

Your Question:

You asked for information about states that require all students to complete a FAFSA, and what policy language is in place to support the requirement.

Our Response:

Most commonly, states require the FAFSA as a condition for receiving state-funded financial aid. In fact, at least one state financial aid program requires completion of the FAFSA in 48 states plus the District of Columbia. **New Mexico** is the only state that does not require the FAFSA for at least one of the two major programs in the state, and **New Hampshire** does not have any state financial aid programs.

Louisiana is a notable exception, where public school students graduating in the spring of 2018 and beyond must complete the FAFSA or state financial aid application, or apply for a waiver as part of their Individual Graduation Plan. This change was made by the State Board of Education in December 2015 in [Bulletin 741](#) (see Chapter 9, Section 901, Part D on page 24). According to ECS research, Louisiana is currently the only state that requires completion of the FAFSA to graduate from high school.

To confirm this assessment, we searched state statutes and regulations for any mention of FAFSA requirements. Several states mention the FAFSA in contexts outside of financial aid or high school graduation requirements, such as:

Financial Literacy Requirements in High School

- **Utah** requires the State Board of Education to adopt course standards in general financial literacy, which includes information about the FAFSA. The statute states, “On or before July 1, 2014, the State Board of Education shall adopt revised course standards and objectives for the course of instruction in general financial literacy described in Subsection (1)(b) that address: (a) the costs of going to college, student loans, scholarships, and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and (b) technology that relates to banking, savings, and financial products” (Utah Code Ann. § 53A-13-108 (West)).
- Similarly, **Oklahoma** requires personal financial literacy education to be taught in public schools, including, “understanding the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), loans and borrowing money, including predatory lending and payday loans” (Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 70, § 11-103.6h (West)).
- Within the general requirements for a course entitled “Financial Mathematics,” designed for students in 10th, 11th, or 12th grades, students in **Texas** must, “[apply] mathematical process standards to demonstrate an understanding for a postsecondary plan,” including sources of aid from the FAFSA (19 Tex. Admin. Code § 130.180). Similar language exists in a 12th grade course entitled, “Economics with Emphasis on the Free Enterprise System and Its Benefits” (19 Tex. Admin. Code § 118.4).

Using FAFSA Completion Rates to Measure Progress

- **Texas** includes FAFSA completion rates by high school as a progress measure to increase enrollment in institutions of higher education, which is targeted at high schools in the lowest ten percent of students graduating from high school and matriculating directly to college (Tex. Educ. Code Ann. § 29.904 (West)).

We hope this information is helpful for you; please don't hesitate to reach out if we can be of any further assistance on this or other education policy issues.