

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

A SURVIVAL KIT

*******SPRING/JUNIOR YEAR*******

**PRESENTED BY THE
BOYERTOWN AREA HIGH SCHOOL
COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

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*****There are many additional resources such as information on Internet sites, videos, CD-ROMS, and books available in the Counseling Office by request.**

Junior Year Checklist

Research careers that interest you. Use the information generated from Career Cruising in your sophomore year to aid you.

Narrow your scope down to 3 possible majors/careers:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Research what schools offer those types of majors (4 year universities, art schools, 2 year technical schools, etc.)

Determine what criteria are important to you in selecting a school (use the questionnaire found in this packet to help). Be sure to talk with your parents about their criteria, particularly cost and distance.

Do a search for schools that meet that criteria – utilize collegeboard.com

Choose a list of schools that interest you and request information and/or set up a tour. (Tours are going to be more useful to you when they are conducted while the school you are visiting is in session) – try to narrow this list to between 6 and 12 schools.

Meet with your counselor to discuss your potential plans – be sure to mention if you wish to play a sport for a Division I or Division II school.

Plan to take the PSAT's in the fall (offered on _____). Not only will this prepare you for the SAT's, but it could qualify you for a National Merit Scholarship.

Plan to take the SAT I and/or ACT at least once in your junior year. You can register for the SAT's on collegeboard.com. Most deadlines are a month or more before the actual test date, so register early. The ACT registration site is actstudent.org. Paper registration for both tests is also available.

Plan to take SAT II Subject Tests only if the schools you are looking at require them.

Go to College Fairs and talk to college representatives when they visit BASH – this is a wonderful opportunity for you to get your individual questions answered and to show you are interested.

Determine who you would like to write letters of recommendation for you and ask them before the end of the year (be sure to provide a resume). You should have 2–3 letters of recommendation. Be sure to choose teachers that you know will write a positive letter for you.

Go over your course selection sheet with your counselor to make sure that you are meeting all of your requirements for graduation.

Senior Year Checklist

Narrow your colleges to 3–4 schools that you could really see yourself attending:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Know the admissions deadlines for these schools – both regular decision and early decision/early action (if applicable). Have any materials you need sent by mail in to the counseling office at least 2 weeks before the deadline, along with a stamped, addressed envelope for each school.

Work with an English teacher that you respect on your college essays.

Check in with the teachers you asked to write letters of recommendation for you. Make sure that each teacher has a stamped, addressed envelope for each school you are applying to.

If you are unhappy with your SAT/ACT scores from junior year, register for the October or November test dates. **(Make sure score reports were sent to each college, since they are no longer included on your transcript).** Be sure to keep in mind the scores that your schools require.

Attend the Financial Aid Night offered by the counseling office – this will give you and your parents a better understanding of the FAFSA form that must be filled out and mailed in January.

Keep your counselor apprised of any acceptance/rejection letters you receive from schools.

Most schools require you to send in a deposit by May 1st to secure a spot there. Be sure to weigh your options well before May 1st in order to have this deposit in to the school of your choice on time.

Inform the other schools you were accepted into of your decision not to attend.

Inform your counselor which school you are planning to attend so that final transcripts can be sent in June after final grades are in.

Make sure that you are passing all of the courses required for graduation.

Graduation! Congratulations and good luck!

HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHAT SCHOOL IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Selecting a school can be difficult – particularly when you aren't completely sure for what you're looking. Take a few minutes to answer the following questions for yourself. Use the answers to help you narrow down your search.

