



College Planning Review

Updated March 2020



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Preparing for College

College Preparation Tips for Grades 9-12

9th and 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 and get involved in their community through volunteering.
- Speak to guidance counselor about their aspirations (career goals, outlining plan of action, application timeline). This person might be a good LoR later.
- Develop comprehension, study, and 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 and 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**

Tip

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



11th Grade

- Most important year! 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 your guidance counselor. Ask counselors for 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 Role

If a student wants to apply to an Ivy League school, our job is to explain the application process and make the student aware of the low acceptance rate. Because our initiative focuses explicitly on aiding disadvantaged students, it is crucial that we are completely supportive of their goals and refrain from limiting their potential. If the student is only applying to schools that may be out of reach, advise them to also apply to additional schools

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.
- Tests 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 test for the first time toward the end of their junior year at the latest so that they will have enough time to study and take more practice exams over summer.

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.

They should avoid signing up for two consecutive tests. It does not allow time to build up their scores.

The College Board and the ACT both offer fee waivers for eligible students. If students are concerned about the cost, they should talk to their counselor.

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.
- If possible, advise students to visit the school, especially 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 the 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.

Identify any other teachers or guidance counselors that will be happy to write a letter of recommendation early. Perhaps, it's a 9th grade teacher who you stayed in touch with. Some schools will require 1-3 letters.



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.

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.

12th Grade (Continued)

- If a student hasn't taken an SAT or ACT 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

Tip

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

12th Grade (Continued)

- 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?”
- Some scholarships application might ask students to write essays and others just might ask for students’ credentials.
- Recommend creating a folder that contains a final list of schools and a calendar with deadlines so students can plan accordingly. They can use a tracker as well:
<https://www.commonapp.org/> (Tracker Resource)
- Perspective: Their college application is an opportunity to tell their own story.

Tip

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 that could happen is the school declining to offer the student more aid).



12th Grade (Continued)

- Perspective: Their college application is an opportunity to tell their own story.
- 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 2020, it would be based on 2019 taxes).
- If a student is 24 or under, they are considered as dependent (unless there are special circumstances).
- Have parent (or guardian) sit through the FAFSA as there are several questions regarding household expenses.
- Schools also require a CSS Profile and supplemental financial aid application to be completed.

Deadlines

Pay attention to a school's specific 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 in the first two weeks of January (mostly January 1-so beware of winter break plans).

12th Grade (Continued)

- FAFSA might request verification. 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.
- Students should be diligently working on scholarship applications, beyond FAFSA.
- Resources: Institutional scholarships, fastweb.com, scholarships.com., unigo.com
- Some scholarships are open to all students while some might be directed toward 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 one time, while others renew every year.

Deadlines

For rolling admissions, submit everything as early as possible. The earlier the application, 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.

While admissions decisions are finalized once they are officially released, financial aid packages can be modified.



12th Grade (Continued)

- Some scholarships fund students directly while others coordinate with the school.
- Scholarships can range from \$100 to as much as \$50,000 or full tuition.
- For some institutional scholarships, students might have to apply for FAFSA by a certain deadline.
- State scholarships: Some states offer a scholarship for students that attend an in-state college or university.
Encourage students to reach out to guidance counselor early! Ex: Florida (Bright Futures)
- National Decision Day: May 1. In most cases, student must pay an enrollment deposit in order to secure the seat.
- Use FinAid/Net Price Calculator on school's websites!

Remember

There's lots of money available out there and not very many people applying for it.

Some schools offer "Admitted Students Day" where they showcase everything the school has to offer. This is a good way for students to compare schools.

Each school has a different policy when releasing decisions



12th Grade (Continued)

- When students have more than one 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 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.
 - ◆ Decisions might not be solely based on the student's preference. Some students might have family responsibilities which they have to also consider.

Reminder of our Role

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.

Congratulate students on their achievements. They made it through!



College Entrance Exams

Study and Prepare Early!

