

COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING GUIDE



BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL

*Photograph by:
Craig Szymanski*

To parents and students:



As you enter the final important stages of your personal and academic growth at Berlin High School, your school counselors wish you every success. We encourage you to consult frequently with us in order to help you with your post-secondary options and assist you in carefully planning your future.

The information in the “College and Career Planning Guide” serves as an aid for you as you consider the important steps in the college and vocational selection process. Testing procedures, college and military options, financial aid, and career opportunities are some of the key areas outlined in this guide.

Hopefully, whatever choice you ultimately make will be the “right fit” for you and the material in this guide will make your transition an easy one. Please visit or set up an appointment to see your school counselor as often as necessary in the upcoming months. Good luck!

*Sincerely,
The Berlin High School Counseling Department*

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“To Do” List for Junior Year:

- ◎ Attend Junior Session #1: “Overview of Junior Year” (September)

- ◎ Register for the PSAT through BHS Counseling Office (October)

- ◎ Attend College Fair at BHS (October)

- ◎ Meet with your counselor and assess your interests, abilities, strengths, and needs. Determine the “right fit” for post-secondary opportunities, including:
 - Traditional 4-year college (Bachelor’s Degree)
 - Junior College (2-year Associate’s Degree or Certificate Program)
 - Technical School (Career Training Program)
 - Career Opportunities
 - Armed Services

- ◎ Attend Junior Session #2: “Finding the Right Fit” and “Naviance College Search” (February)

- ◎ Bring your parents to Junior Session #3: “College Planning and Panel Evening” (March)

- ◎ Register for the appropriate standardized test (SAT Reasoning Test, ACT, SAT Subject Test)

- ◎ Attend Junior Session #4: “Senior Program Planning” (March)

- ◎ Attend Junior Session #5: “Career Seminars” (April)

- ◎ Call or visit online your colleges of interest to schedule campus tours (Start early! February and April breaks are a great time to visit!)

- ◎ Attend Junior Session #6: “Create a Powerful Resume” (May)

- ◎ Over the summer, finalize your list of colleges to which you will apply. Remember to note deadlines and requirements, and make sure your list includes Reach, Realistic, and Likely schools.

“To Do” List for Senior Year

- ◎ Meet with your school counselor to review your post-graduation plan, including:
 - Review graduation requirements (credits, CAPT, capstone, etc.)
 - Determine resources needed for college applications
 - Set up appointments with military recruiters
 - Determine resources needed for job applications

- ◎ Continue to visit colleges of interest, including Open Houses and personal visits (call each college’s Admissions Office or research on college’s website)

- ◎ Register with NCAA Eligibility Center, if appropriate, and inform your counselor

- ◎ Attend Senior Session #1: “College Application Process” (September)

- ◎ Attend Senior Session #2: “Tips for Writing Your College Essay” (September)

- ◎ Register for the appropriate standardized test (SAT Reasoning Test, ACT, SAT Subject Test)

- ◎ Attend College Fair at BHS (October)

- ◎ Attend Senior Session #3: “Common App and Naviance 101”

- ◎ Complete resume, then distribute to your school counselor and the two teachers who will be writing your letters of recommendation

- ◎ Make appointments to meet with college, career, and military representatives as appropriate

- ◎ Complete CSS profile for colleges, if needed (as early as October 1st)

- ◎ Research and complete scholarship applications

- ◎ Attend Senior Session #4: “Financial Aid Evening: How to Complete the FAFSA” (January)

- ◎ Complete FAFSA for colleges (as early as January 1st)

- ◎ Complete BHS’s Scholarship Packet of in-house scholarships (February)

- ◎ Complete “Senior Survey,” which finalizes your post-graduation plans

- ◎ Graduate!

Kinds of Schools

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

University: An institution that grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and supports at least two degree granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological. 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 broad-based, undergraduate education. Pre-professional training may be available but is not emphasized.

Engineering or Technical College: An independent professional school that provides four-year training programs in engineering and the physical sciences. They are often referred to as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.

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

Terminal Program: The academic program is complete in itself. A student who completes the program is prepared to enter a specific occupation.

Transfer Program: An academic program designed to provide the first two years of collegiate study with the final two years to be completed in a four-year college or university.

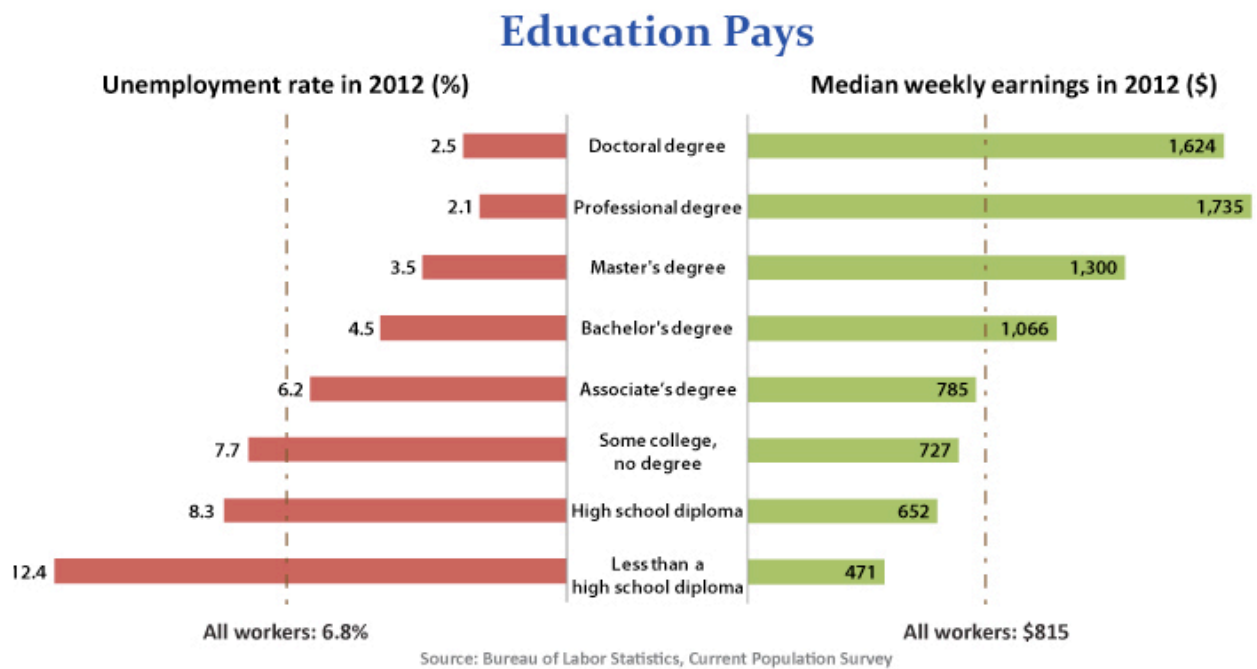
Technical School: An institution that offers occupational programs intended to prepare students for immediate employment in various trades. Students may earn an associate’s degree or certificate/diploma, depending on the institution and length of program.

