

College Planning Guide for Juniors



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I. Introduction

The winter of your junior year is a good time to begin making concrete plans for your future. It is time to take stock of yourself. What kind of student are you? What are your goals? Are your talents such that you can build a career around them? Do you work well with others? Have you had a part-time job or engaged in volunteer work that stimulates a career interest – such as hospital work, camp counseling, or tutoring? Discuss your interests and learning abilities with your counselor, your teachers, and your parents – not so they can tell you what to do, but so that you can express your ideas and get a variety of viewpoints and suggestions.

This planning guide is provided to help you and your parents with your exploration. Your high school counselor will help clarify and supplement this information and will be available to meet with you individually to help formulate personal plans. Please set up an appointment. Your counselor is looking forward to it.

The following suggestions are made to help you prepare for your education beyond high school.

1. **Know Yourself**

Achievements, abilities, interests, ambitions, and values are important factors for you to consider in setting your goals. Discuss these with your counselor, friends, and parents. There are many tools available to help with this process in Naviance Student. See your counselor for more details.

2. **Explore Career Options**

Find out as much as possible about various occupations that interest you. If possible, get some experience in these occupations. Consult with people in these fields. Attend career programs sponsored by the community. Use Naviance Student (<https://student.naviance.com/eastcatholic>) and the College Board web site (www.collegeboard.com) to assist you.

3. **Plan Your High School Program**

Certain courses are required for entrance to particular colleges or specific programs. College bulletins are a good source for evaluation of what will be needed. Consult with the schools you visit to help you select your courses.

4. **Learn to Study**

Develop GOOD STUDY HABITS, including how to take notes from lectures and research materials. Strive to improve your study habits as you progress through the rest of your classes.

5. **Earn Good Grades**

Grades of “B” or better are considered college-recommending grades. Good grades are important. While some colleges will accept students with grades below the level recommended, students’ chances for admission to college are better when their academic record is strong.

6. **Become a Well-Rounded Individual**
Attempt to develop hobbies and outside interests. Participate in school, community, and church activities. Broaden your interests through reading, travel, and contact with knowledgeable people. Colleges want students who do this. They may even offer micro-scholarships for your accomplishments. Go to raise.me for more information.
7. **Select Your Colleges or Vocational Schools**
Investigate the schools that offer the types of programs you desire. Consult with people who have attended these institutions such as friends, relatives, or college representatives. Learn about the project demands in your selected vocational field. Attend college information programs conducted by admissions representatives from all types of schools. Use the guides available at East Catholic. Check college websites as well as Naviance Student, College Board, College Data, and Princeton Review.
8. **Visit Colleges**
Register on-line or by telephone for an appointment and a campus tour, especially during February and April vacation. Spend time visiting classes and dormitories, eating a regular meal in their cafeteria; check out the library and special facilities. Find out what life is like on the weekends. Can you picture yourself at this college?
9. **Learn About College Acceptance**
Talk with your counselor, consult written materials, and do web searches to learn about the requirements of various colleges. Know the application procedures and deadlines established by the college.
10. **Plan Your Finances**
Parents and students should become knowledgeable about financing a college education. Consider federal, state, and local sources of financial assistance. Be sure the sources used are current and up-to-date. Use the various websites to explore the possibilities. A list of these can be found in your packet.
11. **Prepare for Application Procedures Early**
Ask for letters of recommendation, transcripts, applications, and other materials early. Applications for admission should be completed by November 15 of the senior year. Transcript requests, for college applications **and** scholarships, must be completed 2 weeks prior to each institution's own deadlines. This means some transcript requests will be due before October 15. Scholarships have a wide variety of deadlines, with some beginning as early as September and continuing through June.

Please make use of the information and resources in this packet. Begin to explore, but do not panic if you cannot decide exactly what you want to do. You have time to try various jobs, make mistakes, change your mind, and grow out of one career and into another. The average American changes careers five times in their life. Nothing that you do now is irrevocable, so take chances, follow your feelings, and use your common sense. ☺

II. Timetable for Junior Year

- September _____ Monitor your school email, listen to announcements and check your Naviance Student account for college representatives' visits and other important information, throughout the year.
- _____ Get involved in activities, genuine involvement in one is better than token participation in several.
- _____ Prepare for PSATs using practice tests and other online resources
- _____ If you think you may play Division I or Division II sports in college, make sure you have registered with NCAA at www.eligibilitycenter.org
- October _____ Develop lists of your interests.
- _____ Attend college fairs at local schools. Look in the paper, on Naviance Student, and on our website for details. **October – Glastonbury: April - Hartford**
- _____ Read PSAT/NMSQT Student Bulletin.
- _____ Take the PSAT. Scores will be reported in December. Eligibility for National Merit Scholarships is based on the PSAT, and semi-finalists will be announced in the fall of your senior year.
- November _____ Put forth your best academic efforts in these last two years.
- _____ Begin to prepare a list of colleges you want to learn more about.
- _____ Consult college catalogs, websites, and Naviance Student. Update your resume and colleges of interest in Naviance Student.
- _____ Attend our college panel night with your parents in November.
- December _____ Attend the Jesuit Excellence Tour, here at East, in December.
- _____ Meet with your school counselor for a preliminary discussion of college plans. Pages 12-13 types of schools; pages 13-16 major, size and location.
- _____ If you are taking AP courses, discuss with your counselor and teacher the possibility of taking the AP exams and SAT subject tests.
- _____ Discuss with counselor use of computers as well as other forms of preparation to study for SATs.
- January _____ Continue career exploration on Naviance Student. The Career Interest Profiler is a good starting point to narrow down possible college majors.
- _____ Prepare for semester exams; colleges look at your junior grades.
- _____ Prepare for the May SAT using your PSAT results found on your College Board arrant and Khan Academy.
- _____ Make appointments with colleges you will visit during February vacation.
- _____ Talk with teachers and meet with counselor to discuss courses appropriate to future.
- February _____ Review your course selections. Is it the most appropriate for your future goals? Are you taking as many challenging courses as you can handle?
- _____ Continue to prepare for SAT.
- _____ Attend East Catholic Junior - College Night with your parents.

- _____ Make a profile of colleges that interest you. Use Naviance Student, CollegeData.com, The Princeton Review or College Board websites.
- _____ Visit colleges with your parents during February vacation. Update your Naviance Student account with colleges you are considering. **See pages 23-25 for interview tips.**
- March
 - _____ Write or email additional colleges for admissions information.
 - _____ Service Academy candidates must begin the application process.
 - _____ Register for May and/or June SATs and SAT Subject Tests. Sign up with Khan Academy at www.collegeboard.org for review material.
 - _____ Ask your counselor about summer enrichment programs.
 - _____ Consider SAT Subject Tests in courses you are taking this year for June testing.
 - _____ Update your Naviance Student account with pertinent information.
- April
 - _____ Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you and contact them for information, if you have not already done so.
 - _____ Plan a summer activity or job that will give you pertinent experience.
 - _____ Continue college visits during April vacation.
 - _____ Attend the National College Fair at the Hartford Convention Center in the evening with parents.
 - _____ File service academy and ROTC scholarship applications.
 - _____ Update your Naviance Student account with pertinent information.
- May
 - _____ Identify one or two teachers of major courses, usually taken junior year, whom you can ask for letters of recommendation.
 - _____ **Request letters from teachers in person and on Naviance Student.**
 - _____ Take AP Tests, if appropriate.
 - _____ Take SAT or SAT Subject Tests.
 - _____ Update your Naviance Student account with pertinent information.
- June
 - _____ Take SAT or SAT Subject Tests. Have your scores sent to colleges.
 - _____ Continue the college search, and discuss your plans with your counselor.
 - _____ Plan summer visits to colleges, especially for interviews.
 - _____ If you do not have a job, try volunteering in your career interest areas.
 - _____ Update your Naviance Student account with pertinent information.
- July
 - _____ Continue your college visits and interviews.
 - _____ Keep notes on each school visited. Start to narrow your choices.
 - _____ Make sure to update your findings on Naviance Student.
- August
 - _____ Continue your college visits and interviews.
 - _____ Begin working on Common Application at **www.commonapp.org**
 - _____ Begin to fill out college applications. Work on essays, pages 20-22.
 - _____ Prepare a resume using Naviance Student.

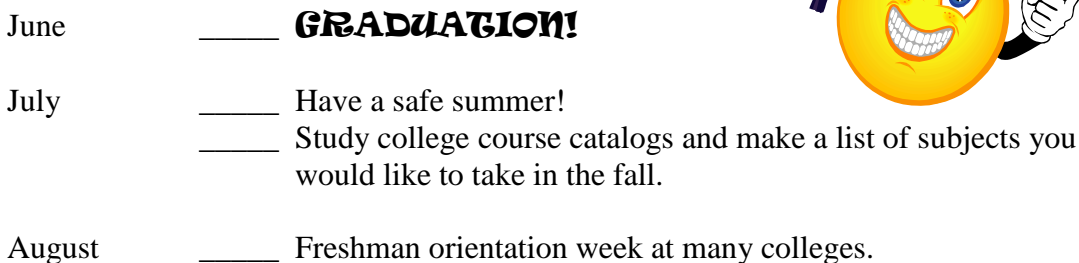
_____ Please make sure all relevant information regarding your college search process has been entered on your Naviance Student account.

