



## Media Inquiries:

**Sonya Cole-Hamilton**

*Chief Communications Officer*

(972) 218-1433 office • (972) 358-7227 cell

[SonyaHamilton@LancasterISD.org](mailto:SonyaHamilton@LancasterISD.org)

[www.LancasterISD.org](http://www.LancasterISD.org)

Connect with us:



Like. Follow. See.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

### **Best Southwest Districts Unite to Host FAFSA Madness, a College-Readiness Event**

**Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD** – On Saturday, April 2, four districts in the Best Southwest will unite for FAFSA Madness, a college-readiness event targeted to high school seniors. Lancaster, DeSoto, Duncanville and Cedar Hill ISD students and families are invited to attend the free event hosted by Lancaster ISD at Lancaster High School located at 200 E. Wintergreen Rd.

Attendees can receive step-by-step assistance with filing their FAFSA/TASFA applications, college essay writing, community college admissions, and DARS which supports post-secondary resources for students receiving special education services. In addition, students can attend sessions on financial literacy, college admission assessments (SAT/ACT/TSI), NCAA Eligibility Rules, leadership, and how to network in college and Beyond. Also, surrounding colleges who still have open enrollment, the Texas Workforce Commission and several military branches have been invited

This is the first time for these Best Southwest districts to host this joint event and Cedar Hill ISD's Director of College & Career Readiness Tyesha Lowe said that Saturday will be an opportunity for students and parents to get individual assistance on options regarding post-secondary opportunities.

"We are experts in this field," she said. "If you have questions about your health, you would see a physician. On Saturday, we will onsite to answer as many questions as possible, and we will continue to be a resource even after Saturday's event."

Lowe said that the idea to host such an event in the Best Southwest was born out of a sincere, data-driven need.

"Historically, students are more likely to continue their post-secondary education if they fill out the FAFSA/TASFA application. Data provided by Commit!Dallas showed that students in Dallas County left millions of dollars of Pell Grant and/or financial loans on the table simply from non-completion of the FAFSA application," she said. "The data also showed that for students in southern Dallas County, completion was lower than other districts in the county."

Lancaster ISD Director of College & Career Readiness Creslond Fannin felt that the lower completion rate was a true call to action for the Best Southwest.

"We want to ensure that the students of Southern Dallas County have every opportunity to successfully enroll in college or enter the workforce and military," she said. "We felt that it was imperative that we collaborated to increase those completion rates and offer resources to the students of Southern Dallas County."

Although Commit!Dallas offers financial aid workshops throughout Dallas County, the Best Southwest districts of Cedar Hill, DeSoto, Duncanville and Lancaster felt a need to host a workshop in closer proximity.

"Therefore, we have partnered to provide our students, in addition to students from any other district, with an opportunity to receive assistance from multiple college access programs right here in the Best Southwest," Lowe added.

After the academics, the day of action will feature athletics as the four district will face off in a friendly, competitive Superintendent/Principal Final Four Basketball Tournament. Each district will have a 15-member team competing for the Best Southwest Final Four Trophy and bragging rights for the year.

“We wanted an interesting and fun way to include our superintendents and principals in this day,” Fannin said. “Every student will enjoy watching their superintendent or principal make a winning shot.”

Admission to the tournament is \$3 which will go towards scholarships for Best Southwest seniors. However, if a student attends the Financial Aid Sessions, they will be given a free ticket to enter the game.

This event is open to the public and special invited guests include Senator Royce West, K104 FM, the Dallas Wings WNBA Team, and musical artist Silento.

The four districts are excited about this weekend and have plans to continue to collaborate to maximize opportunities for students. For more information about upcoming events, contact [bswcollegeready@gmail.com](mailto:bswcollegeready@gmail.com).

**THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS DEPARTMENTS OF THE BESTSOUTHWEST PRESENT**

**2016 SENIORS**

# FAFSA MADNESS

**A SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID SHOWDOWN**

## SATURDAY APRIL 2

### LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL

**FINANCIAL AID SESSIONS**  
**9:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.**  
FAFSA/TASFA Completion  
How to Read a Financial Aid Award Letter  
Rising Star Scholarship  
NCAA Eligibility Center  
Networking After College  
Apply Texas Completion  
ACT Prep - Princeton Review  
TSI Assessment Information  
How to Setup a Student Bank Account

**BEST SOUTH WEST FINAL FOUR BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT**  
**NOON - 3 P.M.**  
Superintendents, high school principals, school board members, city council members and district staff compete in the BSW Final Four Basketball Tournament.

**Admissions:**  
No charge for FAFSA/TASFA completion students  
\$3 for all others  
Proceeds will go toward BSW senior scholarships

*The Lancaster Independent School District serves more than 7,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 11 schools. Our vision is that all students achieve self-sustaining success and leave a lasting legacy. And our mission, in collaboration with parents and communities, is to ignite learning that translates into sustainable success for all students in an ever-changing society.*