

Van Buren Senior Checklist  
Class of 2023

**All Seniors**

- ☐ Complete Mr. Jones's yearbook packet (be mindful of due dates)
- ☐ If you plan to participate in graduation ceremony, order cap and gown
- ☐ Submit CPR certification to Marley Hall
- ☐ Talk with your family about graduation plans/parties
- ☐ Sign graduation/diploma sheet with your official name as it should appear on your diploma and you want it be read at graduation
- ☐ Complete sign out sheet and return to the office (these will be distributed in May)
- ☐ Meet with Mrs. Godwin if you are planning to participate in silver cord
- ☐ Sign Transcript release sheet in Mr. Magnani's room (May)
- ☐ Turn in post graduation plans
- ☐ Turn in all books, computers and pay all fees

**Early Graduation**

- ☐ Complete early graduation application
- ☐ If you plan to attend college in January, complete FAFSA
- ☐ Continue to check email until May. Many important announcements are made via email

**Military**

- ☐ Do your research at [www.military.com](http://www.military.com)
- ☐ Track and maintain your results from the ASVAB taken junior year
- ☐ Meet with recruiters to determine which branch and career area will interest you
- ☐ Prepare for the physical exam and fitness requirements
- ☐ Have school counselor complete your High School Graduation Status Verification letter
- ☐ Determine enlistment date

**Apprenticeships/Trade school**

- ☐ Check out opportunities at Registered Apprenticeship/Future Ready Iowa
- ☐ After you turn 18, fill out the apprenticeship application. [Earn and Learn Iowa](#)
- ☐ Complete required tests and paperwork

**Entering the workforce**

- ☐ Complete your resume and cover letter, have it proof-read and printed
- ☐ Practice your interview skills and prepare lists of questions to ask
- ☐ Prepare job applications and submit
- ☐ Arrange transportation and housing

- ☐ Set up checking and savings
- ☐ Complete employer paperwork including: W-4, payroll information, health care information

**College Bound**

- ☐ Determine which colleges have the major that will correspond with your career goals
- ☐ Plan to visit with college recruiters and make college visit days (see form for visit day)
- ☐ Talk with your family about budgeting and plans for financing college
- ☐ If you plan to attend a 4 year school, take or retake the ACT register at [act.org](http://act.org)
- ☐ If you plan to attend a community college, make an appointment to take the Accuplacer and/or ALEKS
- ☐ Apply for admission to your top college choices
- ☐ If you have taken dual enrollment classes with Iowa Wesleyan or Indian Hill, request transcripts from both colleges
- ☐ Visit the Van Buren Co. CSD homepage and check the scholarship page (student portal)
- ☐ Plan your scholarship applications and essays
- ☐ Complete the FAFSA for financial aid

## **Senior To-Do Checklist!**

### **All Year Long**

- Work hard all the way to graduation! Second semester grade can affect scholarship eligibility!
- Stay involved in after-school activities and seek leadership roles in possible!

### **Fall**

- As soon as possible after its Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> release date, complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov), along with any other financial aid applications your chosen school(s) may require. You should submit your FAFSA by the earliest financial aid deadline of the schools to which you are applying, generally by early February. Refer to the FAFSA "Applying for Aid" section of the site as you go through the application process.
- After you submit the FAFSA you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within 3 days to 3 weeks. This document lists your answers to the questions on your FAFSA and gives you some basic information about your aid eligibility. Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.
- If you haven't done so already, register for and take the standardized tests required for college admission. Check with the colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.
- Apply to the colleges you have chosen. Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions and **PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE DEADLINES!**
- Well before your college application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit the required documents (e.g. transcripts, letters of recommendations, etc.) to the colleges to which you're applying.
- Complete any last scholarship applications.

### **Spring**

- Visit colleges that have invited you to enroll
- Review your college acceptances and compare the colleges' financial aid offers
- Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you. In fact, getting to know your financial aid staff early is a good idea no matter what. They can tell you about deadlines, other aid for which you might wish to apply, and any important paperwork you might need to submit.
- When you decide which school you want to attend, notify that school of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Many schools require this notification and deposit by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **REMEMBER!!!**

**Register for all tests in advance and be sure to give yourself time to prepare appropriately! If you have difficulty paying a registration fee, ask your school counselor about getting the fee waived.**