II. Timetable for Senior Year

- September _____ Meet with your counselor to review credits and program for senior year.
_____ Narrow college choices down (make sure you have a backup school – which you really love!).
_____ Set up your online account and apply for your PIN from www.FAFSA.ed.gov.
_____ Prepare for the Oct. /Nov. SAT by taking practice tests in an SAT review booklet. Register for the SAT or SAT Subject Test by using the website www.collegeboard.com. **Be sure SAT and SAT Subject Test scores are sent directly to colleges.**
_____ Attend meetings with college representatives when they visit our school. The calendar is posted on Naviance Student, on the Colleges tab, and this is where you sign up for visits.
_____ Continue your college visits and interviews, especially on staff development days and underclassmen test days.
_____ Continue to apply to colleges on line, if not done already.
_____ Continue drafts of any essays required; review with your English teacher.
_____ Reduce your preliminary list of colleges to a manageable number – typically 5 – 7. Move schools to “Colleges I am Applying To” list.
_____ Parents attend Financial Aid Night.
- October _____ Hand transcript requests, one for each college, to the counseling office assistant at least two weeks before college due date.
_____ Pay particular attention to deadlines for Early Action and Early Decision.
_____ Review your transcript with your counselor.
_____ Complete **FAFSA** (financial aid form) as soon as possible.
_____ Review for the SAT.
_____ Remind teacher(s) to please upload recommendations to Naviance Student and let them know of your earliest application deadline.
_____ Complete and send the **CSS Profile for financial aid**, if applicable, to your selected colleges.
_____ Attend college fairs at local schools and continue visits at colleges.
_____ Complete your resume on Naviance Student account.
_____ Service Academy deadline – all supporting information must be completed.
_____ Registration deadline for December SAT and SAT Subject Test.
_____ Find out exactly what forms, test results, etc., are necessary to apply to all colleges in which you are interested.
- November _____ Take SAT or SAT Subject Tests. Have scores be sent directly to colleges.
_____ Meet college representatives; interview at colleges, attend open houses.
_____ All transcript requests should be in the School Counseling Office by November 15 at the latest. A separate Request for Transcript form must be filled out for each application, but payment may be made with just one check for all.
_____ Check with Naviance Student to be sure that recommendations have been uploaded. Write thank you notes and give them to teachers!

- _____ First quarter grades are sent to colleges automatically. See your counselor the first school day after reports cards are released if you have concerns.
- December _____ Take SAT or SAT Subject Tests.
 _____ College acceptances begin to be received. **Update Naviance Student when you get an admissions decision.**
- January _____ Submit scholarship applications. Most applications are now on-line.
- February _____ Send updated application material to add to your file at each college if necessary (new honors, offices in school clubs and others).
 _____ First semester grades will be sent to colleges by the School Counseling Office. **You must notify us to which schools you would like your mid-year transcript sent.**
 _____ Check Naviance Student regularly for new scholarship opportunities.
 _____ Confirm you have sent in all applications and your financial aid forms.
 _____ Register for Advanced Placement Tests (AP) if you are taking them.
- March _____ Explore the colleges to which you have applied.
 _____ If you applied, watch for the Financial Aid Form Acknowledgement and Student Aid Report from the Pell Grant Program.
 _____ It is not too late to apply to some colleges.
 _____ Keep your grades high.
 _____ Consider visiting your top college choices before making a final decision.
- April _____ Final college acceptances and financial aid replies come.
 _____ Decide which college you will attend, notify your counselor, and update Naviance Student. Most colleges require that you reply, with a matriculation deposit, by May 1.
 _____ Notify the college of your choice. Send deposit to be received by May 1.
 _____ Update your Naviance Student account to reflect the school you will be attending in the fall.
 _____ Notify schools you have decided not to attend as soon as you decide.
- May _____ Keep your counselor informed of your decisions and scholarships you receive.
 _____ Apply for a student loan, if necessary.
 _____ Take SAT Subject Tests for college placement, if required. Keep grades high.
 _____ Schools may reconsider acceptances based on final grades.
 _____ Apply for a summer job to help pay for college costs.
 _____ Be certain to indicate your college choice on Naviance Student.

Important—Information from Naviance Student will be used to determine the destination of your final transcript. Please be sure to update Naviance throughout the college application process and when you choose the school you will attend.



July _____ Have a safe summer!

_____ Study college course catalogs and make a list of subjects you would like to take in the fall.

August _____ Freshman orientation week at many colleges.

The questions that follow can help you focus on college selection and admission where it belongs—on you as an individual. You may feel embarrassed or self-conscious when you first consider these questions. Nevertheless, an honest and thoughtful self-evaluation can reveal what you should look for in a college and prepare you for statements you will be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews when you apply. A serious look at yourself will help you find the colleges that are right for you and will help you present yourself effectively to them.

1. What aspects of your high school years have been most meaningful to you? If you could live this period over again, would you do anything differently?
2. What values are most important to you? What do you care about most? What occupies most of your energy, effort, and/or thoughts?
3. How do you define success? Are you satisfied with your accomplishments to date? What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
4. What kind of person would you like to become? Of your unique gifts and strengths, which would you like to develop? What would you most like to change about yourself?
5. Is there anything you have ever secretly wanted to do or be? If you had a year to go anywhere and do whatever you wanted, how would you spend that year?
6. What experiences have shaped your growth and way of thinking?

1. What are your academic interests? Which courses have you enjoyed the most? Which courses have been most difficult for you? Why?
2. What do you choose to learn when you can learn on your own? Consider interests pursued beyond class assignments: topics chosen for research papers, lab reports, independent projects; independent reading; school activities; job or volunteer work. What do your choices show about your interests and the way you like to learn?
3. How do you learn best? What methods of teaching and style of teaching engage your interest the most?
4. How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues, and exchange ideas? What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience in recent years?

5. Have you worked up to your potential? Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability and potential? What about your SAT scores? What do you consider the best measures of your potential for college work?
6. Are there any outside circumstances (in your recent experience or background) which have interfered with your academic performance? Consider such factors as after school jobs, home responsibilities or difficulties, excessive school activities, illness or emotional stress, parental influences, English not spoken at home, or other factors, which are unique to your background.

Your Activities and Interests

1. What activities do you most enjoy outside the daily routine of classes and other responsibilities? Which activities have meant the most to you? Looking back, would you have made different choices?
2. Do your activities show any pattern of commitment, competence, or contribution to other individuals, your family, and/or school?
3. How would others describe your role in school or your home community?
4. After a long, hard day, what do you enjoy doing? What is fun or relaxing for you?

The World Around You

1. How would you describe your family and home? How have they influenced your way of thinking? How have your interests and abilities been acknowledged or limited by them?
2. What do your parents and friends expect of you? How have their expectations influenced the goals and standards you set for yourself? To what pressures have you it necessary to conform?
3. What is the most controversial issue you have encountered in recent years? Why does the issue concern you? What is your reaction to the controversy? What is your opinion about the issue?
4. Have you ever encountered people who think and act differently from you? What viewpoints have challenged you the most? How did you respond? What did you learn about yourself and others?
5. What concerns you most about the world around you? Assuming obligation and opportunity to change the world, where would you start?
6. Do you have any current or historical heroes or heroines?
7. What books have you read which have changed your way of thinking? Who are some of your favorite writers? Why?

Your Personality and Relationships with Others

1. How would someone who knows you well describe you? What are your best qualities? What are your most conspicuous shortcomings? Would you agree with their assessment? How have you grown or changed during your high school years?
2. Which relationships are most important to you and why? Describe the people whom you consider your best friends, your best critics, or your best advocates. In what ways are they similar to or different from you?

3. Describe the students at your school. Which ones do you feel you are close to? Do you feel alienated from any? What kind of people do you admire most? Generally, how do you respond to people who think and act differently from what you expect? How do you feel about your teachers?
4. How are you influenced by others who are important to you? How important to you are approval, rewards, and recognition? How do you respond to pressure, competition, or challenge? How do you react to failure, disappointment, or criticism?
5. How do you feel about choices and making decisions for yourself? What are the best decisions you have made recently? How much do you rely on directions, advice, or guidance from others? Have you ever chosen anything because it was new or interesting? How important are fads and fashions?

IV. Choosing a College

A. How to Choose a College

Choosing the right college can seem like the most important decision you will ever make. After all, your college education will affect the rest of your life. “What if I make the wrong choice? What if I do not get in?” What if I am not happy there? What if I don’t learn anything?” It can be scary. By following the steps that are outlined here, the task of identifying appropriate colleges should be easier for you.



First, try to answer the following six questions:

- What kind of college do I want to attend? A liberal arts school, a pre-professional school, and so on.
- What size school do I want? For example, one with 10,000 students or more, or one with as few as several hundred.
- Where do I want to be? Close to home or far away? Some people find being far away too lonely; others enjoy the freedom. Sometimes staying close eliminates the problem of adjusting to a new environment: sometimes being too close keeps you in old ruts.
What location do I want? Urban or rural? Boston University, New York University, and the University of Chicago, for example, are in the middle of big cities (which could be fun or distracting). Rural colleges offer lovely, quiet campuses. For some people, these are the best places to study; for others they are not.
- What lifestyle do I want? There are conservative schools, liberal schools, fraternity/sorority oriented schools, and gung-ho football schools. They all can give you an education. Consider the kind of education you want, as well as what you want surrounding you when you are not studying.

- What special programs do I want? Try to identify colleges offering activities in which you are interested.

Use the available college handbooks and internet programs to develop a preliminary list.

When your list is narrowed, investigate those colleges further on-line and in person.

If possible, visit the schools in which you are interested. Generally, small, private schools encourage interviews, so your visit can be important to your chances of being accepted. The February and April vacations before your senior year are the best time for visiting. Be sure to make your appointments early. Dress up when you go—put your best foot forward. The interview is an opportunity for the college to get to know you. It is not really a pressure situation. You should have researched the college; now, ask any other questions you have. If you like the interviewers, and they like you, that is a good start. Remember, you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you.

Then, when you're on campus, look for such things as the number of courses in your intended major, the library resources in your field of interest, the student-to-faculty ratio, the availability of off-campus programs, how friendly the students are, the general campus appearance, cultural opportunities, housing and health services, sports programs, extracurricular activities, whether the student body is more residential or commuter and, finally, the cost and availability of financial aid.

After all this, you still may worry that you will be stuck somewhere you do not want to be for four years, doing things you do not want to do. It is a lot more likely that if you make an informed choice, four years will not be enough time to enjoy the people you will meet and the things you will learn. College can be the most significant and exciting experience in a person's life.

In deciding which colleges you want to attend, you should first evaluate yourself to determine your needs and strengths. Then you should consider criteria to be met by the colleges in which you are interested: academic reputation, size, geographic distribution of the students, student-faculty ratio, campus facilities, co-ed or single sex, extracurricular programs, social opportunities, cost, financial aid, career counseling, academic competition, location, private/public, religious affiliation, etc.

During your junior year, you should form an idea of the kind of college that suits you best. Study each choice carefully. Be realistic. By early fall of your senior year, you should have selected between four and six colleges.

Questions and Answers

One of the questions asked most frequently is, "What should my final list of colleges include?" Inherent in this question are two considerations; first, how many schools should you apply to and second, what range of schools should be included with regard to admissions competition?