PSAT

- Most high schools offer PSAT to juniors in October (and sometimes freshmen and sophomores-inquire at school).
- Tests cost \$15 each (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.
- Talk to guidance counselor about whether to take SAT or ACT later on. Research which test is required by the school.

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 and 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. Writing scores are available 5-8 weeks after.
- 2 hours and 55 minutes (add 1 hour if ACT with Writing)

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.



ACT (Continued)

- Takes 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. 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:
 - Level1 (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 component include subscores for reading and listening (and usage), on a scale of 20-80.
- Students' scores on these tests typically fall in the range of roughly 30-40 points either above or below true ability. Colleges are aware of this.
- Scores are generally available a month after date of test.

SAT Subject Tests (Continued)

- Not all schools require subject tests.
- 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 a College

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 Colleges: 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.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): Ex: Howard University, Clark Atlanta University

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs): Ex: Florida International University, UTexas: San Antonio

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.

Types of Postsecondary Schools (Continued)

Technical/Vocational Schools

- **Borough of Manhattan Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Santa Barbara City College.** 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 Early Decision 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 for 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 tuition due to the lack of financial aid.

Early Action

- Takes 2 hours and 55 minutes (add 1 hour if ACT with Writing)
- If admitted, students must withdraw all other applications.
- Non-Binding: Students have until May 1st to make a decision.
- Students who are already accepted to a school as an Early Action 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).



Pros and Cons of ED and EA

Early Action & Early Decision

- Pros: Shorter waiting period, save time and expense of submitting multiple applications, 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 applications 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 (Continued)

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 larger number 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

- Is nonbinding.
- Allows candidates to submit their applications anytime within a large window of about 6 months.
- 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.



Pros and Cons of RD and RA

Pros

- Applicants are usually notified within a few weeks as soon as decisions are made.
- Might be less competitive for students as the school receives applicants in bursts.
- Students can finish their application anytime (but THE sooner the better). Students can carefully review the application and not get anxious.

Cons

- Priority Deadline: Some schools might have a deadline for students to be considered for scholarships, housing, and other financial aid packages.
- 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 to spots being filled rapidly. In this case, well-qualified applicants can be denied later.



Criteria to Consider When Choosing a School

Overview

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

Financial Aid Factors

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

Criteria to Consider When Choosing a School (Continued)

Academic Life

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

Student Life

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



Finalizing a List of Schools

2-4-2:

- **2 Safety Schools, 4 Match Schools, and 2 Reach Schools.**
- We recommend that students keep a 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 the reason they are interested in each school on their list. 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 (Continued)

Safety Schools

- 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:
 - 1 Academic Safety School
 - 1 Financial Safety school

Match Schools

- Student's credentials fall 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 the 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 Schools



Finalizing a List of Schools (Continued)

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.

Tip

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 Who 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 interest 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.**

Extra Steps to Express Interest and Verify Eligibility (Continued)

- Contact 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.
- Follow NCAA amateurism rules about receiving a salary or prize money for athletic participation, playing with a professional team and other areas.
- Update the information on the athletics participation section online regularly, up until the time when students request a final certification of their status (usually 3~4 months before enrolling in college).

Intercollegiate Teams

Associations and 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 has 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 Early Decision. All the pros and cons of applying ED as I previously explained still apply here.

Research:

- Student-athletes should also examine the colleges' online team rosters 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 student ranks among the team members 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.

Student Athletes (Continued)

Foresight:

- **Student-athletes should keep in mind that athletic participation is only a part of the college experience.**
- **They should take into consideration the possibility that they might not be able to play (perhaps due to injury) or simply just decide not to play.**
- **In addition, the admissions office – not the college coach – decides whether students are admissible, therefore athletic eligibility does not guarantee admission.**

FAFSA

Revisiting the Critical Step

FAFSA

- Opens October 1. Encourage students to submit by Jan 1. It's based on prior-prior year taxes (So for Fall 2020, it would be based on 2019 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 expenses.
- 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.
Graduating From High School is a Big Deal.