



**IDAHO
COUNSELOR
PLAYBOOK**

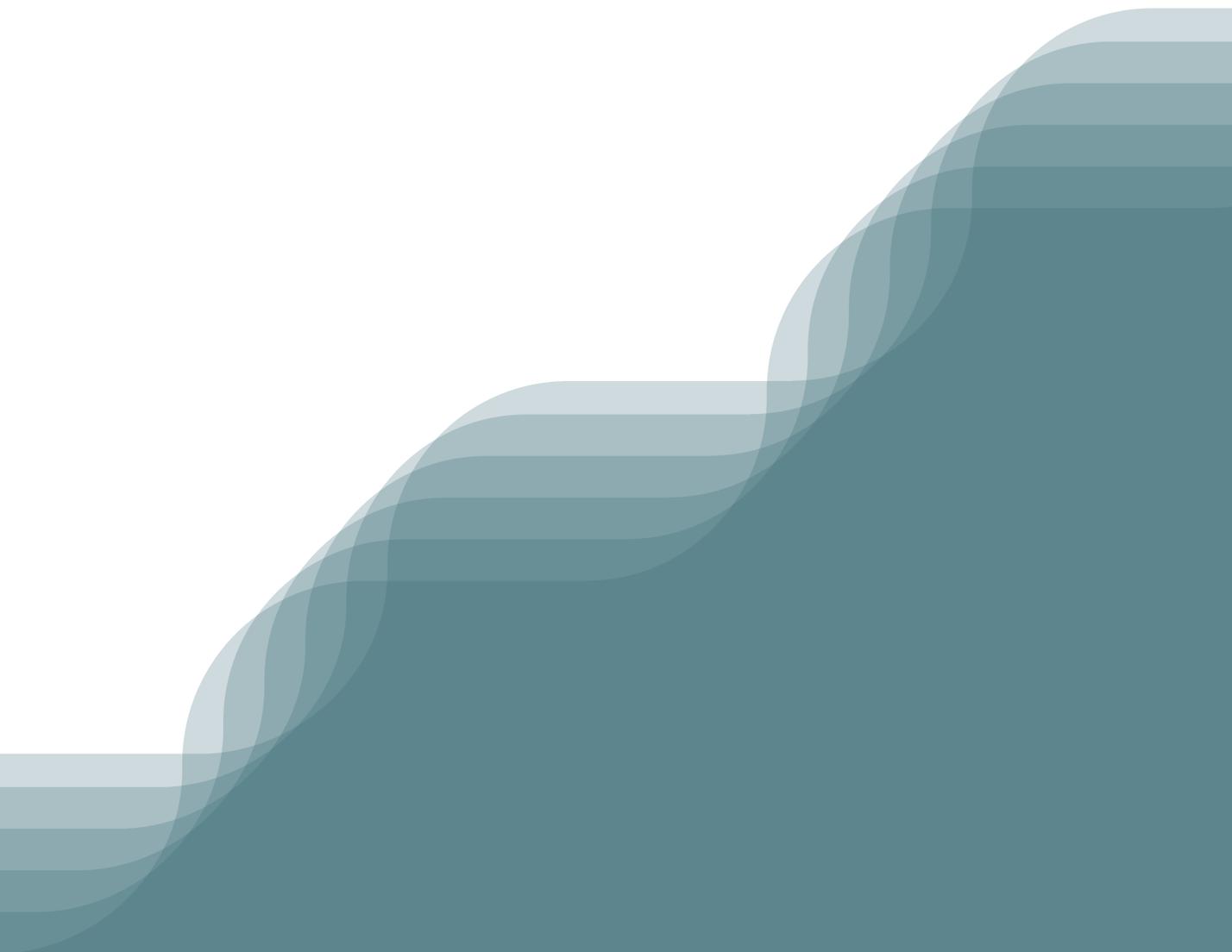
2024-2025

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INFO FOR COUNSELORS

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PLAYBOOK INTRODUCTION



DEAR COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELOR,

Once again, it's the beginning of a new school year. It is with continued excitement and the utmost gratitude that we present you with this updated Idaho Counselor Playbook! We recognize that you are continually at the forefront of connecting students with their post-secondary opportunities, and we wholeheartedly appreciate your commitment to our Idaho students and their future endeavors. Keeping you in mind, we have designed this Playbook to offer guidance on helping students access information about the post-secondary opportunities available.

There have been a team of people working throughout the school year and the summer to prepare the information for you – our hope is that you will be able to seamlessly add the information for the abundance of opportunities that lay in front of your students with the items provided.

You will have up-to-date information through our user-friendly “plug and play” training materials. Each resource has been thoughtfully created to provide support as you engage directly with students, parents, and others. Our materials aim to assist students in successfully navigating their post-secondary journey while helping parents and families gain a clear understanding of the exciting possibilities that lie ahead.

We hope you find this Playbook beneficial. The best way to achieve Governor Little’s goal of making Idaho the place where our children and grandchildren choose to stay is equipping them with the skills needed to become lifelong learners and eventual participants in our state’s workforce.

Sincerely,

Sherawn Reberry
Program Manager, Idaho LAUNCH



TOP 5 TIPS FOR ADVISORS

If you are a new college and career advisor, counselor, or just new to the role of mentoring students through planning for life after high school, consider the following tips. Then, explore the calendar of sponsored PD and suggested activities on the following pages.

1 SIGN UP FOR NEXT STEPS IDAHO NEWSLETTER

Get the latest College and Career development updates via the Next Steps Idaho Newsletter. You can change your subscription preferences at any time!

nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator#newsletter

2 ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES USER

Sign up for Advanced Opportunities news updates from the Idaho State Department of Education.

nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao

3 BOOKMARK THE “FOR EDUCATORS” SECTION ON NEXT STEPS IDAHO WEBSITE

Learn about upcoming opportunities for further learning through the Next Steps Idaho website, looking under the Professional Development tab:

nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator

4 BUILD YOUR NETWORK

Connect with College and Career Advisors throughout the state by reaching out to your Regional Idaho LAUNCH / Next Steps Idaho Ambassador. You can find their contact information by visiting nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/idaho-launch.

5 FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH IDAHO STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Information included in this playbook

- **Idaho LAUNCH:** A new grant program that aims to connect students with in-demand careers by helping cover the cost of an Idaho university, community college, career technical, or workforce training program.
- **Idaho Campus Choice:** Idaho’s pre-admissions program that guarantees acceptance to Idaho’s public institutions based on grade point average (GPA) or 11th grade English Language Arts (ELA) and Math ISAT scores. In late September, high school seniors receive their Idaho Campus Choice letters informing them if they have been guaranteed acceptance to either four, six, or all eight of Idaho’s public higher education institutions. Their next step is to use Apply Idaho to select the institution(s) where they would like to enroll.
- **Apply Idaho:** the website allows students to submit one or more applications for admission to Idaho’s public colleges and universities all at once and for free.
- **Scholarship Idaho:** the online application students use to apply for state-managed scholarships.
- **Advanced Opportunities:** Grant program for students in grades 7-12 that covers the costs for dual-enrollment college courses and advanced CTE classes.

TIPS FOR HOSTING AN EVENT AT YOUR SCHOOL

High School Counselors are often encouraged to organize multiple school events throughout the school year, such as parent nights, back-to-school nights, in-class presentations, College Fairs, and College Application Week. It can sometimes be challenging to know where to begin.

Here are some best practices for hosting successful events:

PREPARING FOR THE EVENT

Consider the event format and choose the appropriate date(s)

- Take into account the number of days required to engage all parties, including seniors and parents
- Check whether there are any conflicting events such as assemblies, PSAT testing, or field trips

Inform and involve school staff

- Advertise the event at an all-school staff meeting
- Send a “heads-up” email to all staff
- Work with Admin to ensure support

Recruit your team

- Form a committee (for a large event)
- Who can help you? TRIO, College Reps, Fin Aid Reps, etc
- Invite state representatives from LAUNCH, Next Steps Idaho, CTE, and Advanced Opportunities.

Communicate, communicate, communicate!

- Parents and Students
 - What is the purpose of the event?
 - Where is it?
 - How can they prepare?
- Teachers and Staff
 - Why is the event important?
 - How will it impact them?

AFTER THE EVENT

Share your success!

- How many students applied during College App Week?
- How many students attended your FAFSA Night?

Seek constructive feedback from students, parents, teachers, and others involved to gather valuable insight.



COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q1

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar.

SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Back-to-School Night
- Parent Night
- Financial Aid Info Night
- College Application Week Events
- College Fair Night

OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Connect with your Regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates.
Visit: nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit for templates and materials.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Community of Practice

Experts, experienced, open forum, brainstorming



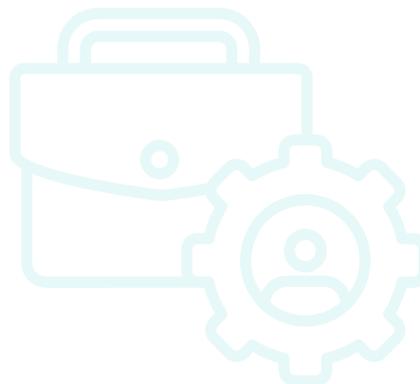
Skill Building

Learning a new skill



Spotlight

Focus, in-depth training and Ed Forums



08

AUGUST

Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Next Steps Idaho Overview

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Write Welcome Letter to families and teachers explaining role
- Staff meeting presentations
 - Role
 - Idaho LAUNCH
 - Next Steps Idaho
- Review/Submit Advanced Opportunities summer funding
- Make school website updates
- Reach out to your Regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Prep for Back-to-School Night, Parent Night

09

SEPTEMBER

Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Advanced Opportunities (for new AO coordinators)

👉 Spotlight: Idaho LAUNCH

👥 Community of Practice: Counselor Day Events (IACRAO)

👥 Community of Practice: How to Host a College Application Week Event

👥 Skill Building: GEAR UP: Speaker Lab – Delivering Effective Lessons

👉 Spotlight: Apply Idaho Walk Thru

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Update all graduation checks for seniors
- Host Parent Night, discuss Idaho LAUNCH and Next Steps Idaho
- Update Senior Project Plan
- Begin post-secondary meetings with seniors

Important Dates

- Direct Admissions notifications sent

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OCTOBER

Professional Development

👉 Spotlight: Next Steps Idaho Overview

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Prep and Host a College Fair Night
- Host a College Application Week/Night
- Approve Advanced Opportunities fall funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship deadlines

Important Dates

- Idaho LAUNCH Grant and Idaho Opportunity Scholarship open applications October 1
- Apply Idaho application opens October 2
- Waypoint Conference is September 29 - October 1

COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q2

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar.

SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- FSA ID workshop
- Scholarship and Financial Aid Help Sessions
- Idaho LAUNCH Sessions
- Advanced Opportunities Night
- ASVAB Night

OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit for templates and materials.