1. For what type of setting are you looking? Rural, suburban, or urban?
2. For what size school are you looking? Something larger, smaller, or around the same size as BASH? Are class sizes a factor for you?
3. How far away are you looking to travel? Would you like to be able to drive home when the mood strikes, or are you alright with flying home a few times a year? (Be sure to discuss this question with your parents).
4. How much are you willing to spend on college? How much are your parents willing to contribute? (Also be sure to discuss this with your parents).
5. Do you have a particular major in mind? Do you have a back-up major in mind in case you decide to switch majors?
6. Do you have a particular activity (or activities) that you are hoping to become involved in at your school of choice?
7. Are you interested in becoming involved with Greek life (Fraternities or Sororities)?
8. Are you interested in playing a sport in college? If so, are you hoping to play for a Division I or II team, or a Division III or intramural team?
9. Are you looking for a school with a particular religious affiliation?
10. What are you hoping to do with your degree? Are you looking for a school that offers internships, co-ops, or study abroad programs to help you reach your goals?
11. Do you want a school where the majority of students go home on the weekends, or a school where there is still an active student body over the weekend?
12. How academically competitive would you like your college to be?
13. How important is school spirit to you?

Come prepared with the answers to these questions when you have your junior year conference with your counselor. Knowing the answers to these questions will make it easier for your counselor to assist you when it comes to choosing schools that are a good choice for you. Also be sure to utilize the college search engine on collegeboard.com.

TOP TEN RULES FOR SELECTING A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

1. Never make your final college selection without visiting at least your top two or three choices. No matter how well you think you know a college or university, you can learn a lot (good or bad) by spending a few hours on campus, including whether or not the college feels like a good “fit” for you. Having family members accompany you on college visits is a great idea because it gives you extra “eyes and ears” and people with whom you can discuss your impressions.
2. There are no exceptions to rule #1.
3. A college is not necessarily right for you because its name is familiar. That might seem pretty obvious, but you wouldn’t believe how many students equate educational quality with name recognition.
4. Investigate at least three or four colleges you know little or nothing about but offer the field(s) of study of interest to you, are appropriately selective for a student with your grades and SAT or ACT scores, and are located in geographic areas attractive to you. You have nothing to lose and you might make a great discovery. A little research and an open mind can greatly increase the odds that you make a good college choice.
5. There are very few worse reasons to select a college than because your friends are going there. Choosing a college because your girlfriend or boyfriend is headed there is one of them. In fact, if there is a worse reason to choose a college, it escapes us.
6. Investigate, investigate, investigate, and be sure to separate reality from (often baseless) opinions. Lots of folks will refer to a college as “good”, “hard to get into”, “a party school”, “too expensive”, etc. without really knowing the facts. Don’t accept these kinds of generalizations without evidence.
7. Do not rule out colleges early because of cost. Many colleges offer scholarships, financial aid, and tuition installment plans that make them far more affordable than they may first appear. You can’t/won’t know how much it will cost to attend a college until the very end of the process.
8. Deadlines, whether for college applications, SAT or ACT registration, financial aid, scholarships, campus housing, etc. are not suggestions. Miss a deadline and you may find yourself in deep you-know-what. Write down on a calendar and adhere strictly to all deadlines.
9. Don’t be afraid to apply to a few “reach schools”. You might be pleasantly surprised by the results if you are not entirely unrealistic. Then, apply to at least three colleges you like which are highly likely to admit you. Remember, choose these three colleges very carefully as they are the places where you are most likely to wind up. Finally, choose at least two “safety” colleges. Colleges to which you are virtually certain you will be admitted. Choosing ‘safety’ schools they don’t really like is a mistake many students make. If you take the time to choose safety schools you would be happy to attend, you’ll eliminate all the anxiety some students experience in the college application and admissions process.
10. When it is time to make your final choice, discuss your options with your family, your counselor, and others who know you well and whose judgment you value. If you have a tough time choosing among two or more colleges or universities it is probably because you have done a good job putting together your list and you will be happy at whichever institution you choose. Once you make your choice, don’t agonize over it. If you have followed these rules there is an excellent chance your final college choice will be a good one.

(Taken from www.college-scholarships.com)

COLLEGE ADMISSION DECISION OPTIONS

EARLY DECISION

This option allows a student to commit to his or her first choice of a college well before May 1st. In exchange for the admission, the college or university will require a nonrefundable deposit by a date that is typically not extended. You should not apply to more than one college under this option; you should withdraw all other applications when you accept an Early Decision offer.

EARLY ACTION

This option allows a student to apply to a college of preference and receive an admission decision well before the normal response, usually in the spring. Students who apply under this option are **not obligated** to enroll or make a deposit.

