

UPCHIEVE: COLLEGE PLANNING

COLLEGE COUNSELING TRAINING

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PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

COLLEGE PREPARATION TIPS FOR GRADES 9-12

9th Grade & 10th Grade

- Remind students that High school admissions counselors review their performance starting with 9th grade. Their grades matter!
- Challenge themselves academically and partake in academic opportunities. Examples: Honors, APs, etc.
- Join a club at school.
- Get involved in their community through volunteering. Find a cause they're passionate about.
- Speak to guidance counselor about their aspirations (career goals, outlining plan of action, application timeline). This person might be a good LoR later.
- Skills to develop: Comprehension skills, study skills, time management skills.
- Start researching colleges via Internet searches and college fairs. Plan ahead to make sure they fulfill school's requirements. They should even visit a school!
- While PSAT is for juniors, some schools allow freshmen and sophomores to take the PSAT early. It's helpful for students to become familiar with entrance exams.

REMINDER

Students should remember that college admissions officers are far more likely to be impressed by an applicant's demonstrated deep commitment to a few carefully selected activities than they are by a laundry list of activities without any proof of leadership or achievement.

9th Grade & 10th Grade Continued

Encourage students to partake in summer enrichment activities.

- Part-Time Job
- Volunteering at Local Clinic
- Interning at a Startup
- Attending Summer Camp
- College Preparatory Program
- Working/Volunteering at a Camp
- So much more

A part-time job is a great way to avoid summer melt, develop interests, and build a resume.

11th Grade

- Most important year! College plans turn into action steps.
- Continue to get involved inside and outside of school. Take up a leadership position.
- Continue with honors and APs.
- Be proactive and stay in contact with guidance counselor. Ask counselors for their advice on colleges.
- Do not become discouraged if the high school counselor's opinion is different than their own and keep an open mind.
- Colleges like diversity and no one can say for certain if a student will be denied or accepted until the school's official decision is released.
- Piece of Advice:
 - “Let the schools say ‘no’ to you, don’t say ‘no’ to yourself. It is better to apply and hold on to that chance (no matter how small) rather than to not apply and forever wonder what could have been.”

REMINDER OF OUR ROLES

*This is also an important reminder to all UPchieve Consultants,. Our job is to guide students through the college application process and help them achieve their dreams. What we think about the student's school choices should not affect our commitment to help them. If a student wants to apply to a highly selective Ivy League school, the admissions consultant's job is to explain the application process and make the student aware of the low acceptance rate. Consultants should then proceed to help that student just like any other. Because our initiative focuses explicitly on aiding disadvantaged students, it is crucial that we are completely supportive of their goals and refrain as much as possible from limiting their potential. However, if the student is only applying to schools that you feel may be out of reach, please do share your concerns and advise them to also apply to some additional schools (while not discouraging them from their current choices).

11th Grade (Continued)

- PSAT is available in October of the junior year. Test costs \$15 per student (some schools might cover cost).
 - It is good practice.
 - Qualifies for National Merit Scholarship Program.
 - After receiving score, students should carefully review score report to navigate strengths and weaknesses.
- Determine if SAT or ACT (or both) is the best choice based on skills, knowledge, and college requirements.
- Some schools prefer SAT, others the ACT. So do research. College requirements on ACT & SAT:
 - Does the school require scores from all test dates?
 - Only highest composite score or Highest superscore?
- More selective schools are likely to require students to also submit Subject Test scores.
- Some schools don't require students to submit tests, but they should still take the test.
- Test are valid for 5 years. Students should take the exams while the material is still fresh in their minds.

TIPS

Students should aim to take the SAT or ACT for the first time toward the end of their junior year at the latest.

Allows students enough time to study and take more practice exams over summer so they can take the SAT/ACT the second time in their senior year.

Any testing scheduled later than this timeline may delay the student's ability to submit his or her college applications because exam scoring takes time to process and deliver.

Strongly recommend that students avoid signing up for two consecutive test dates, if possible. It does not allow time for a student to build up their score.

