

**NEXT  
STEPS**

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*I D A H O*  
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# IDAHO COUNSELOR PLAYBOOK

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**LAUNCH**  
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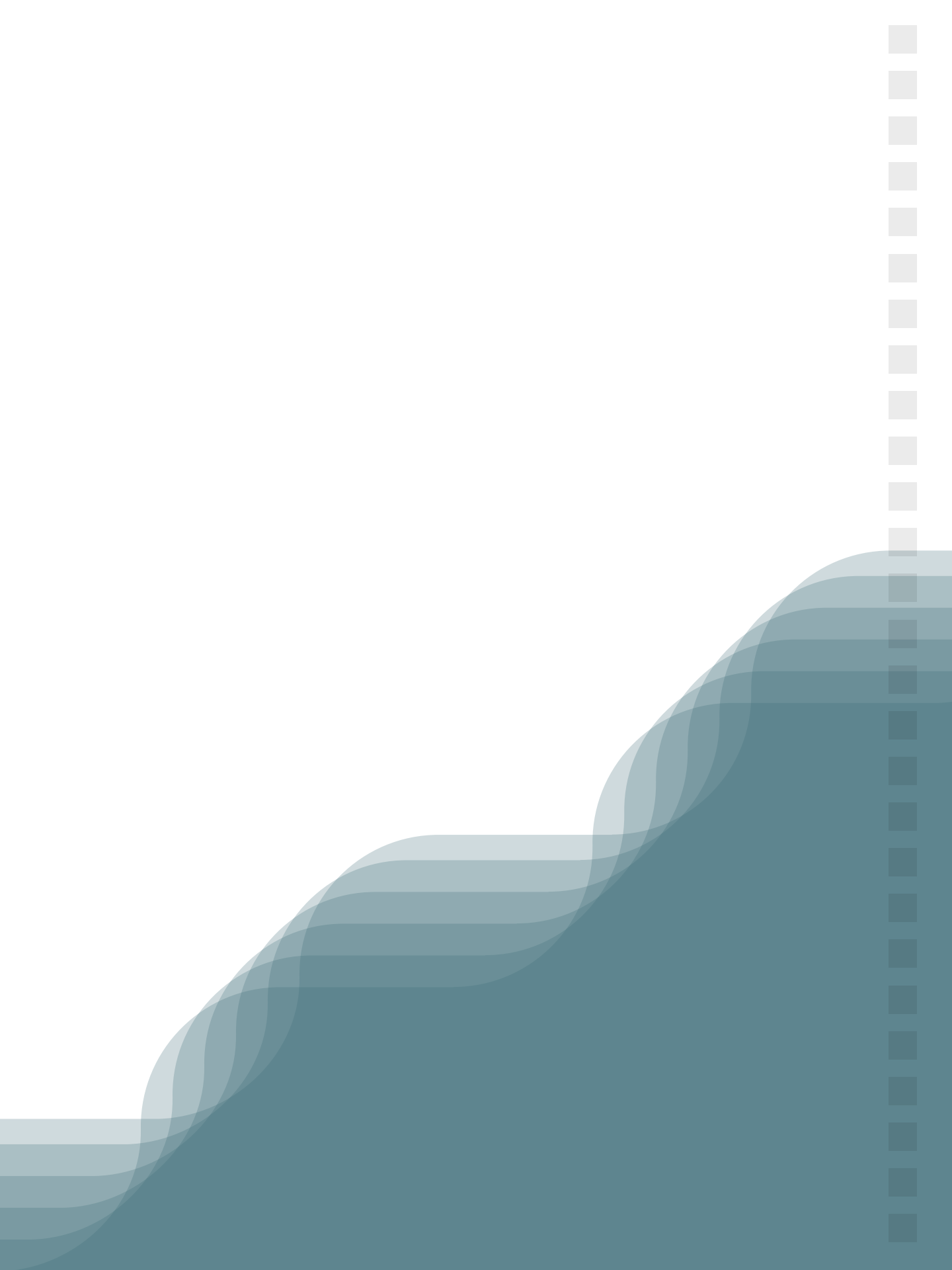




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# PLAYBOOK INTRODUCTION



## DEAR COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELOR,

It's hard to believe that a new school year is once again upon us. It is with excitement and gratitude that we present you with this Idaho Counselor Playbook! We recognize that you are at the forefront of connecting students with their post-secondary opportunities, and we wholeheartedly appreciate your commitment to our Idaho students and their future endeavors. Keeping you in mind, we have designed this Playbook to offer guidance on helping students access information about the post-secondary opportunities available.

There have been a team of people working throughout the summer to prepare the information for you – our hope is that you will be able to seamlessly add the information for the abundance of opportunities that lay in front of your students with the items provided.

You will have up-to-date information through our user-friendly “plug and play” training materials. Each resource has been thoughtfully created to provide support as you engage directly with students, parents, and others. Our materials aim to assist students in successfully navigating their post-secondary journey while helping parents and families gain a clear understanding of the exciting possibilities that lie ahead.

We hope you find this Playbook beneficial. The best way to achieve Governor Little’s goal of making Idaho the place where our children and grandchildren choose to stay is equipping them with the skills needed to become lifelong learners and eventual participants in our state’s workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherawn Reberry".

Sherawn Reberry  
Program Manager, Idaho LAUNCH



## TOP 5 TIPS FOR ADVISORS

If you are a new college and career advisor, counselor, or just new to the role of mentoring students through planning for life after high school, consider the following tips. Then, explore the calendar of sponsored PD and suggested activities on the following pages.

### 1 SIGN UP FOR NEXT STEPS IDAHO NEWSLETTER

Get the latest College and Career development updates via the Next Steps Idaho Newsletter. You can change your subscription preferences at any time!

[nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator#newsletter](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator#newsletter)

### 2 ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES USER?

Sign up for Advanced Opportunities news updates from the Idaho State Department of Education.

[nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao)

### 3 BOOKMARK THE “FOR EDUCATORS” SECTION ON NEXT STEPS IDAHO WEBSITE

Learn about upcoming opportunities for further learning through the Next Steps Idaho website, looking under the Professional Development tab:

[nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator)

### 4 BUILD YOUR NETWORK!

Connect with College and Career Advisors throughout the state by reaching out to your Regional Idaho LAUNCH / Next Steps Idaho Ambassador. You can find their contact information by visiting [nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/idaho-launch](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/idaho-launch).

### 5 FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH IDAHO STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

*Information included in this playbook*

- **Idaho LAUNCH:** A new grant program that aims to connect students with in-demand careers by helping cover the cost of an Idaho university, community college, career technical, or workforce training program.
- **Direct Admissions:** Idaho’s pre-admission program that notifies students in the fall of their senior year, telling them which of Idaho colleges and universities will accept their applications based on GPA.
- **Apply Idaho:** the website allows students to submit one or more applications for admission to Idaho’s public colleges and universities all at once and for free.
- **Scholarship Idaho:** the online application students use to apply for state-managed scholarships.
- **Advanced Opportunities:** Grant program for students in grades 7-12 that covers the costs for dual-enrollment college courses and advanced CTE classes.

# TIPS FOR HOSTING AN EVENT AT YOUR SCHOOL

High School Counselors are often encouraged to organize multiple school events throughout the school year, such as parent nights, back-to-school nights, in-class presentations, College Fairs, and College Application Week. It can sometimes be challenging to know where to begin.

Here are some best practices for hosting successful events:

## PREPARING FOR THE EVENT

### Consider the event format and choose the appropriate date(s)

- Take into account the number of days required to engage all parties, including seniors and parents
- Check whether there are any conflicting events such as assemblies, PSAT testing, or field trips

### Inform and involve school staff

- Advertise the event at an all-school staff meeting
- Send a “heads-up” email to all staff
- Work with Admin to ensure support

### Recruit your team

- Form a committee (for a large event)
- Who can help you? TRIO, College Reps, Fin Aid Reps, etc

### Communicate, communicate, communicate!

- Parents and Students
  - What is the purpose of the event?
  - Where is it?
  - How can they prepare?
- Teachers and Staff
  - Why is the event important?
  - How will it impact them?

## AFTER THE EVENT

### Share your success!

- How many students applied during College App Week?
- How many students attended your FAFSA Night?

Seek constructive feedback from students, parents, teachers, and others involved to gather valuable insight.



# COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q1

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar).

## SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Back-to-School Night
- Parent Night
- Financial Aid Info Night
- College Application Week Events
- College Fair Night

## OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Connect with your Regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates.  
Visit: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit) for templates and materials.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



### Community of Practice

Experts, experienced, open forum, brainstorming



### Skill Building

Learning a new skill



### Spotlight

Focused, in-depth training





# 08

AUGUST

## Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Next Steps Idaho Overview

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Write Welcome Letter to families and teachers explaining role
- Staff meeting presentations
  - Role
  - Idaho LAUNCH
  - Next Steps Idaho
- Review/Submit Advanced Opportunities summer funding
- Make school website updates
- Reach out to your Regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Prep for Back-to-School Night, Parent Night

# 09

SEPTEMBER

## Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Advanced Opportunities (for new AO coordinators)

👉 Spotlight: Idaho LAUNCH

👥 Community of Practice: Counselor Day Events (IACRAO)

👥 Community of Practice: How to Host a College Application Week Event

👥 Skill Building: GEAR UP: Speaker Lab – Delivering Effective Lessons

👉 Spotlight: Apply Idaho Walk Thru

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Update all graduation checks for seniors
- Host Parent Night, discuss Idaho LAUNCH and Next Steps Idaho
- Update Senior Project Plan
- Begin post-secondary meetings with seniors

## Important Dates

- Direct Admissions notifications sent

# 10

OCTOBER

## Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Next Steps Idaho Overview

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Prep and Host a College Fair Night
- Host a College Application Week/Night
- Approve Advanced Opportunities fall funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates

- Idaho LAUNCH Grant and Idaho Opportunity Scholarship open applications October 3.
- Apply Idaho application opens October 2
- Waypoint Conference is October 1–3

## COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q2

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar).

### SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- FSA ID workshop
- Scholarship and Financial Aid Help Sessions
- Advanced Opportunities Night
- ASVAB Night

### OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit) for templates and materials.



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# 11

NOVEMBER

## Professional Development

-  Spotlight: FSA ID, FAFSA
-  Spotlight: Idaho LAUNCH Updates
-  Community of Practice: Dual Credit Advising
-  Skill Building: GEAR UP

## Monthly Focus Tasks




- Plan and Host a Financial Aid night
- Prepare Senior Exit Surveys
- Provide students and parents with the college application timeline available at [nextsteps.idaho.gov](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov)
- Inform students and parents about the common application
- Host an ASVAB Night
- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

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# 12

DECEMBER

## Professional Development

-  Community of Practice: FAFSA Goals, FAFSA Events
-  Community of Practice: Open Mic
-  Skill Building: GEAR UP: Speaker Lab – Delivery Effective Lessons

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Host Scholarship and FAFSA Help Sessions
- Graduation Planning
- Senior Exit Surveys
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates


- Idaho LAUNCH Contingent Offer Letters sent to students
- FAFSA application opens for 2024-2025

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# 01

JANUARY

## Professional Development

-  Spotlight: FAFSA Demo

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Review/Approve Advanced Opportunities funding
- Advanced Opportunities Night/Presentation
- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates

- FAFSA Completion Competition Opens

## COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q3

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar).

### SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Higher Education Days

### OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit) for templates and materials.



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# 02

FEBRUARY

## Professional Development

 Skill Building: FAFSA Changes: Lesson Learned so Far

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Prepare for Higher Ed Day
- Approve Spring Advanced Opportunities funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates

- Tschudy Family Scholarship Deadline is February 15
- Apply for Teacher Externship

# 03

MARCH

## Professional Development

 Skill Building: Financial Aid Offers & Verification

 Spotlight: Legislative Updates

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines


## Important Dates

- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship deadline for applications and renewals is March 1
- Idaho Governor's Cup Scholarship (Academic) Deadline is March 1
- Additional Contingent Idaho LAUNCH Awards announced by March 15

# 04

APRIL

## Professional Development

 Community of Practice: Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Regional Convening

 Skill Building: Helping Students Find their Best Fit

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Check in with Seniors on post-graduation plans
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates

- Idaho LAUNCH applications close on April 15
- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship deadline for Adults (Summer Semester) is April 15
- Idaho Governor's Cup Scholarship (Career/Technical) Deadline is April 15
- FAFSA Completion Competition Ends

## COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q4

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar).

### SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Graduation

### OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit) for templates and materials.



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# 05

MAY

## Professional Development

 Spotlight: Myth Busters

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- College prep
- Senior Exit Surveys
- Senior check-ins with post-graduation plans
- Graduation Planning
- Review/Submit Advanced Opportunities funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

## Important Dates

- Register for the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education's CTE Connect Conference coming up this summer (May 1-30)
- Final contingent Idaho LAUNCH awards will be announced by June 1

# 06

JUNE

## Professional Development

 Community of Practice: Business & Educator Exchange, NNU

 Community of Practice: ISTEM Conferences

 Skill Building: Self-Care, Start Your Summer Right

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Complete the Idaho LAUNCH Feedback Survey
- Senior Exit Survey


## Important Dates

- Apply Idaho Application closes on June 30
- All Direct Admissions Applications must be submitted by June 30

# 07

SUMMER

## Professional Development

 Community of Practice: CTE Connect Conference

 Community of Practice: Idaho Indian Education Summit

## Monthly Focus Tasks

- Fast Forward via Advanced Opportunities
- Plan for Idaho Connect in the '24-'25 school year
- Make virtual, college, military, and program visits
- Prep for College Application Week, FAFSA night, etc.
- Browse the Next Steps Idaho Assessments and Reflections curriculum
- Assessment (college/program searches, scholarship/financial aid).
- ASVAB

## Important Dates

- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship Deadline for Adults (Fall Semester) is July 1.



# IDAHO STATE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

## STATE MINIMUM CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

■ Core Subject Areas .....	29 credits
■ Electives .....	17 credits
■ Additional Requirements .....	See Descriptions
<b>Total Credits .....</b>	<b>46 credit (minimum)</b>

Core Subject Areas		29 credits
<b>Language Arts</b>		<b>9 credits</b>
Language Arts <i>8 credits</i>	Language Arts shall consist of language study, composition, and literature and be aligned to the Idaho Content Standards for the appropriate grade level.	
Communications <i>1 credit</i>	Communications consisting of oral communication and technological applications that includes a course in speech, a course in debate, or a sequence of instructional activities that meet the Idaho Speech Content Standards.	
<b>Mathematics</b>		<b>6 credits</b>
Algebra I (equivalent) <i>2 credits</i>	Secondary mathematics includes Integrated Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Business Mathematics, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Fundamentals of Calculus, Probability and Statistics, Discrete Mathematics, and courses in mathematical problem solving and quantitative reasoning including mathematics taken through career technical education programs.	
Geometry (equivalent) <i>2 credits</i>		
Student Choice <i>2 credits</i>	Dual credit engineering and computer science courses aligned to the state standards for grades nine (9) through (12), including AP Computer Science and dual credit computer Science courses may also be counted as a mathematics credit. Students who choose to take computer science and dual credit engineering courses may not concurrently count such courses as both a mathematics and science credit for the same course.	



## Core Subject Areas

### Science

**6 credits**

Lab-based  
*2 credits*

Student Choice  
*4 credits*

Instruction in the following: earth and space sciences, physical science, life sciences, computer science, biology, chemistry, environment, or approved applied sciences.

### Social Studies

**5 credits**

US History  
*2 credits*

Government  
*2 credits*

Economics and  
Financial Literacy<sup>1</sup>  
*1 credit*

Courses such as geography, sociology, psychology, and world history may be offered as electives, but are not to be counted as a social studies requirement.

### Humanities

**2 credits**

Student Choice  
*2 credits*

May include visual arts, music, theatre, dance, or world language aligned to Idaho content standards for those subjects. Other courses such as literature, history, philosophy, architecture, or comparative world religions may satisfy the humanities stands if the course is aligned to the [Interdisciplinary Humanities Content Standards](#).

### Health

**1 credit**

Student Choice  
*1 credit*

Course must be aligned to [Idaho Content Standards](#) and a student should receive a minimum of one (1) class period on psychomotor cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training as outlined in the American heart Association (AHA) Guidelines for CPR to include the proper utilization of an automatic external defibrillator (AED) as part of the Health/Wellness course.

<sup>1</sup> Beginning in school year 2023-2024, financial literacy is a requirement for high school graduation. Please see Financial Literacy document for reference.

# IDAHO STATE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

## STATE MINIMUM CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

■ Core Subject Areas .....	29 credits
■ Electives .....	17 credits
■ Additional Requirements .....	See Descriptions
Total Credits .....	46 credit (minimum)

<b>Electives</b>	<b>17 credits</b>
<b>Additional Requirements</b>	
<b>District Requirements</b>	The local school district or LEA may establish graduation requirements beyond the state minimum.
<b>Advanced Opportunities</b>	Districts must offer at least one Advanced Opportunity such as Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, Technical Competency Credit, or International Baccalaureate. <a href="#">Advanced Opportunities</a>
<b>Senior Project</b>	The senior project is a culminating project to show a student's ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and communicate that knowledge and understanding. A student must complete a senior project by the end of grade twelve (12). Senior projects may be multi-year projects, group or individual projects, or approved pre-internship or school to work internship programs, at the discretion of the school district or charter school. The project must include elements of research, development of a thesis using experiential learning or integrated project based learning experiences and presentation of the project outcome. Additional requirements for a senior project are at the discretion of the local school district or LEA. Completion of a postsecondary certificate or degree at the time of high school graduation or an approved preinternship or internship program may be used to meet this requirement.



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**Civics Test**

All secondary students must demonstrate that they have met the state [civics and government standard](#) by the successfully completing the civics test or alternate path. Successful completion of this requirement must be reflected on the student's transcript.

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**Physical Education**

High schools are required to provide instructional offerings in Physical Education (fitness). [Physical Education Content Standards](#)

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**Middle School Credits**

Students must meet 8th grade math standards before being permitted to 9th grade.

A student will have met the high school content and credit requirement for any required high school course if: The student completes such course with a grade C or higher before entering 9th grade; course meets the same content standards that are required for high school and course is taught by a properly certified teacher. Parents of middle school students taking a course for high school credit must be notified that the course is available for high school credit and must be given the option as to whether or not the course is transcribed. Students/families paying for courses with Advanced Opportunities funds are consenting to the course being transcribed as high school credit.

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# WORKFORCE READINESS & CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) DIPLOMA

Twenty-first-century graduates are expected to have more skills than ever before. Not only must they have strong academic skills in reading, math, and science, but they must also be able to apply these skills in the workplace. CTE programs are designed to ensure graduates obtain the academic and technical skills that give students multiple pathways to success.

To acknowledge that CTE programs enhance students' high school experience and help prepare them for the demands of today's employers regardless of their path, the 2021 Idaho State Legislature created the Workforce Readiness and CTE Diploma.

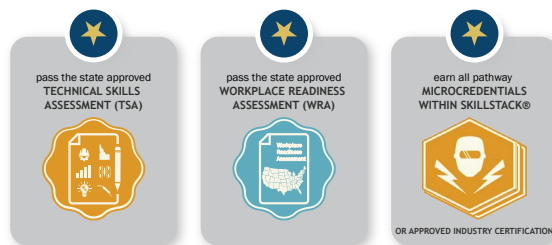
Like all high school students, students enrolled in CTE programs need to meet the academic requirements. In addition, they must also demonstrate their increased level of college and career readiness.

## For students, the diploma helps them:

- Prepare for both college and careers.
- Earn college credits while still in high school.
- Explore Idaho's high-skill, high-demand occupations.
- Gain practical, real-world working experience.
- Earn employer-recognized certifications and microcredentials.
- Develop and articulate valuable technical and employability skills sought by employers.
- Enter the world after graduation confident in their ability to meet their employer's needs.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE A CTE PATHWAY ARE ELIGIBLE IF THEY:



## For employers, the diploma helps them:

- Find qualified employees for their most hard-to-fill positions.
- Reduce the time and money invested in training new employees.
- Identify candidates who possess the employability skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.

**Deadline to qualify:**  
April 30th each year

For more information, visit

[cte.idaho.gov/students/workforce-readiness-and-career-technical-education-cte-diploma/](https://cte.idaho.gov/students/workforce-readiness-and-career-technical-education-cte-diploma/)



## IDAHO'S STEM DIPLOMA

In 2020, there were over 2,000 new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) jobs in Idaho each month – jobs that, on average, pay twice what non-STEM jobs do. Employment in STEM fields in Idaho is highly diverse and includes high tech, healthcare, agriculture, advanced manufacturing, natural resource management, and broadcast media, to name a few. Employers need team members who are critical thinkers, creative problem solvers and skilled collaborators in order to be able to thrive in a constantly changing business environment. Building on children's natural curiosity, educators are working to help their students develop these skills as early as preschool. Ultimately, students who continue to pursue STEM in high school can receive special recognition by earning Idaho's STEM diploma.

Signed into law in 2018, STEM Diploma seeks to address industry needs while honoring graduating seniors who have pursued more rigorous STEM coursework. To raise awareness of the STEM diploma and encourage more schools to participate, Idaho STEM Action Center is working with industry partners, post-secondary institutions, and other state agencies throughout Idaho. Giving students the opportunity to earn a STEM Diploma not only affords them a competitive advantage, but also provides industry and higher education with important information regarding a student's qualifications that can impact his/her placement and potential career path. Additionally, doing so will help to fill the STEM career pipeline with skilled young people, support our state's continued economic prosperity, and ensure that Idaho's youth can find challenging, rewarding and lucrative employment right here in the Gem State.

### STEM DIPLOMA SCHOLARSHIPS

High school seniors in Idaho who earn a STEM Diploma are eligible to apply for one of ten, \$3,000 scholarships provided they will be attending an Idaho public, post-secondary institution, including career technical schools, and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. The STEM Scholarships will be offered in the following fields: Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Computer Science/Technology, Engineering, Food Sciences, Health Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and General STEM (2). The STEM Scholarship application will be available this fall. For additional resources including a STEM course list and STEM course planning template, visit [stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/](https://stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/).

### STEM DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

1. Meets High School Graduation Requirements
2. Earns at least: eight (8) credits of mathematics and eight (8) credits of science
3. An additional five (5) credits in the student choice of any or all subjects of science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

**STEM Diploma  
Scholarship Schedule**

Open: 12/01/2023

Closed: 02/16/2024

Award Date: TBD

For more information, visit: [stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/](https://stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/)

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FUNDING

As legislated by Senate Bill 1290 in 2016, each school district and charter school in Idaho who serve students in grades 8-12 shall establish a college and career advising program for their students. These programs can include advising personnel, near peer/college mentors, students ambassadors, and virtual coaching, among other activities.

### 33-1002. Educational support program.

The educational support program is calculated as follows:

- (2)(q) An amount specified in the appropriation bill for the public schools educational support program for counseling support as provided for in section 33-1212A, Idaho Code, shall be distributed for grades 8 through 12 as follows:
  - (i) For school districts and public charter schools with one hundred (100) or more students enrolled in grades 8 through 12, a pro rata distribution based on students enrolled in grades 8 through 12 or eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000), whichever is greater;
  - (ii) For school districts and public charter schools with fewer than one hundred (100) students enrolled in grades 8 through 12, one hundred eighty dollars (\$180) per student enrolled in grades 8 through 12 or nine thousand dollars (\$9,000), whichever is greater;

Funds established by formula are distributed to school districts twice per year: half in December and half in spring. Districts have discretion on how to allocate these funds. Contact your district office to learn more about how these funds are being utilized to support your students.

Annually the  
state legislature allocates  
**\$9,000,000**  
to support college & career  
readiness activities  
across the state.