REGULAR DECISION

This option requires a student to apply by a deadline in return for a promise of notification by a given date. This option allows colleges and universities to review most of its applications before notifying the majority of its candidates.

ROLLING ADMISSION

This option allows students to receive an admission decision as soon as their files are reviewed. Colleges usually recommend a date when files should be complete.

In all options except Early Decision, applicants will have until May 1st before they should make a nonrefundable deposit, unless they have requested a written extension.

COLLEGE SELECTION WORKSHEET

Research your colleges/universities using this worksheet. It will provide you with easy "at a glance" information.

CHARACTERISTIC

SPECIFIC PREFERENCE

Location (state, city, region)

Type (2-year community college, 4-year university, etc.)

Enrollment by sex (men, women, coed)

Religious affiliation, if any

Size of college (undergraduate enrollment)

Academic calendar

Campus environment

Majors or course offerings

On-campus housing

Special academic programs

Cost

Financial Aid

Student activities

Athletics

Academic caliber of students

Student body characteristics

Social Life

Competitive atmosphere of college

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q: SHOULD I TAKE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS?

A: College entrance examinations are required or accepted for admission at many colleges. Students should carefully check the admissions requirements at prospective colleges to determine (1) whether SAT I or SAT II subject test are required or (2) if other prospective colleges require the ACT (American College Test). Always make sure you include our high school code (390390) when registering for the SAT I, SAT II, or ACT test.

2. Q: WHAT IS THE SAT I?

A: The SAT I Reasoning Test is approximately a four-hour examination which measures your critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing ability.

3. Q: WHAT ARE SAT II SUBJECT TESTS?

A: The SAT II Subject Tests are one-hour examinations which measure the student's level of achievement in certain subject areas. Some colleges require or recommend these tests for admission and/or placement purposes.

4. Q: HOW DO I KNOW WHICH SAT II SUBJECT TESTS TO TAKE?

A: You should make a tentative list of those colleges to which you have been thinking of applying. You can find out from college catalogs or a directory of colleges the Subject Tests which are required by each particular school. Some will specify which tests you must take; others will allow you to choose. Requirements for certain Subject Tests by a particular school may influence you in your choice of classes for your senior year. For example, you may decide to take another year of a foreign language if you learn that a college you want to attend requires a Foreign Language Subject Test for admission. Perhaps the college may even exempt you from a freshman requirement if you do well on a Subject Test.

5. Q: WHEN DO I TAKE THE SAT II SUBJECT TESTS?

A: You will take Subject Tests no earlier than May of your junior year. Some may be taken in June of your junior year or in November, December, or January of your senior year. You should take a Subject Test as soon as possible after completing a course (or courses) in a subject area, while the material is still fresh in your mind. If you decide to take an SAT II in a subject you have not studied recently, you should review the course content material thoroughly and methodically over several weeks' time. Last minute cramming is not likely to benefit you.

-If you plan on being an Early Decision candidate at a particular college, you should check to be sure you satisfy its testing requirements for early admission.

-Consult with your counselor if you are not certain as to which testing date would be the best for you, or if you are uncertain as to whether you should take a particular test.

6. Q: WHICH MATHEMATICS SUBJECT SHOULD I TAKE?

A: Most candidates take the Level I Mathematics Subject Test regardless of the number of years they have studied mathematics. The Level II Test is narrow in scope and concentrates on more advanced work. It calls for a greater depth of understanding and sophistication. Level II is designed for the student of very high mathematics ability who is taking, at least, Advanced Placement work in the high school.

7. Q: SHOULD I TAKE THE THREE SAT II SUBJECT TESTS IN MAY?

A: The Counseling Department suggests you take Subject Test ONLY in those areas of study in which you will NOT continue in your senior year. An Early Decision candidate, however, MUST take three tests if the college requires them.

8. Q: SHOULD I REPEAT THE SAT I IF I DO NOT DO WELL IN SPRING OF MY JUNIOR YEAR?

A: Ordinarily it is advisable for you to take the SAT I more than once. Often you must do so to meet the admission requirements of a specific college or to improve your scores if they seem low and inconsistent with your academic record.