We discourage students from adopting the “shotgun approach” of applying to a multitude of schools. We also discourage students, regardless of academic ability, from “putting all of their eggs in one basket” by applying to only one institution or one level of college. As a rule, we advise that students apply to approximately six schools that vary in terms of selectivity, but have the most important features desired by the student. As long as a student does not overly limit himself/herself geographically, finding such a group of schools is not that difficult considering the large number of colleges and universities found in the United States. Generally, we recommend that a student’s final list include schools from each of the following categories:

- Category I A student’s top choice school. It is fine to include in this group a couple of “long shots” or “stretches.”
- Category II Schools that possess the significant features a student desires and to which the probability of admission is even or slightly better than even. These are categorized as “realistic” schools.
- Category III Schools that have most of the features a student desires and to which the probability of admission is “highly likely” to “certain.” We refer to schools in this category as a student’s “safety” schools.

While there is no hard and fast rule, students usually include two or three schools from Categories I and II and at least one or two schools from Category III. Obviously, those schools that qualify as “long shots,” “realistic,” or “safety,” vary tremendously from student to student. Each student has an individual academic profile and should select schools accordingly, making sure that choices range through all three categories. We would like to emphasize that students are continually encouraged to apply to more than one “realistic” and/or “safety” school. This will ensure two or more acceptances and provide each student with some choices.

A Few Points of Caution

Many students spend hours deciding on their few top choices and just five minutes selecting one or two safer institutions. We strongly advise that you spend as much time and consideration selecting your fifth and sixth choice schools as you do your top choice institution. While a safety school may not be as selective and prestigious as your top choice, you should ensure that it has what you are looking for and is an institution where you stand a good chance of being happy and successful. If your few top choices are small, selective liberal arts colleges, it does not make a great deal of sense to include a large multi-dimensional university as a safety choice. If you want a small liberal arts college, you should spend the necessary time finding a school of similar type that will qualify as a safe choice.

Many students feel that simply because a particular institution falls in Category II as opposed to Category I, it does not offer programs of equal quality. Such an assumption is, in many instances, incorrect. The selectivity of any institution is dependent on the size of its applicant pool, which, in turn, may be affected as much by geographic location, popularity, and reputation as by actual academic quality. Many schools, for a variety of reasons, may be Category II schools from an admissions perspective yet offer programs equal in quality to the student’s few top choices.

We would like to dispel the notion that if you want to go to a good college or university you must look at an eastern school. There are many good schools throughout the country, and we encourage you to investigate options outside of New England. Such a regional approach can limit, in some instances, your ability to attain admission to the quality school you desire. You may be considered, for a variety of reasons, a unique and attractive candidate by a highly selective school outside of the New England area rather than by a school of equal quality within the area.

While the applicant pools at some colleges and universities may be declining, this is not the case at many of the schools that students identify as top choices. At most, of the so-called “prestigious schools” the number of applications is continuing to increase so the competition for admission remains exceptionally keen.

* * * * *

Many students and parents still feel that they can select any one of the various state universities as a safety choice. This is no longer the case—if, in fact, it ever was. Students and parents must realize that state universities are becoming more and more competitive, both for in-state and out-of-state applicants. Many state universities have established quotas governing the number of out-of-state students admitted, thereby creating keen competition for a limited number of places.

* * * * *

B. Kinds of Schools

College: An institution that offers educational instruction beyond the high school level in a two-year or four-year program.

University: An academic institution which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree-granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine or journalism). It is composed of a number of “schools” or “colleges,” each of which encompasses a general field of study.

Liberal Arts College: A four-year institution that emphasizes a program of broad undergraduate education. Pre-professional or professional training may be available, but is not stressed.

Junior and Community College: A two-year institution of higher learning that provides career and vocational training and academic curricula (terminal and transfer).

Terminal Program: An academic program that is complete unto itself. A student who completes it may not be admitted to a four-year college for further study without completing additional course requirements.

Transfer Program: An academic program that is designed to lead into a four-year program at another college or university. The two-year graduate transfers as a junior to the four-year institution.

Engineering or Technological College: Independent professional schools that provide four-year programs in the fields of engineering and the physical sciences. They are often known as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.

Technical School: A two-year institution, which offers terminal occupational programs, intended to prepare students for immediate employment in fields related to engineering and the physical sciences. These schools may also offer one-year certificate programs in certain crafts and clerical skills.

Nursing School: There are three kinds of nursing schools. At schools affiliated with hospitals, students receive an R.N. diploma upon successful completion of training and a state examination. At schools affiliated with four-year colleges, students receive both a

BS degree and an R.N. diploma. Junior colleges and community colleges may offer a two-year nursing program. These schools confer an AS degree in nursing.

Military School: Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Merchant Marines. These institutions (West Point, Annapolis, The Air Force Academy, and Kings Point) require recommendations and nomination by U.S. Senators or U.S. Representatives. Private and state supported military institutions, however, operate on a college application basis, as does the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. They all offer degree programs in engineering and technology with concentration in various aspects of military science.

Business School: Business schools fall into two categories. At some colleges, it is possible to specialize in business administration or in a two-year secretarial course in conjunction with supplementary liberal arts courses. Other institutions offer primarily business or secretarial courses and may not be regionally accredited.

Trade School: Trade schools offer specialized training in specific work fields such as cosmetology, computer technology, medical or dental technology, culinary arts, or drafting.

Professional School: Professional schools offer specialized study in areas such as art, music, drama, dance, photography, etc.

C. College Characteristics

Academics

More than anything else, you go to college to get an education. The type of academic atmosphere and variety of courses studied should be considered when choosing a school.

Colleges can be ranked according to the selectivity of their admissions. For example, some colleges only take students with high grades and very high (1200+) combined (Critical Reading and Math only) SAT scores. These schools are considered very selective in their admissions. Other schools simply require graduation from high school, or accept lower SAT/ACT scores. These schools have lower selectivity and some have open admissions.

You should try to match your academic abilities to the school's selectivity. If you are a very good student, then a more selective college may offer you the right amount of challenge and stimulation. If your record has been weak, a less selective school may best fit your needs.

In addition, college offers a variety of majors or courses of study. If you are sure you want to major in business, for example, you should check the business department of the college you are considering. If you are unsure of what your major will be, then look for a school that has a wide variety of majors, usually called a liberal arts college.

Size

Colleges range in size from 150 to 80,000 students. There is a great difference between attending a small school (1,000-2,000), usually referred to as a college, and a large school (30,000-50,000), usually referred to as a university. Small schools offer you involvement that is more personal, a community atmosphere, and small classes (from 5 to 50 students). Large schools tend to be more impersonal, allow you to be more anonymous, and offer class size of anywhere from 20 to 350 students.

You should ask yourself:

- Will I feel closed in and trapped at a small college?
- Will I welcome the personal, friendly atmosphere a small college affords?
- Will I feel lost and overwhelmed at a large institution?
- Will I feel more independent and free at a large university?
- Will I want large or small classes?
- Would I like to have a good deal of interaction with my instructors or would I prefer a large, more impersonal style of institution?
- Will I want a campus that offers sororities and fraternities, as do many of the larger colleges and universities?
- Are the athletic facilities important to me? Generally, the larger universities offer the greatest range of athletic sports and facilities.

Atmosphere

Colleges, just like any group of people working and living together, create their own atmosphere. Each college has a particular atmosphere or environment that can

affect the performance and satisfaction of each student there. Some facts that go into creating a college's atmosphere are:

- personal or impersonal handling of student questions, concerns, and scheduling
- an academic or less serious mood among the students and their approach to responsibilities
- whether the school is single sex or coeducational

The type of atmosphere a college offers can best be discovered by reading the catalog carefully and, of course, by visiting the campus and talking to as many people as you can. We also encourage you to stay overnight, sleep in the typical freshmen dorm, eat the typical food in the cafeteria, visit classes, and get to know several groups of students on campus.

Cost

Obviously, a major factor to be considered is the cost of attending a college. The total cost for a year, as computed by the college financial aid office, includes tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. Total

costs range from \$4,000 for a community college to over \$60,000 for some private schools.

While cost is undoubtedly very important, do not limit your choice of colleges to only those you can afford without financial assistance. Many of the more expensive private schools have solid financial aid programs which may cover anywhere from 20% to nearly the full cost, depending on your need. A good plan would be to choose several colleges, including one you can afford and several for which you need aid. Although financial aid may seem uncertain at times, limiting prospective colleges on a cost basis alone may exclude some excellent colleges from your list.

We encourage every student to apply to any of the state colleges because they tend to be the "best buy" in colleges, averaging \$10,000 - \$30,000 less than private schools.

Location

There are many reasons why the location of the college may be important to you. You should always consider the expense of travel, the need for independence versus the desire to stay near family, and the effects of living in a particular climate.

When considering the location of a college, think about the campus setting. The physical environment of the college you go to may be very important to you. Some people prefer the social, cultural, and economic activities of a large city or metropolitan environment, others would be unhappy if they could not be near the ocean, mountains or countryside. A major metropolitan area can offer many benefits, but a student must adjust to the lifestyle of a big city. A college or university located in the heart of a city is often comprised of multi-storied classroom buildings and high-rise dormitories. There

are also many colleges and universities in rural settings with widespread campuses located many miles from the nearest metropolitan areas. In addition, many institutions are located close to, but not in, large cities. The decision of a location and campus setting for your college should ultimately include those schools where you will be most comfortable living for the next two to four years of your life.

Student Body Type

A student body can be comprised of all women or both men and women. Students who may worry that they would be cloistered at a single-sex college should know that today virtually all colleges have exchange programs with other colleges whereby a student from one college may cross register at another college to take courses for credit. In addition, dorm privileges, social activities, and extracurricular involvements will vary due to the type of student body your college has.

Ask yourself these 10 questions to evaluate your college preferences.

1. What satisfactions and frustrations do you expect to encounter in college? What are you looking forward to? What worries you most? What do you hope to gain from college? What is the overriding consideration in your choice of college?
2. Why do you want an education? Why are you going to college?
3. How do you want to grow and change in the next few years? What kind of environment would stimulate or inhibit the growth you would like to see?
4. Which interests do you want to pursue in college? Do your interests require any special facilities, programs, or opportunities? Consider all your interests in terms of fields of study, activities, community, and cultural opportunities. Are you more interested in career preparation, technical training or general knowledge and skills?
5. What degree of academic challenge is best for you? What balance of study, activities, and social life suits you best? How interested are you in the substance of intellectual life – books, ideas, issues, and discussions? Do you want an academic program where you must work and think hard or one where you can make respectable grades without knocking yourself out? How important is it to you to perform at the top of your class or would you be satisfied to be in the middle or bottom of your college class? How well do you respond to academic pressure and competition from others?
6. How would you feel about going to a college where you were rarely told what to do? How much structure and direction do you need?
7. How would you enjoy living in a different part of the country? How often do you want to be able to go home? What kind of change in your life-style and perspective might be exciting or distressing and overwhelming?
8. What kinds of surroundings are essential to your well-being? Are there certain places, activities, climate, or pace of life, which make you happy? Do you prefer a fast-paced environment where something is happening

most of the time or an organized environment where you can join a wide variety of planned activities? Do you prefer a more serene and relaxed environment where you can go your own way?

