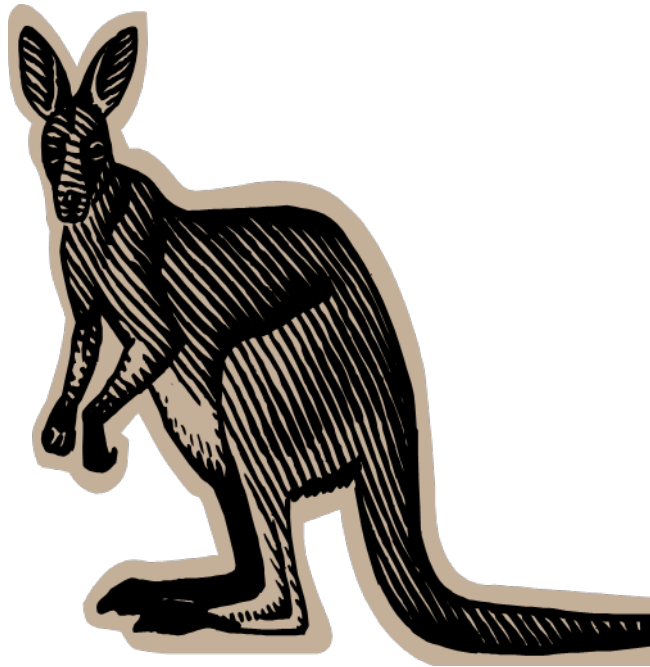


TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



POST SECONDARY PLANNING GUIDE

SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

**TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Dear Juniors and Parents/Guardians:

We are pleased to present this year's Junior Planning Guide to you as you begin the exciting journey to your post-high school education. This book combines information from many sources and has been written with you and your needs in mind. It is designed to provide you with the most accurate and current information available. As you use it, you will find it to be a valuable resource towards having a successful experience over the next year.

While this book does have a great deal of information, there is more available to you. Students, it is vital that you arrange regular conferences with your counselor. You will probably be surprised at how much time you will spend during the next year in the Counseling office and with your counselor. Keep in mind that your counselor's vast experience is at your disposal and so we encourage you to access that knowledge and experience.

The planning process you are about to begin can be both very exciting and challenging. For many students and families, planning for college began years ago. Now that you, as juniors, are about to take the more formal steps to accomplish that plan, there is a natural and understandable sense of excitement. It is also challenging because you will be working on developing plans in an area in which you may have little experience. You should begin by getting organized, staying on task, and utilizing all of the people in your life who are ready to help and support you. Your parents/guardians and family, your teachers, and your counselor at Terryville High School are the immediate resources for you, and as your counselors, we are looking forward to sharing this adventure with you.

Sincerely,

The School Counseling Department

Mike McGowan, School Counselor
Lori Lusitani, School Counselor
Patricia Borda, School Counseling Secretary

CAREER PLANNING

What is career planning?

A career is not just an occupation or paid job. It is all the productive work, paid and unpaid, performed throughout a person's lifetime. This includes work at home and volunteer work in the community, as well as work for an employer. Career education is a joint effort of the home, school, and community to provide all students from pre-kindergarten through high school with opportunities to:

- Learn about their interests, abilities, and aspirations.
- Become aware of and appreciate a range of careers.
- Develop decision-making, job-seeking, and job-keeping skills

Career education is delivered to Terryville High School students through the instructional program, counseling program, advisory program, and through collaborative school/community programs.

Choose a Career

Choosing a potential career can be very exciting though it requires you to look inward. You need to ask yourself, "What am I?" You need to look at yourself in many different ways. You can look at yourself in a mirror. You can look at yourself through the eyes of your friends. You can look at yourself through your likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, attitudes, values, and abilities. In order to plan for the future, you need to make choices based on what you find out about yourself. As you take career assessments and talk with your friends and family about the way they see you, you will learn new things about yourself.

Career Assessments Available

There are several types of career interest inventories and aptitude tests available to you in school. During advisory, you completed some career assessments, which hopefully were of use to you. During your junior year you will also be taking other Interest Inventories in Advisory to further explore some possible careers based on your interests and skills

THE COLLEGE SEARCH

The *Search Process* can be both exciting and challenging. It is clearly exciting because you will be taking the first formal steps to find the college you will be attending in two years. It is challenging because there are more than 4,146 colleges and universities in the United States and you might even add to that number by considering colleges in other countries. There are many steps to this process which will be identified in this section. There are also many people who will assist you. Your parents, other family members, and your school counselor are part of the entire planning process and are eager to assist you in many different ways.