## Things to Consider When Looking for a College!

1. **Types of College/University:**
  - **Liberal Arts:** A college with an emphasis on undergraduate study in liberal arts and sciences
    - Examples: Grinnell, Cornell, Coe, Central, Wartburg
  - **Four Year (Bachelor's degree):** A college that offers students an undergraduate degree in a wide range of academic majors.
    - Examples: Iowa State, University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa
  - **Two Year (Also called a community college or junior college. Associate's Degree):** These colleges offer many types of educational programs, including those that lead to degrees/certificates and that serve a job-entry educational experience.
    - Examples: Indian Hills, Iowa Central Community College, Southeastern Community College, Ellsworth, Kirkwood
  - **Technical/Vocational (Also called trade school or career college):** Secondary education that focuses exclusively on the job training needed for a specific career or skilled trade.
    - Examples: Iowa Lakes community college, Midwest technical institute, Siouxland Pipe welding school, Body wisdom massage therapy, Iowa school of beauty.
2. **Size of the college/university:** Do you want to be part of a smaller or larger campus? Think about what **YOU** will need to be successful. Do you work better in a smaller classroom setting, or a larger one?
3. Think about what you want to study and where you can find that major. What types of internships have students done in the past?

### What do I ask the College Reps?

- What type of financial aid is offered at your school? Are scholarships, loans, grants, and work-study jobs available?
- Can you explain the admission criteria?
- What majors do you offer?
- What types of student activities are available on campus? (Student government, sports, music, theatre, art, Greek system?)
- How safe is your college?
- How many students graduate in 4 years? What is the job placement like after graduation?
- What is the average class size? What is the faculty to staff ratio? Do your professors teach the classes or will a teaching assistant be doing so?
- What are your facilities like? (Library, gym, book store, student health center, career center, cafeteria, wellness center)
- Is there adequate parking? Is it free or by permit only?
- What type of student orientation do you provide?

### When you're ready to look at a specific school!

- Arrange to tour your campus
- Ask to meet with staff/faculty and students who can tell you about your areas of interest
- Arrange to talk with an admission counselor to talk more about tuition, scholarships, life on campus, etc.
- Consider sitting in on some classes
- If you know someone on campus personally, be sure to get their input!
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Ask yourself: "Will this school be able to meet my needs academically, socially, economically, and intellectually?"

# VAN BUREN COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



PO Box 220, Keosauqua, Iowa 52565  
Phone (319) 293-3334 Fax (319) 293-3301

Mr. Jeremy Hissem, Superintendent

## College Visit Form

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

College Representative Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### "Warrior Pride County Wide"

It is the policy of the Van Buren County Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator: 807 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Keosauqua, IA 52565 or by phone at (319) 293-3334.

# 2022-2023 Test Dates (National)

Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline Late Fee Applies	Standby Deadline Photo Upload Deadline
September 10, 2022	August 5	August 19	September 2
October 22, 2022	September 16	September 30	October 14
December 10, 2022	November 4	November 11	December 2
February 11, 2023	January 6	January 20	February 3
April 15, 2023	March 10	March 24	April 7
June 10, 2023	May 5	May 19	June 2
July 15, 2023*	June 16	June 23	July 7

\*No test centers are scheduled in New York for the July test date. See [Non-Saturday Testing](#)

## SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY- START NOW!!

Your essay is your best chance to make the case for why you should receive the scholarship. It helps the scholarship provider learn about you and gives them a much more detailed look at your school and home life.

If you use them right, those few paragraphs can help your application stand out-and could mean the difference between getting a "thanks for applying" email, and an award check! Of course, putting so much emphasis on an essay may make it seem like a daunting task, especially if you do not consider yourself a great writer. By following these next few tips, just about anyone can put together a stand-out essay!

1. **Know your audience.** It is important to realize that every scholarship provider is looking for a specific student who meets a unique criteria. When you get your application, look closely at the questions, the organization giving the scholarship, and any past recipients you can find.
  - a. Are they emphasizing classroom performance? Looking for someone who's dealt with adversity? Interested in character or community service more than grades? Whatever the answer, your research will put you a step ahead of other applicants who are copying and pasting "one-size-fits-all" answers.
2. **Plan far in advance.** You can avoid the "one-size-fits-all" essay by getting an early start on each application. Begin your research and planning a week or so before you think you should, and you'll be able to take enough time to turn out something good.
  - a. This will also give you time to craft an outline, which can help your essay stay concise and on target. Think of two or three main points you want to make in response to the essay questions, add some supporting information under each heading, and consider a sentence or two of introduction and conclusion. Before you know it, you'll have built the structure and thesis of your essay, and you won't have to rush to write it!
3. **Make it personal and passionate.** When you start writing, don't forget that the main purpose of your essay is to convince the reader that you're the student they've been looking for. Answer the questions you've set out in your outline, but make sure every point you make is illustrated with a specific detail that shows you care about the subject.
  - a. Don't just mention that you work with disadvantaged kids; Tell them how your love of soccer got you into coaching those kids. Don't just tell them about your acting awards; Show how the stage helped you conquer your shyness. Putting your unique interests and perspectives on the page will go a very long way toward creating a memorable essay.
4. **Find an Editor.** Last but not least, make sure you have time to run your essay by a good editor. This could be a parent, teacher, or grammar-nerd friend. Even a well-researched and passionately written essay can be derailed by spelling mistakes or awkwardly-worded sentences. A few minutes of proofreading by a trusted editor can make a huge difference.

