









# What to Know about the CSS Profile

*mefa*<sup>®</sup>

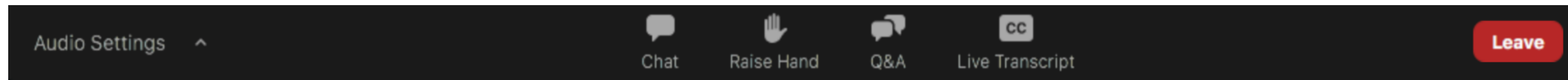
# Connect with MEFA

Scan the QR code to sign up for MEFA emails on relevant college planning topics.



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-  [linkedin.com/company/mefa](https://linkedin.com/company/mefa)
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-  [mefa.org/mefa-podcast](https://mefa.org/mefa-podcast)

# How to Participate



The *Audio Settings* allow you to control the volume levels

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Use the *Live Transcript* feature if you want to see closed captions

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# About MEFA

State authority created by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1982, helping families plan, save, and pay for college



# What is the CSS Profile®?

- College Board's online financial aid application
- Required by roughly 200 colleges/universities & (a few) scholarship programs
  - Check each college/university's financial aid website
- All colleges also require the FAFSA®
- Used to award non-federal financial aid funds
- Opens **October 1st** each year
- Available for both domestic and international students





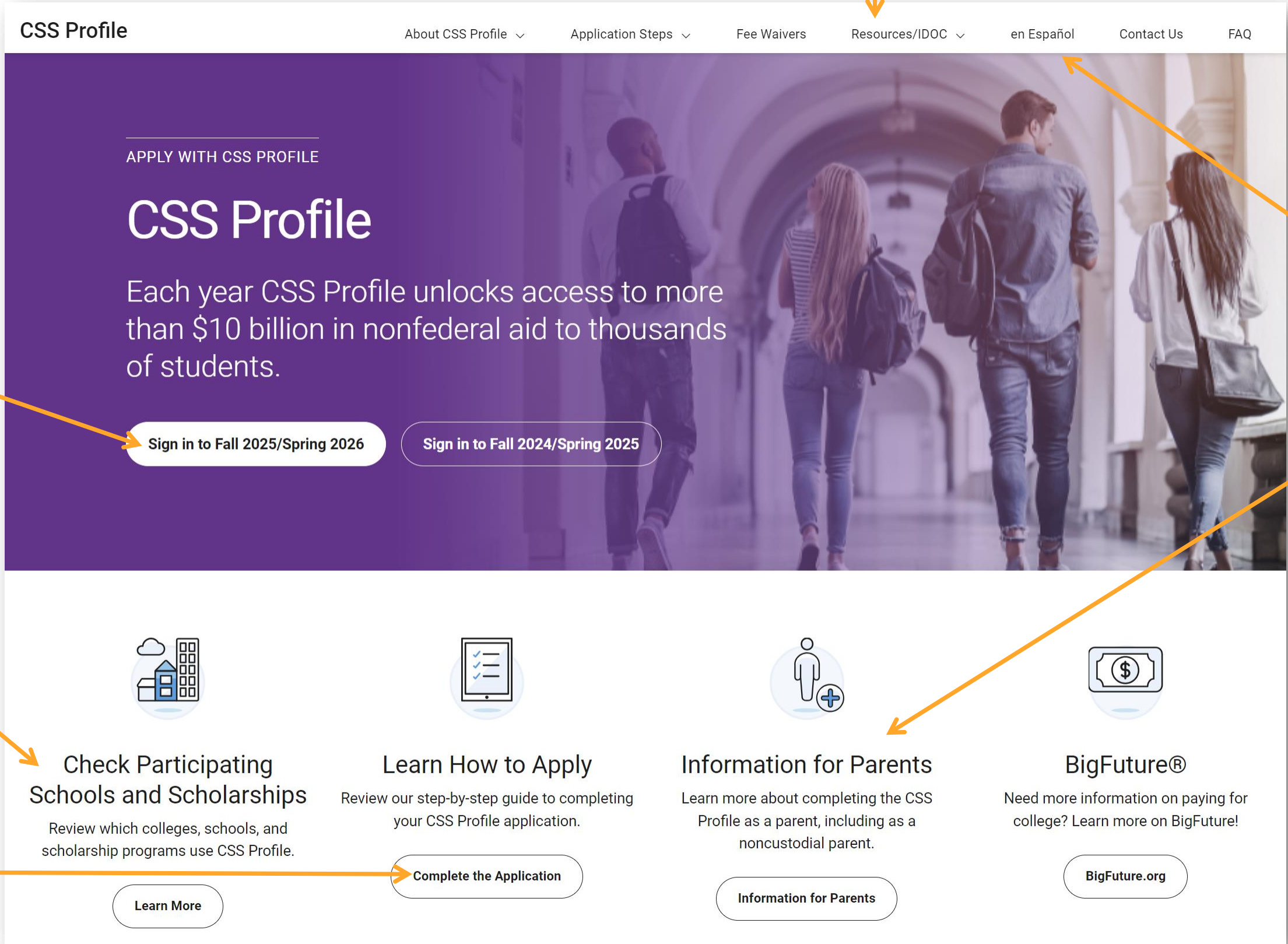
# Why Do Institutions Use the Profile?