The first step in looking for colleges actually is an inward look at you. You must gain a real understanding of the kind of person and student you are. When you consider going to college, there is the “dream” phase. At this point, you really are thinking about things that are external to attending college. It may be that skiing in Colorado or surfing off the California coast sounds fabulous. But you must ask yourself and your parents if this is a realistic goal. If it is, then continue with that thought; if not, begin to deal with the realities of your plans for college.

Ask yourself:

1. How *far from home* do you want to be? It is time to deal with the reality of who you are and if you should really be closer to home or farther away. A guide you may wish to use is: up to 2 hours from home; 2-4 hours from home; 4-8 hours from home; a plane trip from home. Each distance changes your contact with home and you and your parent’s ability to visit while you are at college.
2. Have you identified a *major, a career direction, or general area of study*? If so, that should be a critical question to answer. All computer searches and a number of printed sources have lists of colleges with your preferred field of study. Some lists, such as for English, may last several pages while others, such as Pharmacy, may have relatively few colleges.
3. Do you want an *urban, suburban, or rural* environment? When in or close to a large city, the city may exert a powerful influence on you and your collegiate experience. Is this what you are looking for as part of your experience? Suburban locations may seem ideal as the balance between urban and rural, but if you like to be in the woods or hills, they can still be quite a distance from you.
4. *Academically*, what degree of challenge is best for you? How do you respond to “pressure cooker” environments? Are you looking for a school where you can participate in some activities or one where most of your time would be devoted to classroom work? Are you comfortable with the idea that you may be near the middle or lower part of your college class or do you prefer being near the top of your college class?
5. *Selectivity* in the admissions process is a key consideration in formulating a final list of college applications. There are degrees of selectivity in admissions with some colleges admitting 10%-15% of its applicants while on the other end of the spectrum some colleges admit virtually all applicants. Compare your entrance exam scores (SAT or ACT) along with your cumulative G.P.A. to each school’s typical freshmen admitted students.

6. Are internships, study abroad, independent study, core curriculum and required courses important to you?
7. Begin to think about diversity and what role it plays in your college plans. Ask yourself if a racially, socially, religiously, or academically diverse population is one you want or want to avoid. Do you want to replicate your Terryville experience or are you looking for something different?
8. Cost is a concern for most families and each family must determine its own level of financial comfort. It is vital that all families discuss limits early on in the process. It is equally important to recognize that financial aid is available and families should feel free to discuss their individual circumstances with college financial aid officers. For some families, the final family contribution may be the same at a college that costs \$10,000 or \$35,000.
9. Sports, clubs, and activities may have been important to you in high school. Do you want to continue or investigate some new interests?

TYPES OF SCHOOLS

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

University: An institution which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism, or agriculture). 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 and/or professional training may be available but is not emphasized.

Engineering or Technological College: An independent professional school which 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 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 fields related to engineering and/or various trades. Students may earn an Associate's Degree or a certificate/diploma, depending upon 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 3 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 Airforce. These institutions (West Point, Annapolis, The Air Force Academy, and The 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 science. The Coast Guard Academy handles admission as do other colleges and universities.

RESOURCES TO GET STARTED

While it is easy to find colleges, it is challenging to find colleges that have the features which are important to you. Once you have identified those colleges, the next step is to see where they fall in terms of admission standards. Remember that some colleges are very selective and others are less so. Below is a description of three commonly used approaches to defining admission selectivity for individual students. One word of caution is needed here. One student's "Reach" school may be another's "likely" or "safe" school. It is vital to be realistic in this assessment and there are publications, Terryville High School statistics, and your counselor's experiences to assist you.

REACH

A "reach" school can be defined as one where your credentials may not match those of the typically admitted student. Another way to define this category of school is to look at their admission percentage. Colleges which admit fewer than 25% of its applicants should be considered "reach" schools for *all* applicants, since there is little predictability in their choice of admitted students. Valedictorians are not guaranteed admission to these schools and students with lower class standing often are accepted. You may have the credentials to fit the college's profile, but when colleges admit so few students, other characteristics play an important role in the admissions process. These other factors include geographic distribution, special talents, and a family's history with that college. This last factor is known as *legacy*.

MATCH (often referred to as *TARGET* or *POSSIBLE*)

In this category, your credentials match those of the typically admitted student. This category may have the largest number of schools for you and may, in fact, encompass some schools that are more selective than the others, but they represent a group of colleges from which you might legitimately expect some letters of admission.