9. How would you feel about going to a college where the other students were quite different from you? How would you react? Would you find it an exciting or intimidating environment? Would you prefer to be with people who share your viewpoints and life-style or who challenge and make you question your values?
10. How free do you feel to make your own college decisions? Do you and your parents agree about your plans for college? How important are the opinions of your parents, teachers, and friends, or consideration of familiarity, prestige, or reputation in your community?

V. Testing for College Admissions

Standardized tests are only one of the many factors colleges use in making admissions decisions. Such testing provides a reasonably accurate comparison of student performance on a nationwide basis. Students in New Hampshire and California take the same tests; their scores should be somewhat comparable measures of achievement and ability. A brief description of the major tests follows.

1. The CEEB (College Entrance Examination Board)
The CEEB is the organization that sponsors the most widely accepted battery of tests for college admissions. Registration materials are available in the School Counseling Office. These publications will be helpful to you and your parents in keeping track of registration dates, understanding the format of tests and interpreting scores.
2. The PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)
PSAT/NMSQT (for sophomores and juniors) are October practice tests designed to give an idea of the procedures, questions, and scope of the SAT. Detailed results are reported in a way that helps you to see your strengths and weaknesses. Approximately 15,000 of the 1.2 million students who take the PSAT/NMSQT will be designated as National Merit Semifinalists.
3. The SAT Reasoning Test (Scholastic Aptitude Test)
The SAT is an approximately four hour multiple-choice and writing test that measures verbal, mathematical reasoning and writing abilities. The College Entrance Examination Board is responsible for the SAT, which is given at specified test centers throughout the year. It is required or recommended by many colleges as a part of the admissions process, sometimes in combination with one or more of CEEB's SAT Subject tests. Online registration is required at www.collegeboard.com.
4. SAT Subject Test
SAT Subject tests are diagnostic measures of actual knowledge acquired in specific areas. They are given in wide range of different subjects. These tests are one hour in length and the scores range from 200-800. In general, you should not take SAT Subject tests until you have nearly completed a subject. All tests are part of one large booklet

that you are given at the test center. It is your decision as to how many tests you take (up to three) and in what order. Of course, this decision would best be made before you enter the test center. Online registration is required at www.collegeboard.com.

5. The ACT (American College Testing)

The ACT is an achievement test requested by many colleges, especially those in the Western and Southern states. It replaces the SAT and SAT Subject tests for part of the entrance requirements for these colleges. It tests English, mathematics, social sciences, and natural sciences. A composite score is also given. Online registration is required at www.actstudent.org.

NOTE: Fee Waivers for SAT, SAT Subject, PSAT, and ACT are available through your counselor if you meet certain economic guidelines. Registration for SAT/ACT tests should be completed 4-6 weeks in advance of the test. Failure to register by the deadline results in paying a late fee.

Your school code for both the SAT and ACT is **070373**.

SAT Reasoning/SAT Subject Test College Board Examination 2019-2020 Exam Dates	ACT Test 2019-2020 Exam Dates	Advanced Placement (AP)Examinations 2019 Exam Dates
March 9, 2019**	February 9, 2019	May 6, 2019
May 4, 2019**	April 13, 2019	through
June 1, 2019	April 13, 2019	May 19, 2019
August 24, 2019	June 8, 2019	
October 5, 2019	July 12, 2019	
November 2, 2019	September 7, 2019	
December 7, 2019	October 26, 2019	
March 2, 2020	December 7, 2019	
May 2, 2020	February 8, 2020	
June 6, 2020	April 18, 2020	
	June 13, 2020	
	July 18, 2020	
March 9, 2019 and May 4, 2019** Regular SAT Only		

VI. The College Application Process

A. Course Recommendations for Senior Year

Through the four years of high school, students are busy taking courses that meet the school's distribution requirements – four years of English, two years of foreign language; three years of science; four years of math; three years of history; four years of religion; one year of fine arts; Freshman Seminar, and the state mandated health and physical education requirements. By the senior year, however, many students have the freedom of choosing among elective courses in various fields – which round out their credit requirements for graduation.

Many students are tempted to take it easy during their senior year – to avoid the difficult courses. Colleges look to see that a student is continuing to challenge him/herself academically in order to be an attractive candidate to colleges.

Even so, in some cases there are good reasons for a student not to take a fourth year of science, social studies or foreign language. When it is clear that a student is not avoiding such courses, but actively pursuing other courses that are pertinent to a possible college major, there is no stigma attached to this choice. Sometimes a student may be so weak in foreign language, for example, that an advanced course in the senior year would be not be appropriate.

B. Steps in Applying for College

First Step: Beginning an Application. Create an account with Common Application at www.commonapp.org and with colleges that do not accept the Common App. Start a log of all log-in ID's and passwords.

Second Step: Deadline Dates and Admission Policies. It is advisable to limit the number of applications. An application fee of \$40 - \$75 is usually required for each application, and this is not refundable even if your application is rejected. Fee Waivers are available from your counselor if you meet certain economic guidelines.

Seniors should watch deadline dates specified by each college. However, in most instances, college applications should be sent as soon as possible. Make a list of college deadlines and East Catholic deadlines so you can keep yourself on track. In addition, keep track of what each college requires be included with the application (essay, letters of recommendation, etc.). On occasion, deadline dates for applying are no more than a guideline and a college may actually cut off applications earlier than its final date if it fills its classes before then, or it may continue to accept applications beyond that date if it still has room for more students.

Third Step: Completing the Application. Colleges are not alike and application forms may vary significantly. The Common Application (www.commonapp.org) is accepted by almost 500 colleges: this means you can fill out one application and send it

to many colleges. Other colleges may want you to apply directly through their own website.

A college or university typically collects four different kinds of information about its applicants.

1. The Application. This serves the purpose of identifying the student to the college: name, address, high school, background, academics, extra-curricular, and a personal essay.
2. SAT Scores. These are sent directly to colleges, from College Board, if students so request when they take the exam. Many colleges only accept scores reported to them through the testing agency.
3. The Transcript. Courses taken in grades 9-12 are supplied to colleges. In addition to a record of grades through four years of high school, the transcript shows the student's GPA (grade point average). The student's counselor has the responsibility of sending the transcript to colleges. A sample transcript is on page 33.
4. Letters of Recommendation. Some colleges request that classroom teachers and/or school counselors assess an applicant's ability, in which case it is listed under Application Materials when a student applies. If a college does not ask for these, students need not feel obliged to send them. Recommendations from others; community leaders, influential friends, etc., are of less value to admissions officers and should be sent only after the student has conferred with the school counselor.

C. The College Essay Steps



Most college-bound students approach the task of writing a personal essay for college admissions with some trepidation and a few questions: How important is the essay? What do colleges look for? How is it used? Who reads it? If you are such a student, a few facts and tips may put the essay into perspective and help your best effort.

The essay is important – to you and to the college. According to one admissions director, “It makes the facts in the student's folder come alive for us. Because it is the student's personal statement, no single piece of admissions evidence gets as much attention and provokes as much discussion.”

The essay is your opportunity to take charge of the information the college receives about you, and to provide information that does not appear in grades, test scores, and other materials. It allows you to reveal your intelligence, talents, sense of humor, enthusiasm, maturity, creativity, expressiveness, sincerity, and writing ability – traits that count in the admissions evaluation.

What Do Colleges Look For?

Generally speaking, the admissions staff will evaluate your application essay on three levels:

Level 1 – Proper punctuation, grammar, usage, and syntax, reflecting your ability to use standard written English.

Level 2 – Content, substance, and depth of insight, reflecting your ability to think about yourself and to convey your true feelings or opinions about a topic.

Level 3 – Creativity and originality. “It is at this level,” according to a dean of admissions, “that students can position themselves as unique – as individuals who would bring a freshness of vision and viewpoint to the college that will enhance the quality of its academic and social life.”

In its essay directions, a college may ask you to do one or more of the following:

DESCRIBE your uniqueness as a person, or tell something about yourself that cannot be learned from other information in your application.

DISCUSS something that has contributed significantly to your growth.

COMMENT on your goals and aspirations and tell how you expect the college to help meet them.

EXPRESS your imagination, originality, opinions, or feelings on a special topic.

Whatever the topic, the care and attention you give your essay will express your level of motivation, and enthusiasm for the college.

Essay Writing Tips

Here are a few tips for developing an essay that conveys your personal qualities.

1. Plan your essays during the summer before your senior year, if you can, or early in your senior year. Allow yourself enough time for all the steps below, and write an individual essay for each college.
2. Understand the college’s topics, directions, and deadlines, and look in its catalog or guidebook for descriptions on the personal qualities it is looking for. One selective college, for example, seeks “candidates whose qualities of intellect, initiative, and energy demonstrate desire for both intellectual and personal fulfillment.” An essay for that college should demonstrate and persuade the institution that you have those qualities.
3. Before you start your essay, jot down your aspirations and how you think the college will help you meet them. Then develop a personal inventory.

Make lists of your civic and school activities, your travels, awards, honors, other accomplishments, work experiences, any academic or personal value about yourself. To focus your essay, develop a one-sentence theme from your inventory.

4. Think about the form that you might use to convey your information. Straight prose is fine, but if your theme lends itself to another approach, try it.
5. Write a draft. Set the draft aside for 24 hours, and then read it to spot clichés, triteness, vagueness, dullness, grammatical errors, and misspellings. Is your essay focused on your theme, or does it ramble? Is it confusing or boring? Does the introduction “grab” the reader?
6. Rewrite your essay based on this evaluation and repeat step 5 as often as necessary to sharpen your essay.
7. Ask someone whose opinions you respect to read your essay and give you his or her candid impressions. Ask for specifics but do not let this person rewrite your essay. “Tell me what you think I’m trying to say. How do I come across as a person? What parts confuse you? Where do I need more details? What parts bore you? Tell me the parts you like best.”
8. If necessary, go back to steps 3, 4, or 5. If this draft is the best you can do, polish it by checking again for spelling and grammatical errors, awkward phrasing, inaccurate usage, unnecessary words, or anything else that does not sound right you. Read your essay aloud to locate the rough spots.
9. Type your essay and proofread it to catch typographical errors, and any other errors you may have missed. **Spell Check, Spell Check, Spell Check, but remember that Spell Check will not catch misused words** (i.e. – your vs. you’re).