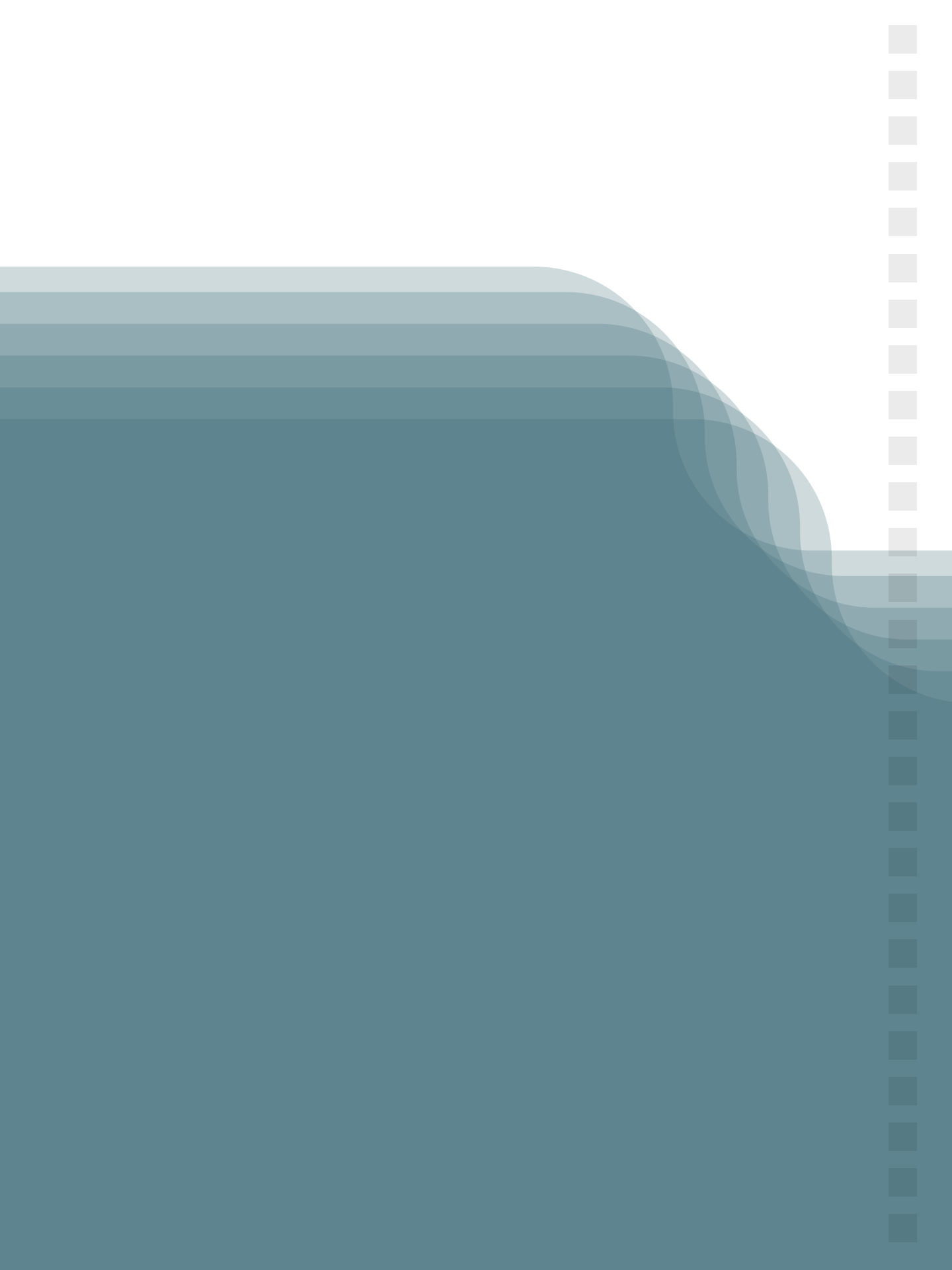
Section 33-1212A, Idaho Code, governs the use of these funds and requirements.

#### COLLEGE AND CAREER ADVISORS AND STUDENT MENTORS.

- (1) College and career advising, and student mentoring are essential components of students' educational experience. Such advising and mentoring provide all students with an early opportunity to identify academic strengths, areas in need of improvement and areas of interest for the purpose of making informed choices and setting postsecondary education and career goals. The focus of college and career planning is to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve academic success and to be college and career ready upon high school graduation.
- (2) School districts and charter schools may employ non certificated staff to serve in the role of college and career advisors and student mentors. Appropriate alternative forms of advising and mentoring shall be research-based and may include the following:
  - (a) High contact programs such as:
    - (i) Near peer or college student mentors; and
    - (ii) Counselor, teacher or paraprofessional as advisor or mentor;
  - (b) Collaborative programs such as:
    - (i) Student ambassadors; and
    - (ii) Cooperative agreements with other school districts or postsecondary institutions; and
  - (c) Virtual coach or mentor programs.
- (3) School districts and charter schools shall provide professional development in the area of college and career advising to all staff serving in the role of student mentors or advisors. All individuals providing services in the role of a college and career advisor must have a basic level of training or experience in the area of advising or mentoring to provide such services.
- (4) School districts and charter schools shall notify parents or guardians of all students in grades 8 through 12 of the availability of college and career advising provided by the district and how to access such services.
- (5) The state board of education shall promulgate rules necessary for the administration of this section.

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Questions should be directed to: **Jacque Deahl**  
(208) 332-6946  
jdeahl@sde.idaho.gov



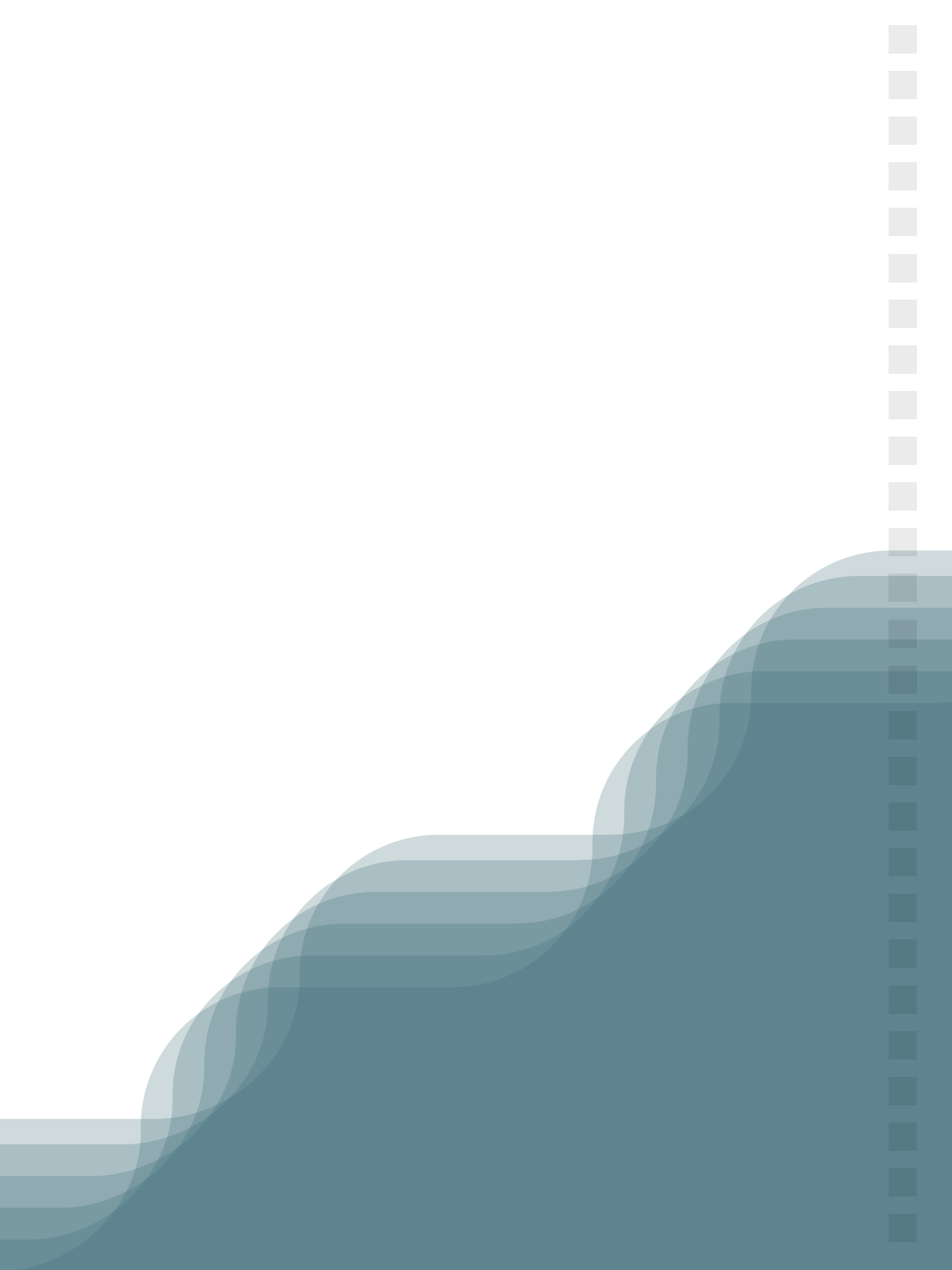




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## FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is defined as funds provided to students and families to pay for postsecondary education and training expenses. Learn more about the different types of financial aid below.

### GRANTS

Free money; does not have to be repaid.  
Federal grants are awarded based on financial need.

Learn more about federal grant programs:  
[Federal Grant Programs \(studentaid.gov\)](https://studentaid.gov)

### LOANS

Borrowed money; must be repaid.

Learn more about federal student loans:  
[studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/federal-loan-programs.pdf](https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/federal-loan-programs.pdf)

### WORK STUDY

Earned money. The Federal Work Study Program allows students to earn money to pay for school while working part time.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Free money; does not need to be repaid.  
Scholarships are awarded based on a variety of factors including merit, talent, need, community service, leadership, etc. Scholarships can come from a variety of sources including local foundations, banks, community organizations, colleges and universities, state agencies, national organizations, and more.



The US Department of  
Education distributes  
**\$150 billion**  
in federal student aid each year.



**Deadlines:** Financial Aid deadlines vary by state and institution. Check state and college websites for the most current information.

More information: [studentaid.gov/](https://studentaid.gov/)

# IDAHO LAUNCH

# IDAHO LAUNCH

The Idaho LAUNCH grant program aims to prepare Idaho's students for Idaho's workforce needs, by providing grants for students to attend education and training programs in Idaho.

## WHAT CAN LAUNCH BE USED FOR?

Idaho LAUNCH provides a one-time opportunity for Idaho high school seniors, beginning with the Class of 2024, to cover 80%, or up to \$8,000, of the tuition and fees at an eligible institution, up to a maximum amount of \$8,000.

### To be eligible students must:

- Graduate from an Idaho High School or Equivalent
- Be an Idaho resident
- Be Enrolled In or Have Applied to an Eligible Idaho Institution
- Begin Post-Secondary Program by Fall Semester After Graduation
- Complete a Career Pathway Plan (Detailed information is available at: [nextsteps.idaho.gov](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov)).

Students can receive up to one-half of the initial grant award in the first year of a program. However, for programs that are less than 12 months in length, students can use the full awarded amount (80% of tuition and fees up to \$8,000) in one year.

## APPLY

Go to [scholarships.idaho.gov](https://scholarships.idaho.gov) to apply!



There is approximately  
**\$75,000,000**  
available for Idaho LAUNCH  
funding. This means that it is  
possible the state may fund  
**between 9,000 and 10,000**  
awards per year.

### October 3

Idaho LAUNCH application opens

### December 31 and March 31

Contingent award letters sent

### April 15

Idaho LAUNCH application closes

### May 31

Final contingent award letters sent

**Please note:** always check [nextsteps.idaho.gov](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov) for the most up-to-date information on approved programs and providers, as these will be updated regularly.

## IDAHO LAUNCH FAQs

### HAVE I HEARD OF THIS PROGRAM BEFORE?

A version of Idaho LAUNCH that serves adult learners seeking to upskill or change careers has been around for approximately 3 years and is referred to as Idaho LAUNCH for Adults.

Idaho LAUNCH for Students is new this year! The graduating class of 2024 will be the first cohort invited to participate in this program. Idaho LAUNCH for Students aims to connect high school seniors with in-demand careers throughout Idaho. Keep an eye out for program updates throughout the year.

### ARE STUDENTS REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR FAFSA TO RECEIVE IDAHO LAUNCH FUNDING?

No, applying for FAFSA is not a requirement for this grant. However, Idaho LAUNCH will only cover 80% (up to \$8,000) of a program's tuition and fees. Idaho LAUNCH grant dollars cannot cover the cost of room and board. Other financial aid and scholarship opportunities may pay the remaining program costs and expenses.

