

# FAFSA COMPLETION INITIATIVE (FCI) REFERENCE GUIDE



## WHAT IS THE FAFSA COMPLETION INITIATIVE?

The FAFSA Completion Initiative is an initiative that allows high schools, school districts, and other designated entities the opportunity to have access to limited but valuable information to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to assist students with the completion of the FAFSA. The FAFSA form gives students access to grants, loans, and/or work-study funds that may be used to pay toward their educational expenses at their college or university.

## WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE FCI IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND?

- Provide high schools, school districts, and certain designated entities with FAFSA completion information to assist in guiding students and their families through the FAFSA process;
- Increase the number of Maryland students who enter and complete a degree and/or credential;
- Assist in meeting the State goal of a 55% completion rate by 2025 of Marylanders that have obtained a degree or credential; and
- Maximize resources by connecting school counselors, students, and families through FAFSA

## WHAT TYPE OF INFORMATION MAY FCI USERS SEE?

- FCI users within the state will have access to view whether a FAFSA is complete, incomplete, or missing any additional information. Users will be able to confirm whether there is additional financial aid information that is required at the student's prospective college or university.
- This information will only be accessible to those eligible FCI participants who have completed and submitted the participation agreement and have been granted access to MDCAPs.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

High School Districts

High Schools

Non-Profit Organizations

Other Designated Entities

## HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

### Step 1:

- Complete the FAFSA Completion Initiative Participation Agreement.
- The Agreement establishes terms and conditions required by users participating in the FAFSA Completion Initiative (Request by email: [fafsa.mhec@maryland.gov](mailto:fafsa.mhec@maryland.gov))

### Step 2:

Sign and return the FCI Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS) User Agreement. MDCAPs is the software system used by MHEC to allocate state grant and scholarships to Maryland students. By signing the user agreement, FCI users will have specific access to the completion status of each student's FAFSA.

### Step 3:

- An Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) representative will create a username and password for the FCI user upon receipt of the MDCAPS User Agreement.
- OSFA will provide additional guidance to the FCI user once MDCAPs access has been granted.

