INTRODUCTION TO LELA

Who Is Lela?

The Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela) is Louisiana’s non-profit resource for free FAFSA completion and college access, and is a division of the Louisiana Public Facilities Authority (LPFA)—a non-profit public trust established to bring financing assistance and advantages to the people of Louisiana. With a focus on FAFSA completion, Lela’s mission is to develop projects and programs which provide resources for college access and statewide outreach initiatives to help ensure students’ success on their path to and through college. Lela specialists are available to coordinate FAFSA Completion events statewide at high schools upon request and conduct local events. The Lela team also assists families one-on-one with FAFSA Completion at its College Planning Center and through its FAFSA HELPLINE (see back cover). All of Lela’s services are FREE!

Website: www.askLela.org
Follow AskLela on: 

2017 Impact

Lela representatives assisted over 7,000 students across Louisiana in creating their FSA ID and submitting their FAFSA.

7,392 Students

Lela representatives worked with high school counselors statewide to coordinate and conduct nearly 250 FAFSA Completion Events on their campuses.

249 Events

Lela awarded $20,000 in scholarships to Louisiana high school seniors through various outreach campaigns and random drawings.

$20,000 Scholarships

Lela provided 50,000 FAFSA Completion and College Planning Guides to Louisiana students and offered access to an electronic Planning and Paying for College Guide to Louisiana parents.

50,000 FAFSA Guides

What is the FAFSA?
The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Completing this free form is the first step toward getting federal financial aid to help pay for college. It can be filed at www.fafsa.gov.

FAFSA Completion

Louisiana’s Non-Profit Resource for FAFSA Completion & College Access

Lela is committed to doing its part to increase FAFSA completion rates in Louisiana. As a member of the Louisiana Department of Education’s Financial Aid Working Group and as a partner in NCAN’s FAFSA Completion Challenge Grant for the City of Baton Rouge, Lela is committed to providing free assistance to students and their families in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Every student deserves the chance to attend college and receive the financial aid needed to help defray its cost. For more information, please contact us at info@lela.org.
HOW TO USE My FAFSA WORKBOOK

FAFSA COMPLETION It's as easy as 123!

Lela has created this Workbook just for you to help you in successfully submitting your Free Application for Federal Student Aid “FAFSA.” Your Workbook includes great tips and resources, but best of all, an easy 3 step FAFSA Completion Process. Follow the 3 steps below very carefully and keep your Workbook in a safe place since it will include personal information. If any questions arise as you are working toward submitting your FAFSA, please call Lela’s FAFSA HELPLINE at (844) 463-2372. Baton Rouge area students and parents may schedule an appointment for one-on-one assistance at Lela’s College Planning Center. (See back cover for contact information.)

1 STEP 1: FSA ID
Create your Student and Parent FSA IDs at fsaid.ed.gov

You and one of your parents (if you are classified as a dependent student) will each need an FSA ID username and password which serves as your electronic signature on the FAFSA. See page 4 for FSA ID Helpful Hints and instructions including a handy spot to record your notes.

2 STEP 2: FAFSA
Complete your FAFSA at fafsa.gov

The FAFSA is a FREE application. Never pay to apply! You will most likely be submitting the 2019/20 FAFSA. If you plan to attend the summer 2019 semester, please contact your college to inquire if the 2018/19 FAFSA will also be required. See Page 5 for a list of items needed to file the FAFSA and for important Helpful Hints.

3 STEP 3: REGISTER TO WIN A $1,000 FAFSA COMPLETION SCHOLARSHIP AT LELE.A.ORG

Once your FAFSA is successfully submitted, you may register for Lela’s $1,000 FAFSA Completion Scholarship drawing. Lela will award $10,000 in scholarships monthly from October through May. See Page 6 for details on Lela’s additional scholarship opportunities and for great scholarship search resources.