### HOW WILL STUDENTS BE NOTIFIED IF THEY HAVE BEEN AWARDED LAUNCH FUNDING?

Students will receive email notifications from Scholarship Idaho. Students must have an active email address to receive information from Scholarship Idaho that requires their attention. Students cannot use a school-based email address, as they will no longer have access to the account post-graduation. Scholarship Idaho will send notifications to students before and after graduation.

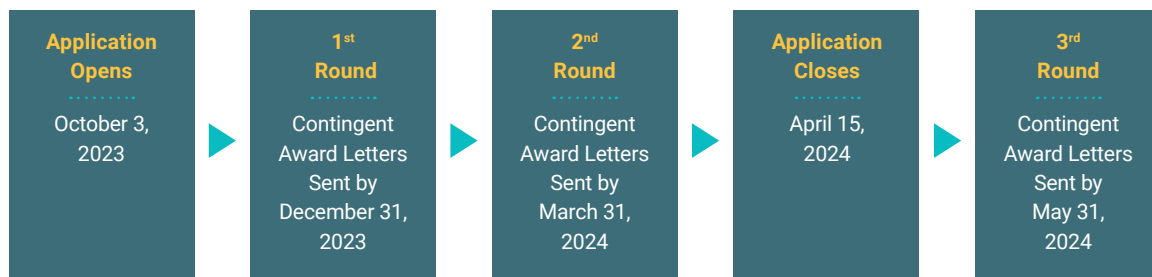
### HOW DOES THE APPLICATION CYCLE WORK FOR IDAHO LAUNCH?

The Idaho LAUNCH application opens on October 3, 2023, and closes on April 15, 2024. Award Letters are contingent upon verification of eligibility.

There will be three rounds of Contingent Award Letters.

- Round 1 Contingent Award Letters sent by December 31
- Round 2 Contingent Award Letters sent by March 31
- Round 3 Contingent Award Letters sent by May 31

Final Award Letters will be issued in June 2024 after eligibility is verified.



## IDAHO LAUNCH FAQs CONTINUED...

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW PROGRAMS COULD BE FUNDED BY IDAHO LAUNCH?

Please refer to [nextsteps.idaho.gov](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov) for the complete listing of eligible programs.

Program	Example Total Cost	Example of Portion Paid for by Launch	Example of Remaining Amount to be Paid by Student
Workforce Training Program (ex: CNA, Welding, Pharmacy Tech)	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,440	\$ 360
Commercial Driver's License	\$6,000	\$ 4,800	\$ 1,200
Community College Course	\$ 400	\$ 320	\$ 80
Community College Degree	\$ 7,000	\$ 5,600	\$ 1,400
Apprenticeship Program (2-year program)	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,000
Apprenticeship Program (5-year program)	\$ 10,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 2,000
Private Trade School Program	\$ 18,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 10,000

**Note:** Actual costs will be dependent on the program and institution. These figures are for demonstration only. Idaho LAUNCH covers 80%, or up to \$8,000 of tuition and fees. Students may use other scholarships and grants to cover remaining costs.

## **WHAT IF SCHOOLS, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE IDAHO LAUNCH PROGRAM?**

Check Next Steps Idaho for answers to common questions at [nextstepsidaho.gov/resources/idaho-launch](https://nextstepsidaho.gov/resources/idaho-launch). For questions not answered by the website, please send an email to [idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov).

## **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CONTINGENT AWARD LETTER AND A FINAL AWARD LETTER?**

A Contingent Award Letter is sent to applicants who submit their application and are on track to meet the program's eligibility requirements. This offer is contingent upon verification of eligibility completion. Final Award Letters will be issued in June 2024 upon successful verification of the application.

Contingent Award Letters and Final Award Letters are distributed through Scholarship Idaho. Students will be required to either accept or decline their award. If students do not respond within the designated time frame, their award may be offered to another candidate. Students are advised to check their email over the summer.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH LAUNCH FUNDING FOR ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS?**

Prioritization will be based on in-demand careers and financial need. Applications will be ranked based on the program a student selects during the application process and how/if it connects to the list of in-demand careers approved by the Idaho Workforce Development Council, which will be reviewed and approved annually.

## **WHO DO I CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THE IDAHO LAUNCH PROGRAM?**

1. Visit the Next Steps Idaho website to find the most current information on the Idaho LAUNCH program at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/launch](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/launch).
2. Urgent questions can be directed to Sherawn Reberry ([sherawn.reberry@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:sherawn.reberry@wdc.idaho.gov)) and Cassie Mansour ([cassandra.mansour@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:cassandra.mansour@wdc.idaho.gov)).
3. Please email all other questions to [idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov](mailto:idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov).

# TIPS FOR HOSTING AN IDAHO LAUNCH INFORMATION SESSION

As Idaho LAUNCH is a new initiative, we strongly encourage high school counselors to actively promote the program throughout the 2023-2024 school year. This can be achieved by incorporating an Idaho LAUNCH spotlight during a parent night, sharing information in the school newsletter, distributing posters and promotional materials sent to your school, or delivering in-class presentations about higher education opportunities. Your outreach activities will play an important role in reaching students who have traditionally encountered limited access to post-secondary opportunities.

Templates and training materials can be found at: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit).

## BEFORE THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

Create a school goal for the number of seniors that will apply for the Idaho LAUNCH program during the 2023-2024 school year.

## DURING THE INFO SESSION

Take notes of any unanswered questions and be sure to follow up with your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador for further clarification.

## BEFORE THE EVENT

Finalize the event format and date(s), along with identifying the necessary training materials. Inform and involve school staff

- Present at an all-school staff meeting
- Send a “heads-up” email to all staff
- Coordinate with administrators for support

## AFTER THE INFO SESSION

Reach out to your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador to address any questions that arose during the event.

Gather feedback from students, parents, teachers, and other parties involved.

## Recruit your team

- Reach out to your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Team up with other counselors

## Communicate, communicate, communicate!

- Consider using the pre-made email templates to notify students, parents, teachers, and staff members of your event.

## Prepare training materials

- Review the ready-to-use training materials



## IDAHO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

The Idaho Opportunity scholarship is awarded to Idaho residents that have graduated, or will graduate, from an Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or who passes a GED/HSE test in Idaho and are pursuing their first bachelors degree at an approved Idaho institution. Applicants must have AT LEAST a 2.7 GPA. The application for the Idaho Opportunity scholarship, Idaho's biggest scholarship program, takes just a few minutes to submit.

Award decisions are based on a combination of need and merit. Applications are ranked based 70% need (using the Student Aid Index from a student's FAFSA) and 30% merit (Cumulative GPA).

Just because a student isn't eligible for the Pell Grant, does NOT mean they shouldn't apply. Many students receive the scholarship each year who do not qualify for any other need-based aid. This scholarship is available to both new and renewal students.

**October 3, 2023**

Application opens

**December 31, 2023**

Round 1 Contingent Offers

**March 1, 2024**

Application deadline

**March 15, 2024**

Round 2 Contingent Offers

*Made prior to need & merit ranking*

*Formal Offers made by April 30, 2023*

*following official need & merit ranking*

### THE BASICS

The Idaho Opportunity Scholarship awards up to \$3,500 per academic year and is renewable for up to four years. **To qualify for this scholarship, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:**

- Have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of at least 2.7
- Be an Idaho resident
- Graduated or will graduate from an Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or its equivalent (GED/HSE from Idaho)
- Must attend during the upcoming academic year (fall semester)
- Must pursue a first bachelor's degree
- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1
- Maintain satisfactory academic standing as specified in program rules.
- Must attend one of these eligible Idaho colleges or universities:
  - University of Idaho
  - Boise State University
  - Lewis Clark State College
  - Idaho State University
  - The College of Idaho
  - Northwest Nazarene University
  - Brigham Young University – Idaho
  - Western Governors University

Students can apply at [scholarships.idaho.gov](https://scholarships.idaho.gov)

# IDAHO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP AND IDAHO LAUNCH COMPARISON CHART

	Idaho Opportunity Scholarship	Idaho LAUNCH
<b>Amount</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$3,500 per year</li> <li>Renewable for up to 4 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to \$8,000 one-time</li> <li>Covers 80% tuition and fees</li> <li>Receive up to 1/2 of funds in year 1</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of at least 2.7</li> <li>Be an Idaho resident</li> <li>Graduated or will graduate from an eligible Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or its equivalent (GED or HSE from Idaho)</li> <li>Must attend chosen institution or program during the upcoming academic year (Fall Semester)</li> <li>Must pursue a first bachelor's degree</li> <li>Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1st</li> <li>Must attend one of these eligible Idaho colleges or universities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University of Idaho</li> <li>Boise State University</li> <li>Lewis Clark State College</li> <li>Idaho State University</li> <li>The College of Idaho</li> <li>Northwest Nazarene University</li> <li>Brigham Young University – Idaho</li> <li>Western Governors University</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate from an Idaho high school or equivalent</li> <li>Be an Idaho resident</li> <li>Be enrolled in or have applied to an in-demand career program at an eligible Idaho institution</li> <li>Begin enrollment by Fall Semester after graduation</li> <li>Complete a Career Pathway Plan or equivalent</li> </ul> <p>Visit <a href="https://nextsteps.idaho.gov">nextsteps.idaho.gov</a> for a complete listing of the eligible in-demand career programs.</p>
<b>Application Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit an application through Scholarship Idaho</li> <li>Complete a FAFSA application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit an application through Scholarship Idaho</li> </ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	March 1	April 15

## OTHER IDAHO STATE SCHOLARSHIPS

### IDAHO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FOR ADULTS

- Deadlines: Fall - July 1, Spring - December 1, Summer - April 15 (FAFSA and application)
- The Idaho Opportunity Scholarship for Adult Learners is for students who are returning to college at least part time (6+ credits) after a break of at least 24 months
- Applicants must have AT LEAST a 2.5 GPA

### IDAHO GOVERNOR'S CUP SCHOLARSHIPS

- Deadlines: Academic - March 1, Career/Technical - April 15
- Applicants must have AT LEAST a 2.8 GPA

\* The Office of the State Board of Education handles the application intake process. The Governor's Cup committee is responsible for reviewing applications and making award decisions. To connect with their staff, please click here: [www.idahogovernorscup.org](http://www.idahogovernorscup.org)

### ARMED FORCES/PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER SCHOLARSHIP

- Applications are open year-round.
- This scholarship is for dependents of fallen or permanently disabled (to the point they are unemployed) Idaho members of the armed forces or Idaho public safety officers.
- Eligible applicants must be Idaho residents.
- Contact the state Scholarship Program Manager ([joy.miller@osbe.idaho.gov](mailto:joy.miller@osbe.idaho.gov)) for application instructions and pre-screening.

To learn more about all of Idaho's state scholarships, visit [nextsteps.idaho.gov/scholarship-idaho](http://nextsteps.idaho.gov/scholarship-idaho)

Students can apply for all Idaho State Scholarships and Grants at [scholarships.idaho.gov](http://scholarships.idaho.gov)



Approximately  
**\$90 million**  
 is available to support  
 Idaho students going on to  
**postsecondary education**

## ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES

Advanced Opportunities is a program that provides funding for Idaho students to use toward educational and career pathways while they are in middle and high school years.

The program provides \$4,125 for each student in grades 7-12 attending an Idaho public school. Funds can be utilized toward particular costs that students may incur for the courses and programs listed below.

### OVERLOAD COURSES

Overload courses are high school courses that are taken in excess of a student's full course load and outside the regular school day. Students can use funds up to \$225 per eligible course.

### DUAL CREDIT COURSES

A dual credit course is a college course taken for both high school and college credit. Students can request funding for up to \$75 per credit. Dual Credit resources for families can be found at [prtoolkit.org/dual-credit/](http://prtoolkit.org/dual-credit/)

### EXAMS

Students can use funds to pay for the full cost of many exams (including proctoring fees). Exams can include: college entrance exams, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and professional certifications.

### WORKFORCE TRAINING COURSES

Students can use funds for approved courses that directly relate to workforce needs. Students can request up to \$500 per course and \$1,000 per year.

### EARLY GRADUATION SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship can be awarded for a student's early graduation, that must be at least one year early.