LIKELY

This category of colleges should represent those places where your credentials exceed those of the typically admitted student. It is strongly recommended that you select at least two schools from this group. While they may not represent your top choices, they should be colleges that have the most important characteristics on your list and which you would be content to attend. Two such applications are recommended because every year and in every high school, some students will attend their “likely” or “safe” school. All students would like to make choices and this would give everyone that opportunity. These are also schools where students may be offered merit scholarships to attend.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS SELECTIVITY GUIDE

Defining admissions selectivity and listing colleges in these categories can be a useful tool for students and parents in identifying colleges. Colleges vary in admissions difficulty. Some colleges admit fewer than 20% of applicants while others offer admission to all applicants who have followed a college preparatory program.

MOST COMPETITIVE

Colleges in this group are among the most difficult in the nation for gaining admission. SAT scores tend to range from 655-800 and ACT scores are 29 or higher. Among the colleges in this group are: all of the Ivy Leagues, Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Carnegie Mellon, UCLA, Colby, Colgate, Connecticut College, Emory, George Washington University, Hamilton College, Lafayette, New York University, Smith, Tufts, Tulane, Vassar, Washington University in St. Louis, Wesleyan, and Williams. Even superior students will encounter a great deal of competition for admission. Students usually will have a transcript with high grades in mostly Honors and Advanced Placement courses.

HIGHLY COMPETITIVE

The median SAT scores range for successful applicants to colleges in this group is 620-654 or 27 or 28 on the ACT, and students usually rank in the top of their high school class. Students who expect to successfully gain admission to colleges in this group typically will have taken many Advanced Placement and honors courses. Colleges in this group include: American, Babson, Bard, Bentley, University of Connecticut, Elon, Fairfield University, Fordham, Lawrence, Lehigh, Loyola (MD), Miami (OH), Muhlenberg, Providence, Stonehill, Syracuse, Trinity (CT), Union, Villanova, and Wheaton.

VERY COMPETITIVE

Colleges in this group generally admit applicants whose median SAT scores range from 573-619 or whose ACT scores are 24-26. Colleges in this group expect students to have completed a rigorous college preparatory program with Advanced Placement and honors courses adding additional strength to the transcript. Colleges categorized as Very Competitive include: Bryant, Canisius, Clark, Clarkson, Drew, Drexel, Hobart & William Smith, Juniata, Michigan State, Moravian, Quinnipiac, Roanoke, and York (PA).

COMPETITIVE

This is a large and broad category of schools. The median SAT scores for students in this group range from 500-572 and their ACT scores are between 21 and 23. Students are expected to have completed a strong college preparatory program of studies with many honors courses. Admission standards vary widely in this group. Some of the colleges at this level of selectivity include: Assumption, Castleton, CCSU, Champlain, Fairleigh Dickinson, Franklin Pierce, University of Hartford, Hartwick, Keene State, Lynchburg, Lynn, New England College, Newbury, Norwich University, Ohio University, Rivier, Utica, Wentworth, and Western New England.

LESS COMPETITIVE

Students accepted to colleges in this group have median SAT scores that generally fall below 500 or ACT scores below 21. These schools usually admit 85% or more of the students who apply for admission. There are a number of excellent choices in this group. For a large number of students, colleges in this group offer particular strength in a chosen major. For other students, the competitive level in class is more appropriate. For still other students, colleges in this group offer opportunities of academic growth which may then allow them to start their collegiate career with the hope of transferring to other institutions. Some of the colleges that Barron's classifies as Less Competitive for admission are: American International College, Becker College, University of Bridgeport, Colby-Sawyer, Ferrum, Lyndon State College, Mt. Ida, Nichols College, and Plymouth State University.

SPECIAL

Another category is that of the specialty school. Often *music conservatories, dance programs, and art schools*, these colleges expect students to complete a college preparatory program of studies but admission decisions may rest primarily with auditions or portfolio presentations. Several colleges in this group also look for academic strength as reflected in course choices, grades, class rank, and test scores.

UNDERSTANDING THE TYPES OF COLLEGE DECISIONS

Early Decision

Students who are absolutely certain of their college choice may apply as an *Early Decision* candidate. Choosing this option generally means that the student has entered into a binding agreement with the school to enroll if accepted under this plan. The student would then agree to withdraw all applications to other schools if accepted as an Early Decision candidate. If, however, the student is deferred to Regular Admission, then the student is no longer obligated to enroll if accepted under the Regular Admission procedures. The student need not reapply if deferred. If the student is denied or rejected, however, he or she is not permitted to re-apply.

