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Smart Solutions

TG's *Adventures In Education* comes with a [Frequently Asked Questions section](#) on paying for college. Your students can find concise answers for a variety of common questions like "What is campus-based aid?" and "How do I apply for financial aid?"

TG Report

Join TG at Financial Aid Awareness Month events around Texas

Promoting college awareness and providing support to those seeking financial aid is a TG priority year-round, but especially during February, a.k.a. Financial Aid Awareness Month. Throughout February, TG will meet with students and families at key awareness events, offering information and resources for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and planning for college. A partial list of events follows. Note that these events are open to all interested families and students, including students already enrolled, and those interested in enrolling.

Financial Aid Saturdays

TG representatives will attend "Financial Aid Saturdays," hosted by 15 Austin-area independent school districts (ISDs), including Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Georgetown, Hays, and Round Rock. Held on Saturdays from February 5 to March 26, these workshops provide help in submitting the FAFSA. Volunteers from the Central Texas business community will be on hand to offer assistance. Tax professionals from Foundation Community Tax Centers will also be available at select locations to help complete tax forms.

Houston Hispanic Forum

On February 19, TG representatives will attend the Houston Hispanic Forum at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. Team members will provide college awareness material and answer questions on how to prepare and pay for college.

College Goal Sunday

Texas' College Goal Sunday is an annual event, offering information about financial aid and assistance to families and students filling out the paperwork required to qualify for aid. On February 27, these events will bring together colleges, high schools, families, and students at 39 locations throughout the state. Students and families will be able to ask questions about the FAFSA as well as learn how to complete and submit the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). (Note that the TASFA was created for non-citizens applying for state financial aid.) A complete listing of host locations and other event details is [available online](#).

To learn more

Throughout February, TG offers support for numerous other financial aid fairs and workshops. For details on these events and all others mentioned above, please contact TG's assistant director of pre-college success Bonita Peebles at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4784, or send an e-mail message to bonita.peebles@tgslc.org.

To order publications and other resources

If you'd like to promote financial aid awareness on your campus, or provide materials in outreach efforts of your own, consider TG's posters and publications, provided at no charge. (Note that some items may be available on backorder, which may add several weeks to delivery.) [Visit TG Online to order any of these materials](#).

Register to be a host site for TG's "Applying for Student Financial Aid" webinar

On Thursday, February 10, TG will offer the 2011 "Applying for Student Financial Aid" webinar, which is designed to answer questions and provide information on completing the 2011-12 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the

Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). Colleges, universities, high schools, civic organizations, and other interested groups are invited to register and serve as host sites for the webinar. Organizations that register will be mailed promotional materials for the event, which includes flyers, evaluations, and other related support materials. College-bound students who are enrolled for the 2011 fall semester and who view the webinar at a registered host site (and complete an evaluation) will be included in a drawing for a scholarship.

To learn more

[Register for the webinar](#) by visiting TG's *Adventures In Education*. For questions, contact Richard Sapp, TG's director of pre-college success at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2865, or send an e-mail message to richard.sapp@tgslc.org.

New TG Financial Literacy Program module explains the basics of expense planning

Like a long road trip, planning for expenses requires a map of sorts (in the form of priorities to meet) and distance-measuring in order to have enough fuel, or resources (in the form of income). A new TG Financial Literacy Program module — *Spending Plans: Meeting Goals the Simple Way* — describes how students can set a spending plan in order to successfully meet life goals, and save for long-term needs. The module includes information on what common mistakes to avoid in planning, and tips on how to prepare for unforeseen expenses.

By the end of this presentation, students should understand how to:

- Devise a simple spending plan of purchases compared to income,
- Use a cash flow statement, and
- Cut unnecessary expenses.

About the TG Financial Literacy Program

TG has released an expanded and enhanced financial literacy program, comprised of ten 15-minute presentations with accompanying activities, workbooks, and speaker's scripts. These modules cover a range of topics, such as solving debt problems and understanding employee benefits. Illustrations, content, and format for each module are tailored to appeal to students from high school through college. The entire TG Financial Literacy Program places a special emphasis on teaching by interaction, the better to gain and keep attention on such important topics as budgeting and saving. Modules and activities can be mixed and matched to suit need. Session participants will receive workbooks that contain glossaries, FAQs, suggested resources for further study, and information on key concepts.

To learn more

Browse a list of [TG Financial Literacy Program](#) modules to learn more about TG's program or to request a "Train-the-Trainer" session for your staff who can then train students on a given topic.

TG calculators can help your students and parents plan for college costs

Online calculators can be invaluable resources to students and families budgeting for college expenses. TG offers a variety of such calculators that allow users to project monthly loan payments once they graduate; gauge the expected family contribution (EFC) for students and/or families; and help determine what students can expect to take home in pay given a certain salary, for example. Note that any information presented is a projection and may vary based on borrowed amounts, actual EFC, expenses, and other factors. Here's how each calculator can serve your prospective or ongoing students.

- **Loan Calculator:** By entering loan amount, loan term, and interest rate, students can estimate a monthly payment. The calculator uses the standard repayment period for a federal student loan of 120 months. It also takes into consideration that borrowers with standard repayment plans are held to a \$50-per-month minimum payment.
- **Daily Interest Calculator:** TG's Daily Interest Calculator illustrates how the number of days between a borrower's last payment, the interest rate, and the principal loan balance affect the amount of interest that accrues each month on a borrower's loans. A borrower can enter the loan principal, the number of days since the last payment, and the interest rate, and then click the "Calculate" button. The calculator will determine the interest rate factor and display the estimated interest due each month.
- **Graduation Planning Calculator:** Using this calculator, students can budget their time to achieve graduation within a specified timeframe. The tool can also help in setting a budget for meeting financial obligations after graduation.
- **Net Earnings Calculator:** With this calculator, students can determine their net earnings on a certain salary.
- **In-school and Out-of-school Budget Worksheets:** Just as their names imply, these calculators compute a monthly budget based on expenses and projected income from loans, or earnings, or both. The worksheets offer a good way for students to begin thinking about their current needs and about what they would like to earn after they graduate.

- **Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Calculator:** This calculator provides an estimate of what the student and his or her family will be expected to contribute toward educational expenses for one academic year of postsecondary education. The calculator follows the formula used by ED but notes that official estimates are provided by ED once the student completes and submits the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.

To learn more

[TG's calculators](#) are available through *Adventures In Education (AIE™)*, TG's college and career planning website for students and families. If you'd like more information on AIE or the calculators, contact TG's communications team at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4588, or send an e-mail message to communications@tgscl.org.

News Briefs

Online learning in college is growing at a fast rate, according to research statistics. The number of college students earning degrees exclusively through online coursework has tripled since 2004. At least a quarter of all students take at least one online learning class at some point while enrolled. [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) offers a profile of the online learning phenomenon with tables and graphs that show, among other things, the favored major of an online learner (criminal justice) and the top ten universities offering online-only enrollment (the University of Phoenix is number one). Note that some articles are available through the *Chronicle* only by subscription.



P.O. Box 83100
Round Rock, TX 78683-3100
(800) 252-9743
(512) 219-5700
(512) 219-4560 TDD

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To ask questions about *Shoptalk*, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4732, or send an e-mail message to communications@tgscl.org.

Contributors to this edition: Rob Davenport and Art Martinez. Edited by TG Communications and Policy and Regulatory Affairs. Designed by TG Communications.

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