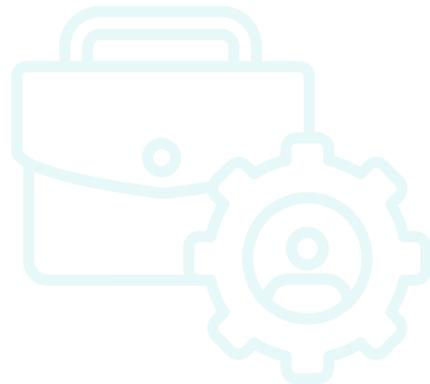


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NOVEMBER

Professional Development

-  Spotlight: FSA ID, FAFSA
-  Spotlight: Idaho LAUNCH Updates
-  Community of Practice: Dual Credit Advising
-  Skill Building: GEAR UP

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Plan and Host a Financial Aid night
- Prepare Senior Exit Surveys
- Provide students and parents with the college application timeline available at nextsteps.idaho.gov
- Inform students and parents about the common application
- Host an ASVAB Night
- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

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DECEMBER

Professional Development

-  Community of Practice: FAFSA Goals, FAFSA Events
-  Community of Practice: Open Mic
-  Skill Building: GEAR UP: Speaker Lab – Deliver Effective Lessons

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Host Scholarship and FAFSA Help Sessions
- Graduation Planning
- Senior Exit Surveys
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- Idaho LAUNCH Contingent Offer Letters sent to students
- FAFSA application opens for 2024-2025

01

JANUARY

Professional Development

-  Spotlight: FAFSA Demo

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Review/Approve Advanced Opportunities funding
- Advanced Opportunities Night/Presentation
- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- FAFSA Completion Competition Opens

COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q3

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar.

SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Post-Secondary Options

OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit for templates and materials.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Community of Practice

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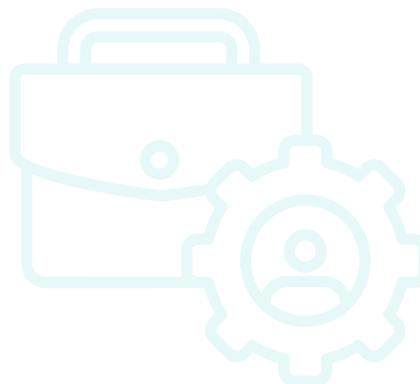
Skill Building

Learning a new skill



Spotlight

Focus, in-depth training and Ed Forums



02

FEBRUARY

Professional Development

 Skill Building: FAFSA Changes: Lesson Learned so Far

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Prepare for Higher Ed Day
- Approve Spring Advanced Opportunities funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- Tschudy Family Scholarship Deadline is February 15
- Apply for Teacher Externship

03

MARCH

Professional Development

 Skill Building: Financial Aid Offers & Verification

 Spotlight: Legislative Updates

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship deadline for applications and renewals is March 1
- Idaho Governor's Cup Scholarship (Academic) Deadline is March 1

04

APRIL

Professional Development

 Community of Practice: Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Regional Convening

 Skill Building: Helping Students Find their Best Fit

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Graduation Planning
- Check in with Seniors on post-graduation plans
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- Idaho LAUNCH applications close on April 15
- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship deadline for Adults (Summer Semester) is April 15
- Idaho Governor's Cup Scholarship (Career/Technical) Deadline is April 15
- FAFSA Completion Competition Ends

COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CALENDAR: Q4

Check out the latest professional development events and find opportunities for students by visiting the Next Steps Idaho Calendar at nextsteps.idaho.gov/calendar.

SCHOOL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Plan ahead for the different school events that you may want to host or participate in providing information for attendees.

- Graduation

OUTREACH GOALS

Create outreach goals for yourself in order to inform your community about the happenings!

- Send reminder emails to teachers, staff, parents, and students regarding upcoming school events and dates. Visit: nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit for templates and materials.

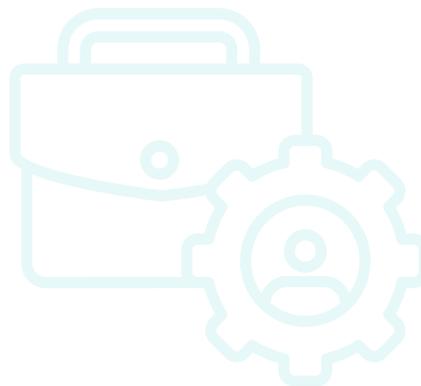


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05

MAY

Professional Development

 Spotlight: Myth Busters

Monthly Focus Tasks

- College prep
- Senior Exit Surveys
- Senior check-ins with post-graduation plans
- Graduation Planning
- Review/Submit Advanced Opportunities funding
- Remind students and parents of scholarship and grant deadlines

Important Dates

- Register for the Idaho Division of Career Technical Education's CTE Connect Conference coming up this summer (May 1-30)
- Final contingent Idaho LAUNCH awards will be announced by June 1

06

JUNE

Professional Development

 Community of Practice: Business & Educator Exchange, NNU

 Community of Practice: ISTEM Conferences

 Skill Building: Self-Care, Start Your Summer Right

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Complete the Idaho LAUNCH Feedback Survey
- Senior Exit Survey

Important Dates

- Apply Idaho Application closes on June 30
- All Direct Admissions Applications must be submitted by June 30

07

SUMMER

Professional Development

 Community of Practice: CTE Connect Conference

 Community of Practice: Idaho Indian Education Summit

Monthly Focus Tasks

- Fast Forward via Advanced Opportunities
- Plan for Idaho Connect in the '24-'25 school year
- Make virtual, college, military, and program visits
- Prep for College Application Week, FAFSA night, etc.
- Browse the Next Steps Idaho Assessments and Reflections curriculum
- Assessment (college/program searches, scholarship/financial aid).
- ASVAB

Important Dates

- Idaho Opportunity Scholarship Deadline for Adults (Fall Semester) is July 1.

IDAHO STATE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

STATE MINIMUM CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

- Core Subject Areas 29 credits
- Electives 17 credits
- Additional Requirements See Descriptions
- Total Credits 46 credit (minimum)

Core Subject Areas	29 credits
Language Arts	9 credits
Language Arts <i>8 credits</i>	Language Arts shall consist of language study, composition, and literature and be aligned to the Idaho Content Standards for the appropriate grade level.
Communications <i>1 credit</i>	Communications consisting of oral communication and technological applications that includes a course in speech, a course in debate, or a sequence of instructional activities that meet the Idaho Speech Content Standards.
<hr/>	
Mathematics	6 credits
Algebra I (equivalent) <i>2 credits</i>	Secondary mathematics includes Integrated Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Business Mathematics, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Fundamentals of Calculus, Probability and Statistics, Discrete Mathematics, and courses in mathematical problem solving and quantitative reasoning including mathematics taken through career technical education programs.
Geometry (equivalent) <i>2 credits</i>	
Student Choice <i>2 credits</i>	Dual credit engineering and computer science courses aligned to the state standards for grades nine (9) through (12), including AP Computer Science and dual credit computer Science courses may also be counted as a mathematics credit. Students who choose to take computer science and dual credit engineering courses may not concurrently count such courses as both a mathematics and science credit for the same course.

Core Subject Areas

Science

6 credits

Lab-based
2 credits

Student Choice
4 credits

Instruction in the following: earth and space sciences, physical science, life sciences, computer science, biology, chemistry, environment, or approved applied sciences.

Social Studies

5 credits

US History
2 credits

Government
2 credits

Economics and
Financial Literacy¹
1 credit

Courses such as geography, sociology, psychology, and world history may be offered as electives, but are not to be counted as a social studies requirement.

Humanities

2 credits

Student Choice
2 credits

May include visual arts, music, theatre, dance, or world language aligned to Idaho content standards for those subjects. Other courses such as literature, history, philosophy, architecture, or comparative world religions may satisfy the humanities stands if the course is aligned to the [Interdisciplinary Humanities Content Standards](#).

Health

1 credit

Student Choice
1 credit

Course must be aligned to [Idaho Content Standards](#) and a student should receive a minimum of one (1) class period on psychomotor cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training as outlined in the American heart Association (AHA) Guidelines for CPR to include the proper utilization of an automatic external defibrillator (AED) as part of the Health/Wellness course.

¹ Beginning in school year 2023-2024, financial literacy is a requirement for high school graduation. Please see Financial Literacy document for reference.

IDAHO STATE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

STATE MINIMUM CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

- Core Subject Areas 29 credits
- Electives 17 credits
- Additional Requirements See Descriptions
- Total Credits 46 credit (minimum)

Electives	17 credits
Additional Requirements	

District Requirements The local school district or LEA may establish graduation requirements beyond the state minimum.

Advanced Opportunities Districts must offer at least one Advanced Opportunity such as Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, Technical Competency Credit, or International Baccalaureate. [Advanced Opportunities](#)

Senior Project The senior project is a culminating project to show a student’s ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and communicate that knowledge and understanding. A student must complete a senior project by the end of grade twelve (12). Senior projects may be multi-year projects, group or individual projects, or approved pre-internship or school to work internship programs, at the discretion of the school district or charter school. The project must include elements of research, development of a thesis using experiential learning or integrated project based learning experiences and presentation of the project outcome. Additional requirements for a senior project are at the discretion of the local school district or LEA. Completion of a postsecondary certificate or degree at the time of high school graduation or an approved preinternship or internship program may be used to meet this requirement.



Civics Test

All secondary students must demonstrate that they have met the state [civics and government standard](#) by the successfully completing the civics test or alternate path. Successful completion of this requirement must be reflected on the student's transcript.

Physical Education

High schools are required to provide instructional offerings in Physical Education (fitness). [Physical Education Content Standards](#)

Middle School Credits

Students must meet 8th grade math standards before being permitted to 9th grade.

A student will have met the high school content and credit requirement for any required high school course if: The student completes such course with a grade C or higher before entering 9th grade; course meets the same content standards that are required for high school and course is taught by a properly certified teacher. Parents of middle school students taking a course for high school credit must be notified that the course is available for high school credit and must be given the option as to whether or not the course is transcribed. Students/families paying for courses with Advanced Opportunities funds are consenting to the course being transcribed as high school credit.

WORKFORCE READINESS AND CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) DIPLOMA

Twenty-first-century graduates are expected to have more skills than ever before. Not only must they have strong academic skills in reading, math, and science, but they must also be able to apply these skills in the workplace. CTE programs are designed to ensure graduates obtain the academic and technical skills that give students multiple pathways to success.

To acknowledge that CTE programs enhance students' high school experience and help prepare them for the demands of today's employers, the 2021 Idaho State Legislature created the Workforce Readiness CTE Diploma.

Like all high school students, students enrolled in CTE programs need to meet the academic requirements. In addition, they must also demonstrate their increased level of college and career readiness.

For students, the diploma helps them:

- Prepare for both college and careers.
- Earn college credits while still in high school.
- Explore Idaho's high-skill, high-demand occupations.
- Gain practical, real-world working experience.
- Earn employer-recognized certifications and microcredentials.
- Develop and articulate valuable technical and employability skills sought by employers.
- Enter the world after graduation confident in their ability to meet their employer's needs.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE A CTE PATHWAY ARE ELIGIBLE IF THEY:

 pass the state approved TECHNICAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT (TSA)	 pass the state approved WORKPLACE READINESS ASSESSMENT (WRA)	 earn all pathway MICROCREDENTIALS WITHIN SKILLSTACK®
		
OR APPROVED INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION		

For employers, the diploma helps them:

- Find qualified employees for their most hard-to-fill positions.
- Reduce the time and money invested in training new employees.
- Identify candidates who possess the employability skills necessary to succeed in the workplace.

For more information, visit

cte.idaho.gov/students/workforce-readiness-and-career-technical-education-cte-diploma/



IDAHO'S STEM DIPLOMA

In 2020, there were over 2,000 new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) jobs in Idaho each month – jobs that, on average, pay twice what non-STEM jobs do. Employment in STEM fields in Idaho is highly diverse and includes high tech, healthcare, agriculture, advanced manufacturing, natural resource management, and broadcast media, to name a few. Employers need team members who are critical thinkers, creative problem solvers and skilled collaborators in order to be able to thrive in a constantly changing business environment. Building on children's natural curiosity, educators are working to help their students develop these skills as early as preschool. Ultimately, students who continue to pursue STEM in high school can receive special recognition by earning Idaho's STEM diploma.