Early Action

Many schools offer this option to give students feedback at an earlier date in the process. In contrast to Early Decision, the *Early Action* option does not require a student to enroll if accepted. Students may use this option with several schools. Be sure, however, to read each college's materials to be absolutely certain that they allow multiple Early Action applications. As with Early Decision outcomes, an Early Action applicant can be deferred to Regular Admission or rejected.

Rolling Admission

Some schools render decisions soon after the applicant's profile is complete. These decisions are made throughout the year and at any time – usually by February. Generally speaking, they do not require a response until May 1, and a commitment to enroll is not expected until that date.

Waiting List

Students who are qualified for admission but whose profiles are not as strong as other candidates in the applicant pool may be placed on the *Waiting List*. This means that the student on this list may be offered admission after the May 1 Candidate Reply Date. It is at that point that schools know how many students plan to enroll and whether they can take some more good applicants. The percentage of students offered admission from the list differs from year to year.

Notes:

- It is the college – not the student – that determines which Plans are available.
- The definitions of Early Decision/Early Action have been changing. Be sure to read the Application Instructions, too, to see if there are any specific restrictions or rules. Discuss the issue with your counselor to keep current and be sure you understand the limitations and implications of your school's Early Decision/Early Action Plan.

CAMPUS VISITS

Campus visits provide the perfect opportunity to get a sense of the campus in the most direct way possible. You will have an opportunity to observe students on campus, to visit all the important facilities, to sit in on classes and to meet with those people on campus who can provide information to help you make your best decision. In addition to specific features about the school, you will get a “feel” for the school to find out if it would be a good place for you to spend the next four years of your life. Much like any other major purchase you will make, a campus visit is a vital part of gathering information before you make a financial as well as personal commitment to a college.

Colleges encourage students and their families to visit the campus and gather first-hand information about their school. Making arrangements for a visit is a simple matter. What may be more complex is arranging for a more complete tour of several colleges, often referred to as the “grand tour” of colleges. Early planning and the tips included in this section will help you make better use of your time and to get the most out of your visits.

Tip Number 1: Be aware of how much you can reasonably accomplish during your visits. A good recommendation is to plan on visiting two colleges each day. How many days you should use for college visits depends on the distance you will be traveling and how much time you have available. Consider a day trip as a guide. With two colleges each day, you will be able to visit between six and eight colleges; that may be all you can handle without confusing one college with another. When making your plans, try to find the most efficient way to travel and focus on being able to get to each location comfortably. A typical college tour is about one hour in length. If the college offers a group information session, plan on adding an additional 45 minutes to an hour. If you plan on having a personal interview with a member of the admissions staff, plan on another hour. While it is not required at all colleges, a personal interview is a fabulous opportunity to share information about you and what you can offer to a college. It is also a great way to gather more in-depth information about the college.

Tip Number 2: If you have some specific interests such as athletics, the “arts”, the labs, or a particular field of study, you should plan on making contact with a coach or professor in your area of interest. Most faculty members are interested in speaking with potential students who have interests similar to theirs. Again, you are making potentially great connections with the college or university. These faculty members could be advocates for you in the admission office should you decide to apply. This will add additional time to your visit and explains why two colleges each day may be the ideal number.

Tip Number 3: Try to visit colleges when they are in session and students are actively visible on campus. This may not always be possible based on your and your family’s personal, work, or school schedule, but it creates an opportunity to see things as you will experience them.

Tip Number 4: While you may want to eat a particular restaurant you saw that looked just great, focus on gathering college information. That means eating on campus. Ideally, can you eat in the student dining facility? What better way to see the variety of means available and to actually taste the food than by eating on campus.

Tip Number 5: Read the bulletin boards, posters, and campus publications. This will give you a real “feel” for issues on campus and how students feel about them.

Tip Number 6: Ask questions. For example, remember the beautiful new swimming pool you saw? Is it available for student use or is it reserved for the swim team? The same question can be used for the gym. You may not want to play intercollegiate basketball but intramural sports have a real interest for you.

Tip Number 7: Take a good look at the quality of the facilities. Are they clean and in good repair? If you're in a warm climate, are the buildings air-conditioned? What about the grounds – are they well maintained? Your level of comfort with your surroundings is critical to your being happy.

Tip Number 8: Look at the dorms if you will be a resident student. How many students to a room? Are they spacious with closets? If you have never shared a room with someone, remember that most dorm rooms house two or more students. Are the buildings clean and well maintained? Again, what you see is what you will have when you enroll.