Be sure to give your name EXACTLY the same way on all College Board Forms and in any communications with them so that they can keep all of your records in order and report your scores to the colleges that you designate. Using initials one time and not the next may cause confusion which may prevent your scores from being reported.

Keep an account of your registration number on each testing date. This will be most helpful if you need to contact the College Board at a later date.

9. Q: WHAT IS THE ACT?

A: The ACT is a four-part, two-hour and forty minute test of the abilities which students will need to succeed in college work. It deals more with the use of skills than with specific subject matter. In addition, the student is asked to complete a twenty-five minute Student Profile section to indicate his grades, background, goals, personal needs, and achievements.

10. Q: SHOULD I TAKE ACT EXAMINATIONS?

A: ACT (American College Testing) examinations are required for admission to many colleges, especially in the West and Middle West. Students should carefully check the admission requirements at prospective colleges to determine (1) whether ACT test is required or (2) if other prospective colleges require the SAT I.

11. Q: WHAT AREAS OF STUDY ARE TESTED?

A: English Usage – measures ability to understand and manipulate language.
Mathematics Usage – measures the ability to reason with mathematical abstractions.
Social Studies Reading – measures reading comprehension, special study skills, and problem-solving reasoning.
Natural Sciences Reading – measures evaluations and critical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

12. Q: WHEN DO I TAKE THE ACT EXAMS?

A: It is advisable in most cases to take the ACT examinations as early as possible in the senior year. Those juniors who are applying to colleges or scholarship programs requiring ACT score reports to be submitted earlier may take the tests in April or June at the end of their junior year. Adjustments are made in scoring so that juniors do not penalize themselves by taking the tests early and seniors do not benefit from taking them at a later time.

13. Q: WHY DOES THE ACT REQUEST MY HIGH SCHOOL GRADES?

A: ACT reports to the colleges which you designate a predictive correlation between your test scores and your grades to estimate how well you will probably do in college work.

14. Q: SHOULD I REPEAT THE ACT EXAMINATION?

A: Ordinarily it is advisable for a student to take the ACT more than once. Often students must do so to meet the requirements of a specific college or when the ACT scores seem low and inconsistent with their academic record.

Be sure to give your name EXACTLY the same way on all ACT Forms and in any communications with them so that the American College Program can keep all of your records in order and report your scores to the colleges that you designate. Using initials one time and not the next may cause confusion which may prevent your scores from being reported.

15. Q: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EARLY ACTION, EARLY DECISION, ROLLING ADMISSION AND REGULAR ACTION?

A: All of these terms have to do with when a college makes their decision whether or not you are going to be offered a spot at their institution. The most common type of acceptance is regular decision. This refers to the process whereby all applications are due by a certain date, and all of those applications are reviewed at the same time. A school that does not have regular decision will have rolling admissions. This is when applications are reviewed as they come into the admissions office. Students will be accepted until all the spots are filled. Early decision and early action are similar to one another, and to regular decision, in that applications are due by a certain date and all applications are reviewed together. However, the application deadline for early decision or early action is earlier than the regular decision deadline. If a student chooses to apply early decision, he or she must sign a contract which says that, if accepted, the student will pull all of his or her other applications and agree to go to that school, often without seeing a financial aid package. With early action, that contract is not in place.

16. Q: WHY WOULD A STUDENT CHOOSE TO APPLY EARLY ACTION OR EARLY DECISION?

A: Applying early action or early decision can increase your chances of getting into a school if your credentials are not totally up to par with their expectations because it shows that you really want to attend that school. It can also be a good decision, even if you do feel your credentials are up to par, if you know that school is the one for you. Be wary of applying early decision unless you are willing to go to that school no matter what the cost, as you will have no opportunity to weigh that school's financial aid packages against those from other schools.

17. Q: WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR ON A COLLEGE VISIT?

A: You should determine a few things that are important to you, such as size of classes, opportunities to study abroad or for internships, or placement rates within your major after graduation. Don't be afraid to ask these questions during the tour, or in the admissions office afterwards. Make sure that you ask the same questions at each school so that you can put them on a level playing field when you sit down to compare them.

While on the tours, look for a campus that seems comfortable to you – do you feel comfortable in the setting? With the type of people who attend that institution? Also look for an institution that offers what you need academically – Does this college offer your major? Does it offer a variety of majors that appeal to you, in case you decide to change majors? If possible, take the time to talk to a professor in your chosen major or attend a class. This can be set up in the admissions office. Also, thought it may seem odd, always take the time to eat on campus. You will be eating this food for the next four years, so it is important that you make sure that you can stomach what the cafeteria serves.

Campus visits

There's no substitute for seeing a college yourself!

There are lots of ways to find out about a college from brochures to videos to college fairs. But the bottom line is that nothing bears the test of going to a college and seeing it for yourself. Here are some ideas to help you make the most of a campus visit.

Before you go

Call the admissions office in advance

Just as there's no substitute for seeing a college firsthand, there's no substitute for advance planning. When you call the admissions office tell them the date you'd like to visit and the time of day you expect to arrive. If you want to stay overnight in a residence hall, ask if they can make arrangements. Also, find out about lining up an interview (if they offer them and you'd like one) or attending an information session, visiting classes and talking with faculty.

Read up on the college and think about questions

Go back through the information you've collected about the college. Check the resources at your school's counseling office and browse the college's web site, if possible. This research will help you think of questions to ask and aspects of the college to explore while you're there. The other side of this page has lists of questions to help you get started. As you think of other questions, write them down.

While you're there

Talk to as many students as you can

Once you're on campus, try to take advantage of a variety of ways to learn about the college:

- Meet with an admissions officer or attend an information session
- Take a tour of the campus
- Sit in on a class
- Have a meal in the cafeteria
- Pick up copies of the student newspaper and alumni magazine.
- Throughout your visit, talk to as many students as you can and don't be bashful about asking questions!

Prepare for the interview

If you have scheduled an interview, take along your list of questions, so you're sure to cover everything you wanted to find out. You'll probably be asked about your academic

background, interests, hobbies, goals and why you're interested in the college, so be ready to talk about that. As with any interview, be on time, or call ahead if you know you'll be delayed.

Take time to look around on your own

Take some time to explore the campus on your own and absorb the atmosphere. While organized activities can give you information you can't get on your own, the reverse is true, too.

Lots and lots of ????

You've probably already thought of lots of questions to ask during your campus visit. Here are some suggestions, but be sure to ask the questions that are important to **YOU**.

When you talk to students ask . . .

1. How many hours a week do you study? Is that typical here?
2. Are faculty members interested in students and accessible outside of class?
3. Do many students go home on weekends?
4. Are the athletic facilities open to all students or only to athletes?
5. Is it possible to study in your dorm room?
6. Is the food good?
7. Are campus jobs readily available?
8. Is there easy access to computers? Where are they located?
9. What's the library like as a place to study? To do research?
10. What do you like most about this college? Least?
11. How easy is it to get the classes you want?
12. If you could change something about this school, what would it be?

If you attend a class, ask yourself . . .

1. Are students prepared for the class? Do they seem interested in the material?
2. Do I feel that the students are learning –either new facts or new ways of thinking about a subject?
3. Is there time for questions and discussion? Do students participate?
4. Am I intellectually challenged by what is taking place in the class?
5. Is there good rapport between professors and students?

As you tour the campus, ask yourself . . .

1. Are the building in good repair? The grounds well-kept?
2. Are the residence halls pleasant and quiet enough to study in? Are there laundry and kitchen facilities?
3. What's the cafeteria like?
4. Are computers and lab equipment up-to-date and plentiful?
5. What's the surrounding town or city like?

In an interview or information session, you could ask. . . .