### FUNDS SPENT IN FISCAL YEAR 2022 BY EXPENDITURE TYPE

Dual Credit	\$ 19,561,224
Exams	\$ 1,617,203
Overload Courses	\$ 1,509,780
Workforce Training	\$ 51,511

### FISCAL YEAR 2022 ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES TOTALS

Payment Totals	\$ 23,455,197
Students Served	39,583



## How to Access Advanced Opportunities

### **SIGN UP FOR AN ACCOUNT**

Staff are assigned an administrator account through the local district IT or by contacting SDE staff. Students should create an Advanced Opportunities account at [advancedops.sde.idaho.gov](https://advancedops.sde.idaho.gov). Creating an account will allow students to request funds and track their account balance. Once an account is created it must be approved by school staff. In some cases, school districts handle the request funding process internally, this is a local education agency decision.

### **PARTICIPATION FORM**

Students and parents must fill out an Advanced Opportunities participation form that outlines program risks and regulations prior to using funds. This form needs to be turned in at the school and will be kept on file with other student records. The participation form can be found online in the student's account at [advancedops.sde.idaho.gov](https://advancedops.sde.idaho.gov) or at the student's school.

### **HOMESCHOOL AND PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS**

According to Idaho code 33-4602, the Advanced Opportunities program is available to all students who attend an Idaho public school. As school district attendance policies vary, please check with the school to understand registration procedures. Homeschool students can choose to attend a public school that will allow them access to Advanced Opportunities funding or there is a non-public school program referred to as the Student Opportunities Assistance Program.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Advanced Opportunities program is an opportunity for students to participate in challenging and rigorous coursework. As students navigate the program, it is their responsibility to meet with their advisor or counselor to create a plan, work hard to successfully complete all courses, and pay attention to important deadlines and registration processes. Students who fail to earn credit for a course paid for by Advanced Opportunities, must then pay for and successfully earn credit or complete one (1) like course before future reimbursement can be made by the Idaho State Department of Education.

### **ADVISING**

Students who use Advanced Opportunities funds to earn more than 15 dual credits must receive advising on how the credits will translate into their post-high school aspirations and fit into their program of study.

## ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

### How to Access Advanced Opportunities

#### COURSE AND CREDIT TRANSFERABILITY

How a course is transferred or accepted is determined by the receiving school/college. Student coursework should be taken in mind with the institution from which the student plans to earn a degree. If students are receiving college credit from more than one college, it is important to plan ahead and consider how courses will transfer, and which courses will count toward the degree program. Each college has a transfer guide that provides information on how credits will be accepted. Visit [coursetransfer.idaho.gov](https://coursetransfer.idaho.gov) for transferability.

For more information visit the Advanced Opportunities website at [sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/advanced-ops](https://sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/advanced-ops).

For questions contact Brock Astle at 208-332-6946 or [bastle@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:bastle@sde.idaho.gov).

Videos to share with students & parents (English & Spanish): [nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao)

#### DEADLINES FOR PORTAL SUBMISSION

Term	Request Funding Window	Verification Deadline	Submission Deadline
Summer 2023	April 7 - June 23, 2023	August 18, 2023	August 25, 2023
Fall 2023/Trimester 1	April 7 - October 6, 2023	November 10, 2023	November 17, 2023
Spring 2024	Nov 20 - March 8, 2024	May 10, 2024	May 17, 2024 May 24, 2024 (exams)
Trimester 2	Nov 20 - March 8, 2024	May 10, 2024	May 17, 2024 May 24, 2024
Trimester 3	Nov 20 - April 5, 2024	May 10, 2024	May 17, 2024 May 24, 2024

\* Student Access window may vary by district, please contact your school/district office for local dates.

\* All funding requests are to be made by the request funding window deadline.

## IDEAL 529 — IDAHO'S EDUCATION SAVINGS PLAN

IDEAL is Idaho's official 529 education savings program. These tax-advantaged 529 accounts are designed specifically to help individuals and families save and invest for their loved ones' postsecondary education.

Research shows that children with education savings accounts are about 7 times more likely to pursue and complete postsecondary education.

### Idaho's 529s feature a variety of tax advantages:

- State income tax deduction of up to \$6,000 for single filers – or \$12,000 for couples filing jointly – per year from adjusted gross income for contributions. One of the most generous in the country.
- Any Idaho taxpayer can receive the tax deduction for contributions. They don't have to be the account holder.
- Tax-deferred earnings and tax-free withdrawals for qualified expenses.

### The Idaho 529 plan is flexible and can be used for a variety of education options:

- Two or four-year universities nationwide
- Skills/career training programs
- Registered apprenticeships
- K-12 tuition (Tuition only at any K-12 public, private or religious school. Limited to \$10,000 per student annually)
- Student loan repayment

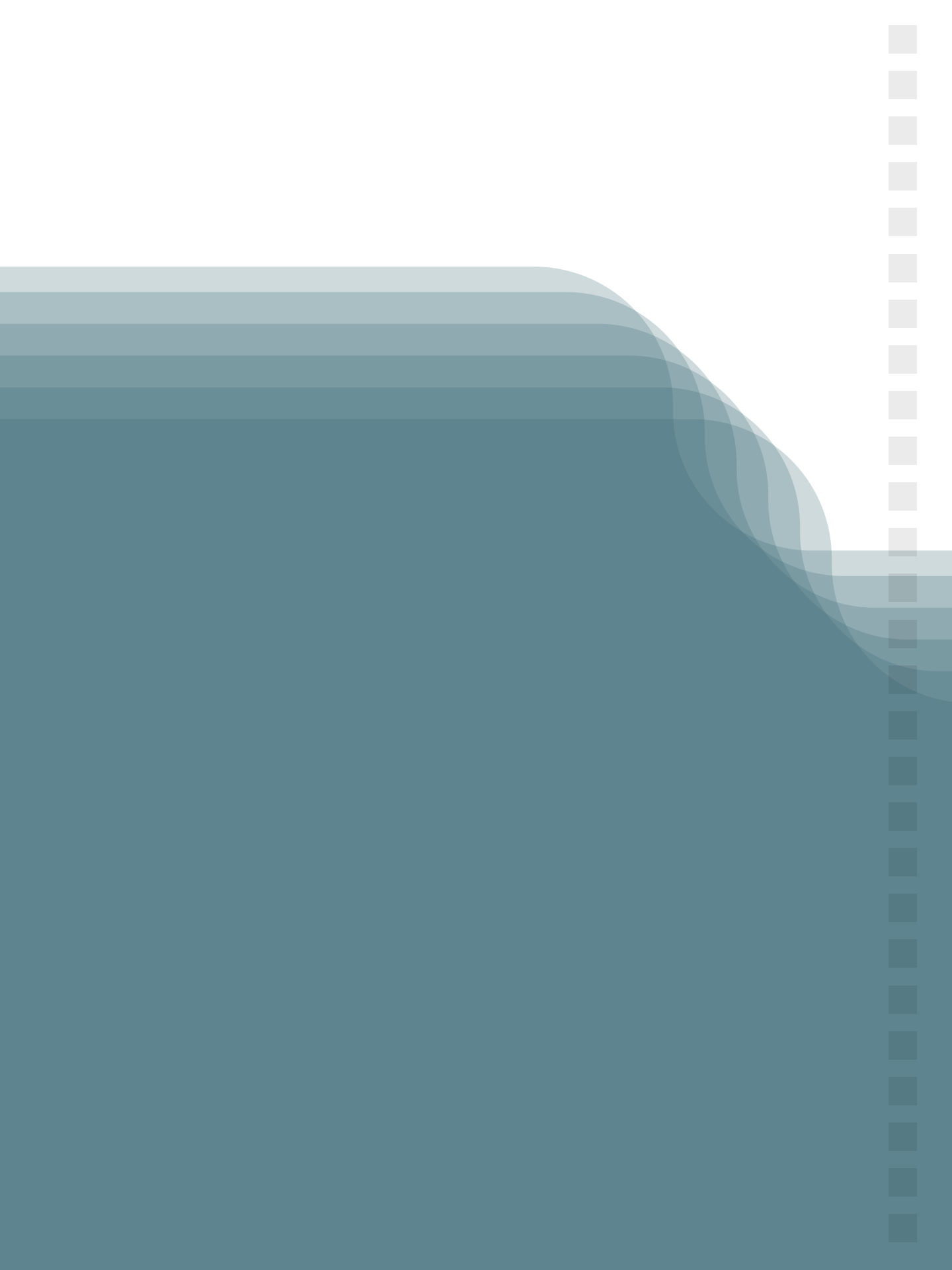
### Starting an account is simple:

- Go to [idsaves.org](https://idsaves.org)
- Choose initial contribution amount (as low as \$25) and payment method
- Choose an investment option – your choices are Vanguard investments or a Sallie Mae savings plan

*Note: you will need the account owner and beneficiary's social security numbers.*

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Learn more at [idsaves.org](https://idsaves.org)

