

FAFSA TIPS FOR STUDENTS IN THE TEACHER CERTIFICATION GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

DO I NEED TO CHANGE MY 2025-26 FAFSA APPLICATION?

Maybe. The U.S. Department of Education has changed the rules for what makes the one-year teacher certification graduate certificate eligible for aid. If you filed the 2025-26 FAFSA as a graduate student, you will need to correct your FAFSA application as follows to be eligible for federal student financial aid.

HOW DO I UPDATE MY 2025-26 FAFSA APPLICATION?

1. Log in to [your studentaid.gov account](https://studentaid.gov).
2. Navigate to the Status Center Dashboard.
3. Select your submitted FAFSA from “My Activity.”
4. On the “Details” page that loads, select “Take Action.”
5. Start a new correction by selecting “Make a Correction.”
6. In section **4-Student, College or Career School Plans**, you should mark:

4 Student College or Career School Plans

When the student begins the 2025–26 school year, what will their college grade level be?

☐ First year undergraduate (freshman) ☐ Second year undergraduate (sophomore) ☒ Other undergraduate (junior year and beyond) ☐ Master's, doctorate, or graduate certificate program (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, etc.)

When the student begins the 2025–26 school year, will they already have their first bachelor's degree? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Will the student be pursuing an initial teaching certification at the elementary or secondary level? ☒ Yes ☐ No

- Other Undergraduate
- Yes
- Yes

AM I CONSIDERED AN MSU GRADUATE STUDENT?

You will still be pursuing and receiving a graduate certificate, but you will be receiving aid as if you were an undergraduate.

AM I DEPENDENT OR INDEPENDENT?

Unless you are:

- going to be 24 or older by the end of 2025 OR
- are married OR
- meet [one of the other conditions](#) that would make you independent

you will be deemed dependent, and your parent(s) will need to provide data on the FAFSA. You will have to provide demographic information for one parent, who will then be invited to complete their portion of the FAFSA. *This is a change from what you are used to from previous FAFSAs.*

Once this process is completed and a new FAFSA is processed, MSU should receive updated FAFSA data within 2-3 days. You will see a new aid package load shortly thereafter, but this will likely be adjusted to reflect the amounts mentioned below.

If you have not yet filed the FAFSA and plan to do so, be sure to follow the instructions above.

WHAT KIND OF FEDERAL AID CAN I EXPECT?

Assuming that you're dependent, the max student loan you will qualify for will be **\$5,500**.

Your parent may also apply for a parent PLUS loan to help with your educational expenses.

If you are independent or your parent is denied a PLUS loan, the maximum loan amount will be **\$12,500**.

In either case, you could also be eligible to receive alternative private loans or the [Michigan Future Educator Stipend](#).