Signed into law in 2018, STEM Diploma seeks to address industry needs while honoring graduating seniors who have pursued more rigorous STEM coursework. To raise awareness of the STEM diploma and encourage more schools to participate, Idaho STEM Action Center is working with industry partners, post-secondary institutions, and other state agencies throughout Idaho. Giving students the opportunity to earn a STEM Diploma not only affords them a competitive advantage, but also provides industry and higher education with important information regarding a student's qualifications that can impact his/her placement and potential career path. Additionally, doing so will help to fill the STEM career pipeline with skilled young people, support our state's continued economic prosperity, and ensure that Idaho's youth can find challenging, rewarding and lucrative employment right here in the Gem State.

STEM DIPLOMA SCHOLARSHIPS

High school seniors in Idaho who earn a STEM Diploma are eligible to apply for one of ten, \$3,000 scholarships provided they will be attending an Idaho public, post-secondary institution, including career technical schools, and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. The STEM Scholarships will be offered in the following fields: Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Computer Science/Technology, Engineering, Food Sciences, Health Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and General STEM (2). The STEM Scholarship application will be available this fall. For additional resources including a STEM course list and STEM course planning template, visit stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/.

STEM DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

1. Meets High School Graduation Requirements
2. Earns at least: eight (8) credits of mathematics and eight (8) credits of science
3. An additional five (5) credits in the student choice of any or all subjects of science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

STEM Diploma Scholarship Schedule

Open: February 10, 2025

Closed: April 6, 2025

Award Date: May 5, 2025

For more information, visit: stem.idaho.gov/apply/stem-diploma/

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS FUNDING

As legislated by Senate Bill 1290 in 2016, each school district and charter school in Idaho who serve students in grades 8-12 shall establish a college and career advising program for their students. These programs can include advising personnel, near peer/college mentors, students ambassadors, and virtual coaching, among other activities.

33-1002. Educational support program.

The educational support program is calculated as follows:

- (2)(q) An amount specified in the appropriation bill for the public schools educational support program for counseling support as provided for in section 33-1212A, Idaho Code, shall be distributed for grades 8 through 12 as follows:
 - (i) For school districts and public charter schools with one hundred (100) or more students enrolled in grades 8 through 12, a pro rata distribution based on students enrolled in grades 8 through 12 or eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000), whichever is greater;
 - (ii) For school districts and public charter schools with fewer than one hundred (100) students enrolled in grades 8 through 12, one hundred eighty dollars (\$180) per student enrolled in grades 8 through 12 or nine thousand dollars (\$9,000), whichever is greater;

Funds established by formula are distributed to school districts twice per year: half in December and half in spring. Districts have discretion on how to allocate these funds. Contact your district office to learn more about how these funds are being utilized to support your students.

Annually the
state legislature allocates
\$9,000,000
to support college & career
readiness activities
across the state.

Section 33-1212A, Idaho Code, governs the use of these funds and requirements.

COLLEGE AND CAREER ADVISORS AND STUDENT MENTORS.

- (1) College and career advising, and student mentoring are essential components of students' educational experience. Such advising and mentoring provide all students with an early opportunity to identify academic strengths, areas in need of improvement and areas of interest for the purpose of making informed choices and setting postsecondary education and career goals. The focus of college and career planning is to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve academic success and to be college and career ready upon high school graduation.
- (2) School districts and charter schools may employ non certificated staff to serve in the role of college and career advisors and student mentors. Appropriate alternative forms of advising and mentoring shall be research-based and may include the following:
 - (a) High contact programs such as:
 - (i) Near peer or college student mentors; and
 - (ii) Counselor, teacher or paraprofessional as advisor or mentor;
 - (b) Collaborative programs such as:
 - (i) Student ambassadors; and
 - (ii) Cooperative agreements with other school districts or postsecondary institutions; and
 - (c) Virtual coach or mentor programs.
- (3) School districts and charter schools shall provide professional development in the area of college and career advising to all staff serving in the role of student mentors or advisors. All individuals providing services in the role of a college and career advisor must have a basic level of training or experience in the area of advising or mentoring to provide such services.
- (4) School districts and charter schools shall notify parents or guardians of all students in grades 8 through 12 of the availability of college and career advising provided by the district and how to access such services.
- (5) The state board of education shall promulgate rules necessary for the administration of this section.

Questions should be directed to: **Jacque Deahl**
 (208) 332-6946
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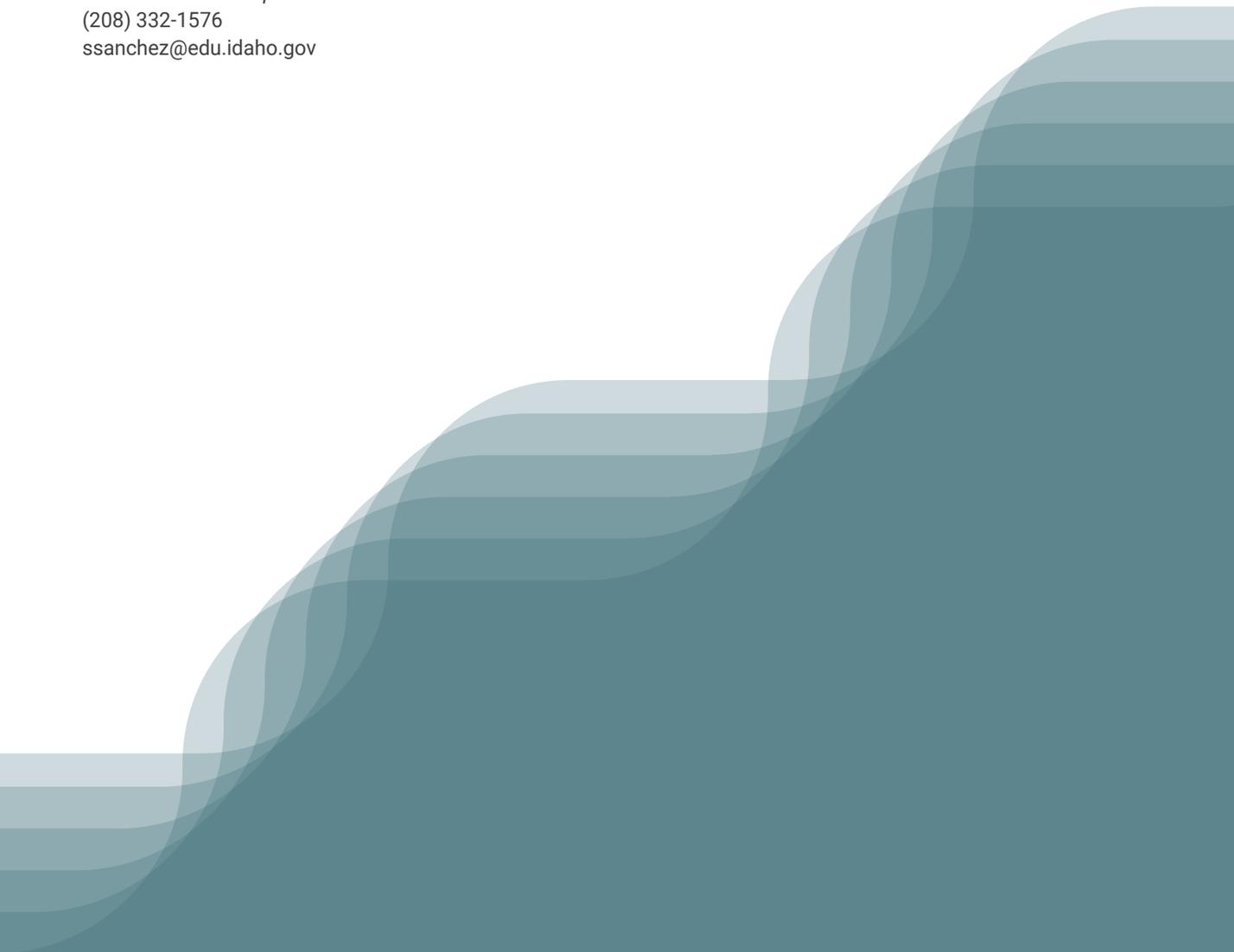
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South Idaho Regional Coordinator Advanced Ops

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rmattucci@sde.idaho.gov



FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is defined as funds provided to students and families to pay for postsecondary education and training expenses. Learn more about the different types of financial aid below.

GRANTS

Free money. Most grants do not have to be repaid. Some grants, like Idaho LAUNCH may require repayment if students do not meet the terms of the agreement they accepted when awarded the money.

Learn more about federal grant programs:
[Federal Grant Programs \(studentaid.gov\)](https://studentaid.gov)

LOANS

Borrowed money; must be repaid.

Learn more about federal student loans:
studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/federal-loan-programs.pdf

WORK STUDY

Earned money. The Federal Work Study Program allows students to earn money to pay for school while working part time.

SCHOLARSHIPS

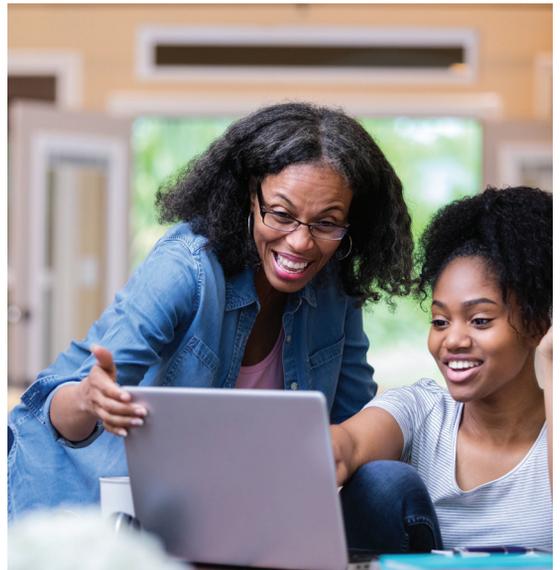
Free money; does not need to be repaid. Scholarships are awarded based on a variety of factors including merit, talent, need, community service, leadership, etc. Scholarships can come from a variety of sources including local foundations, banks, community organizations, colleges and universities, state agencies, national organizations, and more.

Deadlines: Financial Aid deadlines vary by state and institution. Check state and college websites for the most current information.

More information: studentaid.gov/



The US Department of
Education distributes
\$150 billion
in federal student aid each year.



IDAHO LAUNCH

The Idaho LAUNCH grant program aims to prepare Idaho's students for Idaho's workforce needs, by providing grants for students to attend education and training programs in Idaho.

WHAT CAN LAUNCH BE USED FOR?

Idaho LAUNCH provides a one-time opportunity for Idaho high school seniors, beginning with the Class of 2024, to cover 80%, or up to \$8,000, of the tuition and fees at an eligible institution, up to a maximum amount of \$8,000.

To be eligible students must:

- Graduate from an Idaho High School or Equivalent
- Be an Idaho Resident
- Be enrolled in or have applied to an in-demand career program at an eligible Idaho institution
- Begin Post-Secondary Program by Fall Semester After Graduation
- Complete a Career Pathway Plan (Detailed information is available at: <https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/LAUNCH>).