1. Does the college have academic programs that fit my interests?
2. Where are computer terminals located? Will I have to pay extra for computer time?
3. Will I have access to special equipment (such as an electron microscope) as a first-year student?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the college's advising system?
5. How many students will there be in courses I'm likely to take in my first year? Are those courses taught by professors or graduate assistants?
6. What kinds of campus jobs are available for first-year students?
7. Will there be any new programs or facilities in the next two years?
8. What are the college's recent graduates doing now?

Write down your impressions

1. Were the people you met friendly? Did they answer your questions fully and candidly?
2. What do you think of the quality of instruction and the academic atmosphere?
3. Were the students the kind of people you'd like to get to know?
4. Did you like the social atmosphere?
5. Would you like to spend more time there?

College Admissions Checklist

Use this convenient checklist to remind yourself of individual college admissions requirements and to record the progress of your application procedures.

College Name					
Catalog Reviewed					
Application Deadline					
Application Fee					
Required Tests:	-SAT I -SAT II -ACT -Official score report required	-SAT I -SAT II -ACT -Official score report required	-SAT I -SAT II -ACT -Official score report required	-SAT I -SAT II -ACT -Official score report required	-SAT I -SAT II -ACT -Official score report required
Course Requirements Fulfilled					
Personal Interview Required					
Interview Appointment Requested					
Interview Questions Prepared					
Recommendations Required	Names: _____ _____ _____ Completed	Names: _____ _____ _____ Completed	Names: _____ _____ _____ Completed	Names: _____ _____ _____ Completed	Names: _____ _____ _____ Completed
Application Filed					
Application Packet Forwarded to Counseling Office					
College Reply Date					
Financial Aid Deadline					
Required Financial Aid Forms	-FAFSA -CSS Profile -Institution's Financial Aid Forms	-FAFSA -CSS Profile -Institution's Financial Aid Forms	-FAFSA -CSS Profile -Institution's Financial Aid Forms	-FAFSA -CSS Profile -Institution's Financial Aid Forms	-FAFSA -CSS Profile -Institution's Financial Aid Forms
Financial Interview Required					

WHAT IS THE FAFSA?

Why fill out a FAFSA?

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the first step in the financial aid process. You use it to apply for federal student financial aid, such as grants, loans, and work-study. In addition, most states and colleges use information from the FAFSA to award non-federal aid.

Why all the questions?

Student responses to the FAFSA questions are entered into a formula from the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The result is your Expected Family Contribution, or EFC. The EFC measures your family's financial strength. It is used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Your state and the colleges you list may also use some of your responses. They will determine if you may be eligible for school or state aid, in addition to federal aid.

How do I find out what my Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is?

FAFSA will send you a report called a Student Aid Report, or SAR, through the mail or the Internet. The SAR lists the information you reported on your FAFSA and will tell you your EFC. It is important to review your SAR when you receive it. Make sure all of your information is correct. Make any necessary changes or provide additional information.

How much aid do I get?

Your EFC, along with the rest of your FAFSA information, is made available to all the colleges you list in Step Two of the FAFSA. The colleges use your EFC to prepare a financial aid package to help you meet your financial need. Financial need is the difference between your EFC and your college's cost of attendance (which can include living expenses), as determined by the college. If you or your family have special circumstances that should be taken into account, contact your college's financial aid office. Some examples of special circumstances are: unusual medical or dental expenses or a large change in income from last year to this year.

When do I get the aid?

Any financial aid you are eligible to receive will be paid to you through your college. Typically, your college will first use the aid to pay tuition, fees, and room and board (if provided by the college). Any remaining aid is paid to you for your other educational expenses. If you are eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, you may receive it from only one college for the same period of enrollment.

How can I have more colleges receive my FAFSA information?

If you are filing a paper FAFSA, you can indicate up to four colleges to receive your information. You may add more colleges to your record once your FAFSA is processed. There are three ways to do this.

1. If you have a Federal Student Aid PIN, go to FAFSA on the Web at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Select the "Add or Delete a School Code" link to add school codes to your FAFSA.
2. If you do not have a PIN, wait until you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) either by e-mail or by postal mail. Look for the four-digit Data Release Number (DRN) on the first page of your SAR, and then call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). The DRN, along with your name and Social Security number, verifies your identity and allows a customer service representative to add additional school codes to your FAFSA.

