

Resolution of the Board of Education of the City of Newark, County of Essex, Providing That the FAFSA or the NJAFSA Is To Be Completed by All Students as a Graduation Requirement and Amending Board Policy 6146 (Graduation Requirements) to So Provide

WHEREAS the Board of Education is committed to preparing all students for the transition from high school to multiple pathways after graduation – both college and career;

WHEREAS research indicates two-thirds of almost all living wage jobs will require a postsecondary credential; and training for credentials can be expensive and entrance applications can sometimes be challenging;

WHEREAS the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) gives students access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college or vocational school; as by completing the FAFSA, students can be considered for federal financial aid, including Pell grants, work-study programs, and loans, and many states and colleges, as well as some private financial aid providers, use FAFSA information to determine students' eligibility for aid;

WHEREAS, additionally, FAFSA is a prerequisite for Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Grad PLUS Loans, and Parent PLUS loans, which are available without regard to demonstrated financial need and have lower interest rates than private loans; and

WHEREAS the New Jersey Alternate Financial Aid Application (NJAFSA) is an option for some students who are not United States citizens, and its completion will afford students financial benefits similar to those obtained from the FAFSA, and will be considered an acceptable option;

WHEREAS training of staff, parents, and students will be a critical component of implementation of this policy; and

WHEREAS students and parents will be permitted to request an exemption from the requirement to complete the FAFSA or NJAFSA;

WHEREAS this new language that describes FAFSA/NJAFSA graduation requirement has been inserted into File Code: 6146:

F. Complete FAFSA/NJAFSA

FAFSA/NJAFSA

“For students who do not qualify for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the New Jersey Alternative Financial Aid Application (NJAFSA), parents/guardians should complete the FAFSA/NJAFSA Exemption Form and submit it to their child’s school counselor by June 1st of the student’s senior year.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, either the FAFSA or the NJAFSA is to be completed by all students as a graduation requirement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Board Policy 6146 shall be and hereby is amended to provide that the FAFSA or the NJAFSA is to be completed by all students as a graduation requirement.