Students can receive up to one-half (\$4,000) of the initial grant award in the first year of a program. However, for programs that are less than 12 months in length, students can use the full awarded amount (80% of tuition and fees up to \$8,000) in one year.

APPLY

Go to scholarships.idaho.gov to apply!



There is approximately
\$75,000,000
 available for Idaho LAUNCH
 funding. This means that it is
 possible the state may fund
between 9,000 and 10,000
 awards per year.

Application Opens

October 1, 2024

Application Closes

April 15, 2025

Contingent Offers

Applications will continue to be accepted until April 15, 2025 with award notifications rolling through the spring

Please note: always check nextsteps.idaho.gov for the most up-to-date information on approved programs and providers, as these will be updated regularly.

IDAHO LAUNCH FAQs

HAVE I HEARD OF THIS PROGRAM BEFORE?

A version of Idaho LAUNCH that serves adult learners seeking to upskill or change careers has been around for approximately 3 years and is referred to as Idaho LAUNCH for Adults.

Idaho LAUNCH for Students is new this year! The graduating class of 2024 will be the first cohort invited to participate in this program. Idaho LAUNCH for Students aims to connect high school seniors with in-demand careers throughout Idaho. Keep an eye out for program updates throughout the year.

ARE STUDENTS REQUIRED TO FILL OUT A FAFSA TO RECEIVE IDAHO LAUNCH FUNDING?

No, applying for FAFSA is not a requirement for this grant. However, Idaho LAUNCH will only cover 80% (up to \$8,000) of a program's tuition and fees. Idaho LAUNCH grant dollars cannot cover the cost of room and board. Other financial aid and scholarship opportunities may pay the remaining program costs and expenses.

HOW WILL STUDENTS BE NOTIFIED IF THEY HAVE BEEN AWARDED LAUNCH FUNDING?

Students will receive email notifications from Scholarship Idaho, from the email idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov. Students must have an active email address to receive information from Scholarship Idaho that requires their attention. Students cannot use a school-based email address, as they will no longer have access to the account post-graduation. Scholarship Idaho will send notifications to students before and after graduation.

HOW DOES THE APPLICATION CYCLE WORK FOR IDAHO LAUNCH?

The Idaho LAUNCH application opens on October 1, 2024, and closes on April 15, 2024. Award Letters are contingent upon verification of eligibility.

Final Award Letters will be issued in June 2024 after eligibility is verified.



IDAHO LAUNCH FAQs CONTINUED...

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW PROGRAMS COULD BE FUNDED BY IDAHO LAUNCH?

Please refer to nextsteps.idaho.gov for the complete listing of eligible programs.

Program	EXAMPLE Total Cost	EXAMPLE of Portion Paid for by Launch	EXAMPLE of Remaining Amount to be Paid by Student
Workforce Training Program (ex: CNA, Welding, Pharmacy Tech)	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,440	\$ 360
Commercial Driver's License	\$6,000	\$ 4,800	\$ 1,200
Community College Course	\$ 400	\$ 320	\$ 80
Community College Degree	\$ 7,000	\$ 5,600	\$ 1,400
Apprenticeship Program (2-year program)	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,000
Apprenticeship Program (5-year program)	\$ 10,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 2,000
Private Trade School Program	\$ 18,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 10,000

Note: Actual costs will be dependent on the program and institution. These figures are for demonstration only. Idaho LAUNCH covers 80%, or up to \$8,000 of tuition and fees. Students may use other scholarships and grants to cover remaining costs.

WHAT IF SCHOOLS, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE IDAHO LAUNCH PROGRAM?

Check Next Steps Idaho for answers to common questions at <https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/LAUNCH>. For questions not answered by the website, please send an email to idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CONTINGENT AWARD LETTER AND A FINAL AWARD LETTER?

A Contingent Award Letter is sent to applicants who submit their application and are on track to meet the program's eligibility requirements. This offer is contingent upon verification of eligibility completion. Final Award Letters will be issued in June 2025 upon successful verification of the application.

Contingent Award Letters and Final Award Letters are distributed through Scholarship Idaho. Students will be required to either accept or decline their award. If students do not respond within the designated time frame, their award may be offered to another candidate. Students are advised to check their email over the summer.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH LAUNCH FUNDING FOR ALL ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS?

Prioritization will be based on in-demand careers and financial need. Applications will be ranked based on the program a student selects during the application process and how/if it connects to the list of in-demand careers approved by the Idaho Workforce Development Council, which will be reviewed and approved annually.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THE IDAHO LAUNCH PROGRAM?

1. Visit the Next Steps Idaho website to find the most current information on the Idaho LAUNCH program at nextsteps.idaho.gov/launch.
2. Urgent questions can be directed to Sherawn Reberry (sherawn.reberry@wdc.idaho.gov).
3. Please email all other questions to idaholaunch@wdc.idaho.gov.

For more, and frequently updated, answers to FAQs, visit www.nextsteps.idaho.gov/LAUNCH

AVOIDING IDAHO LAUNCH GRANT REPAYMENT

Before accepting a final award, participating students should review and confirm the institution and program listed on their application. These details will be verified each time an invoice is paid on behalf of the participant.

Changing institutions, providers, or programs may cause participants to lose or have to repay their Idaho LAUNCH Grant. They may also have to repay the grant money if they don't meet certain academic expectations once they arrive. These instances are explained below:

UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

A school or provider reports the participant is not meeting academic requirements or is making unsatisfactory progress.

EXPULSION

Defined by individual schools or industry standards. Generally, refers to a case where a participant is asked to leave the institution or program. Voluntary Drop or No-Show: If a participant fails to start or decides to leave a program before completing their program.

JOB OUT

Participants who leave training to pursue a job opportunity that is not related to their chosen program or in-demand career. Please note, if participants provide evidence that they left for a job related to their program, they won't be required to pay back funds.

Exceptions may exist based on special circumstances, exclusions, and an appeal process. Repayment terms and conditions vary, depending on the situation.

TIPS FOR ACCEPTING YOUR FINAL IDAHO LAUNCH GRANT AWARD OFFER

1. Final Award Offers will arrive in the email inbox of the account you used for Scholarship Idaho. If you don't see your offer, check your SPAM or Junk folder.
2. Final Award Offer emails contain a personal invite link to access your account in the NEW Idaho LAUNCH Grant Management system.
 - a. Contact: launchadmin@wdc.idaho.gov if you need help using your personal link to create an account.
3. During the final offer acceptance process you will need to validate several items:
 - a. **ID Verification** – a government issued identification (such as a driver's license, driver's permit, passport, ID card). The document cannot be expired.
 - b. **Your Residency** – Be prepared – you may need to upload documentation to verify your residency (such as driver's license, government ID, utility bill, voter registration/configuration card, etc). The document may not be expired and must have your name and current address.
 - c. **Your Graduation from High School** – Check out this document for instructions if you run into trouble: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:0fed9303-5650-375d-9b72-8379e33b38b1>
Be prepared – you may need to upload a copy of your diploma or transcript.
Please note, you may need to enable edits and indicate that you have graduated from high school in the Class of 2024 and adjust (or add) your graduation date.
 - d. **Career Pathway Plan (CPP) Completion** – If your school district determined, you would use your Senior Project for this there is nothing that you will need to upload. (You can find the list of school district choices here: <https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/assets/uploads/2024/04/LAUNCH-CPP-List-4-22-24.pdf>) If your school district chose to use Next Steps Idaho, visit this link to see how to complete your CPP or connect your LAUNCH number: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:a4773535-5601-3e23-9929-f535ad98f3b8>
4. Once you've finished setting up your account, validating your residency, graduation, program, etc. it may take the Idaho LAUNCH Team up to 3 - 5 business days for your final award to be approved, as this is a manual approval process. Students will receive an email from the system when their verification has been completed.
5. To continue finding out information about your Final Idaho LAUNCH award you will continue to login to the Idaho Grants Management system. This is where you will update information and review your remaining award amount.

TIPS FOR HOSTING AN IDAHO LAUNCH INFORMATION SESSION

As Idaho LAUNCH is a new initiative, we strongly encourage high school counselors to actively promote the program throughout the 2024-2025 school year. This can be achieved by incorporating an Idaho LAUNCH spotlight during a parent night, sharing information in the school newsletter, distributing posters and promotional materials sent to your school, or delivering in-class presentations about higher education opportunities. Your outreach activities will play an important role in reaching students who have traditionally encountered limited access to post-secondary opportunities.

Templates and training materials can be found at: nextsteps.idaho.gov/media-kit.

BEFORE THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

Create a school goal for the number of seniors that will apply for the Idaho LAUNCH program during the 2024-2025 school year.

DURING THE INFO SESSION

Take notes of any unanswered questions and be sure to follow up with your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador for further clarification.

BEFORE THE EVENT

Finalize the event format and date(s), along with identifying the necessary training materials. Inform and involve school staff

- Present at an all-school staff meeting
- Send a “heads-up” email to all staff
- Coordinate with administrators for support

AFTER THE INFO SESSION

Reach out to your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador to address any questions that arose during the event.

Gather feedback from students, parents, teachers, and other parties involved.

Recruit your team

- Reach out to your regional Idaho LAUNCH/Next Steps Idaho Ambassador
- Team up with other counselors

Communicate, communicate, communicate!

- Consider using the pre-made email templates to notify students, parents, teachers, and staff members of your event.

Prepare training materials

- Review the ready-to-use training materials

IDAHO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

The Idaho Opportunity scholarship is awarded to Idaho residents that have graduated, or will graduate, from an Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or who passes a GED/HSE test in Idaho and are pursuing their first bachelors degree at an approved Idaho institution. Applicants must have AT LEAST a 2.7 GPA. The application for the Idaho Opportunity scholarship, Idaho's biggest scholarship program, takes just a few minutes to submit.

Award decisions are based on a combination of need and merit. Applications are ranked based 70% need (using the Student Aid Index from a student's FAFSA) and 30% merit (Cumulative GPA).

Just because a student isn't eligible for the Pell Grant, does NOT mean they shouldn't apply. Many students receive the scholarship each year who do not qualify for any other need-based aid. This scholarship can be renewed for up to 4 years.

October 1

Application opens

March 1

Application deadline including FAFSA

Mid-April

Formal offers made following official need & merit ranking

THE BASICS

The Idaho Opportunity Scholarship awards up to \$3,500 per academic year and is renewable for up to four years. **To qualify for this scholarship, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:**

- Have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of at least 2.7
- Be an Idaho resident
- Graduated or will graduate from an Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or its equivalent (GED/HSE from Idaho)
- Must attend during the upcoming academic year (fall semester)
- Can pursue a certificate, associate or first bachelor's degree
- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1
- Maintain satisfactory academic standing as specified in program rules.
- Must attend one of these eligible Idaho colleges or universities:
 - University of Idaho
 - Boise State University
 - Lewis Clark State College
 - Idaho State University
 - The College of Idaho
 - Northwest Nazarene University
 - Brigham Young University – Idaho
 - Western Governors University

Students can apply at scholarships.idaho.gov

IDAHO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP AND IDAHO LAUNCH COMPARISON CHART

	Idaho LAUNCH	Idaho Opportunity Scholarship
Amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$8,000 one-time Covers 80% tuition and fees Receive up to 1/2 of funds in year 1, unless enrolled in a program that is less than 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$3,500 per year Renewable for up to 4 years
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate from an accredited Idaho high school or equivalent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public School Charter School Private School Homeschool GED Be an Idaho resident Be enrolled in or have applied to an in-demand career program at an eligible Idaho institution Begin enrollment by fall semester after graduation, unless granted an extension Complete a Career Pathway Plan or equivalent, submitted for approval by each district Review the approved list of eligible in-demand careers <p>NOTE: During the application process, students will be required to pick a program (major or subject area of focus) and the school they plan to attend. While they are required to make selections now, these decisions can be revisited and updated by students later. If students make updates after they have been offered a contingent offer, it may impact their final offer</p> <p>Visit nextsteps.idaho.gov for a complete listing of the eligible in-demand career programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an unweighted, cumulative GPA of at least 2.7 Be an Idaho resident Graduated or will graduate from an accredited Idaho high school, Idaho homeschool, or its equivalent (GED/HSE from Idaho) Must attend during the upcoming academic year (fall semester) Must pursue a certificate, associate or first bachelor's degree Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1 Must attend one of these eligible Idaho colleges or universities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of Western Idaho College of Eastern Idaho College of Southern Idaho North Idaho College University of Idaho Boise State University Lewis Clark State College Idaho State University The College of Idaho Northwest Nazarene University Brigham Young University – Idaho Western Governors University
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit an application through Scholarship Idaho 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Submit an application through Scholarship Idaho Submit a FAFSA by Mar 1 Receive and accept a final offer, emailed by Scholarship Idaho
Deadline	April 15	March 1

*NEW: Starting with the graduating class of 2025, students may only be awarded either Idaho LAUNCH or Idaho Opportunity, but not both.

OTHER IDAHO STATE SCHOLARSHIPS

IDAHO GOVERNOR'S CUP SCHOLARSHIPS

- Deadlines: Academic - March 1, Career/ Technical - April 15
 - Applicants must have AT LEAST a 2.8 GPA
 - * *The Office of the State Board of Education handles the application intake process. The Governor's Cup committee is responsible for reviewing applications and making award decisions. To connect with their staff, please visit: www.idahogovernorscup.org*
-



Approximately
\$90 million
is available to support
Idaho students going on to
postsecondary education

ARMED FORCES/PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER SCHOLARSHIP

- Applications are open year-round.
 - This scholarship is for dependents of fallen or permanently disabled (to the point they are unemployed) Idaho members of the armed forces or Idaho public safety officers.
 - Eligible applicants must be Idaho residents.
 - Contact the state Scholarship Program Manager (joy.miller@osbe.idaho.gov) for application instructions and pre-screening.
-

To learn more about all of Idaho's state scholarships, visit nextsteps.idaho.gov/scholarship-idaho

Students can apply for all Idaho State Scholarships and Grants at scholarships.idaho.gov

ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES

Advanced Opportunities is a program that provides funding for Idaho students to use toward educational and career pathways while they are in middle and high school years.

The program provides \$4,625 for each student in grades 7-12 attending an Idaho public school. Funds can be utilized toward particular costs that students may incur for the courses and programs listed below.

OVERLOAD COURSES

Overload courses are high school courses that are taken in excess of a student's full course load and outside the regular school day. Students can use funds up to \$225 per eligible course.

DUAL CREDIT COURSES

A dual credit course is a college course taken for both high school and college credit. Students can request funding for up to \$75 per credit. Dual Credit resources for families can be found at prtoolkit.org/dual-credit/

EXAMS

Students can use funds to pay for the full cost of many exams (including proctoring fees). Exams can include: college entrance exams, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and professional certifications.

WORKFORCE TRAINING COURSES

Students can use funds for approved courses that directly relate to workforce needs.

EARLY GRADUATION SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship can be awarded for a student's early graduation, that must be at least one year early. Scholarship is estimated at \$2,400.

FUNDS SPENT IN FISCAL YEAR 2023 BY EXPENDITURE TYPE

Dual Credit	\$ 21,243,120
Exams	\$ 1,713,912
Overload Courses	\$ 2,218,264
Workforce Training	\$ 111,847

FISCAL YEAR 2023 ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES TOTALS

Payment Totals	\$ 26,003,837
Students Served	42,959



How to Access Advanced Opportunities

SIGN UP FOR AN ACCOUNT

Staff are assigned an administrator account through the local district IT or by contacting SDE staff. Students should create an Advanced Opportunities account at advancedops.sde.idaho.gov. Creating an account will allow students to request funds and track their account balance. Once an account is created it must be approved by school staff. In some cases, school districts handle the request funding process internally, this is a local education agency decision.

PARTICIPATION FORM

Students and parents must fill out an Advanced Opportunities participation form that outlines program risks and regulations prior to using funds. This form needs to be turned in at the school and will be kept on file with other student records. The participation form can be found online in the student's account at advancedops.sde.idaho.gov or at the student's school.

HOMESCHOOL AND PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

According to Idaho code 33-4603, students attending an accredited Idaho private school may be eligible for up to \$2,500 for dual credit courses and exams. Homeschool students must attend an Idaho public or an accredited Idaho private school to be eligible for Advanced Opportunities funding.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Advanced Opportunities program is an opportunity for students to participate in challenging and rigorous coursework. As students navigate the program, it is their responsibility to meet with their advisor or counselor to create a plan, work hard to successfully complete all courses, and pay attention to important deadlines and registration processes. Students who fail to earn credit for a course paid for by Advanced Opportunities, must then pay for and successfully earn credit or complete one (1) like course before future reimbursement can be made by the Idaho State Department of Education.

ADVISING

Students who use Advanced Opportunities funds to earn more than 15 dual credits must receive advising on how the credits will translate into their post-high school aspirations and fit into their program of study.

COURSE AND CREDIT TRANSFERABILITY

How a course is transferred or accepted is determined by the receiving school/college. Student coursework should be taken in mind with the institution from which the student plans to earn a degree. If students are receiving college credit from more than one college, it is important to plan ahead and consider how courses will transfer, and which courses will count toward the degree program. Each college has a transfer guide that provides information on how credits will be accepted. Visit coursetransfer.idaho.gov for transferability.

ADVANCED OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

For more information visit the Advanced Opportunities website at sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/advanced-ops.

For questions contact Brock Astle at (208) 332-6946 or bastle@sde.idaho.gov.

Videos to share with students & parents (English & Spanish): nextsteps.idaho.gov/resources/ao

DEADLINES FOR PORTAL SUBMISSION

Term	Request Funding Window	Verification Deadline	Submission Deadline
Summer 2024	April 8 - June 21, 2024	August 23, 2024	August 30, 2024
Fall 2024/Trimester 1	April 8 - October 4, 2024	November 15, 2024	November 22, 2024
Spring 2025	Nov 25 - March 7, 2025	May 9, 2025	May 16, 2025 May 23, 2025 (exams)
Trimester 2	Nov 25 - February 21, 2025	May 9, 2025	May 16, 2025 May 23, 2025
Trimester 3	Nov 25 - April 4, 2025	May 9, 2025	May 16, 2025 May 23, 2025

* Student Access window may vary by district, please contact your school/district office for local dates.

* All funding requests are to be made by the request funding window deadline.

IDEAL — IDAHO'S 529 EDUCATION SAVINGS PROGRAM

IDEAL is Idaho's official 529 education savings program. These tax-advantaged 529 accounts are designed specifically to help individuals and families save and invest for their loved ones' postsecondary education.

Research shows that children with education savings accounts are about 7 times more likely to pursue and complete postsecondary education.

Idaho's 529 feature a variety of tax advantages:

- State income tax deduction of up to \$6,000 for single filers – or \$12,000 for couples filing jointly – per year from adjusted gross income for contributions. One of the most generous in the country.
- Any Idaho taxpayer can receive the tax deduction for contributions. They don't have to be the account holder.
- Tax-deferred earnings and tax-free withdrawals for qualified expenses.

The Idaho 529 plan is flexible and can be used for a variety of education options:

- Two or four-year universities nationwide
- Skills/career training programs
- Registered apprenticeships
- K-12 tuition (Tuition only at any K-12 public, private or religious school. Limited to \$10,000 per student annually)
- Student loan repayment (up to \$10,000 per beneficiary per lifetime)

Starting an account is simple:

- Go to idsaves.org
- Choose initial contribution amount (as low as \$25) and payment method
- Choose an investment option – your choices are Vanguard investments or a Sallie Mae savings plan

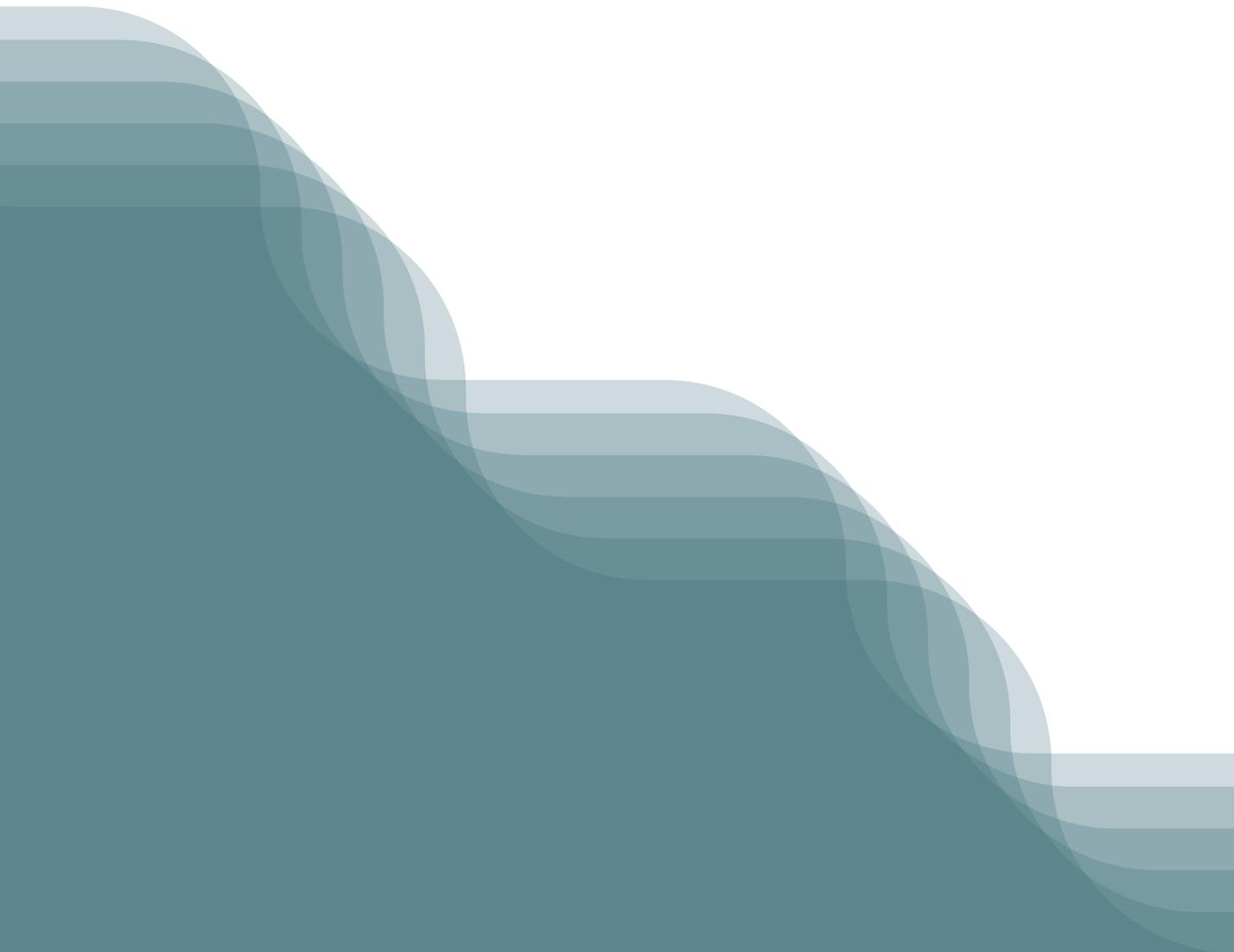
Note: you will need the account owner and beneficiary's social security numbers.