SHARE
FAFSA COMPLETION - CREATE YOUR STUDENT AND PARENT FSA ID USERNAME AND PASSWORD AT FSAID.ED.GOV

1

FSA ID

FSA ID ITEMS NEEDED
- Social Security Number - as printed on your Social Security Card
- Name - as printed on your Social Security Card
- Personal Email Address - Not parent's or school issued
- Cell Phone Number - personal, not shared

FSA ID HELPFUL HINTS
- Your FSA ID username and password serves as your electronic signature
- The student and one parent (if the student is dependent) will each need an FSA ID username and password
- Student and parent cannot use the same email address or cell phone number
- Retain your FSA ID in a secure location
- It is important to verify your email address and cell phone number
- Do not share this information with anyone
- Your FSA ID will be needed annually for FAFSA renewal
- Store a photo of your completed worksheet on your phone for easy access
- Once the Social Security Administration matches your information, your FSA ID can be used to electronically sign your FAFSA

FSA ID WORKSHEET

Create your FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov.

Student Username: ________________________________
Student Password: ______________________________
Email Address: _________________________________
Cell Phone Number: _____________________________

Challenge Questions/Answers:
#1 ______________________________________________
#2 ______________________________________________
#3 ______________________________________________
#4 ______________________________________________

Parent Username: ______________________________
Parent Password: ______________________________
Email Address: ________________________________
(Do not use the same email address that your child used.)

Cell Phone Number: _____________________________
Challenge Questions/Answers:
#1 ______________________________________________
#2 ______________________________________________
#3 ______________________________________________
#4 ______________________________________________

☐ I have verified my Cell Phone Number by entering the secure code that was sent to me in a text.
☐ I have verified my Email Address by entering the secure code that was sent to me in an email.
Submit your FAFSA at fafsa.gov.

Which school year are you applying for Financial Aid? 2019-2020 if enrolling in August 2019

School Year: __________

If enrolling for summer 2019 semester - contact college financial aid office.

Save Key: __________

Your secret word or numbers used to retrieve saved information entered in your FAFSA

NOTE: FAFSA will stay saved for only 45 days if not submitted.

Parent 1: __________

(Mom, Dad or N/A) Be consistent throughout the FAFSA

Date saved: __________

(information will be lost after 45 days if not submitted)

Date signed by student: __________

Date signed by parent: __________

Date submitted: __________
SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES BEGIN AT LEA.ORG. REGISTER TO WIN $1,000!

3 SCHOLARSHIPS

Lela Recommended
FREE SCHOLARSHIP
SEARCH SITES

Scholarship Opportunities
and Resources

www.asklela.org
www.lela.org/freemoneysearch
www.lela.org/financialliteracy
www.osfa.la.gov
www.collegegreenlight.com
www.careeronestop.org
www.fastweb.com
www.scholarships.com
www.actprofile.org
www.louisianabelieves.com
www.fedmoney.org
www.unlockmyfuture.org
www.bigfuture.org

3 WAYS TO WIN
Lela Scholarships!

1. FAFSA COMPLETION
   [TEN $1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!]
   $10,000 in
   Scholarships to be Awarded!
   Louisiana High School Seniors, complete your FAFSA and register
   for a chance to win a $1,000 SCHOLARSHIP!
   RANDOM MONTHLY DRAWINGS: OCTOBER – MAY.
   Register @ asklela.org
   DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2019
   Winners must provide a copy of their FAFSA confirmation page.

2. QUARTERLY DRAWING
   [FOUR $1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!]
   $4,000 in
   Scholarships to be Awarded!
   Win a $1,000 SCHOLARSHIP!
   RANDOM DRAWINGS HELD: SEPTEMBER 30, DECEMBER 31, MARCH 31, AND JUNE 30.
   Register @ asklela.org
   DEADLINE: JUNE 30, 2019

3. FINANCIAL LITERACY
   [ONE $500 SCHOLARSHIP!]
   $500
   Scholarship to be Awarded!
   Win a $500 SCHOLARSHIP!
   RANDOM DRAWING HELD: MAY 1.
   Register @ Lela.org/financialliteracy
   DEADLINE: APRIL 30, 2019