The College Board and the ACT both offer fee waivers for eligible students. If students are concerned that the exams' registration fees might impose a financial burden on their family, they should talk to their high school counselor about obtaining a fee waiver.

11th Grade (Continued)

- Ask 11th grade teacher early about LoR. Start compiling a list of schools.
- Start campus visits. Get an idea of what a college campus feels like.
 - Small liberal arts college.
 - Big state university.
 - Older, ivy league campus.
 - On-campus housing
 - Off-campus housing.
- Students should refrain from only reading schools' websites and stats. A school might be perfect academically, but the campus environment might not be the right fit for the student.
- Students should visit a school before committing to attend!
- If possible, advise students to visit during the school year so see the campus when it's thriving.
- Attend information sessions, sit in on a college class, think about if they'll be excited to join the community.
- Some schools have funds that make visits possible for low-income students.
- Summer after junior year is the most important one. Plan ahead to have a fun, meaningful summer. Volunteer, work, prepare applications, and make memories with friends and family!

ACTION ITEMS BEFORE SUMMER: LOR

Before leaving for summer, students should secure at least one 11th grade teacher to serve as “recommender” for their college application.

Don't expect teacher to work on LoR over summer. Letting teacher know early shows appreciation and respect for their time. ([Early advantage for summer year.](#))?

Identify any other teachers or guidance counselors that will be more than happy to write a letter of recommendation. Perhaps, it's a 9th grade teacher who you stayed in touch with.

Some schools might require 1-3 recommenders. Ask early!

12th Grade

- Students should be thinking about what they want to do after graduation.
- It's never too late to start making plans.
- It is important to acknowledge that college or diving into a 4-year college is not for everyone. There are so many options.
- Encourage students to meet with counselor in the beginning of the year to ensure they're on track to graduate and to discuss post-grad plans.
- Some students might be taking SAT and ACT for the second or third time. If a student hasn't taken either test yet, insist that they sign up for the earliest date available.
- Students need to carefully research the schools in which they are interested. Avoid picking a school solely on rankings. Encourage students to pick schools based on academic, financial, and socio-emotional fit.
- Knowledge of school allows them to craft a better essay, as some schools ask students "why this school?"
- Resources:
 - Ask "How will you fit within the target's school community?", "How will you utilize the school's resources?"
 - Contact College Board and alumni
 - On-Campus Visits

TIPS

Students should also let their high school counselor know as soon as possible if they require financial assistance to complete the college application process. The high school counselor is the person most likely to be able to provide students with SAT and ACT fee waivers, and possibly even request application fee waivers from the students' colleges of choice.

Unless the students strongly believe that they will be able to score significantly better during their third attempt, we generally don't recommend to take a teste more than twice. Instead, we encourage students to focus their time and resources towards improving other components of their college applications.

While admissions decisions are finalized once they are officially released, financial aid packages can be modified. Students are encouraged to speak with their prospective schools' financial aid offices if they need more aid in order to attend the school (the worst could happen is the school declining to offer the student more aid).

12th Grade

- Students should have secured at least one recommendation from an 11th grade teacher before summer.
- If they haven't yet, they should ask other adults for recommendations as soon as the school year begins. They can ask a teacher from a class they excelled in., coaches., and volunteer supervisors. In most cases, they can ask anyone that isn't a family member or friend.
- It's okay for students to request letters without knowing which specific school they'll be applying to. Students can follow up later.
- Students need to give recommenders enough time and information about themselves (such as a "brag sheet" or their resume).
- Schools might be required to send in grades from Senior Year/Semester I or a schedule of senior year classes + grades through junior year.
- Students need to continue to challenge themselves.
- AP Exams: High schools might exempt them out of introductory college courses (saving money down the road).
- Just because a student can take every advanced course available doesn't mean they should.
- College applications will take up a big chunk of their time. It's all about balance.

REMINDER

Students should continue to work hard in school even after their college applications are officially submitted.

High school is not over until the student walks across the stage in cap and gown and receives their diploma.