3. The financial aid administrator at your college can add their school code to your FAFSA, if you provide the college with your DRN.

NOTE: If you need information to go to more than four colleges, you can use FAFSA on the Web or the FED-AID phone number to add up to six new school codes to your FAFSA. However, if you exceed the ten-college limit, any new school codes that you add will replace the same number of original school codes.

Where can I get more information on student aid?

The best place for information about student financial aid is the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend. The financial aid administrator can tell you about student aid available from your state, the college itself and other sources.

You can also check out these resources:

- www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov
- www.students.gov
- The Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
TTY users (for the hearing-impaired) may call 1-800-730-8913
- Your high school counselor's office
- Your state aid agency
- Your local library's reference section

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

- Apply for a PIN number
- Find School codes
- Submit Free Application for Federal Student Aid on-line.

Get this and more at: www.fafsa.ed.gov

FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

International Education Financial Aid
www.iefaf.org

Military Service
www.military.com

- GI Bill
- ROTC

National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators
www.nasfaa.org
www.studentaid.org

National Student Loan Data System
www.nsls.ed.gov

Overview of Financial Aid
www.finaid.org

Pennsylvania Assistance
www.aessuccess.org (PA Loans)
www.pheaa.org (PA State Grants)

Scholarship Search
www.fastweb.com
www.gocollege.com
www.petersons.com
www.educationplanner.com

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov/finaid.html
www.ifap.ed.gov
www.studentaid.ed.gov
www.students.gov

COLLEGE SAVINGS

College Savings
www.collegesavings.org
www.moneycentral.msn.com
www.patap.org (PA Tuition Account Program)
www.upromise.com

Budgets, Debt Management
www.1stdebtconsolidation4u.com
www.cc-bc.com
www.ccsintl.org
www.center4debtmanagement.com
www.mapping-your-future.org
www.myfico.com
www.nfcc.org
www.youcandealwithit.com

FREQUENTLY REQUESTED TELEPHONE NUMBERS

General Information about Federal Aid:
1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
· FAFSA help
· Request copies of Student Aid Report

Pennsylvania Higher Education
Assistance Agency Grant and Loan
Programs:
1-800-692-7392

GLOSSARY OF SPECIALIZED VOCABULARY **FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS**

ACCREDITATION – An approval of an institution by an accrediting body which evaluates schools and programs in relation to specific standards of educational quality. Should not be confused with institutional membership in a professional association which is not an accreditation organization.

ADMISSION TESTING PROGRAMS (ATP) – A division of the College Board that provides college entrance exams and services for students planning to attend college. Included are the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Test of Standard Written English, SAT II, and the Student Descriptive Questionnaire.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT – A service of the College Board that provides high schools with course descriptions in college subjects and Advanced Placement Examinations in these subjects. High schools administer the examinations to qualified students who might then be eligible for advanced placement, college credit, or both, on the basis of satisfactory grades.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT (ACT) – A four-part battery used by many colleges for admissions and/or placement purposes. You should check the college catalog for specific test requirements at particular schools.

CANDIDATES REPLY DATE AGREEMENT (CRDA) – A college subscribing to this agreement will not require any applicants offered admission as freshmen to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1 of the year the applicant applies. The purpose of this agreement is to give applicants time to hear from all the colleges to which they have applied before having to make a commitment.

COLLEGE PREPARATORY SUBJECTS (C.P.) – A term used to describe admissions requirements or recommendations. It is usually understood to mean English, history and social studies, foreign languages, mathematics, and science.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE (CSS) – A service of the College Board that assists post-secondary institutions, the Federal Government, State Scholarship Programs, and other organizations in the equitable distribution of student financial aid funds. By measuring a family's financial strength and analyzing its ability to contribute to college costs. CSS need analysis services offer a standardized method of determining a student's need.