Scholarship essays are a big component of your applications and can be a major headache, too. But by starting early, answering the right questions, and describing what makes you unique, you'll be writing standout essays with ease!

## ACTIVITIES AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

This sheet is here to help you! By filling this out, it can get you a really good start when you go to fill out applications and write your essays.

Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. Your parents' employers and organizations they belong to may also offer scholarships.

You should **NEVER** pay for scholarship information or application fees.

Employment History:

Extracurricular Clubs and/or Groups:

Volunteer and/or Community Service Hours:

Leadership Positions:

Awards/Recognitions:

Sports:

### \*Examples of things to list in your essays and applications!\*

- |                |                  |                |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| -Cross Country | -Choir           | -Leo Club      |
| -Football      | -Marching Band   | -Outdoor Club  |
| -Volleyball    | -Color Guard     | -Quiz Bowl     |
| -Basketball    | -FBLA            | -Rotary Club   |
| -Wrestling     | -FFA             | -Weight Club   |
| -Rhythm Squad  | -NHS             | -Archery       |
| -Cheerleading  | -Student Council | -Band          |
| -Track & Field | -Art Club        | -YLC           |
| -Baseball      | -Spanish Club    | -E-Sports Club |
| -Softball      | -Science Fair    |                |
| -Golf          | -ETC/Fall Play   |                |
| -Basketball    | -Iron Chef       |                |



Name:

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GPA and Class Rank:

Intended Field of Study:

Extracurricular Activities (Clubs, sports, groups, etc.):

Awards and Recognition:

Volunteer Work/Community Service:

Scholarship(s) Being Applied For:

Letter Should be Addressed to:

Date Letter is Needed By:

# -VAN BUREN JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

## TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED WITH FINANCIAL AID

Parents and Students:

Now is the time to get started on the financial aid process for the 2023-2024 school year. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) provides the starting point for state and federal grants, loans and scholarships. Many private scholarships and college scholarships also required the completion of FAFSA before a student is eligible to receive funds. FAFSA filing deadline is now in October instead of January. This earlier filing date will allow students and families a better picture of financial assistance so additional planning can be done before a student goes off to college next fall. The information provided to FAFSA will be based on 2021 tax information.

Here are some tips for getting started.

Begin by visiting **[fsaid.ed.gov](https://fsaid.ed.gov)**

This site will allow you *and* your son/daughter to establish a federal student aid ID. Having the ID will enable you to submit and sign documents electronically which speeds up the processing. Students **and** Parents will each need to establish a FSA ID as you will both be providing information on the FAFSA form.

When you log on to the site, you will need to enter your demographic information along with your social security number. The site will direct you through establishing a user name, password and several security questions. **Please note: It is critical that you record your answers on piece of paper and file the information with other important documents. Trying to recall this information each time you update your FAFSA can be very difficult. Typically, you will only visit this site 1 time per year throughout your college education so a record of security passwords, questions, and secure codes is extremely important.**

When answering security questions, avoid answers that require spaces or punctuation. For example, "St. Mary's Church", should be entered as stmaryschurch

FSAID will also request an email account to send a "secure" code for finishing the ID process. We encourage you to use an email account you check frequently because other information about your award will also come to this account.

**STUDENTS:** Please do not use your school established email account as those will be de-activated upon graduation. Students will not be able to access financial aid information once those accounts are de-activated and you will need to access this information following graduation and throughout your college education.

Establishing a FSA ID can be done prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> and will probably take you about 20-30 minutes.

Once FSA ID is complete, you may visit **[fafsa.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov)**

This site will again have you enter demographic information and allow you to enter financial information used to establish an estimated family contribution (EFC). This site is linked to the IRS so if your tax information is filed electronically; it can be uploaded directly in the FAFSA report.

