For more information and to register

to attend any of the upcoming events, visit <https://apply.pfw.edu/portal/fafsa-events? ga=2.178535974.30593742.1761571969-1305279878.1724686937>.

Types of Financial Aid

After you submit your FAFSA, the colleges you listed will soon be sending a Financial Aid Award letter to you. This will include the financial aid package the college is offering you. Please carefully read all the information and respond according to their requests. Make sure you fully understand the types of aid you are being offered and discuss with your parents what you should accept or decline. You are not obliged to accept all that you are offered.

Types of financial aid typically offered

Grants/scholarships - money that is awarded to you that does not need to be paid back

Work-study – secured employment on campus

Loans – money that is borrowed that must be paid back, with interest

Financial Aid Appeal

Once you have received your financial aid award letters from your list of colleges, it is appropriate to appeal for more financial assistance, if needed. [Here](#) is a link to a helpful video that you should share with your parents regarding tips for this process. In the end, you may not receive additional assistance, but it cannot hurt to ask.

Loan Calculator

In order to cover the cost of your education, you may need to secure loans. A loan is a sum of money that you borrow and must eventually pay back, with interest. Any debt accumulated throughout your college career must be paid back to the lender. Keep this in mind when you are accepting/declining the loans offered to you. Also, remember that you will be in school for multiple years and will likely need to borrow money each year. To help you determine what your monthly loan repayments will be, visit the website <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml>. Below is an example of the overall cost of borrowing \$25,000.

Loan Balance:	\$25,000.00
Loan Interest Rate:	6.53%
Loan Fees:	0.00%
Loan Term:	10 years
Minimum Payment:	\$50.00
Degree Program:	Bachelor's Degree
Total Years in College:	4 years
Average Debt per Year:	\$6,250.00
Monthly Loan Payment:	\$284.54
Number of Payments:	120
Cumulative Payments:	\$34,110.29
Interest Paid	\$9,110.29

When borrowing money, always remember to:

Max out your federal aid before you consider the private option. Federal aid often comes with lower interest rates and more favorable lending terms, so fill out a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) if you haven't already. **The FAFSA deadline is April 15!**

Know how much to borrow. One of the most expensive mistakes you can make is borrowing too much money. Budget for all your costs and know that borrowed money should ONLY be used for school-related necessities, not on trips, entertainment, or clothing.

Keep your expected costs down. The less money you plan on spending, the less money you have to borrow. The rule here? Make a budget and stick to it.

Know your borrower's benefits. Private lenders offer various benefits to borrowers. Some provide interest rate discounts for enrolling in auto-repayment or for students who've made a certain number of on-time consecutive payments. Some lenders even cut your premium by a percentage point or two when you graduate. The key here: know what's offered ahead of time and calculate those benefits into your total cost.

Scholarships

If a website is listed with the scholarship information, you may apply directly online. If there is no web address listed, please see Mrs. Stefanek in the guidance office for a paper application. **Be sure to submit applications by the posted deadlines.**

Scholarship Name: IU Credit Union Scholarship

Criteria: Applicant must have at least a 3.25 GPA and applicant or parent of applicant must be a member of the IU Credit Union. Must plan to attend any accredited college or university.

Amount: \$1,500

Deadline: Visit https://www.iucu.org/personal/pdf/High_School_Student_Application_2026-2027.pdf. **The application is on March 28.**

Scholarship Name: Gertrude B. Eckrich Scholarship

Criteria: Students attending a Catholic high school who plan to attend a Catholic college or university. Students must also be members of the Roman Catholic faith to apply.

Amount: Varies; multiple scholarships will be awarded

Deadline: **BD will have multiple recipients for this scholarship. Applications are due by April 1. This is due during our Spring Break, so plan accordingly. Create an account to complete the application at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=cfgfwscholarships>. Click on the Apply button in the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayn box to get started.**

Scholarship Name: Indiana Sheriffs' Association Scholarship

Criteria: Applicant must plan to pursue an education and career in a law enforcement field and must be a member of or the child/grandchild of a member of the Indiana Sheriffs' Association. If you are not currently a member of the association, an application for membership is available with the application for the scholarship.

Amount: \$750; 40 scholarships will be awarded statewide

Deadline: **The application is available at <https://indianasheriffs.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ISA-Scholarship-Application-2026.pdf> and is due April 1, which is during Spring Break.**

Scholarship Name: National Catholic College Admission Association (CCAA) Scholarship

Criteria: Plan to attend a CCAA member school. Most Catholic colleges are members, but a complete list of members can be found at the website listed below.

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: **The application is available online at <http://www.catholiccollegesonline.org/students-parents/financial-aid/nccaa-scholarship.html>. Applications must be submitted by April 1, which is during Spring Break.**

Scholarship Name: Grace Hogan Scholarship

Criteria: Scholastic achievement, character, financial need, and potential to achieve a college education will be considered

Amount: Varies; multiple scholarships will be awarded

Deadline: **BD will have multiple recipients for this scholarship. Application is available online at**

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=cfgfwscholarships> and is due on April 1. This is due during our Spring Break, so plan accordingly. Click on the Apply button in the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayn box to get started.

Scholarship Name: Robert C. Batchelder, DDS Scholarship

Criteria: Must have a 3.0 GPA and plan to attend either IUFW, IUPUI, or IU Bloomington to pursue a career in the dental field.

Amount: \$5000

Deadline: Application is available online and is due by April 1, which is during Spring Break. To access the application visit <https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=cfgfwscholarships>. Click on the Apply button in the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayn box to get started.

Scholarship Name: Fort Wayne Firefighters Fraternal Benefit Association Scholarship

Criteria: Must be the child or stepchild of an active or pensioned Fort Wayne Fire Department employee.

Amount: Not yet determined

Deadline: Visit <https://www.grantinterface.com/Process/Apply?urlkey=cfgfwscholarships>. The application is due by April 1, which is during Spring Break. Click on the Apply button in the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayn box to get started.

Scholarship Name: Central Catholic High School Alumni Association Award

Criteria: Must submit an essay regarding what your Catholic education has meant to you.

Amount: \$500

Deadline: Paper applications are available in the guidance office and are due April 15.

Scholarship Name: Joan and William Brandt Memorial Scholarship

Criteria: Must plan to pursue an education and career in the healthcare profession. Essay required.

Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: Paper application is available in the guidance office and is due by April 15.

Scholarship Name: Ivy Tech Scholarships

Criteria and Amount: Varies

Visit <https://www.ivytech.edu/financial-aid/scholarships.html> for instructions for how to apply.

Scholarship Name: Ivy Tech NEIFAME – Northeast Indiana Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education

Criteria: Have an interest in working while earning a degree in Advanced Manufacturing at Ivy Tech. This opportunity will connect students with employers in the community that will provide financial support, mentoring, and paid work experience while the student is pursuing a two-year degree.

Deadline: Visit <https://neinfame.com/> for more information and to apply.

Scholarship Name: Allen County Extension Homemakers Scholarship

Criteria: Applicant must be an Allen County resident and plan to attend Purdue University West Lafayette or Purdue University Fort Wayne to study Health and Human Sciences.

Amount: \$2,000

Deadline: Application is available at <https://extension.purdue.edu/county/allen/docs/scholarship-app.pdf> and is due on May 1.

Scholarship Name: Ball State University Northeast Indiana Alumni Association Scholarship

Criteria: Must plan to attend Ball State University. Preference will be given to those who demonstrate financial need through completion of FAFSA.

Amount: Varies

Deadline: The application is available at https://forms.bsu.edu/forms/university_alumni_association_northeastern_indiana_alumni_chapter_scholarship_application and must be submitted by May 1.

Where to Find Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded by colleges, businesses, organizations, and individuals. The criteria for scholarships vary, depending on the objective of the sponsor. Places to seek scholarships include:

Colleges: Colleges offer several types of scholarships: merit/talent, departmental, athletic, and academic. Scholarship information should be available on the Financial Aid portion of the school's

website. Some scholarships are automatic and are awarded at the time of application for admission. Others may require supplemental applications, interviews, and/or auditions. Exhaust all possibilities of scholarships offered through the colleges. These scholarships tend to be generous and renewable for up to four years.

Parents' places of employment: Many businesses and corporations offer scholarships to their employees' dependents. Check with human resources.

Student's place of employment: Many businesses and corporations offer scholarships to their employees. Check with human resources.

Clubs/organizations to which parents belong: Many organizations offer scholarships/grants to members' dependents. Check with club officers or the national/state chapter.

Online Scholarship Opportunities

There are countless websites to help you search for scholarships. The scholarship search process is yearlong and ongoing. The sooner you start, the better.

1. Check each potential college's website for scholarship opportunities for incoming freshmen.
2. Naviance has three scholarship search features under the Scholarships and Money heading under the Colleges tab.
3. A few recommended websites for general scholarship searches are:
www.fastweb.com
www.collegeboard.org
www.college-scholarships.com
www.cappex.com
www.scholarships.com
www.learnmoreindiana.org
www.finaid.org
www.commonapp.org

Please note, you should never pay for a scholarship search nor to apply for a scholarship