

Scholarships/Financial Aid

When do I fill them out?

Start filling them out anytime after your junior year, as they become available.

Where do I get scholarships?

Look for scholarships at the schools you are applying to, in guidance, through parent employers, your own employer or any organizations that you may be affiliated with.

Check the guidance website for scholarships

<http://mpsdweb.mpsd.k12.wi.us/scholarship>

www.fastweb.com

www.cappex.com

www.scholarships.com

Tips for organizing your scholarships

1. Get a folder that is dedicated just for your scholarships.
2. Get a calendar just for keeping track of scholarships and list the due dates of each scholarship on the calendar.
3. Get several transcripts at a time during peak scholarship season so you are not running around at the last minute. Also, keep a book of stamps handy to avoid the last hour mad dash to the post office. Keep enough big (10x13) envelopes on hand so you don't have to fold your applications. Purchase address labels so you can type the address and your return address on them—you can print out a lot of return address labels ahead of time!!
4. Dedicate one flash drive to all of your scholarship applications/essays. Designate folders on your flash drive for each scholarship.
5. Keep a list of what scholarships you have sent out and the date they were sent.

Tips for Writing a Great Scholarship Application

1. Apply for those scholarships that you are eligible for only!
2. Complete the application in full
3. Follow the directions-provide everything that is required such as transcripts, test scores, letter of acceptance and financial aid information, etc.
4. Neatness counts—**ALWAYS TYPE YOUR APPLICATIONS when you can!**
5. Write an essay that makes a strong impression
6. Watch your deadlines
7. Make sure your application gets to where it needs to go-put your name on every page and staple the application together (unless it is indicated that you should not do so)
8. Keep a copy of everything
9. **PROOFREAD!!!**
10. Ask for help when you need it

--Other tips:

1. Don't wait until the last minute to ask for letters of recommendation. At the beginning of the year ask a few people for letters, when you need letters for scholarships later on these letters will already be written and may just need to be changed to be tailored to the specific scholarship. Give these writers 2-3 weeks notice for the letters and this deadline should be at least 1 week before the due date of the scholarship.
2. When you are asking for a letter of recommendation give the writer the criteria that must be addressed in their letter. Also, give them the sheet which lists your GPA, class rank, achievements, activities etc.
3. Thank the letter writers with a nice note
4. Send thank you notes to the sponsoring agency of any scholarships that you receive
5. Start early applying for scholarships and stay consistent in checking on them. It is often great to set aside the same time every week to check on scholarships.
6. If any scholarship asks you to send money to them then it is a scam! Do not send money or give out bank account numbers to anyone claiming they can guarantee you financial aid or scholarships.
7. Often times it is permissible to attach additional sheets of paper to the application. It is often helpful to prepare a list of activities ahead of time and then just print them off for each scholarship.
8. Start generating ideas for scholarship essays. Some ideas are: why am I deserving of this scholarship, how has my community service experience affected me, future career and educational goals etc.

Financial Aid

-Apply as soon in October as you can. You will use 2015 tax data for this year as they transition from the January date.

-Apply early as this money is on a first come, first served basis

-Apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov

-Sign up for FSA ID at <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>