Also, students will be required to submit a final transcript at the end of their senior year to the college or university that they will be attending, and colleges retain the right to alter scholarship eligibility or revoke enrollment offers if they notice a decline in a student's academic performance.

"Senioritis", if it gets out of hand, may result in students failing senior year and losing their admissions offer.

12th Grade (Continued)

- Recommend students to create a tracker. Finalize list of schools, write deadline on calendar, and plan their time accordingly.
- Perspective: Their college application is an opportunity to tell their own story.
- [Requirements Tracker](#) (Resource)
- College Marathon isn't over once applications are submitted. Next steps: \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
- Most colleges allow students to submit application before LoRs are ready. Remind recommenders to make sure to submit by deadline.
- FAFSA: Opens October 1. Encourage students to submit by Jan 1. It's based on prior-prior year taxes (So for Fall 2018, it would be based on 2016 taxes).
- If a student is 24 or under, they are considered as dependent (unless special circumstances).
- Have parent (or guardian) sit through the FAFSA as there are several questions regarding the household.
- Schools also require a CSS Profile and supplemental financial aid application to be completed.
- FAFSA might request verification.
- For some institutional scholarships, students might have to apply for FAFSA by a certain deadline.
- Students do not have to know what school they are attending at the time of filling out FAFSA. They can just list everywhere they're applying.

DEADLINES

Pay attention to school's specific deadline.

Deadlines are not universal, as each school has its own deadlines.

Some schools require everything to be submitted by a specific date, whereas some schools might have different deadlines for each application material.

Early decision deadlines are typically in late October/early November.

Regular deadlines for most schools are typically in the first two weeks of January (mostly January 1-so beware of winter break plans).

For rolling admissions, submit everything as early as possible. The earlier a student applies, the more spots available.

Some schools, with rolling admissions, might have a specific scholarship deadline. This means if a student applies by a certain date, they will be considered for institutional funding.

12th Grade (Continued)

- Students should be diligently working on scholarship applications, beyond FAFSA.
- Resources: Institutional scholarships, fastweb.com, scholarships.com., unigo.com, and more!
- Lots of free money out there, not enough people taking it.
- Some scholarships are open to all students while some might directed to students of a certain background.
- Merit-Based Scholarships: Individual achievements (Academic, Athletic, or Artistic)
- Need-Based Scholarship: Closes gap between EFC (estimated family contribution) and COA (cost of attendance).
- Some scholarships are awarded once-a-year while some scholarships renew every year.
- Some scholarships fund students directly while others coordinate with the school.
- Schools can range from \$100 to as much as \$50,000 or full tuition.
- Some scholarships application might ask students to write essays and others just might ask for student's credentials.
- Ask students to pay attention to the school's institutional scholarships and deadlines.
- Use FinAid/Net Price Calculator on school's websites!

TIP

While admissions decisions are finalized once they are officially released, financial aid packages can be modified. Students are encouraged to speak with their prospective schools' financial aid offices if they need more aid in order to attend the school (the worst could happen is the school declining to offer the student more aid).

12th Grade (Continued)

- Each school has a different policy when releasing admissions decisions.
- National Decision Day: May 1. In most cases, student must pay an enrollment deposit in order to secure the seat.
- Some schools offer “Admitted Students Day” where they showcase everything the school has to offer. Good way for students to compare schools.
- When students have more than option to choose from, there are several criteria to consider before committing.
 - Rank schools based on how happy the students thinks they will be and how the school resources will help.
 - Rank schools based on financial aid package and how much it will cost per year to to attend each school.
 - Think long term. This decision determines the next 4 years of their life, and their foundation of their careers.
 - Some students might value taking out many student loans for a prestigious school whereas some students might value going to an-instate school for much cheaper. It based on the student’s preference.
 - Decisions might not be solely based on the student’s preference. Some students might have family responsibilities which they have to also consider.
 - Do not hint at a final decision for the student. Ask many guiding questions to help them decide a school that is best for them academically, financially, and socially.
 - Congratulate students on their achievements! They made it through! ☺

REMINDER

UPchieve Consultants: It is very important that you do not make (or hint at) the final decision for students. Rather, your job is to help your students reason through their options so they can select the school that is most appropriate for them academically, financially, and socially.