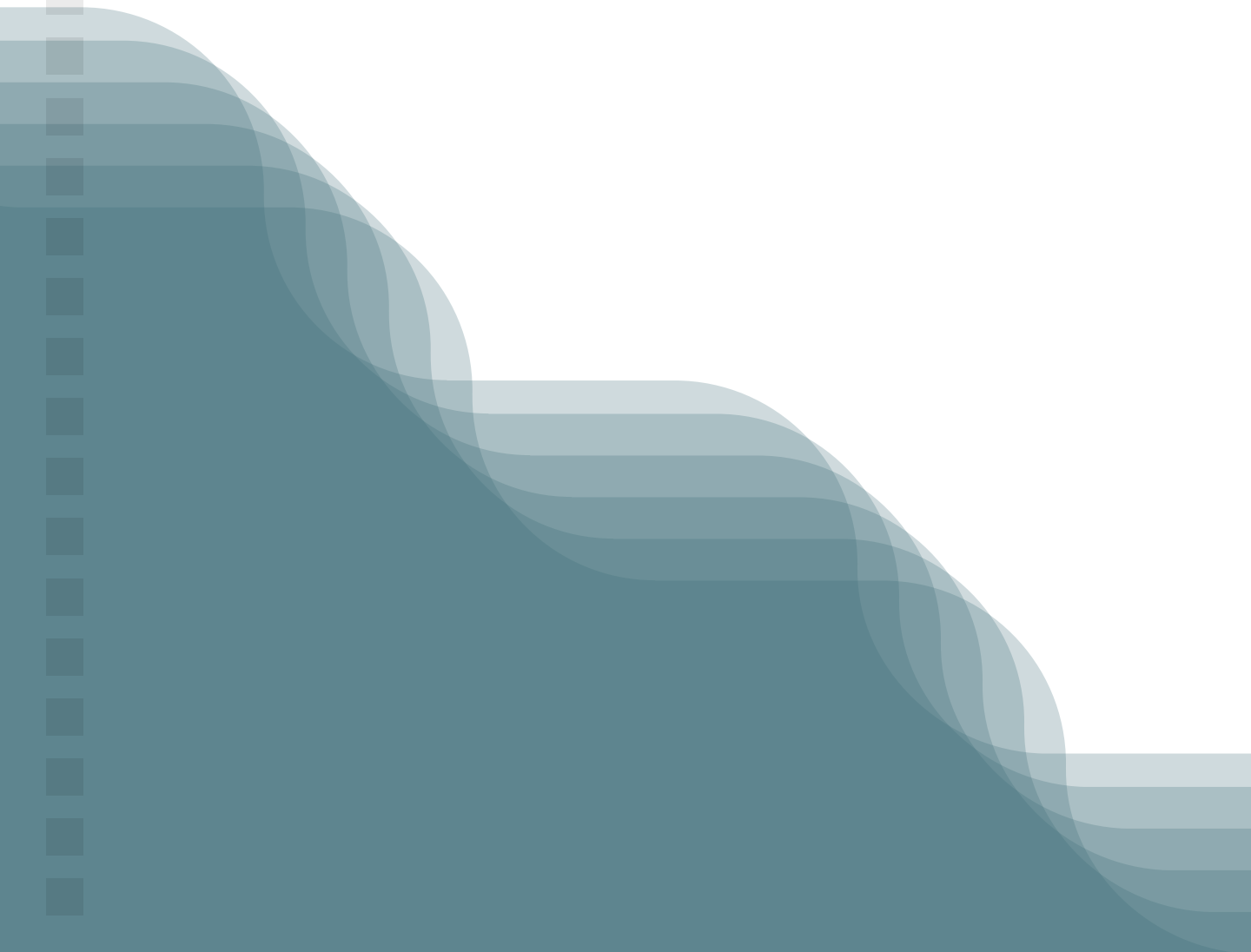


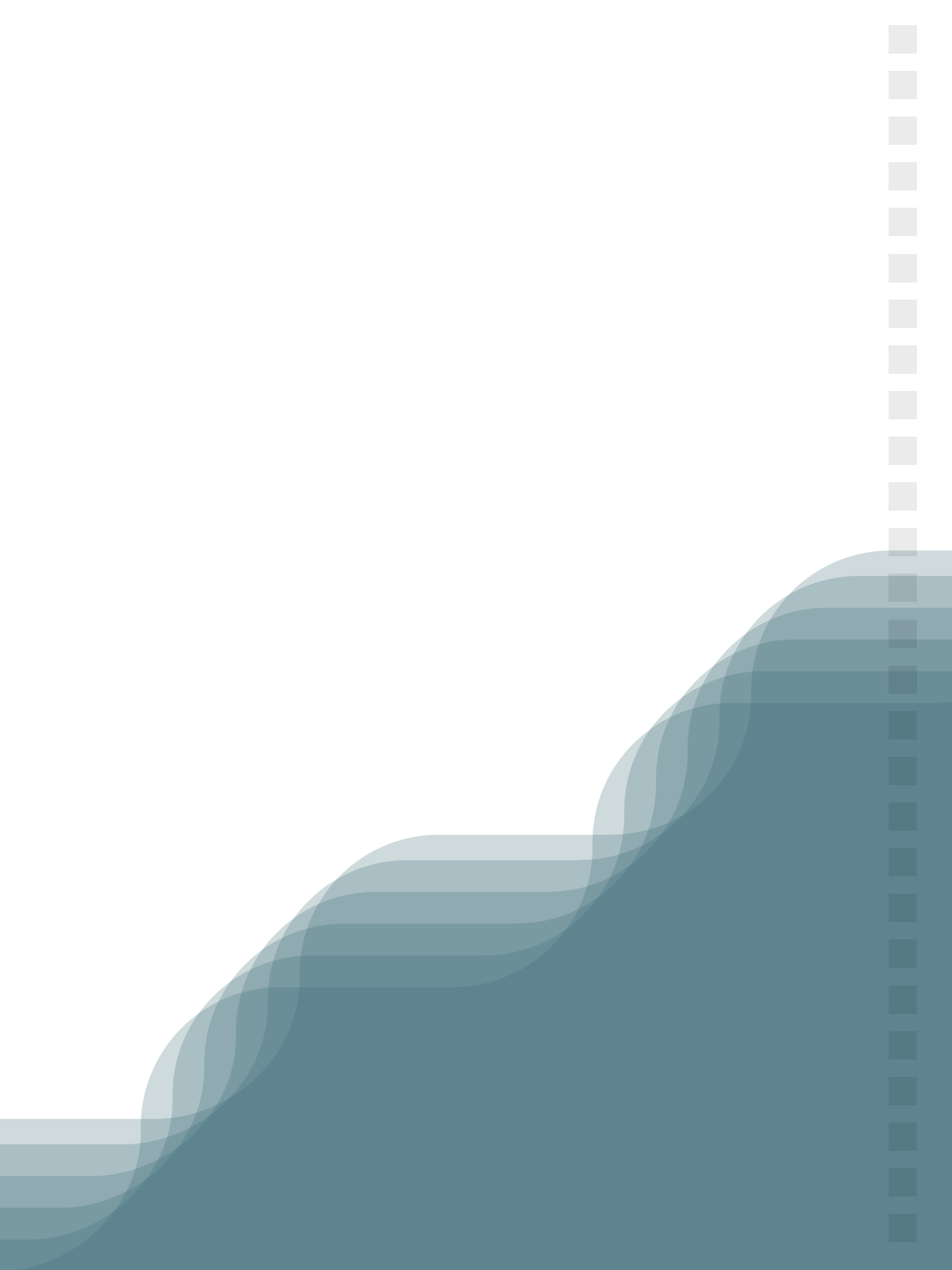




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## FOR STUDENTS & ADULTS: NEXT STEPS IDAHO

Next Steps Idaho is a free research tool that helps Idahoans transition to postsecondary opportunities and fulfilling employment.

Built by the Idaho State Board of Education, this website follows the widely accepted three-pronged approach to career readiness.

It helps visitors 1) identify their strengths and interests, 2) discover related jobs, and 3) pursue self-chosen opportunities through community support, funding (like scholarships), and real-world planning.

Next Steps Idaho promotes colleges, universities, apprenticeships, professional certification, licensing, and vocational training—whatever is best for the individual.

### CAREER-READY PORTFOLIOS

These portfolios—built around grade-specific Career Pathway Plan activities—give students the ability to customize their Next Steps Idaho journey.

Making an account is free, easy, and allows users to:

- Save assessment results
- Favorite careers
- Bookmark resources
- Collect completed activities
- Track events and deadlines

Each time a student logs in, a custom dashboard displays their previous work, reminders, and helpful links to pick up where they last left off.

Learn more at [nextsteps.idaho.gov](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov).

To sign up for a portfolio visit [nextsteps.idaho.gov/login](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/login).



Since its debut in 2022, more than

**17,000 Idaho  
students**

**at 360 in-state schools**

and educational organizations  
have created accounts.

*Next Steps Idaho is available 24/7.*

*Requests and inquiries are  
typically acknowledged by staff  
within 2 business days.*

## FOR STUDENTS: APPLY IDAHO



Apply Idaho is our state's free, common application platform where students can submit applications to up to 10 in-state colleges. Open October through June, this application is **ONLY** available to current-year Idaho high school seniors.

Apply Idaho invites Idaho high school seniors to apply at 1, or several, (or all 10!) participating in-state colleges and universities. The average application can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

---

### With Apply Idaho, students:

1. Save time (just one application)
2. Save effort (a shorter application)
3. Save money (without any application fees)
4. Maximize in-state options (that can be sent to up to 10 in-state institutions)

Built to support student ambitions—from PhDs to professional certificates—ALL paths for in-state training can start from this single application.

### Dates:

- Opens the first Monday in October.
- Closes on the last day of June.

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Visit our website at [nextsteps.idaho.gov/apply-idaho](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/apply-idaho).

Watch our video to learn more: [youtu.be/goKVSyXx4c8](https://youtu.be/goKVSyXx4c8)



**Over 50%**  
**of the senior class,**  
more than

**12,000**  
**students,**

use Apply Idaho each year.

## FOR EDUCATORS: COUNSELOR SUITE IDAHO



# Counselor Suite IDAHO

Counselor Suite Idaho (previously called FAFSA Web or the Idaho FAFSA Completion Project) provides high school counselors with a clear snapshot of their students' career readiness preparation.

Counselor Suite Idaho provides easy-to-read tables and data visualizations that document your students' progress toward FOUR continuing education 'checkpoints.'

---

### 1. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Students hoping to secure virtually \*any\* financial aid will need to submit a FAFSA each year. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates a student's FAFSA completion status and/or common errors in their submission.

### 2. Direct Admissions Idaho

Direct Admissions proactively admits all Idaho public high school seniors to a minimum of six in-state colleges and universities each year. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates if students qualify for an additional two universities, for a total of eight.

### 3. Apply Idaho Applications

Apply Idaho is a free, common college application for in-state institutions. In Counselor Suite Idaho, Idaho teachers or administrators will be able to see which grade-12 students have 'started,' 'not started,' or 'completed' their Apply Idaho application.

### 4. Scholarship Idaho Applications

Scholarship Idaho is a single, common application for 8 state-managed scholarships. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates which state-managed scholarship(s) each student has submitted an application for and their offer status.

*This platform is not available to students; only Idaho high school counselors, teachers, or administrators will be able to create an account.*

*New student cohorts are published annually—in mid-October—and data is updated daily.*

*Data for the FAFSA will appear two-weeks after the form opens each year.*

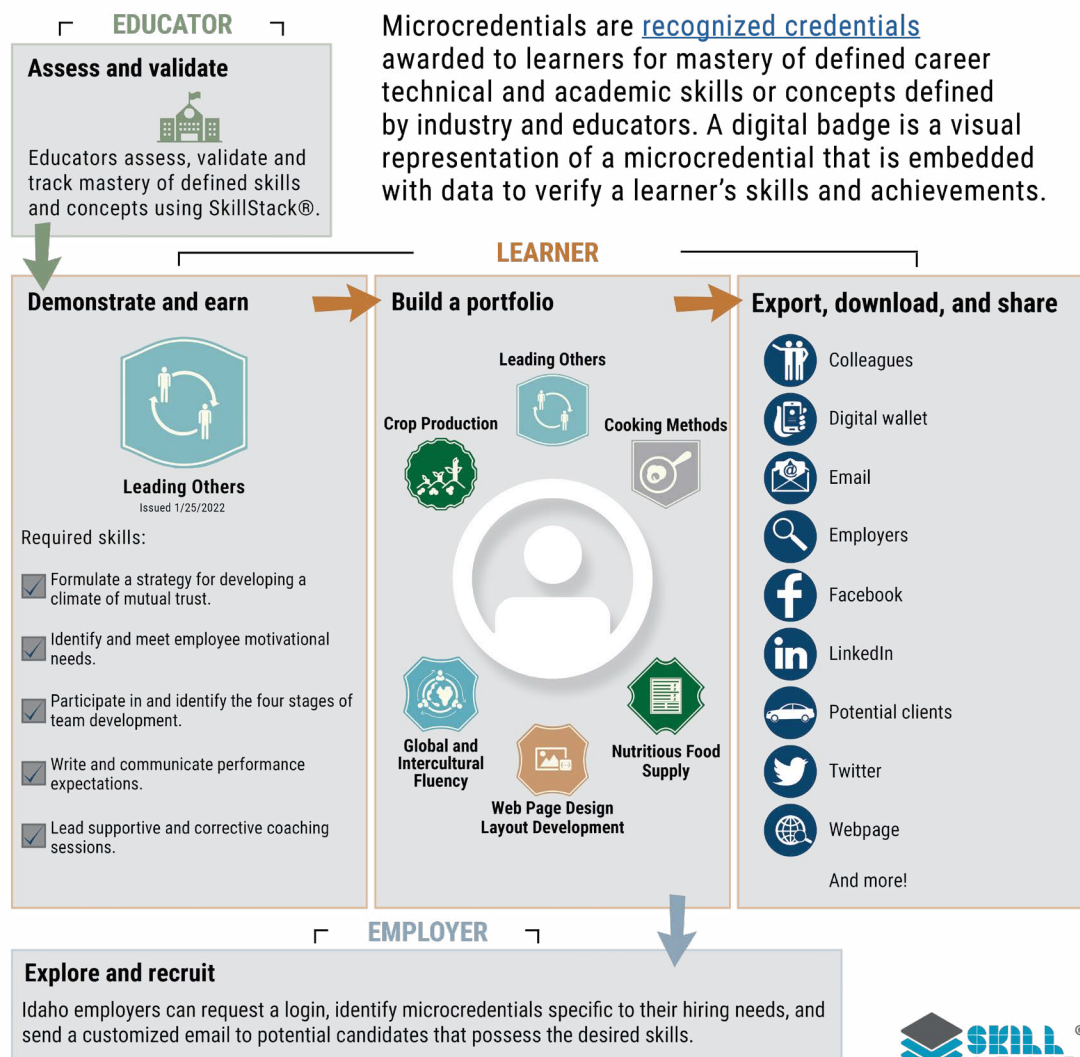
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Request access by contacting [info@nextsteps.idaho.gov](mailto:info@nextsteps.idaho.gov)

# IDAHO SKILLSTACK

Idaho SkillStack® is a microcredential platform that allows educators to validate demonstrated skills, leading to industry-relevant digital badges.

## How microcredentials and digital badges work:



650 W State St Ste 324, Boise ID 83702-5936 | 208.429.5521 | [skillstack@cte.idaho.gov](mailto:skillstack@cte.idaho.gov) | [skillstack.idaho.gov](http://skillstack.idaho.gov)



For more information, visit [cte.idaho.gov/programs-2/skillstack/](http://cte.idaho.gov/programs-2/skillstack/).