SIX REASONS WHY
FILLING OUT THE
FAFSA IS A REALLY
GOOD IDEA:

1. It's how the government and colleges decide your financial need and award institutional aid in some cases for all income levels.
2. If you have all of your documents, it only takes approximately 30 minutes, and you can do it online for FREE!
3. You might be eligible for federal grants, which you don't have to pay back!
4. The FAFSA is used to award some state based aid - like TOPS!
5. Even if you don't think you'll need a loan, it can't hurt to have a backup plan in place. If you do borrow, only borrow what you need. Loans must be paid back.
6. Work-study jobs are mostly on campus, and you become qualified to apply based on your FAFSA information.
NEED HELP Completing the FAFSA?

STUDENTS & PARENTS

- Lela’s FAFSA HELPLine
  Call (844) 463-2372 for live line-by-line assistance.
- Lela’s College Planning Center
  in Baton Rouge. Schedule an appointment
  for one-on-one guidance at info@lela.org.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

- FAFSA Completion Events. Schedule an Event on your campus at carmichael@lela.org

ALL SERVICES ARE FREE!

Has your FAFSA been SELECTED FOR VERIFICATION? LELA CAN HELP!

Don’t get caught up in the heat of Summer Melt!

Summer Melt is a term used when incoming college-bound students fail to enroll in the fall after high school graduation. They „melt away“ during the summer due to various obstacles. Visit Transit.org/avoidsummermelt for tips to avoid Summer Melt. See Pg. 5 for more details on Verification.

LOUISIANA’S CLASS OF 2019 FINANCIAL AID ACCESS POLICY

LOUISIANA REQUIRES PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS TO TAKE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STEPS AS PART OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL GRADUATION PLAN:

- Submit the FAFSA at fafsa.gov; or
- Apply for TOPS; or
- Submit an opt-out Parental Non-Participation Form or Letter; or
- Submit a Waiver through the school system.

Resource: Louisiana Department of Education www.louisianabelieves.com

12 COMMON FAFSA MISTAKES

1. NOT COMPLETING THE FAFSA - If you don’t complete the FAFSA, you could lose out on thousands of dollars to help you pay for college.
2. NOT USING THE CORRECT WEBSITE - The official FAFSA website is fafsa.gov. Never pay to complete the FAFSA!
3. NOT GETTING AN FSA ID AHEAD OF TIME - Create your FSA ID early to avoid any delays.
4. WAITING TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA - Some financial aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis so get it done ASAP!
5. NOT FILING BY THE DEADLINE - Each school sets its own FAFSA deadline so be sure to check with your school.
6. NOT USING YOUR FSA ID TO START THE FAFSA - Sign in the FAFSA with your FSA ID to prevent common errors and for easier electronic signing.
7. NOT USING THE IRS DATA RETRIEVAL TOOL (IRS DRT) - It is the fastest and most accurate way to enter your tax return information.
8. NOT READING DEFINITIONS CAREFULLY - Take your time to read carefully to avoid processing delays.
9. INPUTTING INCORRECT INFORMATION - Be sure to enter your full name as it appears on your Social Security card and triple check your SSN.
10. NOT REPORTING PARENT INFORMATION - Dependency guidelines are determined by Congress, not IRS. Answer all questions on FAFSA carefully.
11. LISTING ONLY ONE COLLEGE - List all colleges you are considering even if you haven’t applied or been accepted yet.
12. NOT SENDING THE FAFSA - An unsigned FAFSA is incomplete. Sign electronically with your FSA ID which is faster than mailing a signature page.

Source: US Department of Education Blog

Committed to Louisiana students since 1984

FOLLOW US AND STAY CONNECTED!

Ask Lela @askLela askLelaCollegeResources askLela.org

Lela is Louisiana’s Non-Profit Resource for FAFSA Completion and College Access and is a Division of the LFPA.