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COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

STUDY AND PREPARE EARLY!

PSAT

- Most high schools offer PSAT to juniors in October (and sometimes freshmen and sophomores-inquire schools).
- Tests cost \$15 per student (some schools will cover cost).
- Students who perform well are eligible for scholarships and national recognition.
 - National Merit Scholarship Program
 - National Hispanic Recognition Program
 - National Scholarship Service: Free college advisory and referral service for 11th-grade African American students.
 - Telluride Seminar Scholarship: Scholarships for gifted 11th-grade students to attend their 6-week summer program in humanities and social sciences.
- PSAT scores take 6 weeks to report and should be available in early December. PSAT score report comes with a free SAT study plan to help students figure out how to strengthen areas of weakness.
- Student should talk to guidance counselor about whether to take SAT or ACT later on. Do research to see which test is required by the school.
- 3 Sections (2 hours, 45 minutes)
 - Reading Test (60 Minutes, 47 Questions)
 - Multiple-choice. Based on passages.
 - Informational graphics but no math is required
 - Some questions ask students to locate a piece of information/idea stated explicitly.
 - Understand implications of author's words. Strong vocabulary.
 - Infer and read between the lines.
 - Writing & Language Test (35 Minutes, 44 Questions)
 - Multiple-choice. Based on passages.
 - Assess student's knowledge of Standard English conventions.
 - Passages vary in topics but require no prior knowledge: arguments, nonfiction narratives, careers, history, social studies, humanities, or science.
 - Math Test (70 Minutes, 48 Questions)
 - Some multiple choice, some require students to fill out answer.
 - Two portions. Calculator is allowed only in one portion.
 - Topics: Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Problem Solving, and Data Analysis.

ACT

- Measures student's skills in five areas: English, Math, Reading, Science, and Writing (Optional).
- **NO PENALTY FOR GUESSING!**
- Registration Fee: \$42.50. Additional fee for Writing Section: \$16. Late Registration: \$27.50. Registration includes reports for students, HS, and up to four colleges.
- Students have until noon of the Thursday following test date to add/change/cancel colleges they wish to send their school to.
- Fee waivers are available!
- Most reports are available online within 2 weeks. Score reports are available within 3-8 weeks. Score reports, including writing, are available 5-8 weeks after.
- ACT Score Report:
 - Composite Score: 1-36. Average of student's scores on four subjects (Reading, English, Math, and Science)
 - Writing Score: 1-12
 - ACT Score Report also shows the student's performance in comparison with all other students in their country/state and where student stands on the ACT College Readiness Benchmark for each criteria.
 - ACT Score Report also features section on College and Career planning that suggests potential occupations the students might enjoy based on their strengths among working with people, data, ideas, and things.
- **2 hours and 55 minutes (add 1 hour if ACT with Writing)**
- **English:** 75 questions in 45 minutes. Content includes: grammar and usage, punctuation, sentence structure, strategy, organization and style. Measures standard written English and rhetorical skills.
- **Math:** 60 questions in 60 minutes. Content includes: number and quantity, algebra, functions, geometry, statistics and probability.
- **Reading:** 40 questions in 35 minutes. Measures reading comprehension.
- **Science:** 40 questions in 35 minutes. Measures the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in the natural sciences.
- **Writing (optional):** 1 essay prompt in 40 minutes. The essay will be evaluated based on the evidence that it provides of the student's ability to:
 - Analyze and evaluate multiple perspectives on a complex issue
 - State and develop his/her own perspective on the issue
 - Explain and support his/her ideas with logical reasoning and detailed examples
 - Clearly and logically organize ideas in an essay
 - Effectively communicate ideas in standard written English