Nursing School: There are three types of education programs for students interested in nursing. Students can prepare for nursing careers in diploma programs affiliated with hospitals. These programs are typically three years in length. Students can also prepare for nursing careers through a two-year college program leading to an associate’s degree. The third kind of preparation is in a college or university program leading to a bachelor’s degree.

Military School: Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. These institutions (West Point, Annapolis, Air Force Academy and Merchant Marine Academy) require a recommendation and appointment by members of Congress (more information is available in subsequent pages). Private and state supported military institutes, however, operate with a college application procedure. Each offers degree programs in engineering and technology with a concentration in various aspects of military service.

Conservatory: A school designed specifically for training in fine and dramatic arts, such as music or dance.

Did You Know???



Resources

Print:

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges

Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges

Collegeboard's Book of Majors

Collegeboard's College Handbook

Peterson's 2 year Colleges

Peterson's 4 year Colleges

Peterson's Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADD

Connecticut Department of Education's "Connecticut Career Pathways"

Collegeboard's Getting Financial Aid

Collegeboard's Scholarship Handbook

Database:

Naviance

<https://connection.naviance.com/berlin>

Complete a college search, research colleges, locate local scholarships, and request required information for college applications

Login information:

Email: First.Last (ex: Ima.Student)

Password: bhs+student id # (ex: bhs12345)

Websites:

College Board Online

www.collegeboard.org

You can register for SAT test dates, practice for the SAT's, fill out the CSS Profile, conduct college searches, research Subject Tests, research AP tests, and much more.

ACT

www.ACTstudent.org

You can register for ACT test dates and practice for the ACT's.

Kaplan

www.kaplan.com

You'll find detailed information on standardized tests as well as Kaplan's prep courses.

Revolution Prep

www.revolutionprep.com

You'll find detailed information on standardized tests as well as Revolution Prep's prep courses.

O*NET

www.onetonline.org

O*NET is a tool for career exploration and job analysis. Read detailed descriptions of the world of work.

BHS's Guide to the College Application Process:

1. Narrow down a list of colleges to include Reach, Realistic, and Likely.
2. Maintain the rigor of your schedule and continue to attain grades that reflect your ability. Colleges want to see that you are continuing to push yourself and will assess your senior year schedule as well as your first quarter, midyear, and final grades.
3. Determine application requirements, including:
 - a. Application deadlines (early action, early decision, rolling, regular decision)
 - b. Standardized Test requirements (Are Subject Tests required?)
 - c. Financial Aid deadlines (Is the CSS Profile required? What is the deadline for filing the FAFSA?)
 - d. Supplements (Do I have to submit a portfolio? Do I have to schedule an audition? What extra information might CommonApp require?)
4. Input into Naviance the list of the colleges to which you will be applying and request a transcript in Naviance.
5. Request letters of recommendation from two teachers and, if needed, your counselor. When requesting your letter, be sure to give each recommender a copy of your resume. After the letter is written, be sure to write a thank you note to each recommender. Input each teacher's name as your recommender in Naviance.
6. Turn in a "Senior Transcript Request Form" to your counselor for each college **AT LEAST TWO WEEKS** before the application deadline.
7. Complete and submit application and any supplementary application requirements online on each school's website or on commonapp.org.
8. Contact SAT (www.collegeboard.org) and/or ACT (www.actstudent.org) to send your official test scores to **EACH** college.
8. Monitor your application status with each school on its website. (Login information will be forwarded to you by each college.)
9. Inform your counselor of decision information from each college and scholarship.

Finding the “Right Fit”

There are many factors to consider when finding the right college for you:

1. Admissions

A. What are the college’s criteria for admission?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| --SAT/ACT Scores | --SAT Subject Test Scores |
| --High school courses | --GPA and Rank |
| --Essay | --Interview |
| --Extracurricular involvement | --Portfolio |
| --Leadership activities | --Audition |

B. How do I compare to the college’s expectations?

Reach:

A reach school can be defined as one where your credentials may not match those of a typically admitted student.

Realistic:

In this category, your credentials match those of a typically admitted student. The majority of schools to which you apply should fall into this category.

Likely:

In this category, your credentials exceed those of the typically admitted student. You should apply to at least one likely school. While it may not be your top choice, it should have the most important qualities for which you are looking, and you should be content to attend.

IMA STUDENT



Hi! I have an 87 GPA and scored 1550 on my SAT's. What are my chances for admission?

College A:

Average SAT: 1720
Average GPA: 92
Ima's chances?: Reach

College B:

Average SAT: 1500
Average GPA: 88
Ima's chances?: Realistic

2. School Type

- Two Year? Four Year?
- Public? Private?
- Coed?

3. Campus Surroundings

- Urban?
- Suburban?
- Rural?



4. Location

- How far from home are you willing to go?

5. Enrollment

- Do you need small classes or do you prefer lecture halls?
- Do you want to know everyone on your campus, or do you want to meet new people all the time?
- Do you prefer a few activities of interest or do you want a lot of options?

6. Extracurricular Involvement

- Clubs?
- Sports (intramural versus Division I, II, or III level)?
- Music programs?
- Drama?
- Newspaper?