Tip Number 9: Will you need special services? This list includes academic support services, health facilities, special food needs. Academic support services include general tutoring services, more intense services for students with Learning Disabilities and accommodations for students covered by a Section 504 Plan. Health facilities should include access to nurses, physicians, therapists, or other trained personnel to take care of your needs. Food concerns should include a review of available meals for students with specific needs. Among the concerns that may apply to you are food allergies, the need for kosher kitchens and vegan or vegetarian meals. There may be others that apply to you so be aware that this is an important part of your life and you need to be sure that the college has provisions to accommodate your needs, whatever they may be.

Tip Number 10: If possible, see if one of the students you met would be willing to let you email them with follow-up questions.

Tip Number 11: Bring along a camera and notepad. Take pictures and make notes of what you see and hear. Before leaving campus, make a list of things that are important to you and the answers to your questions. You may think that you will not get confused or forget what you saw on each campus. But you will – because you are seeing so much in a compressed amount of time.

Tip Number 12: Before leaving town, drive around the perimeter of the college, particularly if you are in an urban area. 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? How far to the mall or other attractions such as movies?

FOR PARENTS

Parents may want to spend time in the Financial Aid Office or the Business Office discussing college financing during your campus visit. Financial aid issues, processing of forms and arranging for various financial concerns can easily be handled during your campus visit but please remember to call in advance for an appointment. Find out as much as you can about non-need or merit-based scholarships. Look into college loans for parents which the college may offer aside from government or bank loans. Be prepared with questions to ask about anything which may concern you and ask them. You will be better informed and better able to assist your student in make the best decisions.

Campus Security

- Procedures and policies for reporting crimes and emergencies on campus, as well as the system of adjudication
- The number and types of crime reported on and around campus

- The school's drug offense policy, as well as descriptions of the school's drug awareness and drug use prevention programs.

To compare campus crime statistics for different colleges,

Visit <http://ope.ed.gov/security>.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

In deciding which of their many applicants to admit, college admissions officers look first and foremost at each applicant's GRADES and the RIGOR of the courses they have attempted in high school. Because they realize that each high school is different, and that high school offerings differ widely, they do NOT evaluate the grades of any one high school's students as if he or she attended a different high school. We, like all other high schools, include a School Profile with all of our transcripts so that the admissions officers can learn about Plymouth and THS, see the kind of courses we offer, and understand our grading system.

Many colleges and universities also require some form of entrance examination. Admissions officers acknowledge that the scores are merely a snapshot of how the student performed on a given morning, but they nevertheless use the scores – to varying degrees – to see how the student fared on a national (international) measure of reasoning ability or achievement. These are the SATs and ACTs.

SAT Scores are to be sent directly from CollegeBoard by the student to each college to complete the student college application.

SAT REASONING TEST

The SAT Reasoning Test, which will be referred to simply as the SAT, assesses the skills students need to succeed in college. Among the college success skills being evaluated will be evidence-based reading/writing and mathematical problem solving. Each section will be scored on a 200-800 scale, so the maximum total SAT score will be 1600. There is also an optional essay that students may opt for when registering for the SAT. **It is strongly recommended that students do choose to take the SATs with the essay as many colleges and universities require the essay.** Focus on the early (easier) questions in each section and get them right! Leave the harder ones blank.

SAT Scores are to be sent directly from CollegeBoard by the student to each college to complete the student college application.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

The SAT-II Tests, which used to be known as Achievement Tests, will now be called SAT Subject Tests. As before, these are designed to measure students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge in specific subject areas. Some colleges, especially the more competitive schools, have required as many as three of these, usually including the SAT-II Writing. In subjects such as U.S. History or Chemistry, it is a good idea for students to take the SAT Subject Test in that area after finishing the course (June of Junior year) while the material is still fresh. There are currently 22 Subject tests from which to choose. These tests are also scored on a 200-800 scale.

ACT

The ACT is an alternate admission test. It has traditionally been required by many colleges in the Midwest, but its popularity is increasing in the Northeast, and most colleges will accept it instead of the SAT Reasoning Test OR in place of SAT Subject Tests. The format of the ACT is different from that of either SAT test in that it has four subtests (English, Math, Reading and Science) and a Composite Score. There is an optional Writing Section as well. Each sub-test and the Composite are scored on a scale of 1-36.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES

Testing agencies such as the College Board and the ACT allow special provisions so that students with documented learning or other disabilities can take admissions tests with modifications or accommodations. Students must complete eligibility forms to document the disability. Students who receive Special Education or Section 504 testing accommodations and their parents should discuss these modifications with their School Counselor as soon as possible.