**FSAID help is available. If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Chapuis at 319-293-3183, ext: 4009**

**FAFSA help is also available by contacting Sonya Davis at the Educational Opportunity Center on IHCC campus. Even if you are not attending IHCC, she can assist with the financial aid process.**

**The Educational Opportunity Center and Iowa State Extension Service will be hosting a FAFSA Completion Night at Van Buren County CSD in October. Watch Facebook posts the first of October learn about specific times.**

## Federal Student Aid ID

If the student is a dependent, one parent will need a FSA ID of their own.

### For the Student:

User Name \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Verified cell phone # ☐ Verified Email ☐

### For the Parent:

User Name \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Verified cell phone # ☐ Verified Email ☐

## FEDERAL STUDENT AID ID

### What is an FSA ID?

The FSA ID - a username and password - has replaced the Federal Student Aid PIN.

### How is the FSA ID used?

The FSA ID is used to log in to certain U.S. Department of Education websites. Your FSA ID confirms your identity when you access your financial aid information and electronically sign Federal Student Aid documents.

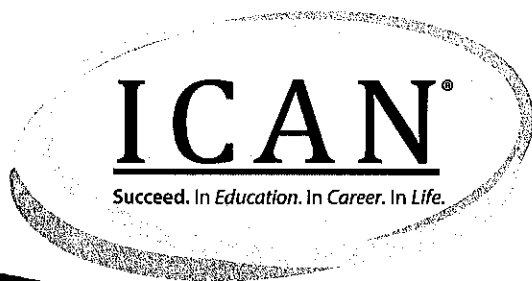
### How do I get an FSA ID?

You can create an FSA ID here: <https://fsaid.ed.gov>

### Steps to Create an FSA ID

1. When logging into this website above, **click the tab to create an FSA ID.**
2. Create a username and password, and enter your e-mail address.
3. Enter your name, date of birth, Social Security number, contact information, and challenge questions and answers.
4. If you have a Federal Student Aid PIN, you will be able to enter it and link it to your FSA ID. You can still create an FSA ID if you have forgotten or do not have a PIN.
5. Review your information, and read and accept the terms and conditions.
6. Confirm your e-mail address using the secure code, which will be sent to the e-mail address you entered when you created your FSA ID. Once you verify your e-mail address, you can use it instead of your username to log in to the websites.

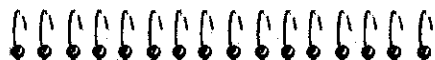
You can use your FSA ID to sign a FAFSA right away. Once the Social Security Administration verifies your information in one to three days, or if you have linked your PIN to your FSA ID, you will be able to use your FSA ID to access the websites listed above. For help, visit [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](https://StudentAid.gov/fsaid)



# Ready to File the FAFSA?

## Here's What You'll Need

Filing for financial aid is less stressful when you are prepared. Use the checklists below to help you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).\*\*



### HELPFUL TIPS

#### \*\*\*FSA ID

The FSA ID is a username and password that will confirm your identity when signing the FAFSA.

To sign the FAFSA online, the FAFSA requires the student and ONE parent to sign with an FSA ID.

When creating an FSA ID you must have access to your phone or email.

During setup you will be asked to verify your cell phone and/or email address by entering a code sent by text or email to the contact information listed.

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

#### When should I file?

The 2023-24 FAFSA form will be available October 1, 2022. Each college has a priority date for the FAFSA. You should file the FAFSA before the priority date. If you are applying to multiple schools, file by the earliest date.

#### Student:

- ☐ Social Security number, driver's license number and date of birth.
- ☐ 2021 federal and state tax returns.
- ☐ W-2 forms and/or other records of income earned in 2021.
- ☐ As of today, what is the balance of checking, savings, and investment accounts?\*
- ☐ Records of untaxed income received in 2021 (e.g., veterans benefits, etc.).
- ☐ 2021 business and farm records.
- ☐ Alien registration number, if not a U.S. citizen.
- ☐ As of today, are you married? If married, what is the date of marriage? If divorced or separated, what is the date of divorce or separation?
- ☐ Child support paid and/or received in 2021.
- ☐ A federal student aid identification (FSA ID) username and password.\*\*\*
- ☐ A list of the colleges/universities you wish to apply to.

