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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Apply for financial aid starting Oct. 1, get help at local College Goal Washington events**

**Olympia**—Oct. 1 is the new start date to apply for financial aid in the 2017-18 school year. This is a full three months earlier than in years past. The new start date is one of two changes to the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The second change lets people import their 2015 tax returns to answer income questions. U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens can file the [FAFSA](#). People who are unable to file the FAFSA due to immigration status, can file the [WASFA](#). The WASFA is the Washington Application for State Financial Aid.

Prospective students, including DREAMers, should apply as early as possible. Some types of aid are first-come, first-served. Students should also follow financial aid deadlines for the colleges they want to attend.

People can get help applying for financial aid or college at local public events, sponsored by College Goal Washington. In October and November, over 120 events will take place throughout the state. Anyone who wants to pursue education after high school can attend these events. Find an up-to-date list of College Goal Washington event dates and locations on [ReadySetGrad.org](#).

“Applying for financial aid is an important step for Washingtonians to continue their education after high school. We hope current students and adults who want to go back to school will take advantage of these events,” said Governor Inslee. “People who apply for financial aid are more likely to enroll in college, where they can get the skills they need to secure living wage jobs and take part in Washington’s thriving economy.”

College Goal Washington helps underserved students access financial aid programs. It is part of the 12th Year Campaign, a Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) initiative to increase educational attainment.

“I am so pleased to see WSAC and community leaders coming together to help Washington state students and families benefit from the new earlier, easier FAFSA,” said U.S. Senator Patty Murray. “I was proud to push for these changes to make it easier for students from all walks of life to have the opportunity to apply for and receive financial aid, and will continue working to make college more affordable and ensure our students can go to college without the crushing burden of student debt.”

This work is made possible through state funding and support from the Washington State Employees Credit Union (WSECU).

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### **About the Washington Student Achievement Council**

The Washington Student Achievement Council is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. The Council has three main functions:

1. Lead statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment.
2. Administer programs that help people access and pay for college.
3. Advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education.

The Council has [nine members](#). Four members represent each of Washington's major education sectors: four-year public baccalaureates, four-year private colleges, public community and technical colleges, and K-12 public schools. Five are citizen members, including one current student. Find us online at [www.wsac.wa.gov](http://www.wsac.wa.gov), on Twitter [@WSACouncil](#), and on [Facebook](#).