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## **Shapiro Administration Hosts FAFSA Completion Workshop to Help Pennsylvania Students and Families Apply for Postsecondary Financial Aid**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Today, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) joined the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), local postsecondary students and families, and legislators to host a FAFSA® completion workshop, highlighting the importance of applying for financial aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the first, and most critical, step in applying for financial assistance for the 2024-25 academic year.

The Shapiro Administration is committed to ensuring that every Pennsylvanian has the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed. That’s why Governor Shapiro announced a new blueprint for higher education – a blueprint focused on workforce development and grounded in access and affordability. Under Governor Shapiro’s blueprint, PHEAA State grants would increase by \$1,000, putting more resources in students’ pockets.

“Postsecondary education opens doors for students across the Commonwealth, but without financial aid, college is out of reach for too many students,” **said Secretary Khalid N. Mumin**. “That’s why Governor Shapiro’s blueprint for higher education is grounded in access and affordability for all Pennsylvanians. No matter where you come from or how much your family makes, you deserve to choose your own path to success. Completing and submitting the FAFSA is the first step in receiving both federal and state student aid. By submitting their FAFSA, current and prospective students are not only opening doors to their futures and more options and experiences, but they’re also making those doors easier to open.”

The FAFSA completion workshop gave local students and families the opportunity to correctly and successfully fill out their 2024-25 FAFSA form in person with the help of higher education experts. New this year, the [new 2024-25 FAFSA form](#) expands eligibility for federal student aid, including Pell Grants, and provides a streamlined user experience. Applicants will be able to skip up to 26 questions, depending on their individual circumstances. The new and improved FAFSA form could take applicants as few as 10 minutes to fill out.

“Families of college-bound students, especially those with unique situations and circumstances, may encounter questions and challenges in completing the FAFSA,” **said Senator Wayne D. Fontana, PHEAA Board Chairman**. “Successful completion of the FAFSA is a critical step in obtaining financial aid, so we are pleased to be able to share the expertise of our Higher Education Access Partners to assist them in person.”

Filling out the FAFSA opens doors for current and prospective postsecondary students, in addition to federal, state, and institutional aid, including the [PA State Grant Program](#), which has provided over \$13 billion in awards to almost 8 million students since its inception.

“February is Financial Aid Awareness Month and the perfect time to promote the free resources and assistance we provide to Pennsylvania’s students and families year-round,” **explained James H. Steeley, PHEAA President and CEO.** “It is our public service mission to create affordable access to higher education and hosting free FAFSA Completion Workshops is just one small part of that.”

Financial Aid Awareness Month, occurring each February, is celebrated by the higher education community in an effort to provide crucial information to students and families about access to federal, state, and institutional aid. This Financial Aid Awareness Month, students across the country can begin the process of applying for financial aid through the [newly updated FAFSA form](#).

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Department of Education, please visit the website](#) or follow PDE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), or [Pinterest](#).