

Q&A EXPERTISE WHEN IT COUNTS

QUICK GUIDE TO COLLEGE FOR PARENTS

Be the Glue: Holding it All Together

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM SEASONED PARENTS

Be aware that your student is listening and taking cues from you. If you are stressed and frantic they will take on that same energy.

Be Honest and straightforward with your students so they understand what is doable financially from the start.

Never call a college representative or coach. You not only take away the student's chance to learn but some colleges will track who is calling and who is really applying and that reflects poorly on the student.

Careful not to bad mouth other students or other's college choices. You might not know the whole story. There are lots of variables in college admissions. Different programs have different requirements.

Avoid power struggles at home by agreeing on a set time each week to discuss college matters. Students become exhausted and anxious by all the college chatter.

What schools are on the list now? Did you check with your teacher? Have you registered for the ACT?
Ugggghhh!



KEEPING THE CALENDAR

- Calendar all testing dates
- Schedule tutors and test prep
- Keep track of college visits
- Remind students when colleges will be visiting their high schools



HELPING THEM DEMONSTRATE INTEREST

Colleges often make a decisions based on a student's demonstrated interest in that college. If a student has never been on their radar that is a negative. Make sure your student visits if possible, takes a tour, goes to their local info sessions and fills out the contact information online. If that school comes to their high school make sure they attend. If not be sure they email the rep to ask for info.

THE STUDENT/PARENT PARTNERSHIP

RESEARCHING SCHOLARSHIPS:

Organizing the scholarship hunt is an extra added layer that can be difficult for students to manage along with just applying college. It's the perfect place for parents to support the effort.

- Identify and research scholarship web sites
- Find scholarships that match your student's strengths
- Help students to craft their scholarship theme
- Help keep the scholarship search organized
- Create project/scholarship timeline
- Remember all scholarships require that the students do something like write an essay, participate in a project or demonstrate a talent.

Best Scholarship Search Websites

fastweb.com
collegenet.com
collegeboard.com
scholarships.com
scholarshipamerica.org
scholarshipmonkey.com

FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

- Research teams and positions that may suit your athlete
- Will that position will be available the following year?
- Be realistic about the competition
- Read the team rosters and the accomplishments of team members to see if your student is in the ball park
- Sports should be used to leverage the best education possible
- Remember coaches leave, injuries happen - so look at the school as a whole not just for sports
- Students need to initiate conversations with coaches do demonstrate leadership and maturity

Junior Year
students should register and
be cleared for eligibility to play
in college at NCAA.org



THE COMPETITION FOR LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

is much less than for those offered by large national organizations. So start local and then branch out from there.

A few \$1000 scholarships can really add up and pay for books and living expenses.

Check with your Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Social Organizations, Ethnic Organizations, Churches, Unions you belong to, even the company you work for may offer scholarships to children of employees.



"Anytime you do something for your student that they can do themselves, you are essentially saying to them, "You are not capable" and that will become a self fulfilling prophecy."

ENCOURAGING INDEPENDENCE

- Have dinner together when possible
- Create conversation that enables critical thinking
- Let students speak for themselves, don't think for them, it's a skill they need
- Forming and defending their opinions is important
- Assume they can handle their affairs and they will
- All correspondence with schools, teachers and colleges should be done by the student to help them demonstrate their maturity
- Do not write their essays, feedback is okay
- Their work should reflect their ability - NOTE: Colleges know the difference between the voice of a 17 year old's essay and that of a middle aged adult

THE ESTIMATED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION

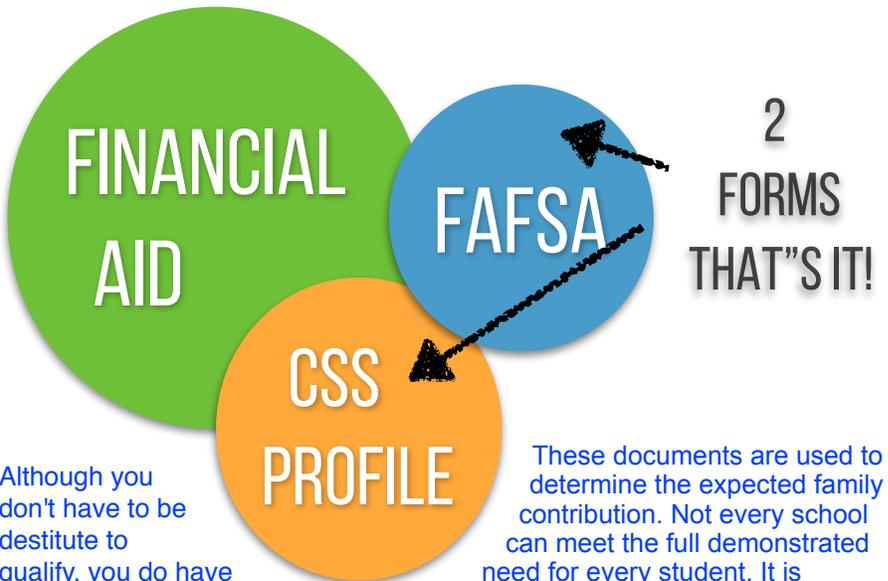
- Your EFC is what you can afford to pay
- Use the Collegeboard's Net Price Calculator to determine your EFC studentnpc.collegeboard.org/
- It provides a side-by-side comparison report
- Put in the names of your colleges then the click on the Financial Aid Tab (e.g. See Princeton and an MIT, one offers higher aid but the other has more students receiving aid)
- Learn what assets can or should be moved
- Get tips on filling out the FAFSA