- Collects more detailed information than the FAFSA
- Allows schools to ask customized questions
- Permits you to provide special circumstances



# Start Here: cssprofile.org

Links to more info



High school seniors should apply for 2025-26

List of colleges that require the Profile

Profile tips



Spanish

Info for noncustodial parents



# Participating Institutions and Programs

## 2025-26 Participating Institutions and Programs

The following colleges, universities, and scholarship programs use [CSS Profile](#) and/or [IDOC](#) as part of their financial aid process for some or all of their financial aid applicants in the populations listed below. Please check schools' websites or contact the institution for more information.

CSS Code	Institution Name	Institution State	CSS Profile – Domestic Students	CSS Profile – International Students	CSS Profile – Noncustodial Parents	IDOC
Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾	Show All ▾
1001	Adrian College, MI	MI	No	Yes	No	No
5007	American University	DC	Yes	No	Yes	No
3003	Amherst College	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4007	Arizona State University	AZ	Yes	No	No	No
6011	Arkansas State University	AR	Yes	No	Yes	No
0193	Armenian Student Assoc of Amer	RI	Yes	Yes	No	No
3075	Babson College	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2037	Bard College	NY	Yes	No	Yes	No
3795	Bard College at Simons Rock	MA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2038	Barnard College	NY	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
3076	Bates College	ME	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
6032	Baylor University	TX	Yes	Yes	Yes	No



# Additional Resources on Homepage

**Getting Started**  
Here's a list of our most helpful resources to make it easier for you to apply.  
[Get Started](#)

**Fee Waivers**  
CSS Profile is free for families who make up to \$100,000 a year.  
[See If You Qualify](#)

**Divorced or Separated Families**  
Some colleges may require the CSS Profile from both the custodial and noncustodial parent.  
[Learn More](#)

**International Students**  
Many colleges provide scholarship aid to international students.  
[Know What to Expect](#)

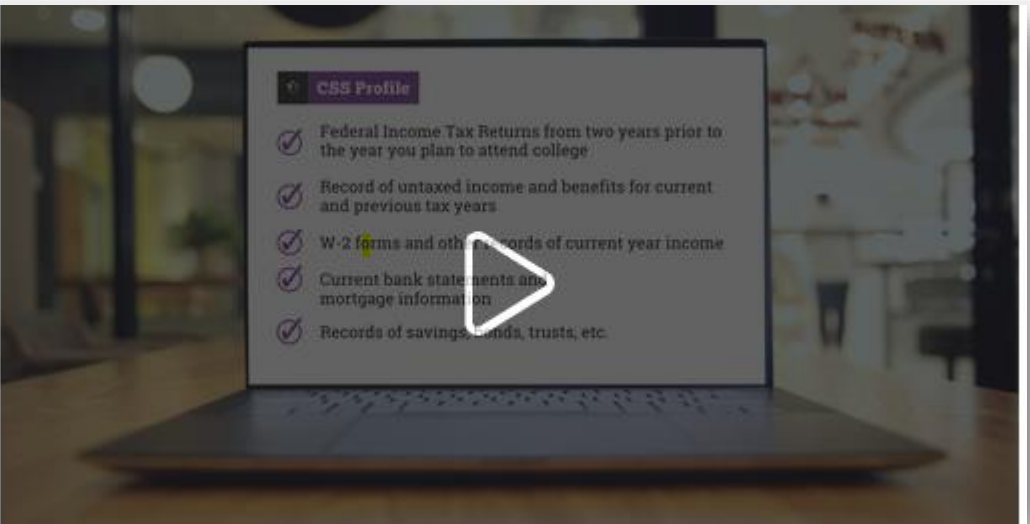
**en Español**  
Estamos listos para ayudarle.  
[Aprender Más](#)

