RISE: Make Your Plan Possible

High School High Tech Financial Aid Facilitator Guide

Instructor Setup

- Complete the HSHT Professional Development Series before facilitating this lesson.
- Use the slide deck with notes as the instructional guide
- Sections may be taught as modules when needed.
- Preserve the core FAFSA, RISE and action planning content.

Handouts

- Future Planning Worksheet
- RISE Readiness Checklist
- Sample Postsecondary Cost Comparison
- My Future Folder Quick Setup
- FAFSA & FFAA Process Guide
- Additional Financial Supports

Language Note: College and School

Throughout this lesson, “college” and “school” may be used interchangeably as student-friendly shorthand for education or training after high school. “College” may include a technical or trade school, Florida College System institution/state college, state university, or other eligible postsecondary program. Facilitators may adjust the wording to reflect the options their students are considering.

MAKE THIS LESSON YOUR OWN

Coordinators are encouraged to localize examples, resources, and delivery for their students, schools, and communities. You know your students, your school, and what they have already learned, so customize examples, local options, discussion questions, and activities as needed. Preserve the core FAFSA, RISE, and action-planning content, but adapt supporting details to what students already know and what is available locally. More material is provided than you may need, so use what best supports your students while protecting the core outcome.

1. Invest in Yourself — 2 min

Objective: Recognize that planning for education or training after high school is an investment in one’s future.

Activity: Use the provided visual sequence to show one student moving from high school through education or training and into a career. Reveal the images in order and let the visual progression do most of the work. Ask students what choices or preparation may have helped the student move from one stage to the next.

Focus Areas

- Future goals
- Education and training
- Preparation
- Self-advocacy and leadership
- Creating more choices

Student Deliverable: Students identify one future education, training, or career goal they would like to keep open as an option.

2. Get Ready Before You Apply — 5 min

Objective: Identify the information, accounts, and organization students need before completing college, financial aid, scholarship, and future job applications.

Activity: Introduce the basic tools students will use across applications: a personal email address, secure account access, long-term cloud storage, school and GPA information, and important documents. Show how the same preparation supports college applications, FAFSA, Florida aid, scholarships, and future job applications.

Focus Areas

- Personal email address
- Usernames, passwords, and account recovery
- Long-term cloud storage
- School and GPA information
- Important documents
- My Future Folder
- Work smarter, not harder

Student Deliverable: Students identify which preparation items they already have and which items they still need to create, locate, or organize.

Please Note: You want students to save "master" copies of all the materials that can be used interchangeably for various applications. Please decide what is most appropriate for your students: hard copy folder, the District's learning management system (Canvas, Google Classroom, Edsby, etc), or a simple thumb drive if available.

Discussion Question: Remind students to store important information somewhere they can access beyond a school-owned device or temporary school account.

3. What Does College Cost? — 3 min

Objective: Identify common education-related expenses students may need to plan for after high school.

Activity: Use the cost examples in the slide deck to review common school-related expenses. Reinforce that costs vary by school, program, and the credential or certification being pursued.

Focus Areas

- Tuition & fees
- Books & supplies
- Tools & equipment
- Uniforms
- Testing, certification, & credential costs
- Program-specific expenses

Student Deliverable: Students identify at least one education-related expense they may need to research for the college or training option they are considering.

Facilitator Note: Keep the discussion focused on education-related costs rather than a full living-expense budget. Certification and credential costs can vary widely. When useful, provide current examples relevant to students' interests or local pathways, and verify specific costs before presenting them.

Terminology Note: A **credential** is a broad term for something that shows a person has met a standard or demonstrated a skill. A **certification** is one type of credential, often awarded by an industry or professional organization after a student meets specific requirements. A **certificate** is typically awarded after completing an education or training program.

4. Ways to Pay — 4 min

Objective: Distinguish among common ways students may help pay for college or training and understand that each source has different rules and limitations.

Activity: Introduce grants, scholarships, and federal student loans separately. Students identify which types generally do not require repayment and which involve borrowing. Review key questions students should ask before accepting aid.

Focus Areas

- Grants & Scholarships
- Federal student loans
- Repayment
- Eligibility requirements
- Award limits
- Renewal requirements
- Before You Accept Aid

Student Deliverable: Students identify which types of financial aid they want to explore first and recognize that one source of aid may not cover the full cost.

Discussion Question: If a scholarship covered 75% of what you needed to pay, would you turn it down because it did not cover everything? Use responses to reinforce that students can combine grants and scholarships and should pay attention to what each award covers.

5. FAFSA + Florida Aid — 8 min

Objective: Understand the major steps required to apply for federal and Florida financial aid.

Activity: Use the FAFSA + Florida Aid Process Guide to walk students through the process at a high level: create a StudentAid.gov account/FSA ID, identify any required contributors, gather needed information, complete FAFSA, review the submission, respond to requests, and complete Florida-specific financial aid applications when applicable. Introduce the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) and its connection to programs such as Bright Futures.

Focus Areas

- StudentAid.gov account / FSA ID
- FAFSA
- FAFSA contributors
- Required information
- Submission and follow-up
- Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA)
- Bright Futures
- Federal student loans
- Asking for help
- Deadlines

Student Deliverable: Students use their Financial Aid Action Checklist to mark which FAFSA and Florida-aid steps are complete, in progress, or still need to be completed.

Common FAFSA Sticking Point: Parents have the right to decide whether to provide consent for their information to be transferred from the IRS. But if a required contributor does not provide consent, the student will not be eligible for federal student aid through FAFSA. Providing consent does not make the contributor responsible for paying the students' college costs. If a family has privacy, tax-filing, or legal concerns, refer them to Federal Student Aid or the financial aid office rather than trying to resolve the issue yourself.

6. RISE: Your HSHT Opportunity — 6 min

Objective: Understand what the RISE Scholarship provides, the steps required to apply, and how students can prepare a complete application.

Activity: Review RISE eligibility, the application process, required information, and the Florida Prepaid College Foundation scholarship benefit. Students use the RISE Readiness Checklist to identify completed requirements and remaining actions.

Focus Areas

- RISE Scholarship eligibility
- FAFSA requirement
- College application requirement
- Required information and documents
- Personal email
- Florida Prepaid College Plan
- Eligible in-state schools
- Application deadline
- Monitoring email
- What Makes You, You

Please Note: Students should be prepared to complete the entire RISE application in a single sitting. While it is possible to stop and return to the application, the system may not accurately save the information in a single application resulting in an incomplete application.

Student Deliverable: Students complete the RISE Readiness Checklist to show what is complete, what is still needed, and the next RISE action.

7. Do: My Next Step — 2 min

Objective: Help students turn what they learned about financial aid into one specific action they can take next.

Activity: Have students return to the Future Planning Worksheet and complete Section 4: *My Next Step*. Ask them to identify one financial-aid action, one person who can help, and a realistic date for completing it.

Focus Areas

- Progress
- FAFSA / FFAA
- RISE
- Grants and scholarships
- College or training applications
- Asking for help
- Personal deadlines

Student Deliverable: Students identify one specific next step, one person who can help, and a target completion date.

Closing Prompt:

My next step is: _____

Someone who can help me is: _____

I will do it by _____