SAT

- **Update from when we took the SAT: No penalty for guessing!**
- Measures skills and knowledge that are deemed necessary for college.
- Registration Fee: \$57 (with essay). \$47 (without essay). Late Fee: Additional \$28. Rush order: \$31.
- Fee waivers are available!
- Each registration comes with 4 free score reports. Students have up to 9 days after their test date to add/change/cancel the colleges they wish to send score to.
- Available 4 weeks after test date. Sent to colleges that same week.
- **Update from when we took the SAT: Scores are no longer graded on 2400 Scale.**
- Total Score: 400-1600
- Section Scores: 200-800 per section (Evidence-Based Reading & Writing, Math)
- Test Scores: 10-40 per Test (Reading, Writing & Language, Math)
- Essay Scores: 2-8 per criteria (Reading, Analysis, Writing)
- Cross-Test scores: 10 to 40 per category (Analysis in History/Social Sciences and in Science)
- Subscores: 1 to 15 per category (Command of Evidence, Words in Context, Expression of Ideas, Standard English Conventions, Heart of Algebra, Problem Solving and Data Analysis, Passport to Advanced Math)
- Score report also shows the student's performance in comparison with other students.
- 3 Hours, 50 Minutes (including a 50-minute optional essay)
- Reading Test (52 MC in 65 minutes):
- Writing & Language Test (44 MC in 35 minutes):
- Math Test (45 MC, 13 Written in 80 minutes)
- Essay (optional-1 prompt, 50 Minutes):

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

20 Tests in 5 General Areas:

- English:
- History:
 - U.S History
 - World History
- Mathematics:
 - Level 1 (Algebra & Geometry)
 - Level 2 (Pre-Calc)
- Sciences:
 - Biology (Ecological/Molecular)
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
- Languages:
 - Spanish
 - Spanish with Listening
 - French
 - French with Listening
 - Chinese with Listening
 - Italian
 - German
 - German with Listening
 - Modern Hebrew
 - Latin
 - Japanese with Listening
 - Korean with Listening

Score Report:

Subject Test scores are reported on a scale of 200-800. Language Tests with Listening include subscores for reading and listening (and usage), on a scale for 20-80.

A student's scores on these tests typically fall in a range of roughly 30-40 points either above or below true ability. Colleges are aware of this.

Scores are generally available a month after test date.

- Not all schools require it.
- Students may take up to 3 Subject Tests on one test day. Students can choose which tests to take when they register. Flexibility to switch on test day.
- Each subject test is an hour long and all multiple choice questions (50-95 questions).
- Language w/ Listening Tests are only offered in November. Tests are divided into a 20-minute portion for listening and 40-minute portion for reading. CD player is required for all Language with Listening Tests.
- SAT Subjects are administered on same days and test centers as SAT. Student CANNOT take both SAT and SAT Subject Tests on same day.
- Not all SAT Subject Tests are offered on same day.
- Registration Fee: \$26 per test date. \$20 per subject test. \$28 for additional late fee. \$31 for rush order.
- Fee waivers are available. Each registration comes with 4 free score reports. Students have 9 days after test date to add/change/cancel which college to send school to.
- SAT Subject Tests are based on high school course work. Good way to show mastery of subject.



CHOOSING WHICH COLLEGES TO APPLY TO

IT'S ALL ABOUT FIT.

TYPES OF POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

- **Public School:** Supported by state and local funds. Tuition for a public school is usually less than a private school. Public school tuition for an in-state student is much less expensive than for an out-of-state student.
- **Private School:** Not tax-supported. Private school tuition tends to be higher than public school tuition, private schools can sometimes offer more financial aid to students, making them more affordable than public schools in some cases.
- **4-Year Colleges and Universities:**
 - Ivy League
 - 8 Universities: Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, UPenn, Princeton, and Yale.
 - State University
 - Ex: University of Florida, Penn State, UCLA
 - Liberal Arts Colleges
 - Ex: Williams College, Wellesley College, Vassar College
 - Arts Colleges
 - Ex: Pratt Institute, Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD)
 - Single-Sex Colleges
 - Ex: Mount Holyoke College, Barnard College
 - Religiously Affiliated Collages: Some connections might be historic, others might be connected to daily student life.
 - Ex: Loyola University Chicago does not expect all students to be Jesuit Catholic, welcomes diversity.