VII. The College Visit and Interview

Suggestions for College Visits

Some colleges require an interview as part of the admissions process, but most do not. It is still important for you to visit the college at which you may spend four years of your life. The visit and interview may help you confirm your choice, or cause you to reconsider it.

If you visit before you make out your application or before your school reports arrive, you should take a copy of your transcript. A copy of an unofficial transcript can be obtained in the School Counseling Office with sufficient notice.

When making an appointment for a college visit keep the following suggestions in mind:

1. If possible, plan a time when high school is not in session, but college is.
2. Request a specific date and time.
3. Request an alternate time if the first is inconvenient for the admissions office.
4. Unavoidable delays require a telephone call to the admissions office.

If it is at all possible, arrange to stay overnight in the dormitory. You can get a good sense of the student body by eating in the college snack bar or cafeteria. Attending several classes is also an excellent idea. **BE SURE TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS IN ADVANCE.**

Avoid a non-scheduled “drop in” to an admissions office. However, if it turns out that an opportunity to visit a school at the last minute presents itself, be courteous and understanding about what the admission staff is able to do for you. Sometimes you are able to join a tour. Rarely, you may find that an interview time is available due to a cancellation. However, “dropping in” is discouraged and is not a productive way to visit a college.

Timetable for College Visits

1. Visit colleges starting as early as February vacation of your junior year.
2. Return in the fall to those you are most interested in for a day of visiting classes, talking with students, staying overnight, etc.
3. Using a map, plan your trip roughly to visit two schools per day.
4. In order for you to have the best choices, a good rule of thumb is to call 4-6 weeks ahead of time. College interview and tour spots fill up remarkably quickly. The more popular colleges are full through January (they stop scheduling interviews by August).
5. It is always nice to visit when a college is in session, but the demands of the fall of senior year do not always make that practical or possible. A summer visit is generally more relaxed. Not only do you have more time, but the admissions people often do also. Schedule the return, comprehensive, overnight visit in the fall for your very few favorites. While overnight lodging and class visits are being offered at more and more colleges, not all do so. Do not assume that this is available.
6. If you would like to see a coach or faculty member in an area of interest, mention that when you call. Colleges do their best to accommodate you.

The Interview Process

1. Learn as much as possible about the college before your visit. Be prepared to both answer and ask questions.
2. Give some advance thought to the things you want to look for and ask about. Having a list of questions with you is acceptable.
3. Go alone rather than with a friend or a gang. Your parents may go along for the drive, but they do not participate in the admissions interview. Parents are sometimes invited to speak with the officer following the interview.
4. Arrive on time or a few minutes early.
5. Be yourself at all times – be honest, sincere, interested.
6. Know your background and experience: be prepared to present it in an orderly manner. An opening question may be “Tell me about yourself.”
7. Be prepared to tell why you have chosen this particular college and what you expect to get out of four years there.
8. Be ready to answer questions about your SAT scores, position (i.e., top 30%) in class, latest grades, and courses you have taken.
9. Smile! Speak distinctly. Look at the interviewer when you are speaking.

10. State and defend opinions only if asked. Do not be argumentative. If you do not know something, admit it. Do not try to bluff.
11. APPEARANCE. Dress neatly and attractively.
12. Relax! Interviews are meant to be informative to both parties. Try to get as much out of the interview as you put into it.
13. Thank your interviewer for his/her time and consideration. Send a note or email thank you.

College Interview FAQs

The following questions are a cross-section of questions that are generally asked at college interviews:

1. How did you first hear about X college?
2. What are your career goals, both long-range and short-range?
3. Why are you interested in majoring in _____?
4. What kinds of things do you do outside of school?
5. What accomplishments have you achieved or activities have you participated in that have had a particular effect on you and your life?
6. What might you be interested in as a future profession?
7. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?
8. How familiar are you with this college and its programs?
9. Which one of your activities has given you the most satisfaction?
10. If you had high school to do over again, would you do anything differently?
11. What particular “life goals” are you seeking to achieve or pursue?
12. What are your priorities in selecting a college?
13. How would you describe your high school and how would you change it?
14. Where do you see yourself in four years?
15. Discuss your most stimulating intellectual experience.
16. Tell me about something you have really wanted which you had to go after on your own.
17. What is the most significant contribution you have made to your school?
18. What books or articles have made a lasting impression on your way of thinking? Have you read deeply into any one author or field?
19. Have you ever thought of not going to college? What would you do?

Some Questions to Ask at the College Visit

Visit the college while it is in session so that you will be able to talk not only with the admissions officer, but also with the students who attend the college. Some questions you might wish to have answered:

1. How many of the students receive financial aid?
2. Do many students go on to graduate work?
3. What provision is made for social activities?
4. How much importance is placed on social activities and other extracurricular activities?

5. Are there museums, concerts, theaters, lectures easily and inexpensively available to all students either on the campus or in the community?
6. What are the various types of dormitory facilities?
7. How are roommates selected?
8. Is there supervision of the dormitories? Rules? Security?
9. How adequate is the library for the number of students using it?
10. What is the size of the classes (small classes mean more opportunity for the student/teacher contact)? Who teaches the freshmen – only the instructors or full professors, too?
11. What laboratory facilities are available for science majors or language majors?

Interview Follow Up

1. Make notes on the interview and the college as soon as possible after the appointment.
 - a. Likes
 - b. Dislikes
 - c. Important points to remember
 - d. Name and title of the interviewer
2. Write a letter of appreciation within a week.
 - a. This shows thoughtfulness, maturity, and courtesy.
 - b. It reinforces the admissions officer's memory of you as an individual.
 - c. Many colleges keep track of all inquiries and correspondence from prospective students.



VIII. Financial Aid

Many families are understandably concerned about meeting rising college costs, especially those at private institutes. Any candidate for admission to college should apply for financial aid if his or her family feels that it might not have the ability to pay the entire cost. Those interested in financial aid should fill out online a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and sometimes a CSS-PROFILE, if a college requires it, and submit according to directions. The FAFSA and the PROFILE (available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov and www.collegeboard.com, respectively) contain comprehensive instructions for their completion. Key income and expense items are expressed as they are in Internal Revenue Service references and definitions. Many colleges require that their own forms be completed as well. Early in the senior year students should be sure they know financial aid deadlines and the proper forms to use for each college they are considering.

Students should pursue all avenues of aid; counselors and college financial aid officers can offer important suggestions and advice. Most institutions award financial aid as a “package,” which means that students receive a combination of scholarship or grant (money that does not have to be paid back), loan (to be paid back when the student leaves college), and campus jobs (sometimes related to a student’s field of study). Institutions are able to help more students by using the package methods.

A. Sources and Purposes of Student Financial Aid

There are two primary sources of financial aid. The first is need-based aid.

Need-based forms of student aid constitute the major portion of assistance available for post-secondary education. Eligibility for need-based aid is based upon the difference between the cost-of-attendance and the family's ability to pay. The second is merit-based aid, which is generally given to students in recognition of special skills, talent, and/or academic ability.

Within the category of need-based assistance, there are two types of financial aid: grant aid, and self-help aid. Grant aid, as the name applies, does not have to be repaid, and does not require a service commitment. Self-help assistance consists of loans, which require repayment, and employment, which consists of part-time jobs, usually within the institution.

These types of assistance, grant aid, and self-help aid, are derived primarily from four sources – institutional, private, state, and federal.

Institutional sources of aid are provided and controlled by the institution, while private sources of aid are derived from community organizations, foundations, professional associations, corporations, and commercial lending institutions.

State sources of aid are usually administered through a state agency and include grants/scholarships, loans, and state work-study.

B. Definition of Need

Simply defined, financial need is the difference between what it will cost a student to attend a college and the amount the family can contribute towards the student's education, as determined by the financial aid office. The important point to remember is that financial need will usually increase as college costs increase. The following is an example of how financial need determination can vary based on college type.

The family's income, assets, debts, family size, and extenuating circumstances are all taken into consideration in determining financial need. Parents with special or unusual circumstances may wish to discuss their situation with the financial aid officer at the colleges in which their sons/daughters are interested.

C. Checklist: What to Do and When to Do It

If you think you need aid to continue your education, your chances are best if you apply in the right way at the right time.

_____ Check Naviance Student on a weekly basis for available scholarships.

- _____ Apply for scholarships for which you qualify. Complete the applications carefully and **ON TIME**.
- _____ Visit your bank and investigate student loan programs.
- _____ Be persistent in pursuing **ALL** avenues of financial aid.
- _____ Ask for information about financial aid opportunities through the financial aid office of each college.
- _____ Make certain you know which need analysis form to file. The most commonly used form is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA) and sometimes the CSS PROFILE is required. The PROFILE is available in October and should be completed as soon as possible in October using estimated information. For the CSS PROFILE, applications should be should be completed online at <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/> . The FAFSA form can be filed beginning October 1 of your student's senior year. You are strongly encouraged to apply online.

	College A In-state 4-year Private	College B Out-of-state 4-year Public	College C In-state 4 Year Public
Total Cost	\$55,000	\$36,000	\$20,000
Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) (Family of Four)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Estimated Need	\$45,000	\$26,000	\$10,000

- _____ Review the acknowledgement you receive after submitting your needs analysis form. The acknowledgement from the College Scholarship Service will list the colleges and programs that you indicate should receive information. Make certain that all entries on the acknowledgment are correct.
- _____ Respond promptly to any request for additional information about your needs analysis form so that there will be no further delay in processing your request for aid.
- _____ Check to see if other financial aid forms are required by the colleges to which you are applying. Complete the forms as early as possible and return them to the college.
- _____ If either parent is a 100% disabled veteran, or if either died during service or from a service-related injury, you may be eligible for special assistance. Contact the nearest office of the Veterans Administration for information.
- _____ Determine how payments from each aid source will be made to you. Generally, payment of financial aid is made at the time you enroll. Find out if there are additional procedures or forms to file in order to receive aid.
- _____ Pay close attention to award letters. Carefully review any financial aid award letter you receive. Notify the college whose offer you are accepting and inform the other colleges of your decision so that financial aid they reserved for you can

be freed for other applicants. If you also receive aid notices from the state or federal programs, read them carefully and be sure to follow any directions they contain so that you can be certain of getting your aid.