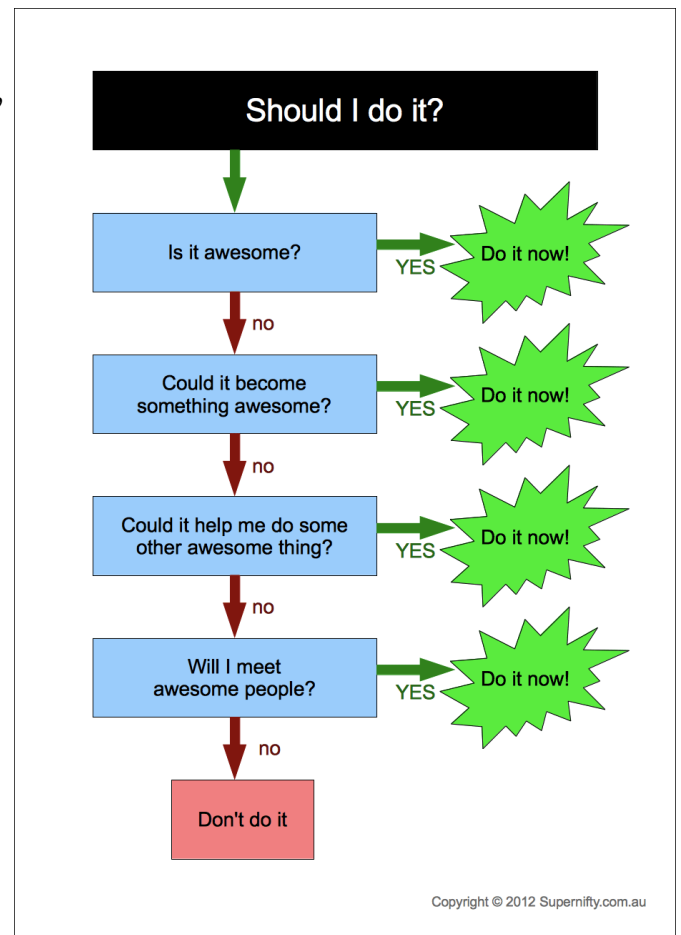
7. Major/Minor/Area of interest

8. Cost and Financial Aid

- Discuss with your parents
- It's important to have "likely" schools when it comes to cost

9. Special Programs

- ROTC?
- Tutoring services?
- Study abroad?
- Internships?



STANDARDIZED TESTS:

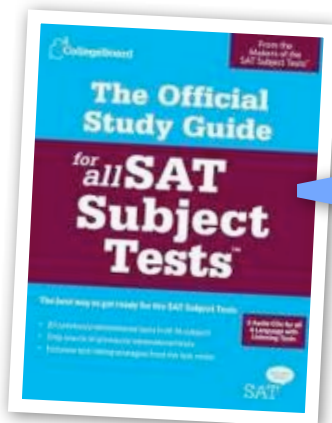


The PSAT is a practice SAT and, for juniors, it is also the National Merit Scholarship Test. The test is offered only in October and is usually taken by sophomores and juniors. The test consists of 5 sections: two 25-minute critical reading sections; two 25-minute math sections; and one 30-minute writing skills section. The PSAT is not a part of the official transcript.



The SAT gives both you and colleges a sense of how you'll be able to apply the thinking, writing and study skills required for college course work. The test is offered nearly every month of the school year and is usually taken toward the end of junior year and/or the beginning of senior year. The test consists of three sections:

- The **Critical Reading** section includes reading passages and sentence completions.
- The **Writing** section includes a short essay and multiple-choice questions on identifying errors and improving grammar and usage.
- The **Mathematics** section includes questions on arithmetic operations, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability.



Subject Tests are hour-long, content-based tests that allow students to showcase achievement in specific subject areas where you excel. There are 20 SAT Subject Tests in five general subject areas: English, history, languages, mathematics and science. Some colleges require one or more of these tests for admission or placement purposes.



The ACT consists of five sections:

English: Measures standard written English and rhetorical skills.

Mathematics: Measures mathematical skills students have typically acquired in courses taken up to the beginning of grade 12.

Reading: Measures reading comprehension.

Science: Measures the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, and problem-solving skills required in the natural sciences.

Writing (optional): Measures writing skills emphasized in high school English classes and in entry-level college composition courses. While optional, most colleges prefer students take the writing portion.



Should I take the SAT or the ACT???



Both the SAT and ACT require similar skills and test similar content. While neither test is purely an aptitude or content-based test, the SAT measures mostly verbal and quantitative reasoning, while the ACT measures mostly achievement related to high school curricula. The difficulty of any standardized test stems from both the difficulty of the questions (“power”) and the degree to which time is a factor (“speed”). For most students, the difficulty of the question presents the bigger challenge on the SAT, while time pressure presents the bigger challenge on the ACT.



(From the Summit Educational Group)



The College Essay (from NACAC)

Top 10 Tips for Writing a College Essay:

1. Start Early

The more time you have, the less stress you'll have. Plus, you'll have more time to give it your best effort. You can start in your junior year!

2. Be Yourself

One of the biggest mistakes students make is writing what they think others want to hear. Take a moment to think about what interests you, what you love to talk about, and what makes you sit up and take notice. Then write about it!

3. Be Honest

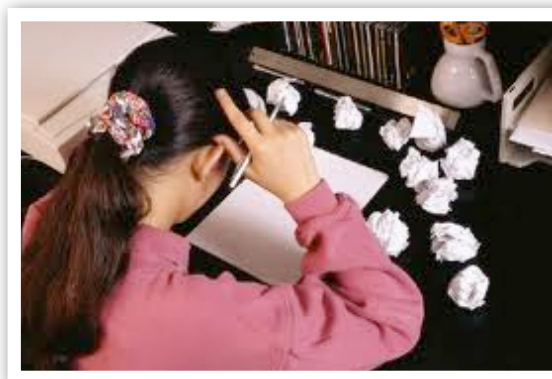
College admissions officers have read hundreds of essays. They are masters at discovering any form of plagiarism. Adapting an email story, buying an essay from an internet site, getting someone else to write your essay--admissions people have seen it all. Don't risk your college career by taking the easy way out.