MANY COLLEGES AWARD AID TO STUDENTS ON A "FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE" BASIS. DEADLINES ARE CRITICAL.

BE CAUTIOUS WHEN USING A COLLEGE FINANCIAL PLANNER

Many are good, but some are not. Be sure to vet your professional and make sure they are not just trying to sell you insurance or annuities!

FINANCIAL AID = WHAT IT COSTS TO ATTEND MINUS WHAT YOUR FAMILY CAN PAY



Although you don't have to be destitute to qualify, you do have to show that you need aid. Fewer than two in ten families can contribute fully to the costs of education at public four-year colleges and fewer than one in 10 can contribute fully to the annual average costs at private four-year colleges. Financial "need" is defined as the difference between what it costs to attend a college and what you and your family can contribute toward those costs. Private colleges might also require the CSS Profile, which contains additional financial information not included in the FAFSA. The CSS PROFILE is administered by the Collegeboard and can be found at www.collegeboard.com.

These documents are used to determine the expected family contribution. Not every school can meet the full demonstrated need for every student. It is increasingly common for a student to be admitted to a college but denied the full amount of financial aid needed to attend.

Check with each college to see who requires the CSS PROFILE and their specific deadlines; they differ from college to college and some have deadlines in the FALL!

Deadlines vary considerably from college to college. Send all the necessary financial aid information to the colleges to which you are applying as soon as you can.

UC or an Ivy League school. Even if you don't think you qualify, you might qualify for some aid if educational costs are high enough or if more than one person in the family will be attending college. Also, keep in mind that every institution calculates need differently.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. THE FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) FAFSA.ed.gov FAFSA becomes available on January 1st
2. CSS Profile (only if required) go to collegeboard.com CSS Profile, which requires additional financial information not included in the FAFSA

The FAFSA is required of all applicants and should be submitted as soon as possible after January 1

Q&A - THE COLLEGE TIMELINE WHAT YOUR STUDENTS SHOULD BE DOING AND WHEN

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Be thoughtful about your academic choices.
- Take advanced classes in your areas of strength.
- Begin exploring activities that interest you both on and off campus.
- Community service and engagement is important.
- Become an active participant in your classes
- Plan an active summer.
- Considering pursuing interests that are unique.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Take the PSAT to determine a baseline score and to determine areas where you need to improve.
- Start to focus on a few interests that you can develop and master over the next three years.
- Make the most of your summers by challenging yourself with new experiences.
- Consider doing a college program in an area of interest. (High Schools that transcript college level courses will count those courses the same way they would an Honors or AP Class)

JUNIOR YEAR

- Challenge yourself academically by taking Honors or AP classes in your areas of strength.
- Consider taking college classes at local colleges to show rigor.
- Take a mock ACT and SAT in the fall.
- Proceed only with the test you do best on, colleges don't have a preference.
- Prep in the areas where you need work
- Register for SAT or ACT tests in advance.
- Prep for and take tests when you have time to prepare. (If you play football in the fall, maybe wait until winter to concentrate on testing)
- Start researching colleges.
- Begin visiting college campuses of all types: small, large, private, public, city, suburban, etc. to get a feel for where you are most comfortable and will succeed.
- Ramp up your extracurricular activities.
- Take on leadership positions.
- Summer between Junior and Senior year is very important. Plan a substantial activity that will enhance your application and is preferably related to your potential major.

SENIOR YEAR

- Take your last tests in the fall.
- Determine what schools you can apply to and can afford.
- Begin to create a solid college list with an equal amount of "Likely" "50/50", and "Reach" schools.
- Apply to about 10 schools, applying to more becomes to difficult to manage and demonstrate true interest.
- Keep visiting colleges, especially those on your list. Take the tours and fill out the info cards so they know you were there.
- Check to see if any of your schools require a Part 1 of the application due in October, i.e. Georgetown, USC
- Send Early Decision, Early Action, Priority and Rolling Applications before November 1st.
- Ask for letters of Recommendation from two academic teachers from Junior and/or Senior Year. Give them at least three weeks advance notice.
- Send final test scores to all your colleges.
- Send transcripts after your first senior semester.
- Any element of a student's application can be sent at anytime. They will be put in the student's file as soon as they arrive.