## Resources

<p>DOWNLOAD</p> <p><b>CSS Profile for Students</b></p> <p>PDF   4.01 MB</p> <a href="#">Download</a>	<p>DOWNLOAD</p> <p><b>CSS Profile Waiver Request for the Noncustodial Parent</b></p> <p>PDF   334.92 KB</p> <a href="#">Download</a>	<p>DOWNLOAD</p> <p><b>CSS Profile Fee Waivers</b></p> <p>Read our FAQ for more details on submitting CSS Profile for free.</p> <p>PDF   135.9 KB</p> <a href="#">Download</a>
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## Complete the CSS Profile

Need help completing your CSS Profile? Watch our quick overview to navigate the process and check out our other resources, like the Frequently Asked Questions, to find more information.



# Application Process

## Sign in

- Use **student's** College Board account from SATs/AP tests
- OR create a new student account using **parent's** information
- A separate College Board account is needed for each student

## Customized application

- Based on each student and colleges where student is applying
- Sections are added when they become required

## Modern features

- Complete sections in any order
- Can complete in multiple sittings
- Mobile-friendly



# Application General Tips

- Click *Save and Continue* to move to the next section
- To exit, click *Save and Continue* and then close the browser
- Use buttons in application, not web browser, to navigate
- Use hints and notes for question guidance
- Some questions will offer expandable hints you can click to read
- Answer all questions to which you have answers, such as the SSN
- Can leave an answer blank if it does not apply and is not required

# Parent Information

- Report all parents and step-parents (up to 4) (include deceased)
- Must report date of birth and email address for parent(s)
- Legal guardians should be reported as parents (different from the FAFSA)
- Custodial parent, current spouse, and student provide financial/household info & list of colleges
  - Custodial parent = same as FAFSA = whoever provided more financial support in the previous 12 months
- Some schools require noncustodial parent to submit a Profile (check school's website)
- Student supplies email address of noncustodial parent
  - Either after school selection or in dashboard after submission
  - It is student responsibility to follow up with noncustodial parent

## Application Determination

Which parents' information will be provided on this application?

Select all that apply.

**Note:** If your selected parent is married or living with a partner, select their spouse/partner as well.

Stella Acorn

Stuart Acorn

Stephanie Acorn

What is their marital status? (required)

Married or in domestic partnership

Divorced or no longer in a domestic partnership

Never married

Separated

Widowed



# If Noncustodial Parent Info Not Available

- If no noncustodial parent is listed, student will receive follow-up questions
  - Is noncustodial parent:
    - Deceased
    - Unknown
    - Incarcerated
    - Involved with legal order or documented abuse
  - Is student:
    - A child of a single adoptive parent
    - A child conceived by single parent at time of conception
    - Not in contact with noncustodial parent
- Based on the answers provided, noncustodial parent questions may be removed
- If noncustodial parent info required but not available, send waiver request to colleges
  - Found on CSS Profile parent page: <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/profile-for-parents>

# Noncustodial Parent Instructions

- Noncustodial parent will receive an email request to submit the Profile
- Noncustodial parent completes a separate and secure Profile
  - Use same website: [cssprofile.org](https://cssprofile.org)
  - Must create own College Board **student** account with **parent** information
  - Will use student's CBFinAid ID (included in email)
  - No student financial info provided, just student demographic info
  - Does not select colleges but sees them listed
  - Cannot submit application until at least one college is listed
  - Can use a fee payment code
  - If completing two CSS Profiles, will need to use two accounts under two different email addresses
- Custodial and noncustodial parents cannot see one another's application

# General Information Requested on Profile

- Colleges where student is applying
- Parent & student 2023 income
- Parent & student projected 2024 income
- Parent and student current assets including businesses
- Household member information
- Number of children in college

## Have on Hand

- 2023 federal tax return (will refer to line items)
- 2023 W-2s
- Records of 2023 untaxed income
- Records of all current assets

[–Sections](#) / Parent Income Intro

### Parent Income Intro

To set up the rest of your application, Stella and Stuart will need the following documents:  
2023 1040, including all pages and schedules  
2023 W-2s from each employer

[Continue](#)

[–Go Back](#)

# More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

## All the same FAFSA questions, plus:

### Parent Income

- Untaxed Social Security Benefits, Foreign Income Exclusion, alimony, housing allowances, workers' compensation, and disability benefits

### Parent Assets

- Value and debt of primary home
- Parent assets held in names of children
- Retirement value (asked for, though not often used)

### Parent expenses

- Medical/dental
- Private elementary/secondary school tuition
- Education loan payments

**Parent Housing Details**

Tell us about Stella and Stuart's home.

**Home purchase year (required)**

**?** What if I didn't purchase my home? ▼

**Home purchase price (required)**

**Current market value (required)**

**?** What is market value? ▼

**Total amount owed on home (required)**

**?** What should I enter here? ▼



# More Questions = Better Estimate of Ability to Pay

## Family data

- Other dependents: name, date of birth, relationship to student, year in school, school expenses

## Student data

- Private scholarships
- Employee tuition benefits

## Explanation of special circumstances

- After certain questions and at the end of the application
- Can check a certain category but must provide details
- Note change in income, exceptional expenses, etc.
- Send details to college if happens after completing the Profile

## Supplemental Questions

- Added by each college/university (requesting school will be noted)
- Sometimes not required but strongly recommended to answer

[←Sections](#) / Special Circumstances

### Special Circumstances

Select all circumstances that have ongoing financial impact for your family. (required)

**Note:** Check all that apply. You will have an opportunity to explain your selection(s) on the next page. If you do not have any circumstances to report, select None.

Change in employment

Exceptional medical or dental expenses

**What is eldercare or financial support?** ▼

Eldercare or financial support of other family members

Non-recurring income or expenses

Other

None

**Save and Continue**

# Fees

- \$25 for the application and initial school report
- \$16 for each additional school report
- Payment options: Credit card or debit card
- Noncustodial parent's Profile: \$25 one-time
- Expanded fee waiver policy



# Fee Waivers

- Automatically granted if family meets one of the following:
  - Household income (AGI) is \$100,000 or less
  - Student is an orphan or ward of the court and under 24
  - Student received an SAT fee waiver (must use student's College Board account)
  - Available to freshman/transfer/returning/independent undergraduate students
- Available to students whose parents live in U.S.
- Not available for international students
- Use for unlimited # of schools
- Noncustodial parents: fee waiver if meet same income guidelines above

# Fee Payment Codes

- Purchased by colleges/universities/organizations for use by students
- Each code pays for one college submission
- No limit on use of fee payment codes





# Submitting the Profile

- Will be given a chance to review the application
  - Prompts given to review inconsistencies or possible errors
  - Able to print answers if desired
- Will need to check box to certify that application is accurate
- Will be asked to pay; fee waivers are shown here

[-Sections](#) / Final Charge Summary

### Final Charge Summary

Application Fee	9.00
<b>College(s) Programs(s) selected</b>	
5024	College of Sample(as is) 16.00
<b>Total Charge</b>	25.00

Based on the information you provided on your CSS Profile application, you qualify for a fee waiver. The fee waiver covers all of your CSS Profile fees.

Please note that your receipt of a fee waiver will be reported with your application data to your schools and programs.

Please be sure your application is complete, accurate, and ready to be submitted and then click "Submit" below to submit your application.

<b>Fee Waiver Credit</b>	25.00
<b>Amount Due</b>	0

[Submit](#)

[-Go Back](#)

# Dashboard

- Can access anytime
- Tab on top right of application
- Includes:
  - Application status
  - Each college's submission date, deadline, and additional documents required
  - Next steps required by each school
  - Payment receipt
  - Option to save or print application
  - Opportunity to add a college or program
  - Link to IDOC
  - Space to add noncustodial parent's email address (can be sent multiple times)
  - The student's CBFinAid ID

## Dashboard

Welcome Stanley Acorn!

Academic Year **2025-26**

Your CBFinAid ID: **ZAARSQY**

### Application Status

Submitted on **08/29/2024**

[Save a Copy](#)

[Click here](#) to complete a 5-minute survey to tell us about your experience.

### Colleges & Programs

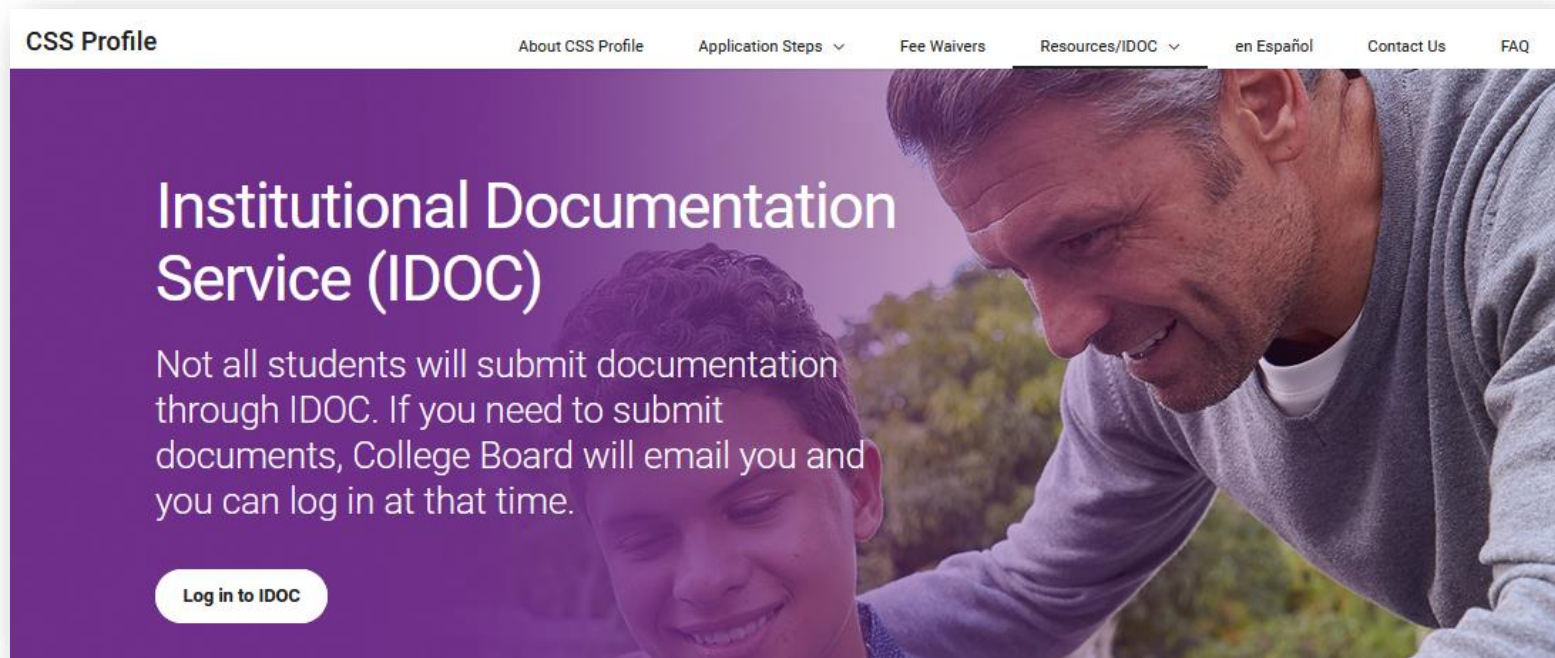
Institution Name ⓘ	CSS Code	Submission Date	Correction Date	Priority Filing Date ⓘ	Priority Filing Date Information	Award Letter Date ⓘ
<a href="#">College of Sample(as is)</a>	5024	08/29/2024				

[Add a College or Program](#)

# Corrections

- Students can submit corrections one time per application for certain situations:
  - Student completed the application as an independent but is actually a dependent
  - Student did not include business or farm information
  - Catch-all drop-down box
    - Options include “made a mistake” and “change in employment”
    - Student can provide a written explanation of the change
- Corrections are permitted only after original application has been delivered (~24 hours)
- Cannot complete a correction and *add college request* at the same time
- No charge to submit corrections

# What is IDOC?



- College Board's Institutional Documentation Service
- Collects family documents (such as tax returns) on institution's behalf
- Not all CSS Profile schools use IDOC; check with each college
- IDOC student dashboard tells student of required documents
- Institution-specific forms are under the *Get Forms* link on the IDOC dashboard
- Documents must be in JPEG, TIFF, or PDF format
- Send ALL tax return pages and schedules to prevent delay
- Sign any documents on signature lines
- IDOC Customer Service: (866) 897-9881
- [idoc.collegeboard.com](https://idoc.collegeboard.com)



# IDOC Overview

**Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC) Overview** 0% Done

**1. IDOC Introduction**

- About IDOC
- Log in to IDOC
- Determining What Documents Are Required
- Uploading Documents
- Checking the Status of Documents
- How to Complete Institutional Forms
- Tips for a Successful IDOC Submission
- Helpful Resources
- Survey


## IDOC Introduction

IDOC is a service that collects family financial documents and distributes them to institutions on behalf of the student.

In this overview, we are going to discuss what IDOC is and guide you through its use. To begin, use the navigation on the left to select the topic you wish to learn more about or view the video in its entirety by clicking play below.

CollegeBoard

### Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC) Overview



-14:01

[slides.collegeboard.org/idoc-student-dashboard](https://slides.collegeboard.org/idoc-student-dashboard)

# Profile Customer Support Center

Click on *Contact Us* on the top navigation bar to reach this page

## Contact Us

**Support Hours:**

- October 1 through February 28: Monday-Friday from 9am-10pm ET
- March 1 through September 30: Monday-Friday from 9am-6pm ET
- Certain holidays may affect these hours.

**Phone Number**

**CSS Profile For Students**  
U.S. and Canada: 844-202-0524  
Para español: 844-202-0524, marque 6  
  
International: 212-299-0096  
  
Applicants need their College Board Security Phrase to validate their identity when contacting the Support Team. Follow the step-by-step guide website link below to recover your Security Phrase.  
  
**Website**  
[Security Phrase Step-by-Step Guide](#)

**IDOC For Students**  
U.S. and Canada: 866-897-9881  
Para español: 866-897-9881, marque 7  
  
International: 212-299-0096  
  
Applicants need their College Board Security Phrase to validate their identity when contacting the Support Team. Follow the step-by-step guide website link below to recover your Security Phrase.  
  
**Website**  
[Security Phrase Step-by-Step Guide](#)

**For Financial Aid Administrators**  
Phone: 866-881-1167  
  
**Website**  
[CSS Profile for Higher Ed Professionals](#)

**For Counselors**  
Phone: 800-626-9795

**Email Address:** [FinaidServices@collegeboard.org](mailto:FinaidServices@collegeboard.org)

**Chat**



# What You Can Do Now

- Research deadlines and required applications
- Start completing applications
  - **The CSS Profile opens Oct 1st**
  - **The FAFSA opens Dec 1st**

**Reference MEFA's Timeline  
for College Admissions  
and Financial Aid**









**Register for other  
MEFA webinars**



# Connect with MEFA

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-  [youtube.com/MEFAcounselor](https://youtube.com/MEFAcounselor)
-  [mefa.org/mefa-podcast](https://mefa.org/mefa-podcast)

# Thank You!

## Questions?



**(800) 449-MEFA (6332)**



**[collegeplanning@mefa.org](mailto:collegeplanning@mefa.org)**

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