#### Parent(s):

- ☐ Social Security numbers and dates of birth.
- ☐ 2021 federal and state tax returns.
- ☐ W-2 forms and/or other records of income earned in 2021.
- ☐ As of today, what is the balance of checking, savings, and investment accounts?\*
- ☐ Records of untaxed income received in 2021 (e.g., veterans benefits, etc.).
- ☐ 2021 business and farm records.
- ☐ As of today, are you married? If married, what is the date of marriage? If divorced or separated, what is the date of divorce or separation?
- ☐ Child support paid and/or received in 2021.
- ☐ A federal student aid identification (FSA ID) username and password.\*\*\*

#### IRS Data Retrieval

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool within the FAFSA application can be used to automatically pull MOST of your 2021 tax information into your FAFSA application. You will still need to have copies of your 2021 taxes and W-2s on hand as a reference.

**Questions?** Call (877) 272-4692 or email [ICAN@ICANSucceed.org](mailto:ICAN@ICANSucceed.org). If you would like FAFSA completion assistance from an ICAN Student Success Advisor, it is highly recommended that you setup your FSA ID\*\* prior to your appointment.

\* See backside for applicable investment and asset accounts.

\*\*The FAFSA is a free form that may be completed without professional assistance via paper or online forms provided by the U.S. Department of Education.

# FAFSA Filing Tips & Helpful Hints?

## Are You Independent?

- ☐ Were you born before January 1, 2000?
- ☐ As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced)
- ☐ At the beginning of the 2023-24 school year, will you be working on a graduate program?
- ☐ Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training or are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
- ☐ Do you have children or dependents who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024?
- ☐ At any time since you turned 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
- ☐ As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you an emancipated minor or in a legal guardianship?
- ☐ At any time on or after July 1, 2022, were you homeless or at risk of being homeless?

## Who is Considered a Parent on the FAFSA?

- ☐ If your parent was never married and does not live with your other legal parent, or if your parent is widowed or not remarried, answer the questions about that parent.
- ☐ If your legal parents (biological, adoptive, or as determined by the state) are not married to each other and live together, select "Unmarried and both parents living together" and provide information about both of them regardless of their gender. Do not include any person who is not married to your parent and who is not a legal or biological parent.
- ☐ If your parents are divorced or separated, answer the questions about the parent you lived with more during the past 12 months. (If you did not live with one parent more than the other, give answers about the parent who provided more financial support during the past 12 months, or during the most recent year that you actually received support from a parent.) If this parent is remarried as of today, answer the questions about that parent and your stepparent.
- ☐ If your widowed parent is remarried as of today, answer the questions about that parent and your stepparent.

## Businesses & Investment Farms

Includes:

- ☐ Market value of land, buildings, machinery, equipment, inventory, etc.
- ☐ Debt means only those debts for which the business or investment farm was used as collateral.

Business Value does NOT include:

- ☐ Value of business if family owns and controls more than 50% of the business and has fewer than 100 full-time employees
- ☐ Your family includes persons directly related to you such as a parent, sibling or cousin, or persons who are or were related to you by marriage such as a spouse, stepparent or sister-in-law.

Investment Farm Value does NOT include:

- ☐ Value of family farm that you (your spouse and/or your parents) live on and operate.

## Investments Include:

- ☐ Cash, Savings and Checking  
(1st Question Under Assets Section)

Following items should be combined for the 2nd Question Under Assets Section

- ☐ Real Estate (not the home you live in)
- ☐ Trust funds
- ☐ UGMA/UTMA accounts (student asset)
- ☐ Money Market Funds
- ☐ Mutual Funds
- ☐ Certificates of Deposit
- ☐ Stocks
- ☐ Stock Options
- ☐ Bonds
- ☐ Other Securities
- ☐ Installment & Land Sales
- ☐ Commodities
- ☐ Educational Savings Accounts including 529 plans, Coverdell and Educational IRAs. (List as parent asset)

## Do Not Include:

- ☐ The home you live in
- ☐ Life Insurance Values
- ☐ Retirement Accounts
- ☐ Pension Funds
- ☐ Annuities
- ☐ ROTH IRAs
- ☐ Keogh Plans
- ☐ UTMA/UGMA accounts for which you are a custodian, but not the owner.

## W-2 Box 12 a-d

- ☐ Question 94 - Untaxed Income  
a. Payments to tax-deferred pension & retirement savings plans include amounts reported on the W-2, Box 12. Don't include IPERS. Report codes D, E, F, G, H, & S

\* Please refer to the 2023-22 FAFSA guide for a more detailed explanation. After Oct. 1, 2022, visit <https://fafsa.gov/options.htm> and click the link to 2023-2022 School Year.