

Scholarship and Financial Aid for College Support

*You absolutely can afford to attend college,
and we support you in reaching your goal.*

BEST Students and their parents can rest assured that *no student need ever say, "I cannot afford to attend college"*. Our mission is to ensure that each and every student in need has sufficient funding available for a college education. *We actively inform our students and their parents about the many and diverse sources of Financial Aid and scholarships available to them.*

At BEST, we build in comprehensive support services to make receiving college admissions, financial aid, scholarship information and applying for both need-based and merit-based scholarships an integral part of our college-going culture and program.

The **first place to begin is to** complete and file the initial **Financial Aid** application known as the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). For a guide to completing the FAFSA, visit: <http://www.fafsaonline.com/> This link contains all of the information students and their parents need to begin funding a college education. Beware of alternative web sites: filing a FAFSA is FREE! You should never pay for financial and scholarship information!

The U.S., Department of Education and Federal Student Aid has a simplified the process for filling out the FAFSA. You can follow each section all of the way through for a comprehensive set of instructions. Visit this site at:

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov./index.htm>

The **State of California** also has financial aid available for students. This aid is provided to students in the form of a Cal Grant. To apply for a Cal Grant, students must complete a GPA Verification paper application, *in addition* to the FAFSA form. Our school counselor will need to calculate your GPA (it is not the GPA on your transcripts). When you get the form, complete it in BLACK ink, then give it to the counselor. The deadline for Cal Grants is **March 2**. Students who complete both forms, have a re-calculated GPA of 3.0+ or are low to middle income may qualify for a Cal Grant. This money can be used for vocational schools, community college, California State Universities (CSU), University of California (UC), and private schools in California.

For students interested in the community college system, there is a second deadline to apply for Cal Grants if you do not qualify based on your 10 th and 11 th grade GPA. The deadline will be September 2 and your senior year grades will also be used to re-calculate your GPA. The form for the September 2 deadline will be at the community college.

The most costly mistakes students and their parents make are:

- failing to file a FAFSA and Grade Verification Form through their high school for state money. This link is for 2007-2008 and provides general information http://www.csac.ca.gov/pubs/forms/grnt_frm/g-4.pdf See your counselor or College and Career Center for next year's information.
- making critical mistakes on the FAFSA that delay or cause the application to be denied
- not meet the filing deadlines-Students should file the FAFSA as soon as possible after **January 1st and renew their financial aid application each year thereafter.**

Our **College and Career Center**, located in room 222 on the McClymonds Educational Complex is available to assist all students and their parents avoid all of the above mistakes. They also assist with Admission on the Spot to colleges, support for completing college applications and more.

We also have an experienced **College Scholarship Coordinator**, Ms. Marsha Rhynes, on our BEST staff, who assists students with personalized scholarship eligibility, application, and logistical support to secure college funding. Finding additional scholarship money for students in need of financial support is her passion and completion of many of the scholarship essays necessary is an integral part of our college curriculum. BEST students may contact Ms. Rhynes at MarshaRhynes@aol.com

We also utilize, network and receive support from our District sponsored College Prep and Scholarship Student Support Services.
http://student.ousd.k12.ca.us/College_Prep_and_Scholarship_Info/Scholarship_information.html

All BEST high school juniors and seniors are enrolled in College Summit, a program dedicated to providing each and every student with what he or she needs to get to college and ensures that all students' potential can be realized. <http://www.collegesummit.org/> BEST students may log in and sign on to College Summit at <http://csnet.collegesummit.net/csnet/sp/Login>

The Merit Award, <http://www.themcclymondsmeritawards.org/> supported by an anonymous donor is available to all eligible MEC students. Our principal, James Gray, Sr., is committed to supporting BEST students through additional partnerships that help to make matriculation in college through graduation a financial reality.

BEST College Prep High School students also have a powerful community support liaison. **Ms. Melissa Buss** represents is the **Project Coordinator & Community Outreach Representative for McGrath Properties, Inc.** Ms. Buss works directly with our students in a myriad of ways to ensure college success for our students. She is a hands-on integral part of our college-going culture.

Ms. Buss represents **BEST High School's** direct partnership and scholarship support for the McGrath Achievement Award, several major scholarships awarded to **BEST** students.
melissa@mcgrathproperties.com

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