- Investigate community funds and other sources. Financial aid is also provided by community agencies, foundations, corporations, unions, religious organizations, clubs, and civic, cultural, and fraternal group. Need is usually considered, but other factors may be taken into account in determining a student's eligibility.
- Compare Financial Aid. You should compare the types of aid offered by the colleges you are considering. If you need assistance, consult the financial aid department of each college.

IX. Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

Accreditation – recognized as maintaining standards that qualify the graduates for admission to higher or more specialized institutions.

AP - Advanced Placement – The Advanced Placement Program gives students the opportunity to pursue college-level studies while still in secondary school and to receive advanced placement and/or credit, based on their performance, upon entering college. The AP Program provides 34 courses and exams in a variety of subject areas.

Alumni Interviews – Admissions interviews that are conducted by graduates of colleges to which a student has applied. These are often done locally when a student is unable to travel to a distant college for an interview.

ACT – American College Testing Program – see page 18

Associates Degree – A degree granted by most two-year colleges and some four-year colleges at the end of two years of study. A student may earn the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree, dependent upon the course of study.

Bachelors Degree – A degree granted by four-year institutions after completing four years (or in some cases, five years) of study. A student may earn a Bachelor of Science or Arts degree dependent upon the course of study.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA) – Originated by the College Board, this agreement establishes a common date, May 1, that is the earliest a subscribing college may require an accepted applicant to say whether he or she plans to attend. About 300 colleges distribute acceptances by early April and agree to wait until May 1 to require an accepted candidate to reply to their offer. This allows students to make informed decisions when all alternatives are known.

Carnegie Units – One Carnegie unit is given for successful completion of one year's study of one college preparatory or academic subject in high school. Some colleges refer to these as

“academic units.” The name comes from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Class Rank – A student’s standing based on his or her academic record as compared with that of the other members of the class. In a class of 100, the “best student” would be No. 1, the poorest No. 100. **East Catholic does not rank students.**

CEEB – College Entrance Examination Board – See page 17

College Fair – A gathering of college representatives at a central location. Students can walk from booth to booth, gathering information. It is often accompanied by presentations of admissions, financial aid, etc.

CSS – College Scholarship Service – CSS is the financial aid division of the College Board (CEEB). It provides a needs analysis service for financial aid applicants.

College Work-Study Program – A government-supported financial aid program coordinated through financial aid offices whereby an eligible student (based on need) may work part-time while attending class at least half-time, generally in college-related jobs.

Comparative Guidance and Placement Program (CGP) – A system of information gathering and interpretation designed by the College Board to help students in self-evaluation and in academic and career planning, to assist educators in the placement and counseling of those students, and to provide institutions with summary data for planning and research purposes.

Consortium – Several colleges and universities in an area often join in a consortium, or cooperative association, which gives students the opportunity to use the libraries or take courses at all member institutions. Consortium members often present joint lecture programs or unusual courses.

Cooperative Education – A program in which the student alternates between full-time college study and full-time paid employment related to the area of study. Under this plan, the bachelor’s degree often requires five years to complete.

Core Curriculum – A group of courses, in varied areas of the arts and sciences, designated by a college as one of the requirements for a degree.

Credit by Examination – A program through which some colleges grant course credit based on results of the Advanced Placement test scores, the ACT Proficiency Examination Program (PEP), the CEEB College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), the New York College Proficiency examination Program, or another examination developed by the college.

Decile – The class ranking of all students in a grade is divided into ten equal sections. Thus, a student’s rank may be expressed as “in the third decile” (third group from the top).

Deferred Admission – This is an admissions plan whereby a student applies for college and is notified of acceptance during the senior year of high school, but then may take off a year for travel, work, or other projects before attending college.

Descriptive Tests of Language and Mathematics Skills (DTLS/DTMS) – A set of nine diagnostic and placement tests used by college for entry-level placement and by students for self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses in important language and mathematics skill. The

tests are offered by the College Board to assist students in self-directed learning activities and to help colleges in providing appropriate instruction.

Early Action – A plan of admission decision whereby students submit their application early and hear back early, when compared to regular decision. Qualified candidates who apply early action may receive offers of admissions by mid-December. Unlike the Early Decision Plan, the Early Action Plan does not allow an institution to request an applicant to make a firm commitment to matriculate, indicate college preferences, or make any response to an offer of admission before the traditional May 1 candidate's reply date.

Early Decision – There are two types of early decision plans: the single-choice plan and the first-choice plan. Both types may require a student to sign a legally binding contract stating that if accepted he/she will attend that school. In the single-choice plan, students cannot apply to other colleges until the early decision college has notified them. In the first-choice plan, students may apply to other colleges, but name the early decision college as the first choice and agree to enroll at the college and withdraw all other applications if accepted.

ETS- Educational Testing Service. The Educational Testing Service carries out the operational phase of many College Board programs, including the development and administration of the Board's major testing programs, under contract. ETS is a separate and independently governed nonprofit organization.

FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid – a form developed by the Federal Government and completed by parents and students to provide an estimate of the parents' and the student's ability to contribute toward the costs of post secondary education. It is available online. Practically every college requires the FAFSA form when Financial Aid is requested. Their website is www.FAFSA.ed.gov.

FFS – Family Financial Statement – Same as the FAFSA but administered by the American College Testing Program (ACT).

General Educational Development Examination (GED). – A series of tests that adults take to qualify for a high school equivalency certificate of diploma. Many colleges will accept satisfactory GED test results in place of a high school diploma.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – An indicator of the student's overall scholastic performance. The GPA is computed by totaling the number of grade points earned in each course (generally, A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0) and dividing the sum by the total number of courses carried.

Language Proficiency Examination – An examination in a foreign language to determine whether a student had satisfied a college's foreign language requirement and, if not, in which level of a foreign language course he or she should be placed.

Official Transcript – Most colleges will only accept a transcript that bears the high school seal and is mailed or sent electronically directly from the high school to the college. (See Transcript)

Open Admissions – The policy of some colleges of admitting virtually all high school graduates, regardless of academic qualification such as high school grades and admissions test scores.

PSAT/NMSQT – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests – see page 17

Private College – Owned privately but often receives grants from public sources. Admission is open to all qualified applicants.

PROFILE – The Financial Aid PROFILE Service is offered by the College Scholarship Service Board (CSS). It is used by many colleges (see list on form) to award their own private funds.

Public College – Owned by a public entity (such as a state) and funded by a combination of public funds and tuition fees. Admission is open to all qualified applicants.

Qualified Acceptance – occasionally an institution postpones action on an application and will suggest that the applicant pursue a particular course in its summer session. Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the college agrees to accept the student for its regular degree programs at the beginning of the first or second semester.

ROTC – Reserve Officers' Training Corps – Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy. This combines military education with baccalaureate degree study, often with financial support for those students who commit themselves to future service in the Armed Forces. Local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply detailed information about these programs, as can participating colleges.

Rolling Admissions – A plan adopted by some colleges whereby students are notified of acceptances or rejection to that college, usually within two to four weeks after the receipt of a completed application. Colleges using Rolling Admissions continue to accept students until their freshman class is filled. Usually, it is wise to apply early to such colleges, since applications are normally not accepted after the admissions quota has been reached.

SAT – Scholastic Aptitude Tests – see page 17

State Certification – State certification in a particular trade or profession specifies that you meet minimum competency requirement.

SDQ – Student Descriptive Questionnaire – A questionnaire that can be completed by students when they register for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or Achievement Tests. It gives the student an opportunity to provide information about educational objectives, extracurricular activities, academic record, and areas in which counseling or assistance may be needed.

SSS – Student Search Service – A College Board program designed to help colleges identify potential applicants with the particular academic or personal characteristics they are seeking. The service also provides students with an opportunity to learn about colleges with programs and characteristics they want. Information is gathered about students who wish to participate through the Student Descriptive Questionnaire of the ATP and the biographical section of the PSAT/NMSQT. The College Board then supplies each participating college with the names and addresses of students who have the particular characteristics they specify. The service is free to students.

Study Abroad – Any arrangements by which a student completes part of the college program – typically the junior year, but sometimes only a semester or a summer-study in another country. A college may operate a campus abroad, or it may have a cooperative agreement with some other American college or institution in another country.

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language – The TOEFL is designed for students for whom English is not a native language and whose scores on the SAT would obviously be affected by the language difference.

Transcript – A chronological listing of all subjects taken and grades received. Also may include standardized testing and other objective information (See Official Transcript).

View Book – Short, colorful booklets published by a college to highlight its programs, services, and activities.

Waiting List – In addition to accepting and rejecting applicants, many colleges place students on a waiting list for admission. As accepted applicants decide to attend other colleges, the school will offer their places to students from the waiting list.

COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE VISITS 2018

Adelphi University	Sacred Heart University
Albertus Magnus College	Saint Anselm College
American International College	Saint Joseph's College of Maine
Assumption College	Saint Joseph's University
Bay Path University	Saint Michael's College
Becker College	Salve Regina University
Bentley University	Savannah College of Art and Design
Binghamton University - SUNY	Seton Hall University
Bryant University	Siena College
Castleton University	Southern Connecticut State University
Catholic University	Southern Vermont College
Central Connecticut State University	Springfield College
Clarkson University	Stonehill College
Colby College	Suffolk University
College of Our Lady of the Elms	SUNY at Albany
College of the Holy Cross	Syracuse University
Curry College	The College of New Jersey
Dean College	The University of Scranton
Eastern Connecticut State University	Tufts University
Emmanuel College - Boston	Tunxis Community College
Endicott College	U.S. Air Force
High Point University	University of Connecticut
Hofstra University	University of Dayton
Holy Apostles College and Seminary	University of Hartford
Husson University	University of Lynchburg
Iona College	University of Maine
Jesuit College Fair	University of Maine - Farmington
Johnson & Wales University	University of Massachusetts-Amherst
Keene State College	University of Massachusetts-Amherst
Landmark College	University of Massachusetts-Lowell
LaSalle University	University of New England
Lasell College	University of New Haven
Lynn University	University of Pittsburgh
Marist College	University of Rhode Island
Merrimack College	University of Rochester
Mitchell College	University of Saint Joseph
Monmouth University	University of Southern Maine
Mount Holyoke College	US Army
Nazareth College	Washington College
Niagara University	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Nichols College	Western Connecticut State University
Providence College	Western New England University
Purdue University	Westfield State University
Regis College	WPI
Roger Williams University	Yale University

EAST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
115 New State Road
Manchester, CT 06042

Phone: 860-649-5336
CODE: 070373

Entry Date:
Graduated:
Date of Birth:
Previous School:

zip:

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STATE

CLASS OF

GR. YEAR	# COURSE	LEV	TEACHER	FVLT	CREDIT
013	English I	CP	Jacob, L	87	1.30
013-10-1	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-2	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-3	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-4	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-5	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-6	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-7	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-8	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-9	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-10	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
013-10-11	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	86	1.30
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013-10-197	013	CP	Ed. S. A. L. H.	8	

SEM- YEAR	#	COURSE	LEV	TEACHER	PHIL	CREDIT	CR- YEAR	#	COURSE	LEV	TEACHER	ENGL	CREDIT
10-11-12	662	American Lit	Adv	Horan, B	85	1.00	12-13-14	0-2	Senior English	Adv	Kircho, L		0.00
10-11-12	663	Americ & Sacraments	Adv	Urbanski, J	97	1.00	12-13-14	0-3	Creative Writing	Adv	Dow, D		0.00
10-11-12	229	Spanish	Adv	Andrews, A	80	1.00	12-13-14	1-2	Christian Life	Adv	Horan, S		0.00
10-11-12	422	Spanish	Adv	Combs, M	81	1.00	12-13-14	2-2	Pre-Calculus	Adv	Jacobs, M		0.00
10-11-12	526	Modern Mid Civ/US Gov	Adv	Cooper, J	78	1.00	12-13-14	4-0	American Sign Language	Adv	Heasley, R		0.00
10-11-12	629	Health	Adv	Heasley, J	96	0.75	12-13-14	5-6	Social psychology	Adv	Heasley, R		0.00
10-11-12	632	Chemistry	Adv	Roberts, S	83	1.00	12-13-14	6-2	Anatomy & Physiology	Adv	Shinarowich		0.00
		TOTAL CREDITS:				6.75	12-13-14	7-6	Digital Photography	Adv	Scorsio, S		0.00
							12-13-14	9-1	Fall Sports Phys Ed	Adv	Calande, S		0.00
									TOTAL CREDITS:				6.00

ACADEMIC STANDING										NUMBER OF CREDITS EARNED IN THIS SCHOOL										DATE PRINTED	
AT END OF																					
GPA	QUL	PTI	WT	CREDIT	English	Religion	MachTech	Vocals/Len	Sci	Math	AD	MISC	P.E. HOME	TOTAL	DATE						
3.42	B	80-89	18.00	18.50	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.25	0.00	0.75	19.50	08-23-2013						
MARKING VALUES:																					
A 90-100	B 80-89	C 70-79	D 60-69	F 50- and below	Ex Exempt	WIP Withdrawn Passing	WF Withdrawn Failing														
Incomplete	P Pass	Med Medical	E Excused																		
Signature _____										Title _____										Date _____	

**Colleges Accepting ECHS Graduates
(Class of 2018)**

<p>Adelphi University Allegheny College Anna Maria College Assumption College Auburn University Australian National University Babson College Barry University Barton College Bay Path University Becker College Belmont University Bentley University Binghamton University Birmingham-Southern College Boston College Boston University Brandeis University Bryant University Butler University Carleton University Catawba College Central Connecticut State University College of Charleston Christian Brothers University Clarkson University Clemson University Coastal Carolina University Colby College Colby-Sawyer College Colgate University College of Saint Rose College of the Holy Cross Concordia University - Montreal Connecticut College Cornell University Curry College Dalhousie University DeSales University Dickinson College Drexel University Eastern Connecticut State University Elms College Elon University Emerson College Emmanuel College Endicott College Fairfield University Fairleigh Dickinson University Fitchburg State University Flagler College Florida Atlantic University Florida Gulf Coast University Fordham University Franklin Pierce University Georgetown University Gettysburg College Gordon College High Point University Hobart and William Smith Colleges Hofstra University Houghton College LaSalle University Johnson & Wales University (Providence)</p>	<p>Keene State College Keuka College King's College Lafayette College Le Moyne College Lesley University Loyola Marymount University Loyola University Maryland Lynchburg College Lyndon State College Lynn University Maine Maritime Academy Manchester Community College Manhattan College Manhattanville College Marist College Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences Mercy College Merrimack College Messiah College Miami University, Ohio Michigan State University Mitchell College Monmouth University Mount Ida College New England College Niagara University Nichols College Northeastern University Northern Michigan University Nova Southeastern University Ohio University Otis College of Art and Design Pace University, New York City Palm Beach Atlantic University Pennsylvania State University Providence College Purdue University Queens College of the CUNY Queens College of Charlotte Quinnipiac University Regis College Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Rochester Institute of Technology Roger Williams University Rowan University Rutgers University Sacred Heart University Saint Anselm College Saint Joseph's University Saint Leo University Saint Michael's College Salve Regina University San Diego State University Seton Hall University Siena College Skidmore College Southern Connecticut State University Southern New Hampshire University Springfield College St. Bonaventure University St. John's University St. Lawrence University State University of New York, Albany</p>	<p>Stonehill College Suffolk University Susquehanna University Syracuse University George Washington University Ohio State University Trinity College Union College, New York United States Merchant Marine Academy University of Alabama University of Bridgeport University of Central Florida University of Connecticut University of Connecticut, Hartford University of Colorado University of Delaware University of Hartford University of Houston University of Illinois University of Iowa University of Maine University of Maryland, College Park University of Massachusetts, Amherst University of Massachusetts, Boston University of Minnesota - Duluth University of Minnesota University of Mississippi University of New England University of New Hampshire University of New Haven University of North Carolina University of North Dakota University of Notre Dame University of Pittsburg University of Rhode Island University of Rochester University of Saint Joseph University of Scranton University of South Florida University of Southern California University of Southern Maine University of Tampa University of Tennessee University of Vermont University of Virginia Villanova University Virginia Tech Wagner College Washington and Jefferson College Wentworth Institute of Technology West Virginia University Western Connecticut State University Western New England University Wheaton College, MA Wheaton College, IL Whitman College Williams College Worcester Polytechnic Institute Worcester State University</p>
36		

Lentz & Lentz SAT Review

At East Catholic High School – Starting March 6th

DISCOUNTED TUITION:

\$385



A moderately priced, high-quality SAT preparatory program servicing New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

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Limited Class Sizes!

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www.LentzSatPrep.com



DETAILS

Lentz & Lentz SAT Prep is offering an eight-session, 24 hour professional SAT prep program at East Catholic High School. Our comprehensive, three-hour per session, individualized program is geared to assist bright, average, and underachieving students. Class time is split equally between English and math, covering all facets of the exam.

The verbal part consists of reading comprehension, vocabulary, contextual completions, speed-reading techniques, grammatical skills, optional essay writing, all applicable to the SAT. The mathematical part covers a myriad of problems, including: arithmetical skills, advanced algebra, basic geometry, functions, trigonometry, exponents (including our famous "tip sheet"), and modern mathematic concepts. A course of this nature would cost a great deal more money taken outside the school.

"I am grateful for having taken this course. I got the scores that I needed to apply for a college honors program."

- Mark

HIGHLIGHTS

- Money-back guarantee within three calendar days if not satisfied by first session
- Small class sizes
- Expert high school and college teachers
- Test taking skills & strategies
- Live make up for missed classes
- Copyrighted curriculum covering all aspects of the test
- Extra help at no charge
- Homework designed to reinforce SAT skills
- Supplementary online podcasts for missed lessons and optional review
- Simulated exams used for practice
- Speed-reading and shortcut math geared
- Free refresher sessions

CLASS SCHEDULE

The SAT prep course at East Catholic High School will be held on the following Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

- 1) March 6
- 2) March 13
- 3) March 20
- 4) March 27
- 5) April 3
- 6) April 10
- 7) April 24
- 8) May 1

** Schedule is subject to change*

Writing essays: tips for students

(as stated by college admissions counselors)

- You have heard it before: write about what you know.
- Be you: write about something small in scale, a story that only you can tell in your own voice. We want you to show us your character and personality.
- If there is anything unusual about you, or about your academic record, explain it. Discuss any unique or interesting talents or viewpoints you might have.
- Write about something that is important to you personally. Do not try to guess what we might want to hear. We have probably heard it already and we would rather hear what *you* have to say.
- Use language with which you are familiar and comfortable. Good writing is about communication, not about showing off. Proofread carefully and use Spell Check.
- Answer the question we have asked; be sure to follow the directions and adhere to the length and format requirements.
- Here is what matters: content, style, and originality.
- Most importantly: be honest.

College Comparison Worksheet

College Comparison Worksheet			
General Information	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
Location			
Rank information			
Web address			
Size			
Colleges and schools			
Other			
Applying	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
Admissions address			
Admissions telephone			
Contact person			
Application fee			
Date application due			
Send transcripts to			
Date application mailed			
Accepted?			
Accept or decline by date			
Other			
Requirements	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
SAT minimum score			
ACT minimum score			
Other standardized tests			
Grades			
Advanced placement (AP) scores?			
International Baccalaureate (IB) credit?			

Essay requirements			
Personal document requirements			
Resume requirements			
Community/volunteer work			
Other			
Finances	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
Yearly tuition (non-resident)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Books/supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0
Room and board	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transportation	\$0	\$0	\$0
Medical	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal	\$0	\$0	\$0
Estimated total	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial aid info			
Scholarship info			
Student employment info			
Financial aid office location			
Financial aid office telephone			
Other			
Non-Academic Student Activities	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
Club sports I'm interested in			
Greek system?			
Other			
Campus Visits	Option-1	Option-2	Option-3
When			
Contact person			
Contact's phone number/e-mail			
Accommodations			

10 Things to Do on a College Trip

Why Tufts, Harvard, UConn or any other college? Junior year is usually a busy time as students and their parents plan college visits. Seeing a school can help narrow a student's top choices and ultimately, provide information that will prove helpful when completing the applications and essays. But what you do while at the school is equally important. Here are 10 tips that will get you on the right track.