WHEN AND HOW OFTEN TO TAKE THESE TESTS

A good recommendation is for juniors to sit for their first SAT in the early spring of the junior year. There are opportunities to sit for the exam again in May of the junior year and also in the fall of the senior year. Taking the test in the early spring provides good practice and an opportunity to get acclimated to the test situation. Since colleges will use the student's best total or the highest individual scores from any sitting, there is little risk in taking the test in the early spring. If, after two tests, students don't feel that they have reached their level of ability, it is time to consider a test preparation course or tutoring in the subject areas on the test. Many students have successfully prepared themselves by working at home using print or computer-based materials. Other students feel that the discipline of attending a formal class to prepare for the SAT is a more successful approach. Several commercial firms offer test preparation classes at various times throughout the year. The most popular test preparation companies in this area are *Stanley Kaplan* and *The Princeton Review*. Many adult education, evening school and continuing education programs offer test preparation courses as well.

The fall of the senior year offers more opportunities to sit for the SAT or ACT. Other test dates in the year may also be possible based on individual student plans. Your counselor can discuss these decisions with you and can offer suggestions specifically for you.

Things to Know Before Applying to Colleges and Universities

- You have the right to receive factual and comprehensive information from colleges and universities about their admission, financial costs, aid opportunities, practices and packaging policies, and housing policies. If you consider applying under an early admission plan, you have the right to complete information from the college about its process and policies.
- You have the right to be free from high-pressure sales tactics.
- You have a responsibility to research, and to understand and comply with the policies and procedures of each college or university regarding application fees, financial aid, scholarships, and housing. You should also be sure you understand the policies of each college or university regarding deposits you may be required to make before you enroll.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1) While researching schools, keep a running list of colleges you're considering in Naviance: "Colleges" → "Colleges I'm Thinking About" → "Add Colleges to this List"
- 2) Once you've asked your two teachers to write you a letter of recommendation in person, add their name to your Naviance account so each teacher has access to upload their letter onto Naviance: "Colleges I'm Applying To" → Under the Teacher Recommendation section, click "Add/Cancel Requests." Select teacher from drop-down menu and add note to teacher if desired. Repeat for additional teacher you've asked. Click "Update Requests." *For counselor recommendation requests, fill out Counselor Recommendation Form located on your home screen in addition to adding you counselor's name from the drop-down menu
- 3) Once you've submitted a college application (either on the college's website or on Commonapp.org, move that college from your "Colleges I'm Thinking About" → Under "Colleges I'm Applying To," check off box next to college name and click "Move to Application List." Indicate admission type, check off box to request transcript and also box stating you have submitted your application
- 4) If you have not sent in your SAT or ACT scores to your college, send your SAT scores via Collegeboard (collegeboard.org) and ACT scores via actstudent.org. Collegeboard allows you 4 free score reports to send if you send scores at the time of registration or up to nine days after you sat for your test.*Otherwise there is an \$11 charge to send scores to each college. The fee to send your ACT scores is \$12 per college.*
- 5) Complete the Transcript Request Form (copies available in the school counseling office) and bring to your school counselor who will then submit additional materials to your college (transcript, letters of recommendation, school profile)

THE COLLEGE ADMISSION APPLICATION

The typical four year college application includes the following components:

1. **Application** – The application includes simple biographical information. Frequently you will need to write essays or short answers, which are intended to acquaint the admission committee with your experiences, strengths and weaknesses, and writing ability.
2. **Academic Record** – Colleges tend to place most importance on the grades in classes, and the rigor of the classes taken, which is factored in to your cumulative weighted GPA and class rank listed on your transcript.
3. **Test Scores (if required)** – Standardized testing has come under a great deal of scrutiny and criticism in recent years. Many colleges have stated that they are not concerned with applicants' test results; a few have even made submission of test scores optional. However, any college that requires the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) will use the scores in its admission process. How much emphasis is placed on test results depends on the college's policy.
4. **Recommendations** – These letters are prepared by teachers or counselors who know you well and can positively comment both on your work in the classroom and on your personal manner. It is important to ask the person to write you a letter of recommendation in person and to offer that person a resume as well. Most colleges look for 2-3 letters of recommendation.
5. **Essay** – The essay is a way to convey your “personal side” to the college. Your essay is a chance for you to “talk” with anyone that reads your application and makes a judgment about you.
6. **Activities** – Although your academic credentials are the primary factor in determining admission, your record of involvement in activities can be a significant supporting factor. It is better to be involved in one activity and to be a significant contributor to that activity than to be involved superficially in several organizations. Colleges want leaders!