TYPES OF POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS (CONTINUED)

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Earn certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees.
- 2-Year Public Institutions
- After graduating, some students can transfer to a 4-year college or university to complete a bachelor's degree.
- Safe choice for students who did not excel academically in high school and could use some support transitioning to post-secondary education environment.
- Some students choose community college in order to save money for two years while completing all the requirements to transfer.
- Remind students to keep in contact with advisor to make sure everything transfers.
- Many cities have pathway programs for a seamless transfer from community college to a public, in-state university.
 - Example: FUSE Program. Hillsborough Community College to University of South Florida.
- Examples: Borough of Manhattan Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Santa Barbara City College.

TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

- Students can earn a certificate or associate degree, prepare for a licensing exam, or study to begin work as an apprentice.
- Mostly privately-owned businesses that offer shorter (2 years or less) training and educational programs.
- Teach students necessary skills to acquire jobs in specific industries.
- Teach science behind the occupation with a focus on studying books and manuals for computer-oriented training and careers. Hands-on approach.
- Trades: Construction, Agriculture, Culinary Arts, Medical Records Technology, Welding, Cosmetology, etc.
- Examples: New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts, Apex Technical School (New York), Niles School of Cosmetology (Chicago).

WHEN TO APPLY

EARLY DECISION

- Binding: Students are obligated to attend the school they were accepted to as an ED applicant.
- ED applications are due in Late Oct/early Nov and notified mid-Dec.
- If admitted, students must withdraw all other applications.
- Most schools require student applying ED, parent, and counselor to sign an ED agreement form spelling out the plan's condition.
- The only exception to get out of the commitment is that students can't afford due to the lack of financial aid.

EARLY ACTION

- Non-Binding: Students have until May 1st to make a decision.
- Students who are already accepted to a school as an EA applicant are allowed to apply to other schools during the regular decision cycle.
- EA applicants usually receive their admission results early in the admissions cycle (January or February).

WHEN TO APPLY

EARLY ACTION & EARLY DECISION

- Pros: Shorter waiting period, save time and expense of submitting multiple apps, more time to prepare for college if accepted early, reassess options and apply elsewhere if denied.
- Cons: Pressure to commit to one school early on, unable to compare financial aid packages, limited time to work on other apps if not accepted, develop senioritis if accepted early.
- Reminder: ED & EA applicants must take SAT/SAT Subject Test by October of senior year.

DOES IT INCREASE CHANCES?

- While reported early acceptance rates are usually higher, it is not always true that applying early will increase a student's chance of acceptance.
- Colleges vary in the proportion of the class admitted early and in the percentage of early applicants they admit. Higher admission rates for ED applicants may also correlate to stronger profiles among candidates choosing ED.
- Students should ask the admissions officers whether their institution's admission standards differ between ED and regular applicants, and then assess whether applying early makes sense given their own credentials.

WHEN TO APPLY

REGULAR DECISION

- Nonbinding: Students may apply to as many schools as their time and resources allow.
- Normal process where students apply by a certain published deadline and all applicants are notified on a certain promise date (usually by April 1st so students have a month to think about it).
- Competition with a bigger school of applicants for the remaining spots in each school's incoming class.
- This option allows them one or two extra months to work on their college applications.

ROLLING ADMISSION

- Nonbinding.
- Allows candidates to submit their applications anytime within a large window of about 6 months long.
- Some schools do not have a previously specified end date (the window simply closes when all spots are filled) or some schools have priority and nonpriority cycles. Some schools have a published date.
- Applicants are usually notified within a few weeks as soon as their decisions are made.
- Might be less competitive for students as the school receives applicants in bursts.
- Students can finish their application anytime (but sooner the better). Students can carefully review application and not get anxious.
- Priority Deadline: Some schools might have a deadline for students to be considered for scholarships, housing, and other financial aid packages.
- Drawbacks: Schools often use a first-come, first-served method to grant housing and financial aid. Schools might underestimate the number of students who will accept the admission offer which can lead spots being filled rapidly. In this case, well-qualified applicants can be denied later.

CRITERIA TO CONSIDER

OVERVIEW

- School Type
- School History
- Location
- Distance from Home
- Campus Size
- School Size
- Mission & Unique Qualities
- Rankings
- Campus Facilities

ACADEMIC LIFE

- Acceptance Rate
- Graduation Rate
- Freshman Retention Rate
- Academic Calendar (Quarters, Trimesters, Quarters)
- Student to Faculty Ratio
- Class Size
- Quality of Professors, Teaching Assistants, and Major Departments
- Degrees, Majors, Minors, and Certifications
- Curriculum
- Course Availability
- Other Academic Opportunities (Research, Co-Ops, Dual Degree, 5YR BA/MA, etc.)
- Academic Support Resources
- Career Services
- Graduate/Professional School Outlooks
- Employment Right Out of School
- Study Abroad

CRITERIA TO CONSIDER

STUDENT LIFE

- Housing
- School Spirit
- Campus Culture
- Social
- Dining
- Extracurricular Activities
- Collegiate Athletic Association/Sport Participation
- Safety Statistics
- Alumni Network
- Demographics
- Other Resources & Services

FINANCIAL FACTORS

- Tuition & Fees
- Room & Board
- Financial Aid
- Scholarships
- Indebtedness of Graduating Class
- Work-Study Program
- Application Fees & Fee Waivers

FINALIZING A LIST OF SCHOOLS

- **2-4-2:**
 - 2 Safety Schools, 4 Match Schools, and 2 Reach Schools.
- **We recommend students to keep the list of schools they intend to apply to between 5-8 schools.**
- Instead of spreading themselves too thin (and wasting time & money), students should focus on 8 schools or less. Craft the best applications possible for these schools.
- Ask students for their reasoning for each school. If your students are only applying to schools within one category (only safety schools or only reach schools), share your concerns.

FINALIZING A LIST OF SCHOOLS

SAFETY SCHOOL

- Student's credentials fall above the school's average range for accepted students.
- Student can be certain that he/she will be admitted.
- Not always a desired choice, but recommended so that students have something to fall back on.
- **Recommendation:**
 - I **Academic Safety School**
 - I **Financial Safety school**

MATCH SCHOOLS

- Student's credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's average range for accepted students.
- No guarantees, but students have a good shot of getting admitted.
- A match school can be a local state school or an out-of-state private college.
- It might not be student's dream school, but student should be happy to select a match school as his/her final choice if it turns out to be best option.
- Applying to match schools is a wise decision for every student, from the 'C' student to the valedictorian.
- Recommendation: 4 Match School

FINALIZING A LIST OF SCHOOLS

REACH SCHOOLS

- Schools where student's academic credentials fall below the school's average range for accepted students.
- It might be the case that student's credentials fall within the range but the institution is highly selective.
- Reach schools are long-shots, but should still be somewhat possible.
- **Recommendation: To conserve time and money, students should consider only applying to 1-2 reach schools.**
- Strategy provides students the chance to attend their "dream school" while still respecting their limited resources.

TIP FOR UPCHIEVE CONSULTANTS

- if you get a chance to go over the list of schools with your students, do not discourage students from applying to reach schools. Instead, ask them to justify their reasons for applying to each school and do share your concerns if students are only applying to reach schools and not safety schools.



STUDENT-ATHLETES

FOR STUDENTS THAT ARE INTERESTED IN
PLAYING SPORTS IN COLLEGE + ATHLETIC
SCHOLARSHIPS

EXTRA STEPS TO EXPRESS INTEREST AND VERIFY ELIGIBILITY:

- Attend summer sports camp at a college of interest so the college coach can see the athlete play (and student can check out the campus).
 - Earn a certain minimum GPA in the NCAA-specific core courses and a certain minimum score on the SAT or ACT.
 - Send letters of interests to colleges in their sophomore or junior year letting college coaches be aware of the student's interest.
 - Prepare an athletic resume containing basic student information, sports statistics beginning in 9th grade and academic record.
 - Submit video showcasing athletic skills in a competitive situation. Accompany it with a statistics summary.
 - Use a special application marked with a code supplied by the college's athletic department to indicate the athletic department is interested in the student.
-
- Register with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility Center in the beginning of junior year. **Students who have received a waiver for the SAT or ACT are eligible for a waiver of the registration fee.**
 - Registration includes personal information and questions about the student's course work and sports participation outside of high school. Official high school transcripts (by completion of junior year) and SAT/ACT score report are also required. Students must be cleared by the Eligibility Center before they receive athletic scholarships or compete in NCAA Division I or II schools.

INTERCOLLEGIATE TEAMS

ASSOCIATIONS/CONFERENCES

- National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)- MOST INFLUENTIAL. Includes largest colleges.
- National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)
- National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)

NCAA DIVISIONS

- **NCAA Division I:** Most competitive athletically, can offer full and partial athletic scholarships (partially funded by the NCAA) and have academic eligibility requirements.
- **NCAA Division II:** Less competitive than Division I and have different eligibility guidelines and financial aid offerings.
- **NCAA Division III:** No academic eligibility requirements and no NCAA-funded financial aid. (However, the colleges can offer scholarships of their own.)
- **Prospective Division I and II athletes** need to take NCAA-specified core courses beginning in 9th grade (**NCAA Course Work Requirements**). Generally, more students fail to qualify to play NCAA sports because of lack of appropriate course work than for low test scores.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

- **Eligibility:**

- There are strict rules and timelines regarding contact from NCAA Division I and II coaches.
- Interested students must reach out to college coaches in time for the coach to watch them play, while still following the eligibility rules.
- College coaches eager to secure their athletes may urge students to apply ED. All the pros and cons of applying ED as I previously explained still apply here.

- **Research:**

- When researching colleges, student-athletes should also examine the colleges' online team rosters (if possible) for information such as how many players a team has for each position and the athletic stats of the players.
- This will give an idea of how the students ranks among the team and their chance of admission. They should also take into consideration the graduation rate of athletes at the college, it indicates how likely the athlete's life is conducive to academic success.

- **Foresight:**

- Student-athletes should keep in mind that athletic participation is only a part of the college experience.
- They should take into consideration the scenario where they couldn't play (perhaps due to injury) or simply just decided not to play.
- In addition, the admission office – not the college coach – decides whether students are admissible, therefore athletic eligibility does not guarantee admission.

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FAFSA

THE CRITICAL STEP

FAFSA

The Basics:

- Opens October 1. Encourage students to submit by Jan 1. It's based on prior-prior year taxes (So for Fall 2018, it would be based on 2016 taxes).
- If a student is under the age of 24, they are considered as dependent (unless special circumstances).
- Have parent (or guardian) sit through the FAFSA as there are several questions regarding the household.
- Website: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- Student and parent(s) will need to create a FSA ID.
- **COA:** Cost of Attendance. This is a sticker value listed on websites.
- **EFC:** Estimated Family Contribution.
- **Net Price Calculator:** Some schools feature a Net Price calculator on their websites. This helps them gain some knowledge about what to expect once they receive their FAFSA.
- Institutions might require students to fill out FAFSA by a certain deadline to qualify for institutional scholarships.

Types of Federal Funding:

- Scholarship
- Grant
- Federal Work Study
- Subsidized Loans
- Unsubsidized Loans

Financial Aid Packages

- Some packages include loans as part of their package.
- No-Loan schools do not include loans in their financial aid packages.

**CONTINUE TO
ENCOURAGE OUR
STUDENTS!**



**CONGRATULATE THEM ON THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND KEEP
AN OPEN-MIND. GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL IS A BIG DEAL.**