

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND
BOARD OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
JOINT RESOLUTION**

NO.: BHE 24-64

BESE

BOARD DATE: June 20, 2024

JOINT RESOLUTION REGARDING FAFSA COMPLETION

MOVED: that the Board of Higher Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (collectively the Boards) receive the June 18, 2024 Joint Memorandum on FAFSA completion from Department of Higher Education (DHE) Commissioner Ortega and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Acting Commissioner Johnston. The Boards express their appreciation to the Commissioners and staff from the DHE and DESE on this work.

The Boards recognize that FAFSA completion is a key step in the college application process and is positively associated with college enrollment. Students who complete the FAFSA are substantially more likely to enroll in an institution of higher education.

The Boards therefore direct their commissioners to continue their ongoing interagency collaboration and coordination to develop recommendations aimed at increasing awareness for students and their families on college affordability, including new state financial aid availability. The proximate goals should include increased FAFSA and MASFA completion rates, with the ultimate goal of increasing college-going rates. The scope should include examination of innovative, technology-enabled student engagement strategies, and separately, examination of policies such as mandatory FAFSA completion. The Boards encourage the commissioners to use existing infrastructure to pilot promising approaches to effectively communicate financial aid availability to students transitioning to postsecondary education. The Boards further request that the commissioners produce a joint annual report that includes FAFSA and MASFA completion rates by student groups and a summary of the interagency work on this topic.

Authority: M.G.L. c. 15A, §9(u) and M.G.L. c. 69, §1B

Contact: Noe Ortega, Commissioner, Department of Higher Education
Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner, Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education.