As You Apply

- You must complete all material required for application and submit your application on or before the published deadlines. You should be the sole author of your applications.
- You should seek the assistance of your high school counselor early and throughout the application period. Follow the process recommended by your high school for filing college applications.
 - It is your responsibility to arrange, if appropriate, for visits to and/or interviews at colleges of your choice.

After You Are Offered Admission

- You have the right to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission and/or financial aid.
- Colleges that request commitments to offers of admission and/or financial assistance prior to May 1 must clearly offer you the opportunity to request (in writing) an extension until May 1. They must grant you this extension and your request may not jeopardize your status for admission and/or financial aid.
- Candidates admitted under early decision programs are a recognized exception to the May 1 deadline.
 - You must notify each college or university that accepts you whether you are accepting or rejecting its offer. You should make these notifications as soon as you have made a final decision as to the college you wish to attend, but no later than May 1. It is understood that May 1 will be the postmark date.
- You may confirm your intention to enroll and, if required, submit a deposit to only one college or university. The exception to this arises if you are put on a waitlist by a college or university and are later admitted to that institution. You may accept the offer and send a deposit. However, you must immediately notify a college or university at which you previously indicated your intention to enroll.
- If you are accepted under an early decision plan, you must promptly withdraw the applications submitted to other colleges and universities and make no additional applications. If you are an early decision candidate and are seeking financial aid, you need not withdraw other applications until you have received notification about financial aid.

If You Are Placed on a Wait/Alternate List

- The letter that notifies you of that placement should provide a history that describes the number of students on the waitlist, the number offered admission, and the availability of financial aid and housing.
- Colleges may require neither a deposit nor a written commitment as a condition of remaining on a wait list
- Colleges are expected to notify you of the resolution of your wait list status by August 1st at the latest.

NCAA: ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY IN COLLEGE

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 membership divisions – Division I, Division II and Division III. Institutions are members of one or another division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, **you must be certified** by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse was established as a separate organization by the NCAA member institutions in January 1993. The Clearinghouse ensures consistent interpretation of NCAA initial-eligibility requirements of all prospective student athletes at all member institutions.

NCAA RULES

The NCAA website, www.ncaa.org, will have answers to all of your questions.

WHEN TO START THE PROCESS

If you want to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, plan to start the certification process early – usually the end of your junior year of high school.

It is your responsibility to make sure the Clearinghouse has the documents needed to certify you.

These documents are:

- Your completed and signed Student Release Form and fee.
- Your official transcript from every high school you have attended.
- Your ACT or SAT scores.

Go to the NCAA website to obtain the rules and forms necessary for certification. Be sure to **PRINT OUT** the Student Release Forms and bring both of them to the School Office. Copy 1 will be sent by the School Office to NCAA with your transcript and SAT/ACT scores within seven days of submission. Copy 2 will be sent in June after you graduate from THS.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Naviance

<http://connection.naviance.com/terryville>

Your #1 source for college research, courses, and careers. Students will be able to build a resume, complete career interest surveys and manage timelines and deadlines about colleges and careers, research colleges and request official documents to be sent to prospective schools (Each students will have a login/password)

Build your list of schools under the “Colleges” tab on your account. Later you will complete your applications in Naviance. See previous section entitled “College Application Process”.

College Board Online

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

Register for SATs, search for colleges, get test dates, apply to colleges and lots more. Students who have taken the PSATs have the ability to use their given access code to login to their CollegeBoard Quick Start to customize their SAT study plan. There is also a special section for PARENTS.

Common Application

www.commonapp.org

The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that serves students and member institutions by providing one admission application that students may submit to any of the 488 participating colleges, saving the student time in the application process.

ETS Net

<http://www.ets.org/>

ETS is the Educational Testing Service, the very people who prepare the SAT. The site offers a virtual store where you can buy books and software to study for the tests, and an online magazine by and for high school students.

Kaplan

<http://www.kaplan.com>

You’ll find a full complement of information on standardized tests, as well as details on Kaplan’s prep courses.

Office of Post-secondary Education

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/listOPE/index.html>

Established by a branch of the federal government’s Department of Education, this site offers information on financial aid, the FAFSA form, and college codes.

CollegeView

<http://www.collegeview.com>

By combining an extensive database of two and four-year colleges with engaging multimedia “tours,” CollegeView gives students and parents a general overview of a college, plus a direct email option for requesting additional information. This site also includes Career Center information, electronic applications and financial aid information. Very comprehensive site!

