FAFSA Completion and Follow-Up Steps Checklist

RGV FOCUS
a collaboration with Educate Texas

☐ **Step 1:** Create an FSA ID for Student and Parent at fsaid.ed.gov. You will use your FSA ID to log into and sign the FAFSA. File it in a safe, but accessible place.

☐ **Step 2:** Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online beginning October 1 at fafsa.gov. Request an IRS Tax Transcript for yourself and your parents at www.irs.gov/individuals/get-transcript. This will make the verification process easier <u>IF</u> you are selected for verification. <u>DO NOT</u> submit the IRS Tax Transcript(s) to your institution unless they ask for it.

☐ **Step 3:** Within a week or two, you will receive an email from Federal Student Aid with your Student Aid Report (SAR). Review your Student Aid Report with your counselor or advisor. You can also find your SAR by logging back into the FAFSA website.

Does your SAR indicate you were selected for verification? If yes, proceed to step 4. If no, proceed to step 7.

☐ **Step 4:** Review your institution's online portal* for important information about the documents you need to submit in order to verify your financial aid application.

☐ **Step 5:** Gather and submit those documents to the institution's Financial Aid Office. If you have questions about the documentation needed, see you counselor or call the Financial Aid Office; they are there to help you. Keep copies of everything you submit. Follow the submission procedures the portal tells you: online, fax, email, or by regular postal mail. Make sure you submit the documentation by the deadline the institution provides.

☐ **Step 6:** Check your online portal or email frequently to ensure that your institution received the documents you submitted. Complete any additional requirements indicated on your institution's online portal.

☐ **Step 7:** Approximately one month after all financial aid documentation is received, check your email or online portal for your Financial Aid Award Letter. This letter will indicate the amount of financial aid you are eligible to receive and may include grants, scholarships, student loans, and parent loans. Talk to your counselor or institution if you have questions about your financial aid award or the cost of attendance.

☐ **Step 8:** Accept or decline your financial aid award in the online portal. Pay close attention to deadlines!

☐ **Step 9:** If you are accepting a loan, you will need to complete additional loan promissory notes (an agreement that you will pay the loan back) and some online loan counseling to ensure you understand how the loan(s) work and the conditions for repayment. Those items are found on studentloans.gov

☐ **Step 10:** Check your student bill before the semester starts to ensure that your financial aid was applied, and arrange to pay any amounts not covered by financial aid. Again, deadlines are important. Check your online portal or email often!

*If you have already applied to your college or university of choice, you should have received instructions for how to access the institution's online portal. If you have questions, check with your counselor or call the institution where you applied.

Note: checking your personal or institutional email often is very important during the application and financial aid process.