Learn more at idsaves.org



ONLINE TOOLS

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IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEXT STEPS IDAHO & APPLY IDAHO

Sara Scudder

College & Career Access Officer
(208) 488-7580
sscudder@edu.idaho.gov

Maria Paluzzi

Pre-Admissions Program Manager
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(208) 332-1576
ssanchez@edu.idaho.gov

Bibiana Ramirez

Senior Outreach Coordinator
(208) 332-1596
bramirez@edu.idaho.gov

Vacant

Next Steps Idaho Program Coordinator
info@nextsteps.idaho.gov

IDAHO CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION & SKILL STACK

Stephanie Mai

Assistant Director, Program Quality
(208) 429-5507
Stephanie.Mai@cte.idaho.gov

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GEAR UP

Jacque Deahl

Statewide GEAR UP Coordinator
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jdeahl@sde.idaho.gov

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Idaho State Board of Education Includes:

- Next Steps Idaho
- Apply Idaho
- Scholarship Idaho
- Counselor Suite Idaho

NEXT STEPS IDAHO

**NEXT
STEPS**
I D A H O

Next Steps Idaho is a free research tool that helps Idahoans transition to postsecondary opportunities and fulfilling employment.

Built by the Idaho State Board of Education, this website follows the widely accepted three-pronged approach to career readiness:

It helps visitors 1) identify their strengths and interests, 2) discover related jobs, and 3) pursue self-chosen opportunities through community support, funding (like scholarships), and real-world planning.

Next Steps Idaho promotes colleges, universities, apprenticeships, professional certification, licensing, and vocational training—whatever is best for the individual.

CAREER-READY PORTFOLIOS

These portfolios—built around grade-specific Career Pathway Plan activities—give students the ability to customize their Next Steps Idaho journey.

Making an account is free, easy, and allows users to:

- Save assessment results
- Favorite careers
- Bookmark resources
- Collect completed activities
- Track events and deadlines

Each time a student logs in, a custom dashboard displays their previous work, reminders, and helpful links to pick up where they last left off.

Learn more at nextsteps.idaho.gov.

To sign up for a portfolio visit nextsteps.idaho.gov/login.



Since its debut in 2022, more than

**35,000 Idaho
students**

at 360 in-state schools

and educational organizations
have created accounts.

Next Steps Idaho is available 24/7.

*Requests and inquiries are
typically acknowledged by staff
within 2 business days.*

FOR STUDENTS: APPLY IDAHO



Apply Idaho is our state's free, common application platform where students can submit applications to up to 10 in-state colleges. Open October through June, this application is ONLY available to current-year Idaho high school seniors.

Apply Idaho invites Idaho high school seniors to apply at 1, or several, (or all 10!) participating in-state colleges and universities. The average application can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

With Apply Idaho, students:

1. Save time (just one application)
2. Save effort (a shorter application)
3. Save money (without any application fees)
4. Maximize in-state options (that can be sent to up to 10 in-state institutions)

Built to support student ambitions—from PhDs to professional certificates—ALL paths for in-state training can start from this single application.

Dates:

- Opens the first Monday in October.
- Closes on the last day of June.



Over 50%
of the senior class,
more than

12,000
students,

use Apply Idaho each year.

Visit our website at nextsteps.idaho.gov/apply-idaho.

Watch our video to learn more: youtu.be/goKVSyXx4c8

FOR EDUCATORS: COUNSELOR SUITE IDAHO



Counselor Suite IDAHO

Counselor Suite Idaho (previously called FAFSA Web or the Idaho FAFSA Completion Project) provides high school counselors with a clear snapshot of their students' career readiness preparation.

Counselor Suite Idaho provides easy-to-read tables and data visualizations that document your students' progress toward FOUR continuing education 'checkpoints.'

1. **The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

Students hoping to secure virtually *any* financial aid will need to submit a FAFSA each year. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates a student's FAFSA completion status and/or common errors in their submission.

2. **Direct Admissions Idaho**

Direct Admissions proactively admits all Idaho public high school seniors to a minimum of six in-state colleges and universities each year. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates if students qualify for an additional two universities, for a total of eight.

3. **Apply Idaho Applications**

Apply Idaho is a free, common college application for in-state institutions. In Counselor Suite Idaho, Idaho teachers or administrators will be able to see which grade-12 students have 'started,' 'not started,' or 'completed' their Apply Idaho application.

4. **Scholarship Idaho Applications**

Scholarship Idaho is a single, common application for 8 state-managed scholarships. Counselor Suite Idaho indicates which state-managed scholarship(s) each student has submitted an application for and their offer status.

This platform is not available to students; only Idaho high school counselors, teachers, or administrators will be able to create an account.

New student cohorts are published annually—in mid-October—and data is updated daily.

Data for the FAFSA will appear two-weeks after the form opens each year.

Request access by contacting info@nextsteps.idaho.gov



FOR EDUCATORS: GEAR UP IDAHO NAVIGATORS ONLINE RESOURCE

GEAR UP Idaho has developed specific college and career readiness resources called “Navigators” for educators, families, and students. These are online tools available for free to all audiences. New Navigators are added regularly. All GEAR UP Idaho Navigators can be printed or used as slides during a classroom activity. Event-based navigators include printable signs and worksheets and also contain instructions for setting up or adapting events for your school.

GEAR UP Idaho Navigators include:

APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

This activity walks students through the process of seeking out and applying for scholarships. Available in English and Spanish.

CAREER PATHWAY PLAN

This resource can be used as a guide when working to create a student’s career pathway plan. Available in English and Spanish.

COLLEGE BUDGETING

This tool guides students and parents through the process of budgeting for college, covering important details like calculating an EFC and estimating the cost of attendance. A great complement to any scholarship presentation! Available in English and Spanish.

CAMPUS TOUR ACTIVITIES

This toolkit is full of ideas and activities designed to supplement and enhance a campus tour. Pick and choose from activities for students to complete before, during, and after a campus tour to help them take away the most from their experience on campus.

GREAT IDEAS GUIDE

This collection of great ideas and best practices was contributed by school counselors and college and career coordinators from across Idaho.

HALL OF REFLECTION

This event can be implemented in a variety of ways. The Hall of Reflection is designed to help students set goals and reflect on their vision for their futures.

FAMILY WELLNESS NIGHT

This event is designed to help families discuss and set goals for financial, emotional and physical wellness.

HANDS-ON CAREER FAIR TOOLKIT

A resource designed to make career fair prep, setup, and implementation as easy as possible for teachers and counselors working with students to explore their options for their futures.

PARENT TOOLKIT

Created to help guide parents in supporting their students through their first year of college. The workbook can be done on their own however it is accompanied by a facilitator guide to assist school counselors or community leaders in setting up workshops for parents.

To access resources visit sde.idaho.gov/student-engagement/cc-readiness and click on the GEAR UP Idaho Navigator you are interested.

If you have any questions contact Jacque Deahl, jdeahl@sde.idaho.gov, (208) 332-6946.

OTHER COLLEGE & CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

CTE PROGRAMS DIRECTORY

Career Technical Education (CTE) programs provide hands-on learning opportunities aligned with careers right here in Idaho. Using the CTE Programs Directory on the Next Steps Idaho website, students can browse programs across the state and filter by the program area that interests them, a career cluster they want to pursue, the school they attend or their region, and the course level they need.

nextsteps.idaho.gov/cte-program-directory

IDAHO DIGITAL SKILLS

IdahoDigitalSkills.org offers Idahoans free access to online learning tools to increase their digital skills. Whether you're learning how to use a mouse or applying for jobs online, there are a variety of tools and resources available. IdahoDigitalSkills.org was created for Idahoans to more easily identify resources that support them in their digital work and life.

idahodigitalskills.org

LEARNING BLADE VIA THE IDAHO STEM ACTION CENTER

Learning Blade is a system of interactive online lessons, teacher lesson plans, and printable at-home activities for 5th to 9th graders, where students learn about STEM and Computer Science careers while reviewing academics.

stem.idaho.gov/apply/learning-blade/

LINKEDIN LEARNING

Students can access their free-to-use LinkedIn Learning account via Equus Workforce Solutions. LinkedIn Learning is an online educational platform that helps you discover and develop business, technology-related, and creative skills through expert-led course videos.

equusidaho.com/linkedinlearning

SOFT SKILLS TRAINING MODULES

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) is excited to share these interactive soft skills trainings presented by Idaho Digital Learning Alliance in partnership with the Idaho WDC. The modules are designed to help students gain important employment skills that will increase their chance of finding a job and help students climb the career ladder.

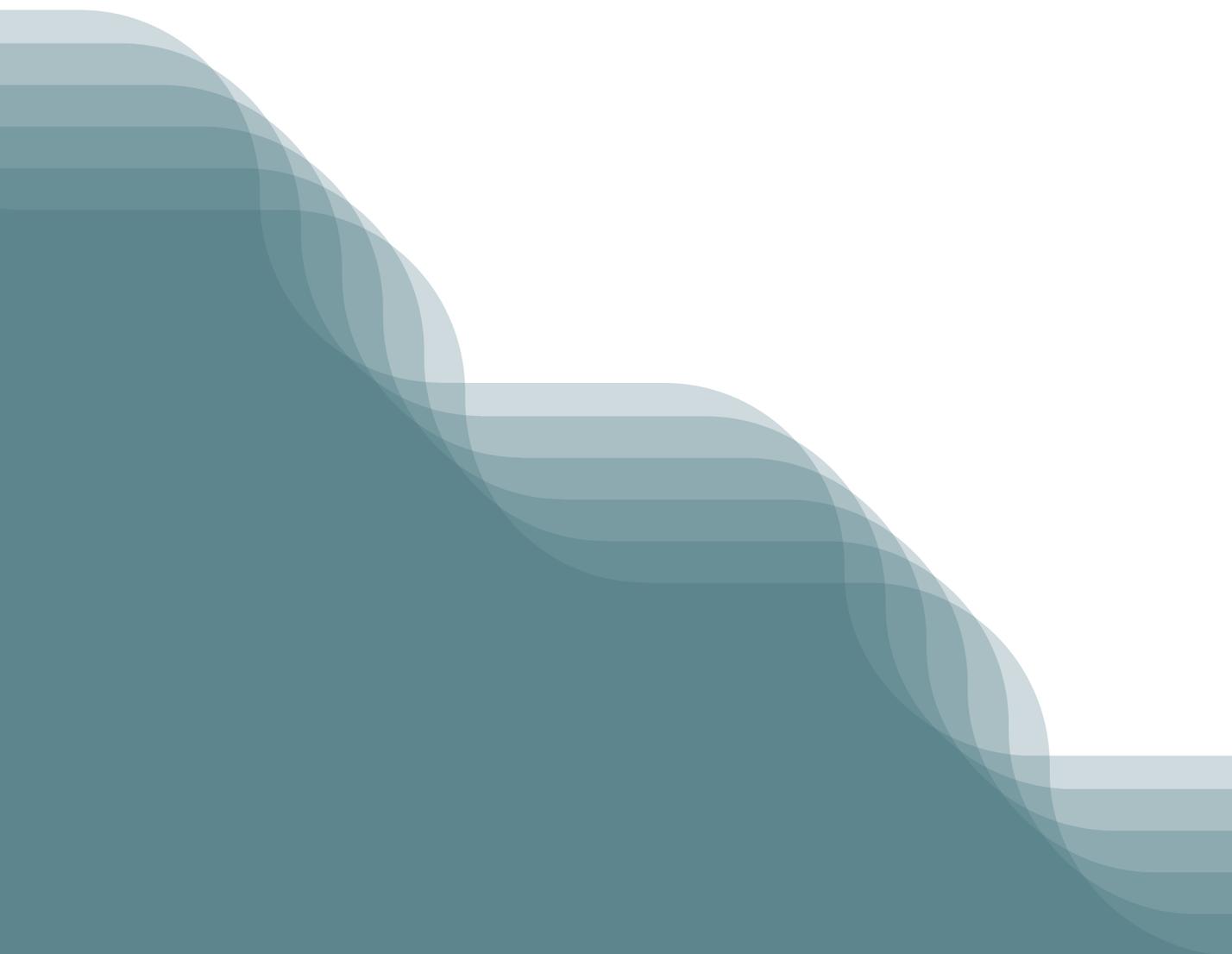
wdc.idaho.gov/resource-hub/#outreachmaterials

