



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 23, 2021

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myFutureNC and LatinxED Partner for Free Virtual FAFSA Advising Sessions

Latinx students, families, and counselors are encouraged to sign up to meet with bilingual FAFSA experts

RALEIGH, NC - Many North Carolina high school students who stand to benefit the most from federal financial aid for college are not filling out the FAFSA or Free Application for Federal Student Aid. While FAFSA completions are down nine percent year over year statewide, majority low-income and minority high schools are seeing even larger declines - down 13% this year compared to last year.

The language barrier and unique circumstances facing the Latinx community can make filling out the FAFSA difficult for some families. **In an effort to help families navigate the process, myFutureNC is partnering with LatinxED to offer free, virtual FAFSA assistance to Latinx students, their families, and their counselors from February 21 to March 7.** Bilingual College Access coaches from the College y Consejos program are available to help at a variety of times including nights and weekends. To sign up for one-on-one FAFSA assistance, [click here.](#)

“The pandemic has created additional hardships on Latinx high school students who were already facing college access barriers. We want them to know college is still the best way to move up the economic ladder and we can help them get there,” said Ricky Hurtado, Co-

Founder of LatinxEdu. “Many families may not realize how much money is available in federal grants that can alleviate all financial burden if students fill out the FAFSA.”

In addition to virtual advising, myFutureNC, business, government, and education leaders have set a goal to make [North Carolina First in the nation in FAFSA filings](#). The NC First in FAFSA initiative launched the [FAFSA School Challenge](#) this semester to encourage high schools to earn the highest FAFSA completion rate and implement innovative strategies to support FAFSA completion locally. So far, nearly 70% of public high schools across the state have registered for the challenge. One hundred percent of North Carolina school districts have at least one high school participating.

“We want all North Carolina students to know that we are here for you and want to help you achieve your dreams,” said Cecilia Holden, CEO of myFutureNC. “We are thrilled so many are partnering with us in this important work to make North Carolina first in the nation in FAFSA completions.”

According to a 2020 [report by Education Strategy Group](#) (ESG), students who complete the FAFSA are far more likely to enroll in higher education. In fact, 90% of FAFSA completers attend college directly after high school, compared to just 55% of students who don’t complete the FAFSA. FAFSA completers are also more likely to persist in their coursework and obtain a degree.

In 2020, North Carolina students left an estimated \$107 million on the table by not filling out the FAFSA.

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ABOUT NC FIRST IN FAFSA:

NC [First in FAFSA](#) is a [myFutureNC](#) Collaborative that focuses on increasing the number of high school seniors who complete the FAFSA application. Increasing the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#), or FAFSA, completion rate is a fundamental step in North Carolina’s efforts to meet our state’s 2 million by 2030 postsecondary educational attainment goal. Students who complete the FAFSA are more likely to enroll in higher education, persist in their college coursework, and obtain a degree.

Partners include Carolina Demography, College Foundation of North Carolina, College Advising Corps, the Hunt Institute, and the John M. Belk Endowment.

For more information on NC First in FAFSA, visit myfuturenc.org/first-in-fafsa/.