# FOR EDUCATORS: GEAR UP IDAHO NAVIGATORS ONLINE RESOURCE

GEAR UP Idaho has developed specific college and career readiness resources called “Navigators” for educators, families, and students. These are online tools available for free to all audiences. New Navigators are added regularly. All GEAR UP Idaho Navigators can be printed or used as slides during a classroom activity. Event-based navigators include printable signs and worksheets and also contain instructions for setting up or adapting events for your school.

**GEAR UP Idaho Navigators include:**

## APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

This activity walks students through the process of seeking out and applying for scholarships. Available in English and Spanish.

## CAREER PATHWAY PLAN

This resource can be used as a guide when working to create a student’s career pathway plan. Available in English and Spanish.

## COLLEGE BUDGETING

This tool guides students and parents through the process of budgeting for college, covering important details like calculating an EFC and estimating the cost of attendance. A great complement to any scholarship presentation! Available in English and Spanish.

## CAMPUS TOUR ACTIVITIES

This toolkit is full of ideas and activities designed to supplement and enhance a campus tour. Pick and choose from activities for students to complete before, during, and after a campus tour to help them take away the most from their experience on campus.

## GREAT IDEAS GUIDE

This collection of great ideas and best practices was contributed by school counselors and college and career coordinators from across Idaho.

## HALL OF REFLECTION

This event can be implemented in a variety of ways. The Hall of Reflection is designed to help students set goals and reflect on their vision for their futures.

## FAMILY WELLNESS NIGHT

This event is designed to help families discuss and set goals for financial, emotional and physical wellness.

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To access resources visit [sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/cc-readiness](https://sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/cc-readiness) and click on the GEAR UP Idaho Navigator you are interested. If you have any questions contact Jacque Deahl at [jdeahl@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:jdeahl@sde.idaho.gov) or Julia Hopper at [jhopper@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:jhopper@sde.idaho.gov).

## OTHER COLLEGE & CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

### IDAHO CONNECT

Idaho Connect is an online, interactive platform that builds bridges between education and the world of work, expanding lessons beyond textbooks to help students explore careers. Educators in all public and charter high schools will have access during the 2023 - 2024 school year in partnership with a grant from Micron. Employers can build a window of opportunity to Idaho's youth by providing sessions about what they do.

[nextstepsidahoconnections.nepris.com/site](https://nextstepsidahoconnections.nepris.com/site)

### IDAHO DIGITAL SKILLS

IdahoDigitalSkills.org offers Idahoans free access to online learning tools to increase their digital skills. Whether you're learning how to use a mouse or applying for jobs online, there are a variety of tools and resources available. IdahoDigitalSkills.org was created for Idahoans to more easily identify resources that support them in their digital work and life.

[idahodigitalskills.org](https://idahodigitalskills.org)

### IDLA OPEN CONTENT CATALOG, 8TH GRADE CAREER EXPLORATION

IDLA provides access to internally created online textbook content for Idaho districts and charters. This course is aligned to the First Steps Standards. The course includes lesson objectives, lesson content, videos with transcripts, and non-graded interactivities.

[opencontent.idahodigitallearning.org/electives/8th-grade-career-exploration](https://opencontent.idahodigitallearning.org/electives/8th-grade-career-exploration)

### LEARNING BLADE VIA THE IDAHO STEM ACTION CENTER

Learning Blade is a system of interactive online lessons, teacher lesson plans, and printable at-home activities for 5th to 9th graders, where students learn about STEM and Computer Science careers while reviewing academics.

[stem.idaho.gov/apply/learning-blade/](https://stem.idaho.gov/apply/learning-blade/)

### LINKEDIN LEARNING

Students can access their free-to-use LinkedIn Learning account via Equus Workforce Solutions. LinkedIn Learning is an online educational platform that helps you discover and develop business, technology-related, and creative skills through expert-led course videos.

[equusidaho.com/linkedinlearning](https://equusidaho.com/linkedinlearning)

### SOFT SKILLS TRAINING MODULES

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) is excited to share these interactive soft skills trainings presented by Idaho Digital Learning Alliance in partnership with the Idaho WDC. The modules are designed to help students gain important employment skills that will increase their chance of finding a job and help students climb the career ladder.

[wdc.idaho.gov/resource-hub/#outreachmaterials](https://wdc.idaho.gov/resource-hub/#outreachmaterials)

### TEACHER EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Every summer, the STEM Action Center, in partnership with the Idaho Workforce Development Council, provides K-12 classroom teachers and college and career advisors the opportunity to work at an Idaho employer where they gain valuable industry experience and knowledge, helping them better prepare students for the world of work.

[stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-externships/](https://stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-externships/)





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## DIRECT ADMISSIONS



# Direct Admissions

## IDAHO

Idaho's public colleges and universities are reserving several thousand seats for your students! All Idaho public high school graduates will be accepted at a minimum of 6 in-state colleges the term after they graduate. Students with GPAs at or above an agreed upon benchmark have even MORE options with a total of 8 in-state colleges saving them a spot.

Students still need to apply to notify their chosen institution that they want to attend.

Direct Admissions gives more Idahoans the opportunity to obtain a professional certificate or accredited degree. It removes barriers and encourages high school graduates to extend their training before entering the workforce.

Idaho was the first U.S. state to imagine/offer an onramp like this. Now, similar programs are now being implemented across the nation.

Encourage your students to continue their education in Idaho. Here, they can gain the knowledge and skills needed to make an impact on their local community—or anywhere in the world.

Only available to Idaho high school graduates who apply to in-state institutions the semester immediately following their graduation from high school.



**Over 20,000**  
**high school seniors**  
are sent a Direct Admissions  
letter each year and  
**over 67%**  
receive the letter offering  
admission to all 8 Idaho public  
colleges and universities.

*Interested students **MUST**  
complete an admission  
application to the institution of  
their choice by June 30.*

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Learn more at: [nextsteps.idaho.gov/direct-admissions](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/direct-admissions)

## FAFSA

FAFSA stands for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

To be eligible for federal financial aid, a student must complete and submit the FAFSA each year. Completing the FAFSA is the **ONLY** way to qualify for federal grants, student loans, work study, and some scholarships!

Users must create an account, called an FSA ID, in order to complete the FAFSA. The FSA ID allows you to sign your FAFSA form electronically.

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### IMPORTANT FINANCIAL AID DATES

- FAFSA will open in December of 2023
- Be aware that each institution may have unique priority deadlines
- Deadline to submit a FAFSA for the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship is March 1

As of June, 2023 42% of Idaho seniors completed a FAFSA application.

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To create a FSA ID, visit [studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch](https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch)

To complete the FAFSA form, visit [studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa)

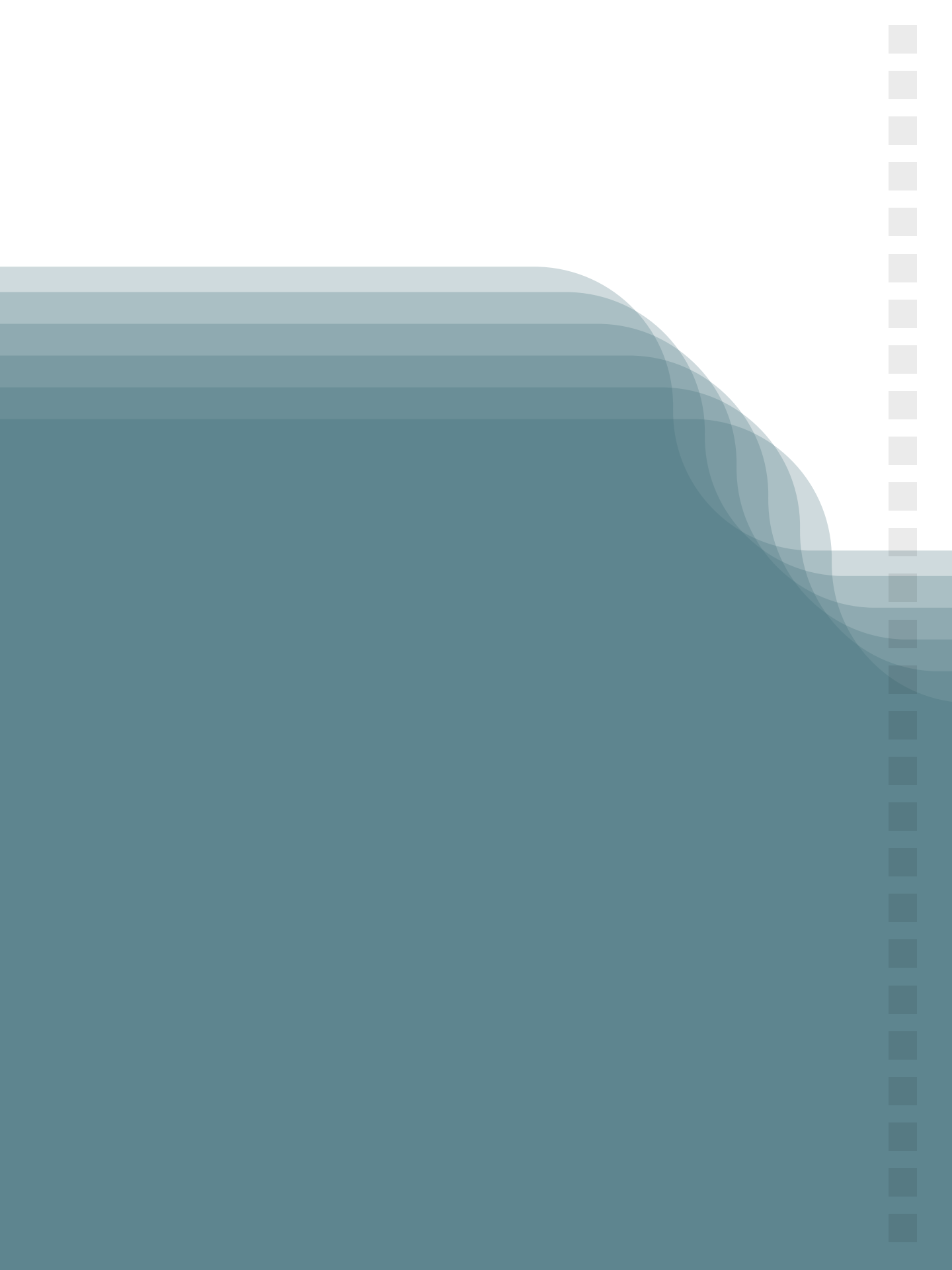
**WHY IS FAFSA SO IMPORTANT?**

CLASS OF 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES  
IN **IDAHO**

WHO WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE  
THE FAFSA **LEFT**

**\$20 MILLION**  
IN PELL GRANTS  
ON THE TABLE

NCAN





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# STATE AGENCY & PROGRAMS CONTACTS LIST

## IDAHO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL & IDAHO LAUNCH

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*Idaho LAUNCH Training Coordinator*  
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*Policy Advisor, Intergovernmental Affairs*  
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## IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION & NEXT STEPS IDAHO

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*College & Career Advising Program Manager*  
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**Joy Miller**  
*Scholarship Program Manager*  
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## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

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## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GEAR UP COORDINATORS

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jhopper@sde.idaho.gov.