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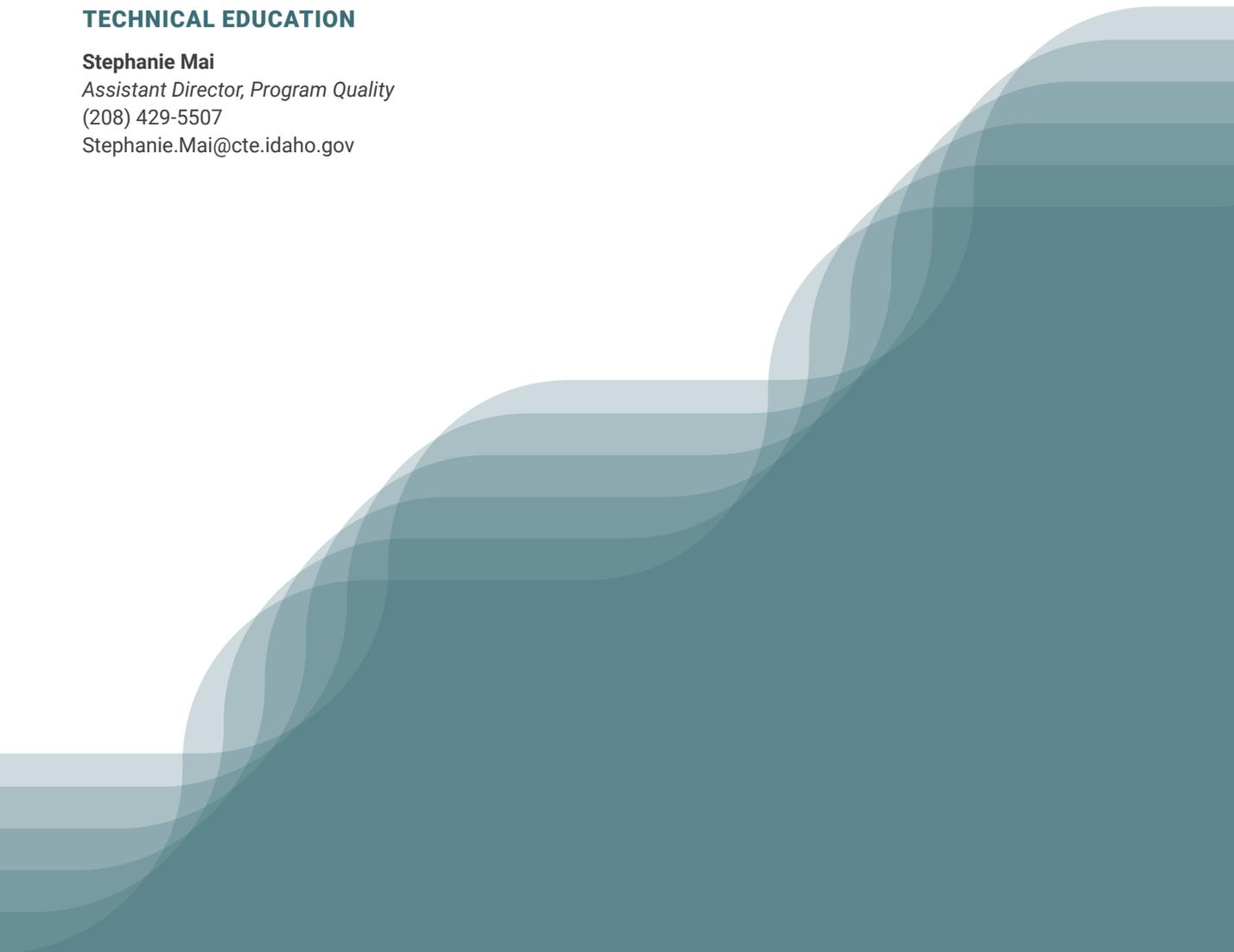
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DIRECT ADMISSIONS



IDAHO

Campus Choice

Idaho's public colleges and universities are reserving several thousand seats for your students! All Idaho public high school graduates will be accepted at a minimum of 6 in-state colleges the term after they graduate. Students with GPAs or ISAT scores at or above an agreed upon benchmark have even MORE options with a total of 8 in-state colleges saving them a spot.

Students still need to apply to notify their chosen institution that they want to attend.

Idaho Campus Choice gives more Idahoans the opportunity to obtain a professional certificate or accredited degree. It removes barriers and encourages high school graduates to extend their training before entering the workforce.

Idaho was the first U.S. state to imagine/offer an onramp like this. Now, similar programs are now being implemented across the nation.

Encourage your students to continue their education in Idaho. Here, they can gain the knowledge and skills needed to make an impact on their local community—or anywhere in the world.

Only available to Idaho high school graduates who apply to in-state institutions the semester immediately following their graduation from high school.



Over 20,000

high school seniors

are sent an Idaho Campus Choice letter each year and

over 67%

receive the letter offering admission to all 8 Idaho public colleges and universities.

*Interested students **MUST** complete an admission application to the institution of their choice by June 30.*

Learn more at: <https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/campus-choice>

FAFSA

FAFSA stands for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

To be eligible for federal financial aid, a student must complete and submit the FAFSA each year. Completing the FAFSA is the **ONLY** way to qualify for federal grants, student loans, work study, and some scholarships!

Users must create an account, called an FSA ID, in order to complete the FAFSA. The FSA ID allows you to sign your FAFSA form electronically.

IMPORTANT FINANCIAL AID DATES

- FAFSA will open in December of 2024
- Be aware that each institution may have unique priority deadlines
- Deadline to submit a FAFSA for the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship is March 1

As of the end of August, 2024 44% of Idaho Seniors completed a FAFSA application.

To create a FSA ID, visit studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch

To complete the FAFSA form, visit studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa

Find Financial Aid and FAFSA tools here: <https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/educator#curriculum-resources>

WHY IS FAFSA SO IMPORTANT?

CLASS OF 2022 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
IN **IDAHO**

WHO WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE
THE FAFSA **LEFT**

\$20 MILLION
IN PELL GRANTS
ON THE TABLE

 NCAN

AMERICORPS AND PEACE CORPS AS POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS

AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps are two options to gain useful employment experience while adding value to communities across the country or around the world. Volunteers with these organizations provide critical aid after disasters, build capacity at local nonprofits or government entities, support education and economic empowerment, maintain natural areas, improve public health, mitigate climate change, and take on countless other challenges.

AmeriCorps and Peace Corps positions are unpaid, but people who serve with these organizations receive living stipends, training opportunities, and other supports. AmeriCorps members also earn a Segal education award at the end of their service. AmeriCorps service positions serve within the United States and vary in length from a few months up to a year, while Peace Corps positions are international and last for two years, providing a range of options for service.

AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps are two options to gain useful employment experience while adding value to communities across the country or around the world. Volunteers with these organizations provide critical aid after disasters, build capacity at local nonprofits or government entities, support education and economic empowerment, maintain natural areas, improve public health, mitigate climate change, and take on countless other challenges.

Peace Corps volunteers serve outside the United States at locations across the globe, including sites in Central and South America, the Caribbean, North and South Africa, Eastern Europe, Central and East Asia, and across many Pacific islands. Volunteers receive a living stipend for the duration of their service term, allowing them to live within their local community. In their two-year service positions, volunteers support critical projects while also learning from their new community, creating positive relationships that span cultures and borders.

AmeriCorps members serve within the United States and have a long history of providing needed support, from the service members helping to alleviate poverty in the 1960s to those who provided aid at Ground Zero after 9/11. No matter the need, AmeriCorps members get the job done. Each member also receives a range of benefits for the duration of their service term. These benefits include a living stipend, loan deferment, professional development and training, and a Segal education award, which can be applied to repay loans or cover educational expenses. Roughly 200,000 Americans serve their communities each year through AmeriCorps, creating a broad network of alumni.

AMERICORPS LINKS:

- Learn More about AmeriCorps: <https://americorps.gov/>
- Discover AmeriCorps Benefits: <https://americorps.gov/members-volunteers/your-benefits>
- Learn About AmeriCorps' Service Branches: <https://americorps.gov/serve/americanorps>
- Choose a Service Branch: <https://americorps.gov/serve/fit-finder>

PEACE CORPS LINKS:

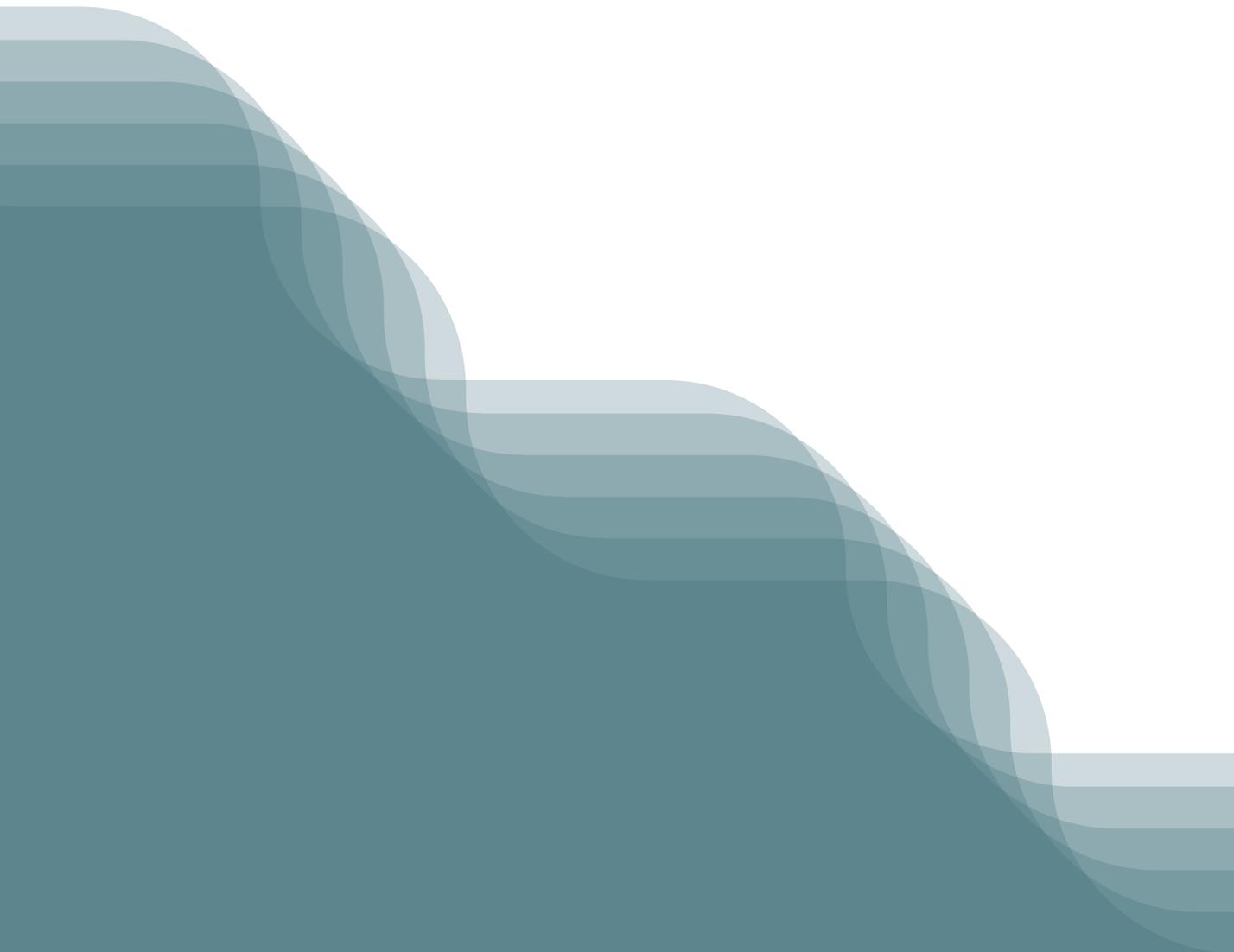
- Learn More about the Peace Corps: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/>
- Learn about Peace Corps Benefits: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/benefits/>
- View the Peace Corps' Major Goals: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/global-initiatives/>

DISCOVER SERVICE LOCATIONS: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/countries/>



CONTACTS

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STATE AGENCY & PROGRAMS CONTACTS LIST

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Financial Aid (208) 426-1664
Registrar (208) 426-4249

IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY

Admissions (208) 282-2475
Financial Aid (208) 282-2756
Registrar (208) 282-2661

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY - IDAHO

Admissions (208) 496-1330
Financial Aid (208) 496-1411
Registrar (208) 496-1411

LEWIS-CLARK STATE COLLEGE

Admissions (208) 792-2378
Financial Aid (208) 792-2224
Registrar (208) 792-2223

COLLEGE OF EASTERN IDAHO

Admissions (208) 535-5390
Financial Aid (208) 524-3000 X 7
Registrar (208) 535-5665

NORTH IDAHO COLLEGE

Admissions (208) 769-3311
Financial Aid (208) 769-3311
Registrar (208) 769-3311

COLLEGE OF IDAHO

Admissions (208) 459-5305
Financial Aid (208) 459-5380
Registrar (208) 459-5400

NORTHWEST NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

Admissions (208) 467-8472
Financial Aid (208) 467-8347
Registrar (208) -467-8548

COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN IDAHO

Admissions (208) 732-6221
Financial Aid (208) 732-6250
Registrar (208) 732-6272

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

Admissions (208) 885-6326
Financial Aid (208) 885-6312
Registrar (208) 885-6731

COLLEGE OF WESTERN IDAHO

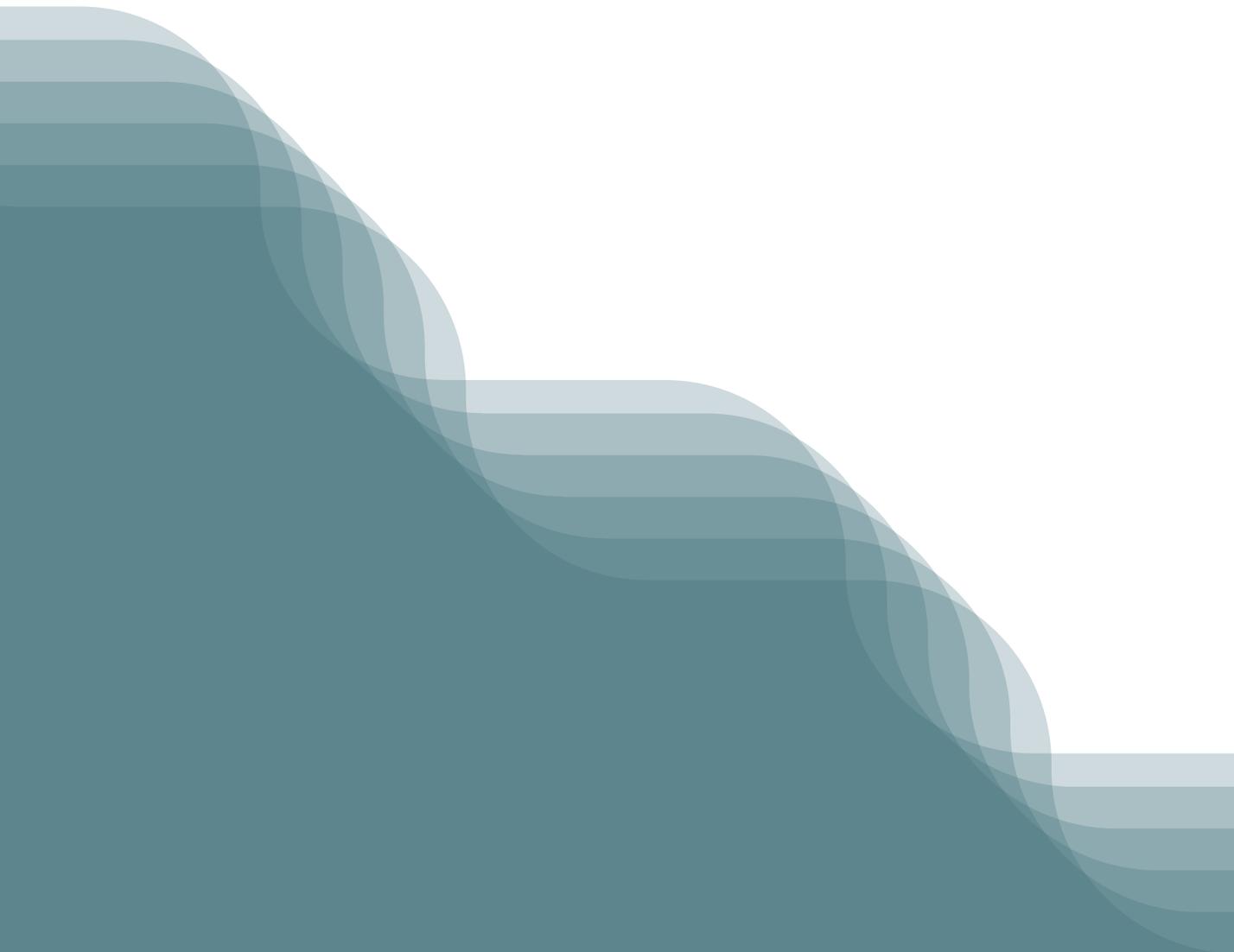
Admissions (208) 562-3000
Financial Aid (208) 562-3000
Registrar (208) 562-3000

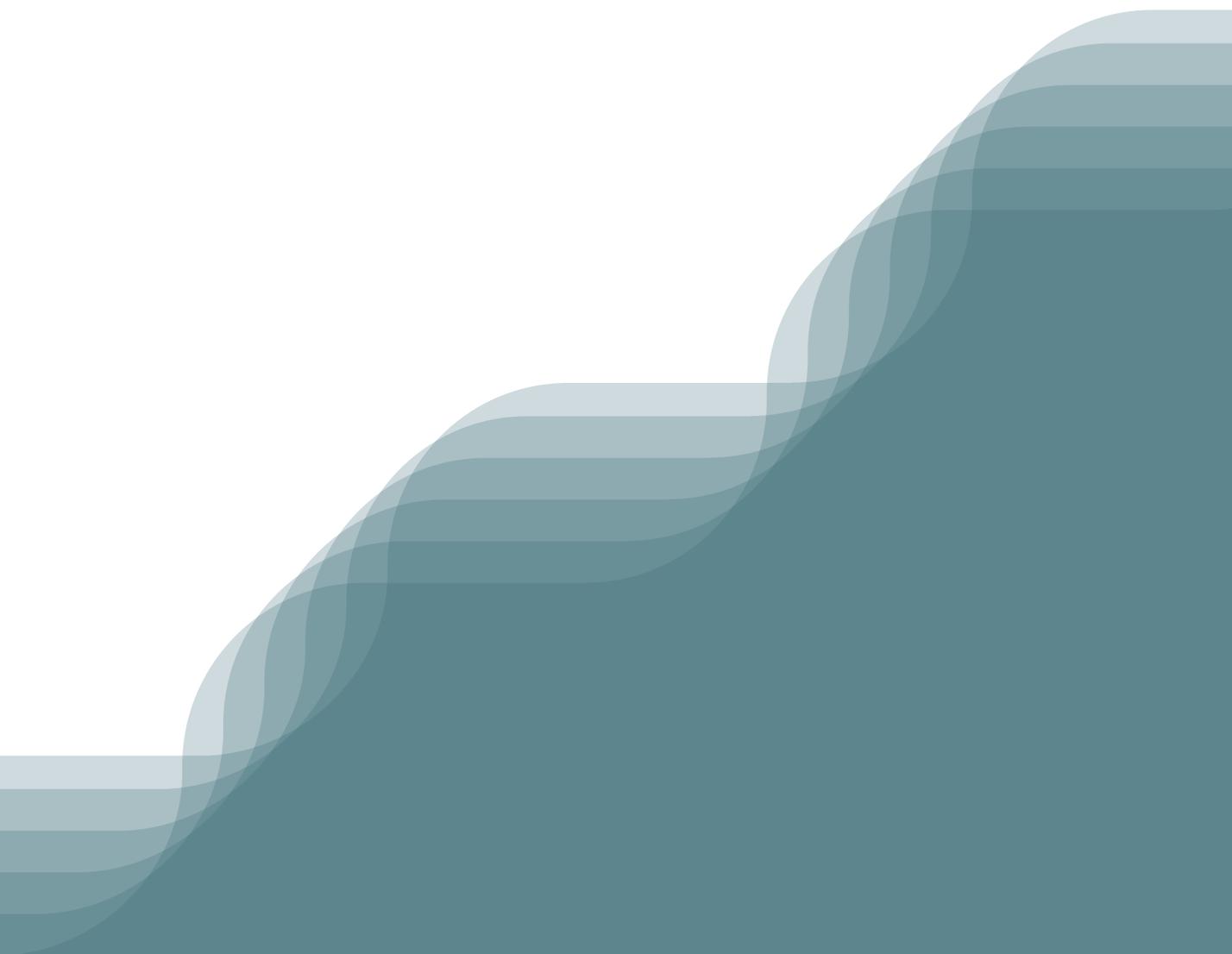
WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY

Admissions (877) 435-7948 X 3147
Financial Aid (877) 435-7948 X 3105
Registrar (877) 435-7948 X 3105



NOTES







[NEXTSTEPS.IDAHO.GOV](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov)

IDAHO
LAUNCH

[NEXTSTEPS.IDAHO.GOV/LAUNCH](https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/launch)

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