4. Take a risk

Don't settle for the essay that everyone else is writing. Imagine an admissions officer up late, reading the fiftieth essay of the day--yours.

5. Keep in focus

This is your chance to tell admissions officers exactly why they should admit you. Unfortunately, some students try to list every single reason.... Don't make your essay look like a grocery list.



Instead, choose one theme to develop throughout an essay. The rest of your application will highlight all of your achievements. Use the essay to help the admissions officer get to know you as a person.

6. Write and rewrite

Don't try to write a masterpiece on your first try. For your first draft, write anything that comes to mind about your topic. Then let it "rest" for a few hours or a few days. When you come back to your draft, look for ways to make it more focused and better written. Two suggestions: 1. Remove the introductory and concluding paragraphs and see if your

essay seems stronger. 2. Go through the essay and cut out every "very" and every "many." Words like these are vague, and your writing is often stronger without them.

7. Get a second opinion

Even best selling novelists ask other people to read their manuscripts for suggestions and constructive criticism.

8. Proofread

It can be difficult to catch minor typos--try reading your essay out loud or reading it backwards to catch errors.

9. Don't confuse applying online with sending an email, text, or tweet

"u", "BTW," and "thanx" are not appropriate in a formal document.

10. Don't expect too much from an essay

Admissions reps look at the whole package--your academics, extracurricular activities, standardized tests, and other factors. A great essay rarely makes up for a weak academic record. On the other hand, a mediocre essay won't necessarily consign your application to the "deny" list. So, make your essay as well-written as you can.

Sample College Essay Questions

1. Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
4. Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

The personal essay helps colleges become better acquainted with you as a person and student, apart from courses, grades, test scores, and other objective data. It will also demonstrate your ability to organize your thoughts and express yourself.

(From www.commonapp.org)

Create a Powerful Resume

adapted from Brad Karsh, "Next Step Magazine"

You've worked hard in high school. You know it. Your teachers know it. Now you need to make sure the person making admission or hiring decisions knows, too. Here are a few hints to creating a powerful resume:

1. Personal information:

This is pretty straightforward. Your personal information goes at the top of the page and includes your:

- name
- address
- phone number
- email address (Make sure you use a professional email address; no one wants to admit or hire "thedirthead@email.com.")

2. Education

This is always the second section on your resume. You may want to list your:

- school
- city and state
- year of graduation
- GPA and class rank
- SAT/ACT scores
- significant coursework

Only include information that is flattering to you. For

example, if you aren't proud of your rank, don't include it!

3. Experience

This is known officially as the "meat" of the resume. List all of your relevant jobs and work experience, plus your extracurricular and volunteer/community service activities. List also your honors and awards. Think about your leadership positions, service projects, and other activities you've done where you gained skills. Describe your accomplishment with succinct bullets. Don't sell yourself short by leaving off all that you accomplished. For example, when listing activities, think about:

- How was the club/job better as a result of your involvement?
- How did you do it differently than the person before, after, or next to you?
- How were you selected?
- What were your major tasks and responsibilities?
- How many hours did you contribute to each activity?

4. Interests

In this section of your resume, show how involved and interesting you are. Include a brief list of your interests.

Final touches:

Make sure to proofread your resume! You should have at least two other people read your resume to guarantee you don't have typos.

"When students lie on their college applications, there's always a chance the university will catch them. By lying, applicants are putting their integrity in jeopardy, not to mention risking consequences ranging anywhere from a review of the application by committees within the university to full-blown expulsion."
--Amanda Smith
in "The Highlander"

Please consult the BHS counseling office for samples of resumes you can use as a guide.

Barry Goode Student

101 Main Street
Berlin, CT 06037
(860) 555-1234
Email

Education	Berlin High School, Berlin, CT Expected date of graduation: June 2014	
	Course work includes: AP US History, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Law, Personal Finance, Marketing Management	
	University of Connecticut Early College Experience Courses: AP Biology, Spanish V, AP Calculus, AP Physics, Discrete Math	
	GPA: 92.6 Rank: 58/241 SAT: Critical Reading: 520 Math: 520 Writing: 520	
Honors/Awards	National Honor Society Scholar-Athlete Award, Basketball Poetry Contest YMCA Volunteer Award	(11, 12) (10,11,12) (10, 11) (10)
Athletics	Basketball • Guard • Captain • All-Academic Honors	(9, 10, 11, 12) (9, 10, 11, 12) (12)
Clubs/Activities	Upbeat Peer Leadership Program • Elected Senior Board Member • House Leader, Hospital for Special Care Drama Club • Attended weekly meetings • ImProv Night • Talent Show Redcoat Marching Band • Trumpet	(9, 10, 11, 12) (12) (12) (10, 11, 12) (11, 12)
Community Service	Peer-Tutor • Spanish & Mathematics Soup Kitchen • Volunteered Sundays • Set up and clean up	(11, 12) (10)
Employment	Stop & Shop Supermarket • Cashier Camp Thunder Moon • Counselor • Responsible for leading youth group activities	(September 2012 – present) (Summers 2011, 2012)
Interests	Writing poetry, hiking, skiing, travel	



FAQ's for Obtaining Letters of Recommendation:

1. How many recommendations do I need?

The priority is **QUALITY** not **QUANTITY**. We recommend that you get two teacher recommendations and at least one of them should be from a core subject area teacher.

2. My dad knows a senator from Connecticut. Should I get him to write me a letter of recommendation?

Not unless the senator knows YOU really well and can say something new, different, or eye-opening for the admissions committee.

3. Should I waive my right to see a letter of recommendation?

A confidential letter is best. Most teachers will provide you with a copy of your letter anyway. If you have chosen your recommender carefully, you need not worry what he or she will say about you.

4. Whom should I ask?

A good letter of rec reflects the strengths--and perhaps a few weaknesses--of the candidate. You need to identify a teacher who knows your work, who can tell some good stories, and who can highlight your personal qualities. Don't assume that you should choose the teacher in whose class you are performing the best. Nor should it necessarily be the teacher of your favorite subject. You need to choose a teacher who knows you well to write your letter .

(adapted from Mark Montgomery, College Counselor)

The College Interview

Campus Interview:

The campus interview process is your opportunity to gather information first hand. It also gives the college an opportunity to gain valuable information and insights about you as a candidate for admission.

Not all colleges require a personal interview. However, it is **highly recommended** that students take advantage of the interview process whenever possible. If the college location makes a campus interview impossible, a college will often arrange for alumni in this area to speak with the student. Look for information in the mail that might come from schools of interest; often they have interview days for which you can register.

Once you have decided on the schools you wish to visit, call each college admissions office and schedule an appointment. When calling, verify if the interview will be a group session or an individual session. Be sure to call if you must cancel any appointment. If you have any specific requests, be sure and arrange such matters well ahead of the scheduled interview.

Suggestions for the College Interview Process:

1. Dress appropriately; being neat, clean, and conservatively dressed will never hurt you.
2. Be Prompt! Allow sufficient time to arrive at the school before your scheduled interview. Walk around if possible. Call if you will be late or unable to attend the scheduled appointment.
3. Look the interviewer in the eye when answering questions.
4. Bring a copy of your high school transcript and resume.
5. Be yourself; the admissions officer wants to know you as you are, not as you wish to be.
6. Bring your parent, but remember: it is **your** interview. Most college interviewers prefer to speak to you alone and then to bring your parents in for an exchange of information at the end of the session.
7. Be well informed concerning the material in the college catalogue.



8. Prepare ahead of time questions you wish to have answered or points you wish to have clarified. Plan to have at least one question to ask (see below).
9. Discuss your school and community activities and indicate what activities you might pursue during your college experience.
10. When possible, plan your visit and interview when classes are in session. Walk around the campus and visit various facilities.

Possible Questions to Ask During An Interview:

1. What is the attrition rate among freshmen for the previous academic year?
2. Is on-campus housing guaranteed for four years?
3. Does the college anticipate an increase in the tuition and board it will be charging next year?
4. Are there any major fields of study that have an enrollment quota?
5. Are campus activities and facilities available seven days a week?
6. Does the college award any scholarships on the basis of academic merit or talent?
7. How successful have graduates been in getting jobs in their own or related academic areas? Can you inform me about the placement record of graduates with major companies as well as the placement rate in professional and graduate schools?
8. What housing accommodations are available?
9. What is the average class size for freshmen courses?
10. What unique features or programs does the college offer?
11. Are college computers available for student use? How many?
12. What special programs are available (i.e., internships, study abroad programs, classes at nearby colleges, etc.)?
13. If majoring in an area requiring certification, licensing, etc., ask whether the program will qualify you for the entrance into the profession and prepare you for the state or national certifying examinations.
14. What do students do on the weekends? Is your school considered a “suitcase” school?

Questions that Students Are Often Asked At A College Interview:

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

1. How did you first hear about our college?
2. Tell me about yourself.
3. What are your career goals – long range and short term?
4. Why are you interested in majoring in _____?
5. What kinds of things do you do outside of school?
6. What accomplishments or extracurricular activities have had a particular effect on you and your life?
7. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?
8. How familiar are you with this college and its programs?
9. If you had high school to do over again, would you do anything differently?
10. What particular “life goals” are you seeking to achieve or pursue?
11. What are your priorities in selecting a college?
12. How would you describe your high school and how would you change it?
13. Where do you see yourself in four years?
14. Discuss your most stimulating intellectual experience.
15. What is the most significant contribution you have made to your school?
16. What books or articles have made a lasting impression on your way of thinking? Have you read deeply into any one author or field?
17. Why should we accept you at our college? What contributions will you bring us?



What do I do on a college visit???

Campus visits provide the perfect opportunity to get a “feel” for the school and find out if it would be a good place to spend the next few years of your life.

Tip #1: Be aware of how much you can reasonably accomplish in one day. A good guideline is to visit two colleges in one day so that you can make the most of the visit (such as taking a tour, listening to an info session, sitting in on a class, visiting the financial aid office, and participating in an interview).

Tip #2: If you have specific interests such as athletics, the arts, or a particular major, you should plan on making contact with a coach or professor in your area of interest to see the available facilities.

Tip #3: Visit when students are actively visible on campus. This gives you the ability to see things as you will experience them.

Tip #4: Eat in a dining hall. What better way to see the

variety of meals available and to actually taste the food than by eating on campus? You can also get a glimpse of what students are talking about and perhaps get a glimpse of what is happening on campus.

Tip #6: Ask questions.



Tip #7: Take a good look at the facilities. Are they clean and in good repair? Are the grounds well-maintained? Is the technology you will be using up-to-date?

Tip #8: Look at the residence halls. Colleges usually offer a variety of housing choices, including a traditional setting, suite style, and apartment style. Upperclassmen may also have different options from

freshman. Make sure you see where you will likely live. How many students live in a room? Are they spacious with closets? Are the bathrooms clean?

Tip #9: Will you need special services, such as academic support services, health facilities, or special food needs? Make sure the college has provisions to accommodate your needs.

Tip #10: Bring along a camera and notepad. Take pictures and make notes of what you see and hear. Because you are seeing so much in a compressed amount of

time, it is easy to forget information or confuse colleges.

Tip #11: Before leaving town, drive around the perimeter of the college. Then drive a few blocks further away and drive around the neighborhood. Will you be comfortable in your surroundings? Are there off-campus sites that you want or need to have close by?

Financial Aid

Students who will need financial assistance to attend college should contact the financial aid offices of the colleges to which they have applied for admission. **The financial aid procedures will vary from college to college and it is important to be familiar with each college's procedure and time lines.** A personal meeting with a financial aid officer is a good procedure to follow during the campus visit. Colleges have a variety of scholarship programs. Students should be aware of the various need based and merit based scholarships available for each college. Application procedures, filing deadlines, and other information can be obtained from the college financial aid offices and college catalogue.

Most colleges require students to file the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** to apply for federal, state and institutional aid programs. In addition, some colleges and private scholarship programs require students to file the **College Scholarship Profile (CSS)** to apply for institutional aid and scholarships. The FAFSA can be filed after January 1. The CSS Profile can be filed after October 1.



FILE THE FAFSA AT:
WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV

FILE THE CSS PROFILE AT:
WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.ORG

The estimates of financial need made by the Federal Student Aid Program Processor and by the College Scholarship Service serve as a guide to the college financial aid offices. Each college decides which applicants will receive financial aid and what type of financial assistance will be offered. The financial aid offer is usually sent to each student as a package, including part scholarship, part loan, and part work-study. **The student does not have to make a decision about attending a college until a financial aid decision has been made.**

Students who apply for early decision or early acceptance programs to a college should contact the college financial aid office for specific directions concerning filing for financial aid.

Federal and state controlled financial aid programs change each year. Therefore, students are encouraged to talk with their counselor about financial aid programs.

In January, the School Counseling Department sponsors a Financial Aid Night. A financial aid consultant is invited to explain to senior parents the various financial aid programs and application procedures.

It is important to remember that the best source of information about a specific college's a financial aid program is the college financial aid office. Do not hesitate to contact them if you have any questions.

Local Awards and Scholarships

Throughout the year announcements are made concerning various scholarships that are available to seniors. Students should be aware of these notices and check with the School Counseling Office about applications and deadlines. A listing of regional and national scholarships is maintained and updated in the School Counseling Office and on Naviance. **Students should check Naviance and the scholarship file in the School Counseling Office on a regular basis throughout the year.**

Parents should check everywhere for scholarship opportunities, including: place of employment, church, clubs, bank, affiliations, etc.

The **Berlin High School Awards and Scholarship Committee** is made up of representatives from each of the departments at the high school. The committee meets each spring to determine award recipients for the many scholarships and awards presented to members of the student body. **In February, the awards and scholarship packet is passed out to all interested seniors. This award and scholarship information will also be located on the school's website.** This packet contains descriptions of all the awards and scholarships available to seniors as well as the single application form used for a majority of these scholarships. Both the high school and the community awards and scholarships are explained in detail. **Students and parents must fill out all appropriate forms and return the completed forms to the School Counseling Office before the filing deadline.** Students who apply for need based scholarships must attach a copy of their SAR (Student Aid Report), which students receive after filing the FAFSA, or a copy of the parents' adjusted gross income on the 1040 tax form. Students should be aware that some scholarships, such as the Lion's Club Scholarship, will only accept the Student Aid Report from the Federal Processor as a support document.

The question is often asked, **Should I bother to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid?** It is a good idea for all students to complete the FAFSA. The completion of this form not only allows the student to apply for all school and community scholarships, but it also allows eligible students to apply for guaranteed student loan programs.



Creative Scams: What to Watch Out For

Some companies find innovative ways to take your money. Know what to look for when trying to tell friend from foe.

Paying for financial aid is an unnecessary expense. Here's why:

Claim #1: "We'll help you complete complicated forms."

- A. Information about the FAFSA and other forms is available for FREE from your school counselors, Peck library, and the Department of Education.
- B. You still have to fill out the same basic information for a fee-based service that you would for the FAFSA. How else would they get your information?

Claim #2: "We'll find different ways to report your assets and obtain more aid."

While these services can be legitimate, remember that colleges can request additional documentation about your finances. Also, not reporting tax information accurately is against the law (punishable up to a \$20,000 fine, prison, or both).

Claim #3: "For a fee, we can find scholarships for you."

These services claim to have lists of "secret" or "guaranteed" awards that they'll match up with you. Truth is, there are no secret lists; these people just visit the same free websites that you should visit for details of legitimate offerings. Not one scholarship in the United States guarantees winners, nor is there a pot of unclaimed scholarship money.

Claim #4: "Congratulations! You've been preselected to win this award!"

These notifications bring happy news: you have already won a scholarship that was never applied for. Now, it's true that some scholarships are offered without an application being filed based on the student's record, but notification will come from the high school or directly from the college – not from a third-party letter or in an e-mail. Ignore any offer when the congrats letter comes with a check and instructions to deposit it and forward some of the money.

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

Your best resource is the financial aid office at the college or university you wish to attend. Contact financial aid offices at the same time you request an admission application.

You and your parents also can talk to experts and get in-depth help filling out the FAFSA by attending College Goal Sunday event. For dates, go to:

www.collegegoalsundayct.org.

Many career and community organizations offer grants depending on your interests and background. For a list of public and private aid sources, and other college information, contact the [Education & Employment Information Center](#).

Often a checklist can help with academic and financial planning. Checklists for elementary, middle and high school students and their parents, prepared by the U.S. Department of Education, are available at www.StudentAid.ed.gov.

National Information Sources

Federal Student Aid on the Web – www.StudentAid.ed.gov

... information from the U.S. Department of Education on planning, preparing and paying for postsecondary education.

Financial Aid Information Page – www.FinAid.org

... click on \$Scholarships to access a wide selection of search databases. Click on Calculators for tools to determine college costs, savings goals, and how much financial aid you may need.

FastWeb – www.fastweb.com

... a highly popular, customized financial aid search site.

EFC Calculator – www.finaid.org/calculators/finaidestimate.phtml

... use this tool to estimate your Expected Family Contribution.

Federal Trade Commission – www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/scholarship

... information on scholarship scams and how to avoid them.

Connecticut Information Sources

Education & Employment Information Center
Office of Higher Education
(800) 842-0229
edinfo@ctohe.org • www.ctohe.org/edinfo

CT Higher Education Trust
(a 529 college savings program)
(888) 799-CHET (2438)
www.aboutchet.com

Athletic Eligibility

Intercollegiate college athletic programs are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization founded in 1906 that has established rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid. The NCAA has three divisions: Division I, Division II, and Division III. Institutions are members of a division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

A prospective athlete must be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center, which ensures consistent interpretation of NCAA initial-eligibility requirements for all athletes at all member institutions.

Any high school athlete who is considering playing a sport on the DI or DII level in college must start planning early. NCAA eligibility requires athletes to

complete a certain number of credits in core courses while maintaining an expected grade point average and achieving a particular SAT or ACT score. Not all of BHS's courses are NCAA approved, so the student should consult with the school counselor or the NCAA website for a list of approved courses.

Students considering participating in DI and DII college athletics must also register with the Eligibility Center and may do so at the end of their junior year. As part of the registration process, applicants will be prompted to request an official high school transcript from BHS. Students will also be required to send their official SAT or ACT scores to the clearinghouse.

For eligibility requirements, visit www.NCAA.org.

To register with the eligibility center, visit: www.eligibilitycenter.org



MILITARY SERVICE

Many diverse employment and training opportunities exist in the military. Most military occupations are comparable to one or more civilian occupations.

The **Military Career Guide** available in the school counseling office outlines 134 military occupations arranged in 12 broad career groups:

Human Service Occupations	Vehicle and Machinery Mechanics
Media and Public Affairs	Electronic and Electrical Repair
Health Care	Construction
Engineering, Science and Technical	Machine Operator
Administrative Occupations	Transportation
Service Occupations	Combat

Representatives of the Armed Services visit Berlin High frequently, and students may arrange individual appointments.

Each branch of the military service offers enlistment programs that vary from two to six years. They also offer Reserve Programs and ROTC Programs (Reserve Officer Training Corps). The Army, Navy and Air Force sponsor ROTC scholarship programs designed to give financial assistance for college to outstanding young men and women.

For students who desire more information, please refer to the following guide:

U.S. Army Recruiting Station 67 Laurel Street Bristol, CT 06010 (860) 584-0366	U.S. Navy Recruiting Station 65 Laurel Street, Unit 3A Bristol, CT 06010 (860) 585-1303
U.S. Air Force Recruiting Station 65 Laurel Street Bristol, CT 06010 (860) 585-0618	Connecticut Army National Guard 600 Woodruff Street Southington, CT 06489 (860) 621-0010
U. S. Marine Corps Recruiting Service 170 Main Street Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 346-3525	U. S. Army Reserve 90 Lydia Street Waterbury, CT 06705 (203) 753-2334

Conneticut Air National Guard
100 Nicholson Road
East Granby, CT 06026
1-800-992-4793

SERVICE ACADEMIES AND ROTC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

While all juniors should begin exploring possible educational programs following graduation, those interested in the Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship program must begin as soon as possible to ensure that they receive full cooperation.

The first step in securing an appointment to one of the academies is to write and ask for a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire. Addresses follow:

Admissions Office
U.S. Military Academy
West Point, NY 10996

Admissions Office
U.S. Air Force Academy
U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840

Admissions Office
Naval Academy
Annapolis, MD 21402

Admissions Office
Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, NY 10024

The second step is to write to each of your Senators and your Congressman and ask that they consider you as one of their nominees. In this letter you should indicate your first, second, third and fourth choices for academies as well as:

Name, Address, & Telephone Number
Date of Birth
Social Security Number
High School Name and Year of Graduation
Name of your Parents

The Coast Guard Academy has an admissions process similar to other highly competitive colleges. There is no nomination process involved. Write directly for an application:

Admissions Office
U.S. Coast Guard Academy
New London, CT 06320

R.O.T.C. scholarship programs involve a competitive application process as well. In addition to the written application, candidates must undergo a physical examination, formal interview, and a physical ability test. The first step in the process is to write for an application.

Air Force ROTC/RRUF
Maxwell Air Force Base
Alabama 36112-6663

College Army ROTC
Gold Quest Center
P.O. Box 171045
Salt Lake City, UT
84117-9943

Navy-Marine Corps ROTC
College Scholarships Program
Navy Opportunity Info Center
P.O. Box 4877
Trenton, NJ 08650-8990

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

College or post secondary education is not for everyone. Strong technology education classes, business classes, and a solid general education prepare students for entry-level positions in the world of work. The decision to continue one's education should be based on a personal evaluation and assessment of career plans, commitment to education, and family considerations.

School counselors work closely with students who do not plan to attend post-secondary schools. Individual guidance appointments are devoted to identifying career interest areas and aptitudes. To aid students in clarifying career goals, counselors work with students in creating their Student Success Plan, including inventories on Goal Setting, Learning Styles, Interests, Skills, and Career Planning through the interactive program, Career Cruising.

Whenever possible, arrangements will be made for student to spend time at job sites for a **Job Shadowing opportunity.**

Berlin High sponsors **Career Seminars** in the spring. This is an excellent opportunity to speak directly with local employers in order to obtain career and vocational information.

Helpful Resources:

Education/Employment Information Center of the State Department of Education
1-800-842-0229

--maintains an employment hotline with current job information

"Connecticut Works" Center in New Britain
860-827-6200

--services Berlin residents seeking employment



EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS

Some of you will have had enough schooling for now and will want to go directly to work. You need to talk to your school counselor early about how to be ready for meaningful employment after graduation. Only planning can get you into a career and not just a job. Some employment opportunities provide excellent on-the-job training that gives you valuable new skills for future career direction.

Steps in Planning for your Future Employment

1. Evaluate yourself – your abilities, values and interests. Ask yourself the following questions: How do I feel about work? What work experience do I have? What courses did I like in school? What are my likes and dislikes? What are my hobbies? What kind of lifestyle do I want? Do I like to work with numbers, people or things? What kind of job would I like to have in order to earn enough money? What has my high school experience prepared me to do?
2. Review your Student Success Plan on Naviance (connection.naviance.com/berlin) for results from your assessments (learning style, interests, skills and abilities).
3. Use available career resources to search out specific information about your possible career choice – any necessary training, expected earnings, advancement possibilities, projected employment outlook, and personal qualifications. Suggested resources are Naviance (connection.naviance.com/berlin) and O*NET (ononline.org).
4. Arrange to spend time with people involved in your field of interest to watch them at work (called “shadowing”) and to interview them.
5. Attend the Berlin High Career Seminars in the spring.
6. Obtain a part-time job that will help you explore a career field and give you experience and training that will be useful in obtaining full time employment after graduation.
7. For assistance in locating full time employment after high school graduation, contact local business and industry representatives who provide many high schools annually with specific job opening requirements and interview schedules.
8. Find out where to seek employment. Check newspapers, trade magazines, placement agencies, government (state & local) employment services, training centers, school work programs, and civil service jobs posted in your local post office. Also check bulletins, announcements, the local YMCA and YWCA, and your church. Talk with your parents, relatives, and friends about possible job openings. Some of the most lucrative jobs may be found right in your own back yard.
9. Prepare a resume and practice filling out job applications.
10. Counselors and teachers may be used as references.