COLLEGE WORK-STUDY PROGRAM (CWSP) – A Federally sponsored program that provides jobs for students with demonstrated financial need. Generally students are paid at least the Federal minimum wage; jobs are available through colleges as well as public and private non-profit agencies.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION – A college program in which a student alternates between periods of full-time study and full-time employment in a related field. Students are paid for their work at the prevailing rate. Typically, five years are required to complete a bachelor’s degree under the cooperative plan, but graduates have the advantage of having completed about one year’s practical work experience in addition to their studies. Some colleges refer to this type of program as work study, but it should not be confused with the Federally sponsored College Work-Study Program.

EARLY ADMISSION –The practice of some colleges to admit certain students who have not yet graduated high school (usually students of exceptional ability who have completed their Junior SAT).

EARLY ACTION – Information must be on file with particular colleges at a very early date. Notification is given prior to regular decision.

EARLY DECISION – The practice of some colleges to admit highly motivated, highly qualified students at an early date. The early decision agreement is binding. Read the fine print. You may apply “Early Decision” to only one college. Once admitted you must withdraw any other regular college applications.

FINANCIAL AID FORM (FAF) – A document supplied by the College Scholarship Service (CSS) used by parents of dependent students or independent students to provide information about their income, assets, expenses, and liabilities. The CSS uses this information to determine how much money a family is able to contribute to a student’s college expenses. It can be used to apply to all federal aid programs. (Profile FAFSA)

FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE – Twelve or more semester hours per 15-week semester; Eight or more semester hours per 10-week quarter.

HONORS PROGRAM – Any special program for very able students which offers the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these.

MAJOR – The subject of study in which the student specializes. Most programs specialize in the junior and senior year of college.

OPEN ADMISSIONS – The college admissions policy of admitting high school graduates and other adults generally without regard to conventional academic qualifications; such as high school subjects, high school grades, and admission test scores. Virtually all applicants with high school diplomas or their equivalent are accepted.

PENNSYLVANIA HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (PHEAA) – Created to improve higher education opportunities for residents of the state by providing financial aid to help meet the costs of post secondary education.

PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT I/NMSQT) – Measure verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities. Most students take the PSAT I/NMSQT as juniors, but some are sophomores or seniors. The test is co-sponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) and is delivered and administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Scores can be used to estimate a student's performance on the College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test. Only juniors are eligible for the National Merit Scholarships.

RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) – Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the U. S. Air Force, Army, and Navy.

ROLLING ADMISSIONS – An admissions procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as school record and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

SAT I REASONING TEST – The College Board's test of critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing ability. Refer to the overview of the SAT I which appears later in this guide.

SAT II SUBJECT TESTS – Tests which measure knowledge in specific subjects (e.g. chemistry, biology, foreign language, mathematics. etc.). They are one hour in length and are administered by the College Entrance Examination Board. Three percent of the colleges in the United States require SAT I and II for admission. Many of the highly competitive colleges require them, and some less competitive colleges require them for some programs (e.g. engineering, science, etc.). You should check the college catalog for specific requirements at particular schools.

SEMESTER – A period of about 17 or 18 weeks which makes up half of the usual academic year in colleges using this kind of calendar.

STUDENT SEARCH SERVICE – A College Board program designed to help colleges identify potential applicants with the particular academic or personal characteristics they are seeking.

TESTS OF GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) – A series of five tests that adults who did not complete high school may take through their state education system to qualify for a high school equivalency certificate. The tests are also administered at centers outside the United States and to members of the armed services through the U. S. Armed Forces Institute.

THREE/TWO – LIBERAL ARTS AND CAREER COMBINATION – A program in which a student completes three years of study in a liberal arts field followed by two years of professional/technical study (e.g. engineering, allied health, forestry). At the end of this study, the student is awarded the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science Degree.

TRANSFER PROGRAM – An education program in a two-year college that is offered primarily for students who plan to continue their studies in a four-year college or university.

TRIMESTER – An academic calendar period of about 15 weeks. Three trimesters make up one year. Students make normal progress by attending two of the trimesters each year, and some colleges can accelerate their programs by attending all three trimesters in one or more years.

TUITION – The cost of instruction charged by a school; tuition does not include fees, books, room, meals, or other charges.