## IDAHO DIVISION OF CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (IDCTE)

**Jenni Bradford**  
*Senior Program Quality Manager*  
(208) 429-5543  
jenni.bradford@cte.idaho.gov

## INSTITUTION CONTACT INFORMATION

### BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Admissions (208) 426-1156  
Financial Aid (208) 426-1664  
Registrar (208) 426-4249

### IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY

Admissions (208) 282-2475  
Financial Aid (208) 282-2756  
Registrar (208) 282-2661

### BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY - IDAHO

Admissions (208) 496-1330  
Financial Aid (208) 496-1411  
Registrar (208) 496-1411

### LEWIS-CLARK STATE COLLEGE

Admissions (208) 792-2378  
Financial Aid (208) 792-2224  
Registrar (208) 792-2223

### COLLEGE OF EASTERN IDAHO

Admissions (208) 535-5390  
Financial Aid (208) 524-3000 X 7  
Registrar (208) 535-5665

### NORTH IDAHO COLLEGE

Admissions (208) 769-3311  
Financial Aid (208) 769-3311  
Registrar (208) 769-3311

### COLLEGE OF IDAHO

Admissions (208) 459-5305  
Financial Aid (208) 459-5380  
Registrar (208) 459-5400

### NORTHWEST NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

Admissions (208) 467-8472  
Financial Aid (208) 467-8347  
Registrar (208) -467-8548

### COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN IDAHO

Admissions (208) 732-6221  
Financial Aid (208) 732-6250  
Registrar (208) 732-6272

### UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

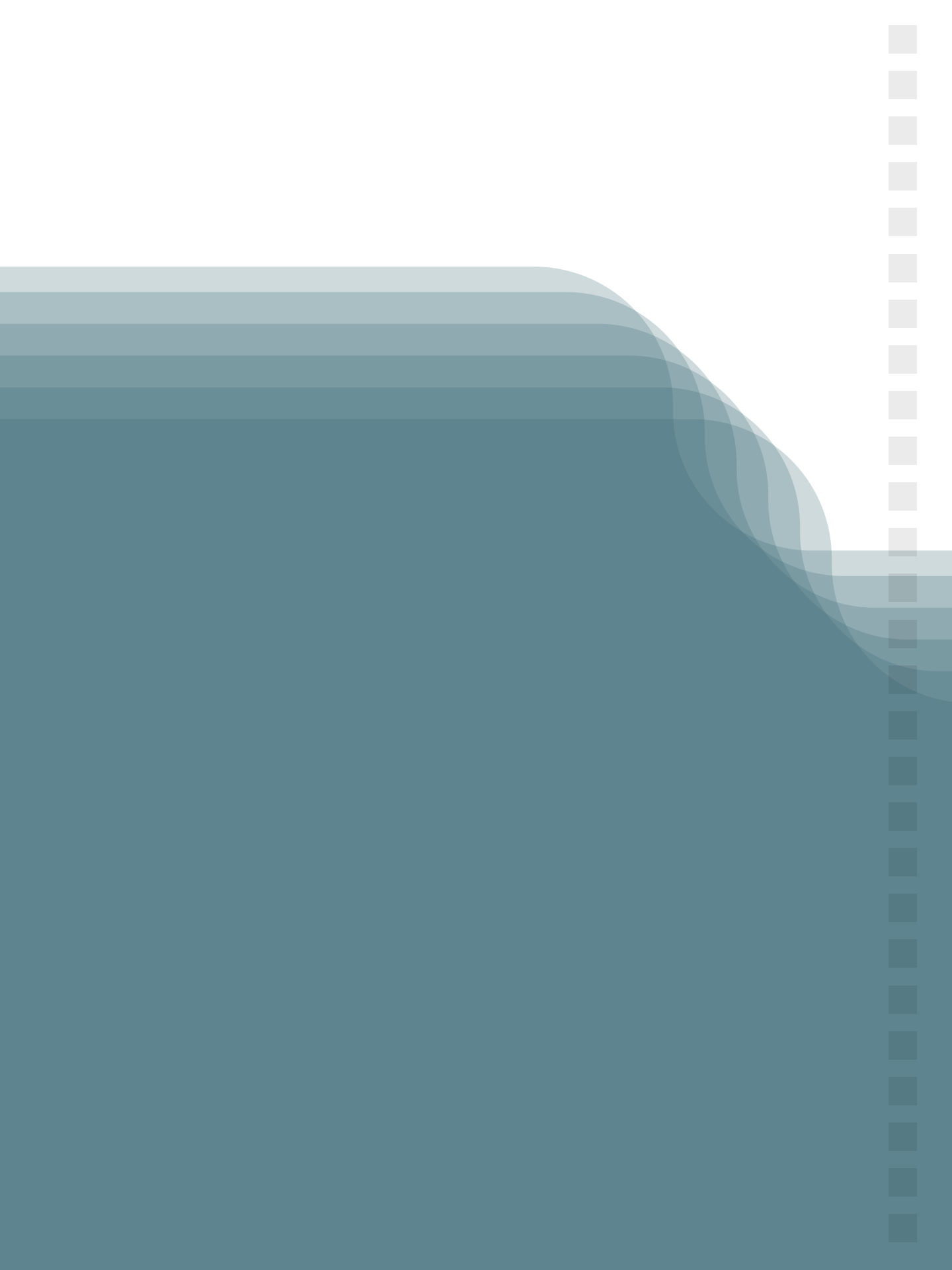
Admissions (208) 885-6326  
Financial Aid (208) 885-6312  
Registrar (208) 885-6731

### COLLEGE OF WESTERN IDAHO

Admissions (208) 562-3000  
Financial Aid (208) 562-3000  
Registrar (208) 562-3000

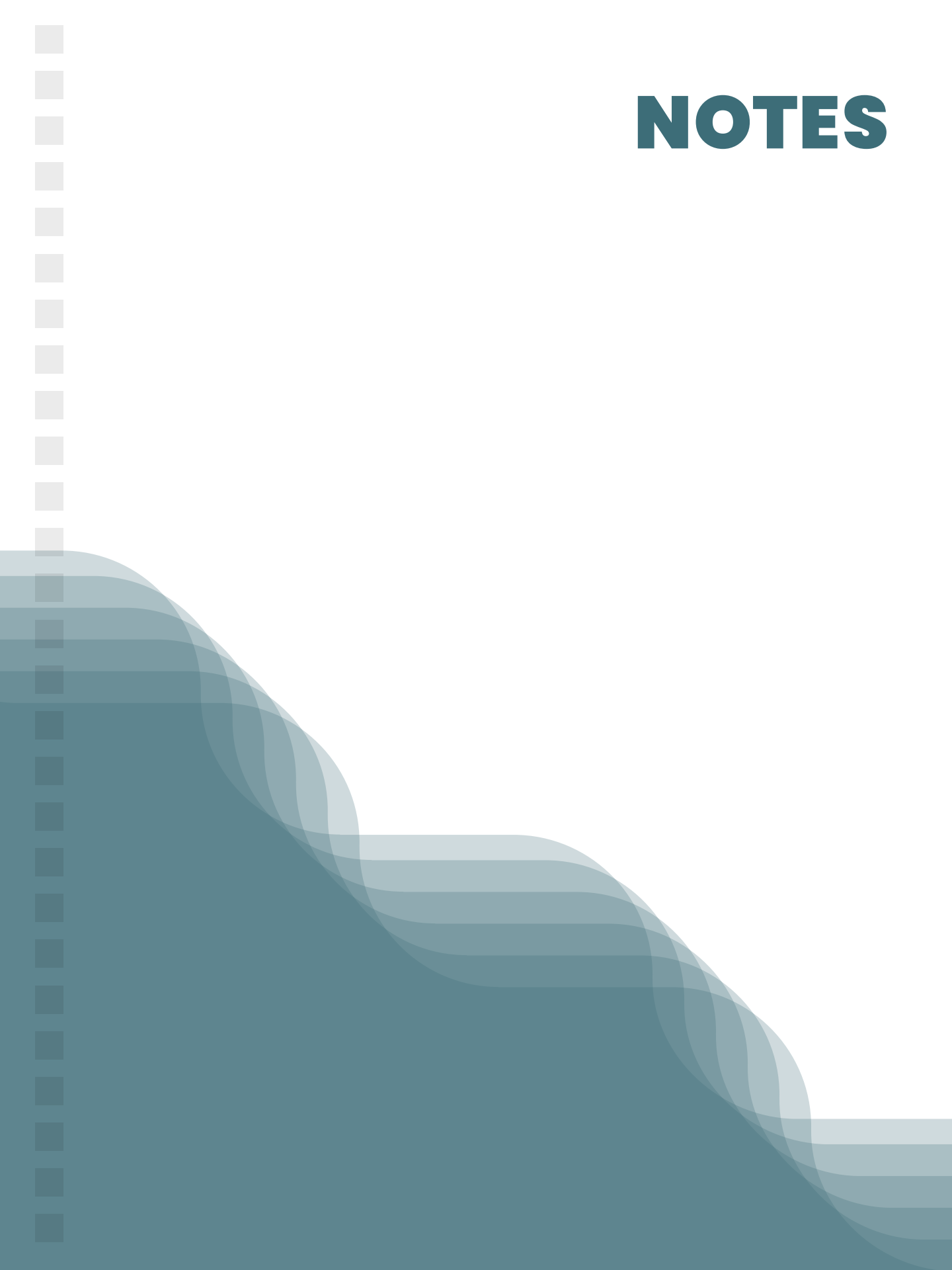
### WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY

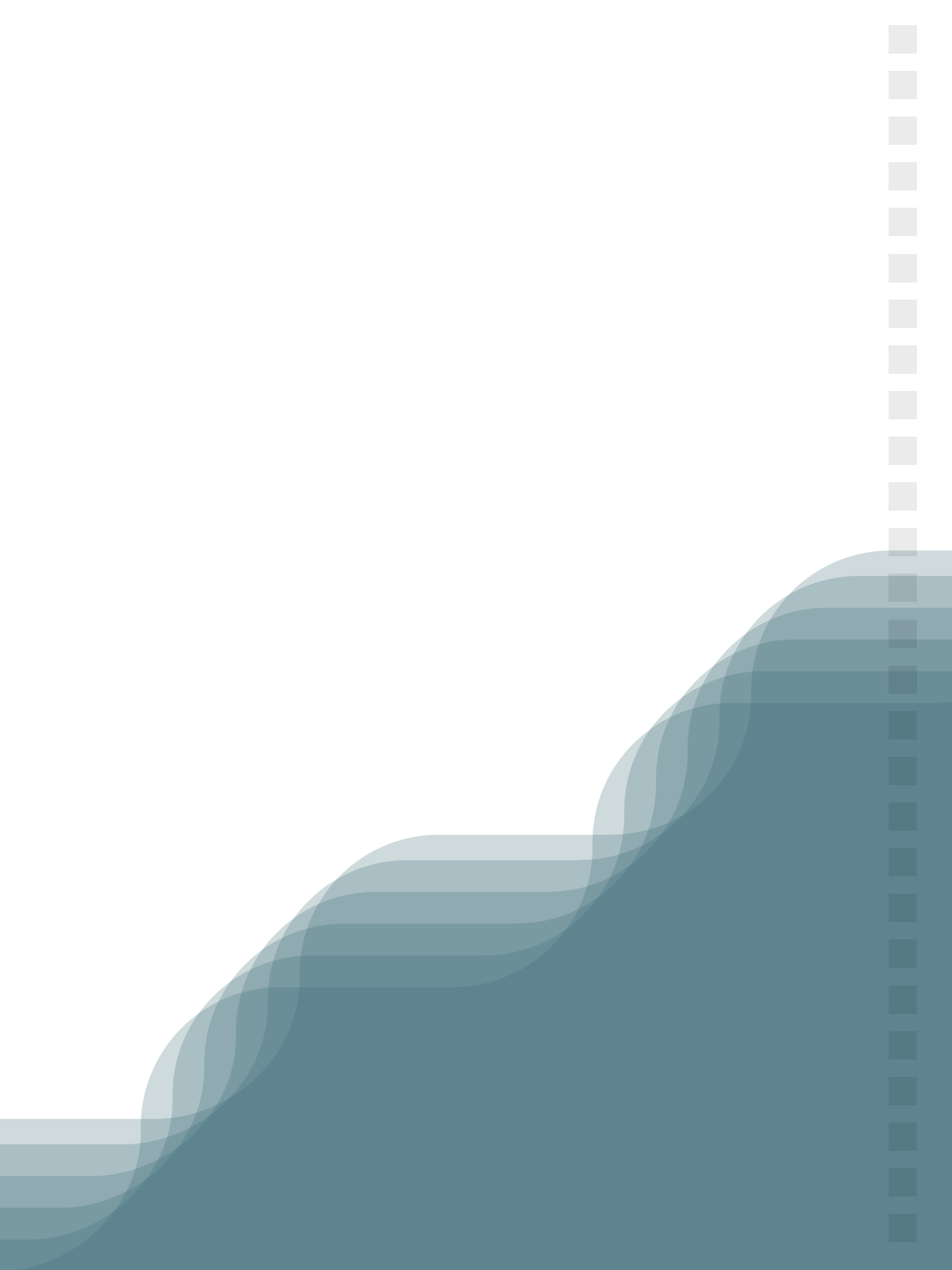
Admissions (877) 435-7948 X 3147  
Financial Aid (877) 435-7948 X 3105  
Registrar (877) 435-7948 X 3105





# NOTES











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**NEXTSTEPS.IDAHO.GOV**

IDAHO  
**LAUNCH**

**NEXTSTEPS.IDAHO.GOV/LAUNCH**

For more information, please contact us at  
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