11. Prepare for each interview:
 - a. Find out all you can about the company, policies, and product.
 - b. Be confident; have self-esteem
 - c. Bring your resume or send one ahead, if requested.
 - d. Be prepared; answer questions simply and quickly; itemize your work experiences.
 - e. Dress appropriately; use common sense and taste.
 - f. Arrive for the interview early. You may be asked to wait, but it will make an excellent first impression. If your interview is out of town, check mode of transportation to be used and weather conditions for the day.

12. At the interview:
 - a. When you are introduced, remember the interviewer's name.
 - b. If requested to fill out additional papers or forms, be brief and simple. Use your resume or notes for reference.
 - c. Be sure footed, ask questions, talk about your goals, and sell your skills and training.
 - d. Relax; be yourself, honest, and tactful; present yourself in a way that makes the company think they need you.
 - e. Be alive; indicate you know the company, product, people, process, and potential growth.
 - f. Be positive about yourself and what you can bring to the company. Don't be negative about yourself or past experiences.
 - g. Don't evade questions; answer them honestly and simply, and look at your interviewer while talking.
 - h. Your posture is important; don't slouch, chew gum, or smoke.
 - i. When questions are asked to which you do not know the answer, don't fake it; simply answer the questions as honestly as you can.
 - j. The employer wants to talk to you. Do not bring anyone with you to a job interview.
 - k. Try not to brag or exaggerate and, above all, don't lie! Try not to conceal previous work records (even though they may have been poor experiences) or complain about past employers or supervisors.
 - l. Conclude the interview with an arrangement for finding out the prospective employment decision on hiring. As a follow-up, write a note thanking the person who interviewed you for his/her time and consideration.
 - m. Do not become discouraged if, during your first interview, you become nervous or fail to present yourself favorably. You will improve with time. Your counselor in your high school is there to help you. See him/her early in your senior year so he/she can work with you.



Glossary of Commonly Used Terms:

Accreditation: Recognized as maintaining standards that qualify the graduates for admission to higher or more specialized institutions or areas of employment. When applying for particular college programs, a student should make sure that the program is accredited.

Accuplacer: A collection of tests, typically administered by colleges and technical schools to incoming students. The Accuplacer is used to evaluate a student's aptitude within a number of basic academic areas, and the results are used to determine the level of courses in which a student is placed.

AP: Advanced Placement: The Advanced Placement Program gives students the opportunity to pursue college-level studies while still in high school and to receive advanced placement and/or college credit, based upon their performance, upon entering college. The web address is: www.collegeboard.org

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

ACT: American College Testing Program. The web address is: www.actstudent.org

Associate's Degree: A degree granted by most two-year colleges and some four-year colleges at the completion of program requirements usually lasting two years.

Bachelor's Degree: A degree granted by four-year institutions after the completion of program requirements usually lasting four years.

CSS Profile: College Scholarship Service: CSS is the financial aid division of the College Board that provides a needs analysis service for financial aid applicants. Some colleges require the CSS Profile in addition to the FAFSA to grant financial aid. The web address is: <http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>

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.

Consortium: Several colleges and universities in an area often join together in a cooperative association that 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 may require 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), or another examination developed by the college.

Deferred: Many students who apply to college early action or early decision find that they've neither been accepted or denied. When a student receives an admission decision of "deferred," the student's application will be reconsidered under regular admission procedures. A student may choose to submit more materials to the college in order to improve chances of admission.

Early Action: An admissions procedure in which students apply to and hear admissions decisions from a college on an accelerated schedule.

Early Decision: Similar to Early Action in process EXCEPT that the early decision is binding.

EFC: Estimated Family Contribution: A measure of your family's financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by law. Your family's taxed and untaxed income, assets, and benefits (such as unemployment or Social Security) are all considered in the formula. Also considered are your family size and the number of family members who will attend college during the year. Your EFC is reported to you on your SAR by FAFSA.

FAFSA: Free Application For Student Aid: A form developed by the Federal Government and completed by parents and students to provide an estimate of the parents' and student's ability to contribute toward the costs of post-secondary education. It is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA is required by practically every college when Financial Aid is requested.

GED: General Educational Development Examination: a series of tests that adults take to qualify for a high school equivalency certificate diploma.

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

PSAT/NMSQT: Practice SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

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

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

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.

Open Admissions: The policy of some colleges of admitting virtually all high school graduates, regardless of academic qualification such as high school grades. Students applying to a college with Open Admissions generally must take a placement test like the Accuplacer to determine the level of courses in which the student will be placed.

Regular Decision: A student may submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time.

Restrictive Early Action: Similar to early action in procedure EXCEPT the college places limitations on the student's ability to apply early to other colleges. A student should carefully read a college's rules if applying with restrictive early action.

ROTC: Reserve Officers' Training Corps: Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy. This combines military and officer training education with a traditional college education, often with financial support for those students who commit themselves to future, post-graduation service in the Armed Forces. Participating colleges and local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply information about these programs.

Rolling Admissions: A plan adopted by some colleges whereby students are notified of admissions decisions usually within four weeks after receipt of a complete application. Colleges with rolling admissions continue to accept students until their freshman class is filled. It is essential to apply early to such colleges, as applications are not accepted after the admissions quota has been reached.

SAR: Student Aid Report: A paper or electronic document that gives you some basic information about your eligibility for federal student aid as well as listing your answers to the questions on your FAFSA.

SAT Reasoning Test: The web address is: www.collegeboard.org

Study Abroad: Any arrangements by which a student completes part of the college program 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.

Subject Test: Created by Collegeboard, these hour-long, content-based tests allow students to showcase achievement in specific subject areas. Some colleges require students to take Subject Tests in addition to the SAT Reasoning test for admission. Information can be found on www.collegeboard.org.

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. Information can be found on www.ets.org/toefl

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 may offer their places to students from the waiting list.