#1 It may seem obvious but **phone/check out the website first**. Some schools require prospective applicants to reserve a spot in the information session and tour. Since information sessions and tour times vary seasonally, confirming the time will prevent mix-ups. While you have them on the phone, make sure you are on the school's mailing list and find out about the other resources available to prospective students. Finally, check to see that classes will be in session (and students will be on campus) when you visit.

#2 Take notes. Putting together a school list is difficult, especially if all of the schools are running together in your mind. If the student won't take notes, a parent should.

#3 Talk to students who are not affiliated with the admissions office. Student tour guides are sometimes less than forthcoming with respect to a school's shortcomings. Other students, those who do not work for the admissions office, may offer different (and less scripted) insights.

#4 Pick up the school newspaper and skim it. Hopefully, you took clear, meaningful notes while sitting in the information session and taking the tour. All too often things were clear when you visited, but later everything is a blur. School newspapers differentiate the school and highlight issues students and the administration consider important. Referring to the college paper will come in handy, especially when you are answering that all too difficult supplemental question, "Why ABC College?"

#5 Take the tour. It is a great way to get a sense of the campus. While on tour, be observant. Is the campus well cared for? That can be an indication of whether alumni give money to the school. Alumni who have had a great experience and feel that their school was part of their success often give back.

#6 Attend the information session. Other than an interview, this is the closest most applicants get to the admissions committee. Take advantage of it. Ask thoughtful questions during, or better yet after, the information session. Get the speaker's card and follow up with an email or note. The note will not get you in, but it will likely be included in your application and provides another data point on which your application will be evaluated.

#7 Interview...even if it is not required. Interviewing showcases an important component of your application: interpersonal skills. These are difficult to demonstrate in an essay. If possible, interview with an admissions committee member on campus versus an alumnus. It will be, after all, a member of the admissions committee who will be evaluating your application.

#8 An overnight stay is the best way to get a sense of how you would fit in on campus. Unlike anything else, it gives you a chance to experience a college's classes, dorm life, campus safety, cafeteria food, and social life up close...blemishes and all.

#9 Investigate the campus' crime statistics and those of the surrounding neighborhood. Campus safety is important. Students need to feel safe when walking back from late night study sessions or socializing. If the prospective student neglects to do that research, a parent should. Knowing the campus is safe will make everyone more comfortable.

#10 Find out if they like you. One way to quickly assess the relationship between the administration and the students is to get a sense of how students are treated by college employees. Are students, particularly undergrads, considered a nuisance? If so, take notice.

The Data Colleges Collect on Applicants

8:00 AM ET (Dow Jones) Print

By Douglas Belkin

Some colleges, in an effort to sort through a growing number of applications, are quietly tracking prospective students' online interaction with the schools and considering it in deciding whom to admit.

Enrollment officers at schools including Seton Hall University, Quinnipiac College and Dickinson College know down to the second when prospective students opened an email from the school, how long they spent reading it and whether they clicked through to any links. Boston University knows if prospective students RSVP'd online to an event--and then didn't show.

Schools use this information to help determine what they call "demonstrated interest," or how much consideration an applicant is giving their school. Demonstrated interest is becoming increasingly important as colleges face a rising number of applications and want to protect or improve their yields--the percentage of accepted applicants who enroll.

Gregory Eichhorn, vice president for admissions at Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Conn., said the technological sophistication of the analysis has ramped up considerably.

"If we ask someone for an interview, we look at how they respond, how quickly they respond or if they don't respond at all," said Mr. Eichhorn. "It helps us make a decision."

At Seton Hall University, in South Orange, N.J., students receive a score between 1 and 100 that reflects their demonstrated interest, said Alyssa McCloud, vice president of enrollment management. The score includes about 80 variables including how long they spent on the school's website, whether they opened emails and at what point in high school they started looking on the website (the earlier the better).

Many students have no idea they are being tracked, or to what extent.

Demonstrated interest started becoming important about a decade ago with the growth of the common application, which allows students to apply to more schools with little additional effort. Schools saw a rise in applicants but a drop in yield among accepted students. Yield fell among four-year, private, not-for-profit colleges to 34.5% in 2017 from 49% in 2003, according to a Wall Street Journal analysis of federal data. A drop can hurt a school's reputation and make filling its class a challenge.

In 2017, 37% of 493 schools surveyed by the National Association of College Admission Counseling said they consider demonstrated interest to be of moderate importance--on par with teacher recommendations, class rank and extracurricular activities. It carried less weight than grades, class rigor or board scores.

Admissions officers say information on demonstrated interest is generally used to decide on borderline candidates. Some schools explain on their websites or during information sessions that demonstrated interest is considered part of the admissions process.

We tell students it's important to establish a relationship," said Kelly Walter, the dean of admissions at Boston University.

Colleges also have low-tech means to help determine demonstrated interest. Last year, one third of students who applied to American University either visited its Washington, D.C., campus or attended an information session about the school, said Andrea Felder, assistant vice provost for undergraduate admissions. Two thirds of those admitted took part in either the campus tour or offsite information session.

It is certainly a factor in our decision making: Ms. Felder said. It helps us in predicting which students are likely to enroll:

Schools can buy software that tracks data on prospective students. Among the largest providers is Technolutions Inc. The company's chief executive Alexander Clark says its product, Slate, generates a dashboard summarizing thousands of data points on each student and is used by 850 schools.

Mary Ethington, an independent college counselor outside of Chicago, tells students to relax, assume their web traffic with the school is being monitored and to open every email from a college as if it were homework.

"The anxiety comes from not knowing whether a school tracks or doesn't track," she said. "We just want the schools to be transparent."

Mary Hinton, a senior at Dickinson College, benefited from demonstrated interest without knowing it. After she toured Dickinson in high school, she sent a thank-you note to her tour guide, at her mother's suggestion.

Now a tour-guide herself, Ms. Hinton has learned those notes are forwarded from tour guides to admissions officers. Her advice to prospective students about thank-you notes: "Write them. It just takes a minute and it can make a difference."

Cathy Davenport, Dickinson's dean of admissions, said such information is part of a holistic admissions review. "From my perspective, you can't isolate one variable. It's more complicated. There is no one size fits all, she said."

How to Finalize Your College List

Once you've made a list of colleges you're interested in, the next step is to narrow down the list to colleges you'll apply to. Most counselors recommend that students apply to five to eight colleges - more than that usually doesn't make sense. Here's how to make your college list manageable.

Narrow Down Your List

If you're at this point in the process, you've probably already looked into things such as location, size and majors offered. Here are some other things to research:

- Variety of academic programs offered
- Special programs, such as study abroad
- Clubs and activities on campus
- Housing options
- Available facilities, such as labs, theaters and gyms.
- A great way to narrow your list is to start making college visits, if possible. You can also make virtual campus visits.

**COUNSELORS
RECOMMEND YOU
APPLY TO 6-8
SCHOOLS.**

Sort Your List

Once you have a list of colleges you think you will be satisfied attending, sort it into three categories:

Likely: These are colleges that you feel you have a very good chance of getting into and that you think you can afford to attend. They should also be colleges you would be happy to attend. These used to be referred to as safety schools.

Target: These are colleges that you feel you have a good chance of getting into and that are good matches for you overall.

Reach: These are colleges that you think may be more of a challenge to get into. Getting in is not a sure thing, but it's realistic enough to be worth the effort of applying.

Balance Your List

From your sorted list, you should choose: One to two "Likely" schools, Two to four "Target" schools, and one to two "Reach" schools.

Think before you apply to more than eight colleges. It's probably not necessary and could be a waste of effort. With college applications, quality is better than quantity. You must complete each section of an application carefully, and admission officers can tell if you're not serious about their school. In fact, they look for students who seem to really want to go to their school.

If you have successfully identified one good safety school on your list, you should feel confident that you will receive at least one acceptance letter.

Use Your Support Network

You don't have to go through this process alone. Your parents, school counselor and teachers can help you think about your decisions and choose which schools to apply to.

Remember, there will be more than one school that's right for you. What you're doing now is narrowing down your options to good possibilities. After this step, you should be able to choose again - from those colleges that offer you a place in their freshman class.

Selectivity Ladder

When deciding which schools to apply to start with your SAT score to help you determine target, reach, and likely schools.

- Start with your SAT score in the "Target Schools" row. Look for schools that report an average SAT at or very near your score. These are your target schools.
- Add 100 points to your score and look for schools that fall into the "Reach" category.
- Subtract 100 points to find schools that fall into your "Likely" category.

Add 100 points to your score for reach schools.	Reach Schools
Student example 1220	Target Schools
Subtract 100 points for likely schools.	Likely Schools

SAT vs ACT

	SAT	ACT
Why Take It	Colleges use SAT for admissions and merit-based scholarships	Colleges use ACT for admissions and merit-based scholarships
Test Structure	Reading, Writing & Language, Math, Essay (Optional)	English, Math, Reading, Science Reasoning, Essay (Optional)
Length	3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)	2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)
Reading	5 Reading Passages	4 Reading Passages
Science	None	1 Science section testing critical knowledge, not specific science knowledge
Math	Covers: Arithmetic, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Data Analysis	Covers: Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra I & II, Trigonometry, and Probability & Statistics
Calculator Policy	Can be used on some math questions	Can be used on all math questions
Essays	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source of text.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
How It's Scored	Scored on a scale of 400-1600	Scored on a scale of 1-36

Should I Take the ACT or SAT?

Students are increasingly taking [both the SAT and ACT](#). Changes made to the SAT in 2016 have made it easier than ever to prep for both tests concurrently — and earn competitive scores on both!

The best way to decide if taking the SAT, ACT, or both tests is right for you is to take a timed [full-length practice test](#) of each type. Since the content and style of the SAT and ACT are very similar, factors like how you handle time pressure and what types of questions you find most challenging can help you determine which test is a better fit.

REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION

Student: _____ Counselor _____

Courses taken with instructor: _____

Special notes for teacher (extraordinary projects completed, etc.) _____

Date requested _____

For Teacher Use: _____ Uploaded to Naviance

_____ CommonApp form completed on Naviance

_____ Request marked COMPLETED* on Naviance

*Via pulldown at bottom of student listing screen

REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION

Student: _____ Counselor _____

Courses taken with instructor: _____

Special notes for teacher (extraordinary projects completed, etc.) _____

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Notes Page:
