HigherEdUSA

Your Best Suitable College/University

Dream big while being realistic!

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How to Find Your Best Suitable College*?

HigherEdUSA

Among the 4,000 colleges and universities* in the U.S., how do you find your best fit?

Instead of trying to look for that needle in a haystack, HigherEdUSA will assist you in developing a step-by-step plan and following through in an organized fashion.

By following a well-organized sequence of steps, you can feel confident in your college decision.

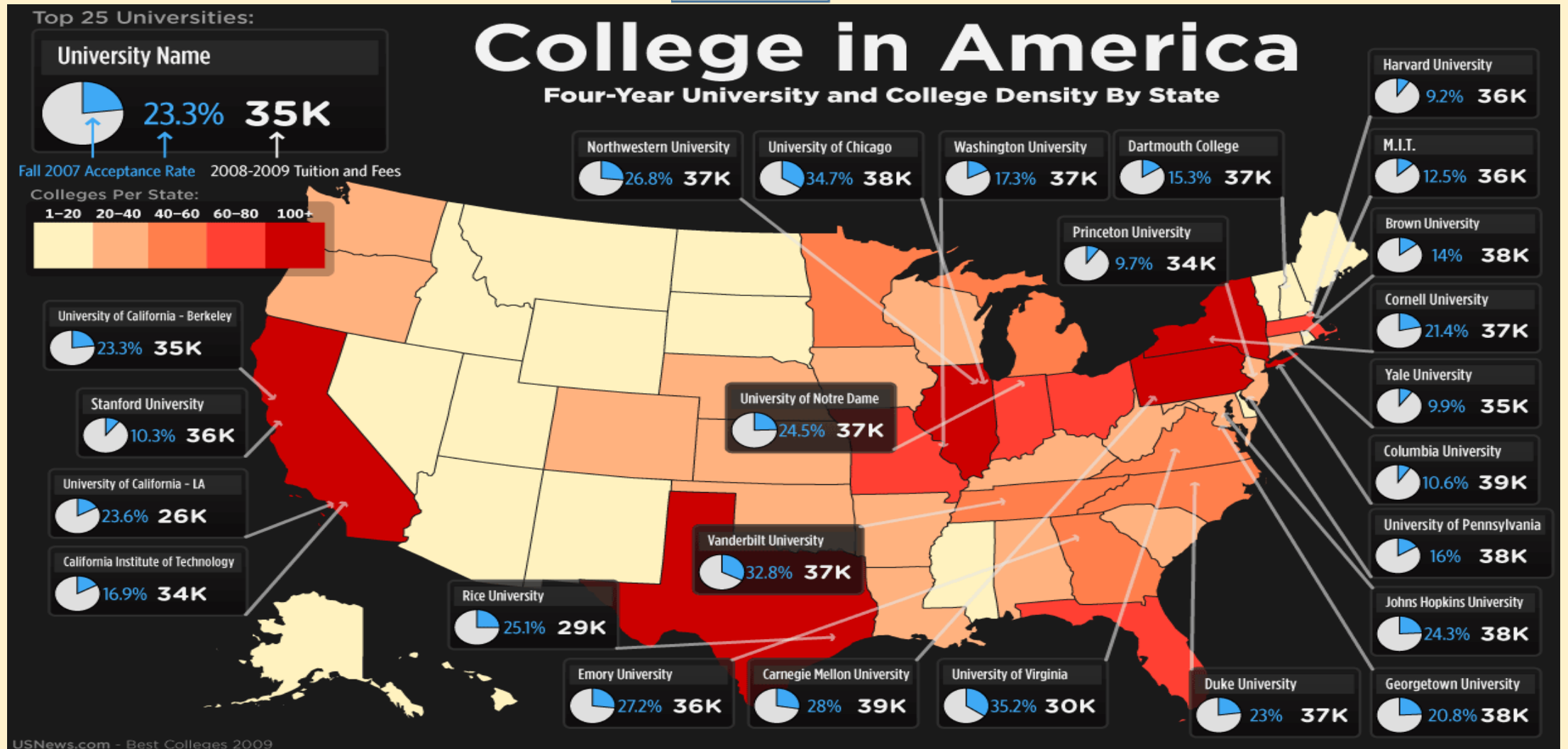*Colleges and universities will be referred as colleges/college in this PowerPoint.

College Selection Criteria 1. Location

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Explore where you'd like to go, big cities or small-to-medium size college towns, east/west coasts or the mid-west, and locations with internship/employment opportunities?

The United States is a big country with colleges located all over.

Small/medium size college towns often offer a more intimate sense of community.

Colleges in large cities offer you easy access to more social and cultural activities, and enable you to meet people from your home country, as well as from all over the world.

College in America
Four-Year University and College Density By State

Top 25 Universities:

University Name
23.3% 35K

Fall 2007 Acceptance Rate   2008-2009 Tuition and Fees

Colleges Per State:
1-20 20-40 40-60 60-80 100+

Harvard University 9.2% 36K
M.I.T. 12.5% 36K
Brown University 14% 38K
Cornell University 21.4% 37K
Yale University 9.9% 35K
Columbia University 10.6% 39K
University of Pennsylvania 16% 38K
Johns Hopkins University 24.3% 38K
Georgetown University 20.8% 38K

Northwestern University 26.8% 37K
University of Chicago 34.7% 38K
Washington University 17.3% 37K
Dartmouth College 15.3% 37K
Princeton University 9.7% 34K

University of California - Berkeley 23.3% 35K
Stanford University 10.3% 36K
University of California - LA 23.6% 26K
California Institute of Technology 16.9% 34K

University of Notre Dame 24.5% 37K
Vanderbilt University 32.8% 37K
Rice University 25.1% 29K

Emory University 27.2% 36K
Carnegie Mellon University 28% 39K
University of Virginia 35.2% 30K
Duke University 23% 37K

USNews.com - Best Colleges 2009

College Selection Criteria 2. Ranking

A college's reputation can be a big influence while you evaluate colleges.

Before including a college on your list, you should look into its overall academic quality and reputation reflected in its rankings.

Popular and reputable college rankings are developed using comprehensive methodologies and published by U.S. News, Forbs, QS Ranking, etc.

QS University Rankings Factors

- Academic reputation
- Employers reputation
- Faculty/Student ratio
- Citations per faculty
- International faculty ratio
- International student ratio

Evaluator/Rank	US News - Global	QS World	US News - US	Forbs - US
1	Harvard	MIT	Princeton	MIT
2	MIT	Cambridge	MIT	Stanford
3	Stanford	Stanford	Harvard	UC Berkeley
4	UC Berkeley	Oxford	Stanford	Princeton
5	Oxford	Harvard	Yale	Columbia
6	Columbia	Caltech	U of Chicago	UCLA
7	U of Washington	Imperial College of London	Johns Hopkins	Williams College
8	Cambridge	U College of London	U Penn	Yale
9	Caltech	Eth Zurich	Caltech	Duke
10	Johns Hopkins	U of Chicago	Duke	U Penn
11	UCSF	U of Singapore	Northwestern	Northwestern
12	Yale	Peking U	Dartmouth	Rice
13	U Penn	U Penn	Brown	Vanderbilt
14	UCLA	Tsinghua U	Vanderbilt	Dartmouth
15	U of Chicago	U of Edinburgh	Rice	Harvard

College Selection Criteria 3. Academic Majors Availability

If you already have a clear sense of your academic path, it's important to make sure that the colleges you consider offer a major that fits in that pathway.

HigherEdUSA will offer guidance, if you:

1. Would like to select the best suitable colleges for the major(s) of your choice,
2. Are still undecided about your academic and/or career goals,
3. Are contemplating among several majors, or
4. Really want to go to one or two college(s) in particular, but they don't offer your specific intended major.

See detailed information regarding college major in HigherEdUSA's PowerPoint entitled "How to Determine an Academic Major".

College Selection Criteria 4. Size:
from a few hundred to over 50,000 students. (Two Examples)

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Dartmouth College is a private Ivy League institution in rural Hanover NH, founded in 1769. It has a total undergraduate enrollment of 4,459. Average SAT: 1,500, GPA: 4.1/5, Acceptance rate: 8.74%. Student to faculty: 7 to 1.

UCLA is a public research university in Los Angeles, CA. Its academic roots were established in 1881. UCLA offers 337 undergraduate degree programs for 31,600 students. In 2021, it was the most applied-to University in the US. GPA: 4.54/5, Acceptance rate: 14%. Student to faculty: 18 to 1.

List Creation Stage - Draft Your Best Suitable College List

HigherEdUSA will guide you through the drafting process by:

1. Reviewing your college selection thoughts

2. Matching your academic performance, e.g., GPA, class rank, SAT/ACT, and course work with comparable colleges

3. Highlighting your meeting agenda between you and your school counselor. If there is more than one college counselor, make sure to stick with one. Meeting topics should include:

- An understanding about your high school and its college-going history to different colleges/universities
- An assessment of your academic performance
- A course sequence for your remaining high school terms.

Dream, Target, and Safety Schools (List creation continued)

Your Best Suitable College List should include a few Dream Schools, Target Schools, and Safety Schools.

Pay attention to the college cost and make sure there is at least one school that you know your family can afford on that list.

Dream Schools

Target Schools

Safety Schools
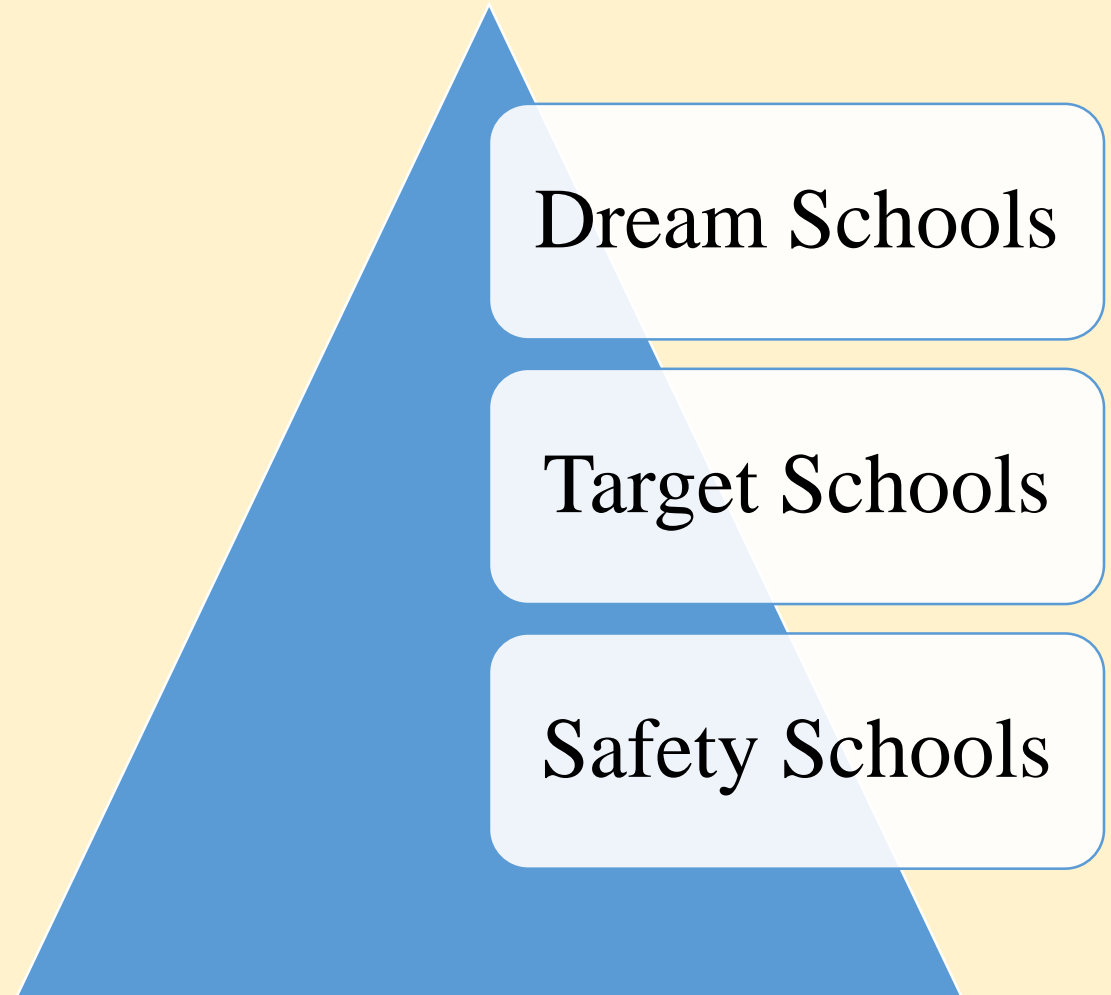
Dream Schools

These colleges may be just a bit out of your reach where your academic credentials fall in the lower end, or even slightly below, the school's average range for the cohort of students accepted in the previous year.

Dream schools might be long shots, but they might still be possible. HigherEdUSA will assist you in presenting yourself through strong and distinctive application materials to increase your chances.
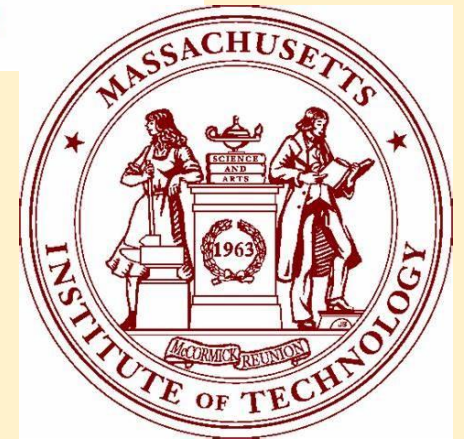
Examples for Dream Schools

Princeton University is a private Ivy League research university in Princeton, NJ, founded in 1746. Known for Social Sciences, Engineering, Computer, Physical Sciences, etc. Enrollment: 8,419, GPA: 3.92/4, SAT: 1,450-1,600, Acceptance rate: 5.48%, Student to faculty: 5 to 1.

UC Berkeley is a public research university in Berkeley, CA, founded in 1868. Known for Social Sciences, Computer, Engineering, Business and Management, etc. Enrollment: 45,000, GPA: 4.17-4.31/5, Acceptance rate: 11.4%, Student to faculty: 20 to 1.

Target Schools

Colleges where your academic credentials (GPA, SAT/ACT, class rank, etc.) fall well within the school's average range for the most recently accepted class.

There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to expect to be accepted by one or more of your target schools.

Examples for Target Schools

The University of Maryland, College Park, founded in 1856, UMD is often labeled a "Public Ivy". It is the largest university in Maryland and D.C., a primary research partner with top national agencies. Known for Engineering, Education, Business, Biological Sciences, etc. Enrollment: 40,521, GPA: 4.28/5, Acceptance rate: 52%, SAT: 1,330-1,510, Student to faculty: 18 to 1.

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, the oldest, largest, and top-ranked public university in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. Known for Computer, Psychology, Biological Sciences, Economics and Finance, etc. Enrollment: 35,641, GPA: 3.73/4, Acceptance rate: 67%, Student to faculty: 16 to 1, SAT: 1,180-1,410.
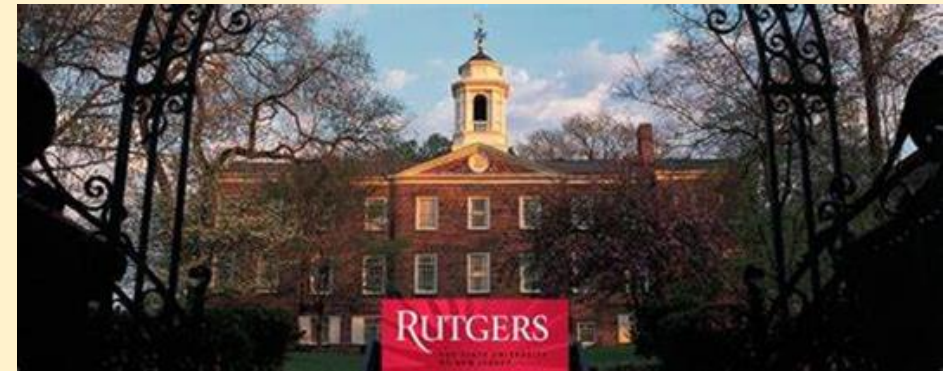
Safety Schools

Those where your academic credentials exceed the schools' range for the average first-year student. You should be reasonably certain that you will be admitted by your safety schools.

Like your dream and target schools, these should also be colleges you'd be happy to attend.

SAFETY SCHOOLS in college admissions

DO'S	DON'TS
✓ Must be admitted. Guaranteed admissions or your profile is in the top 75%tile at a school admits most applicants.	✗ Don't skip it. ALL students need safety schools.
✓ Must be affordable. Use Net Price Calculator to evaluate costs and aid.	✗ Don't limit to just one. Consider applying to more than one safety school.
✓ Must be HAPPY to attend. Pick a school that appeals to you because many students attend their "safety" school.	✗ Don't get caught up in rankings.

HOMESCHOOLSUCCESS.COM
HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING WITH COLLEGE ADMISSIONS IN MIND

Examples for Safety Schools

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UC Santa Cruz is one of the 10 UC campuses, founded in 1965. Located on Monterey Bay, on the edge of the coastal overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Known for Computer, Behavioral Sciences, Business Management, Cell/Molecular Biology, etc. Enrollment: 19,161, GPA: 3.76-4.16/5, Acceptance rate: 48%, Student to faculty: 23 to 1.

Iowa State University of Science and Technology, ISU, is a public research university in Ames, Iowa, founded in 1858. It is home to the National Ames Lab, discovering, analyzing, and applying new materials. Known for Engineering, Agricultural, Veterinary, Computer, etc. Enrollment: 25,241, GPA: 3.71/4.0, Acceptance rate: 84%, Student to faculty: 18 to 1, Average SAT 1,220.

List Creation - Assess Your Chance of Being Accepted

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HigherEdUSA will assist you in developing, completing, and updating a spreadsheet comparing and assessing your academic data with those of the colleges on your draft list.
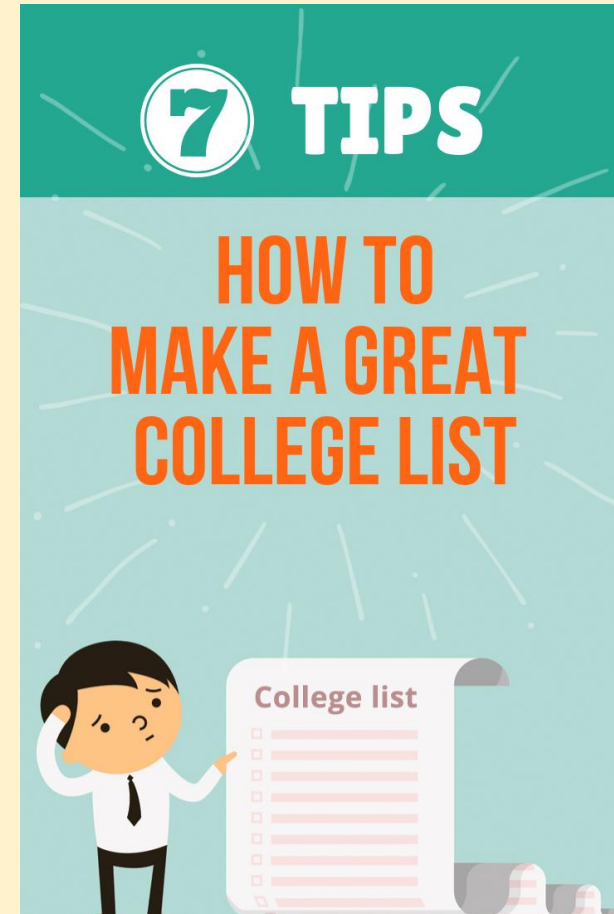
Narrowing Down the List

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By now, your list should include several dream, target, and safety schools.

Remember, there will be more than one school that's right for you. What you're doing at this stage is narrowing down your options to good possibilities.

HigherEdUSA will show you vital steps to take in order to finalize the list.

How to finalize your college list
College list

When to Begin?

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You should start looking at colleges early on.

Realistically **10th grade** may be the best time to begin the intense research.

By **winter in your 11th grade**, you may have already taken ACT/SAT at least once, and several AP/IB, honors or even college-level courses. It is the perfect time for you to seriously begin to draft your Best Suitable College List.

You list may start with more than 10 colleges and universities. By the beginning of **senior year**, you may already have narrowed the list down to around 6 schools, or to a number that you feel comfortable and confident with.

Final Note

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College education is important and plays a major role in your life.

Creating a list of the best suitable schools is a vital step for your college success.

Your final list serves as a solid foundation for you to begin the comprehensive but fun process of college application.

HigherEdUSA will be by your side throughout the journey reaching your goal.