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MARGO CHALY, ESQ.
Executive Director

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To Local Educational Agency Leaders,

Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2025 and for two academic years thereafter, students in public high schools and charter schools must complete either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([FAFSA](#)®) or the [New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application](#) as a condition of receiving a high school diploma, unless an opt-out waiver is completed according to the terms of P.L. 2023, c.295. By completing the FAFSA or the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application, high school seniors can learn about the financial aid options available to them to help cover the costs of pursuing a postsecondary degree or career training program.

The New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) is here to support student success champions in assisting students with satisfying this new graduation requirement at New Jersey high schools by providing financial aid application *status* updates to authorized staff members. Districts are encouraged to enter into a [data-sharing agreement](#) with HESAA to access real-time information regarding the status of financial aid applications of the 12th grade students in your district.

Upon completing the data-sharing agreement, authorized personnel in your district will receive credentials and instructions for using New Jersey Financial Aid Management System (NJFAMS). Next, your team members will upload a roster of the Class of 2025, and throughout the school year your team can generate reports of the financial aid application status of the students on the roster. HESAA does not provide specific financial information or any other substantive information from any individual student's application.

It is important to establish the data-sharing agreement, obtain access to NJFAMS, and upload Class of 2025 rosters as soon as practicable. This will allow your team members to be familiar with the NJFAMS platform ahead of the 2025-2026 FAFSA launch scheduled for December 1, 2024. After you download and complete the data-sharing agreement, email the fully-executed agreement to Roseann Sorrentino (rsorrentino@hesaa.org).

The HESAA Outreach team is ready and eager to assist your team in helping the students and families in your district navigate the financial aid process. We offer workshops and webinars about financial aid literacy as well as specific details about the FAFSA and NJ Alternative applications. Do not hesitate to contact me or Jennifer Azzarano, Director of Outreach & Communication (jazzarano@hesaa.org), for additional information.

Thank you,

Margo Chaly, Esq.
Executive Director