Peterson’s Education Center

<http://www.petersons.com>

Peterson’s college database is available on this Home Page, as is other educational and career information.

The Princeton Review

<http://www.review.com>

You may search The Princeton Review’s site by the school’s name, region, state, size, and cost. PR also provides you with their rating of hundreds of colleges. Apply online and complete a career inventory.

US News and World Reports – College Ranking Online

<http://www.usnews.com>

You may find it interesting to see how US news ranks colleges in America. Just keep in mind that “best” for one student may not be for another so the information you get here should be only one of the many factors that play a role in deciding where to apply.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

FinAid (The Financial Aid Information Page)

<http://finaid.org>

Sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, this page provides links to hundreds of sources of information about student financial aid, including FastWeb, a searchable database of more than 180,000 private-sector scholarships, fellowships, grants and loans.

Other Helpful Sites:

www.fastweb.com

www.ctohe.org

www.gocollege.com

www.aboutchet.com

www.scholarshiphelp.org

www.CHESLA.org

www.knowhow2go.org

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

<http://studentaid.gov>

Tips to Getting Aid without Delay!

Financial aid administrators and school counselors from around the country agree that the following tips speed up the application process:

- **Important: Read the instructions!**

Many questions on the FAFSA are straightforward, like your Social Security Number, however, many questions are asked specifically for purposes of student financial aid. Common words like “household,” “investments,” and even “parent” may have special meaning. Read all instructions carefully.

- **Apply early**

State and school deadlines will vary and tend to be early. Check with them to find out their exact deadline dates. The U.S. Department of Education will process your FAFSA if received on or before the deadline. However, to actually receive aid, your school must have correct, complete FAFSA information before your last day of enrollment.

- **Save time: File Electronically!**

Complete and submit your FAFSA online. It is the fastest and most accurate way to apply for student aid.

- **Ask: Do I need additional forms?**

Many schools and states rely on the FAFSA as the single application for student aid. However, your school or state may require forms. Check with your state agency and the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend to find out if they require additional forms.

Creative Scams: What to Watch for

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

Financial Aid fees: Worth the Price?

Paying a fee to help you apply for financial aid may be 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, your library and the Department of Education:

Toll-free help line: 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243)

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).

Note: While financial aid services may provide useful information, know your options before deciding to use these services. Financial aid shouldn't cost you especially when free resources are available.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding FAFSA

Why fill out the FAFSA?

The FAFSA is the first step in the financial aid process. Both students and parents need to apply for PIN number. This can be done on the FAFSA website. Use it to apply for federal student financial aid, such as Pell grants, student loans, and college work-study. In addition, most states and schools use FAFSA information to award their financial aid. For introductory instructions on how to complete the FAFSA online go to "Completing the FAFSA," at www.fafsa.ed.gov. You can begin filling out a FAFSA on October 1st.

Why all the questions?

They enter your FAFSA responses into a formula which is required by the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The result is your Expected Family Contribution, or EFC. The EFC is a number that measures your family's financial strength. It is subtracted from the Cost of Attendance at the school(s) you plan to attend which determines your eligibility for federal student aid.

Your state, and the school(s) you list, may use all or some of your responses. They will determine if you are eligible for school or state aid.

How do I find out what my EFC is?

They will send you a report, called a Student Aid Report (SAR) by email or by postal mail depending on the addresses that they have on file for you. The SAR lists the information you reported on your FAFSA, and will tell you your EFC. Reviewing your SAR is important to ensure all of your information is correct. Make any necessary changes or provide additional information.

How much aid do I get?

The schools use your EFC to prepare a financial aid package (grants, loans, and/or work study) to help you meet your financial need. Financial need is the difference between your EFC and your school's cost of attendance (which can include living expenses), as determined by the school. If you or your family has special circumstances that impact your financial situation, contact your school's financial aid office. Some examples include: unusual medical or dental expenses, or a large change in income from last year to this year.

When do I get the aid?

Your financial aid will be paid to you through your school. Typically, your school will first use the aid to pay tuition, fees, and room and board (if provided by the school). Any remaining aid is returned to you for your other expenses.

Where can I get more information on student aid?

The financial aid office at the school you plan to attend is the best place to get information about federal, state, school and other sources of student financial aid.

You can also check out these resources:

- www.studentaid.ed.gov
- www.students.gov

MILITARY CAREER OPTIONS

There are numerous job training opportunities in the military for both men and women. If you would like to travel or earn good wages immediately, the military service may be for you. Representatives from all the services are available to give you information about career training and/or educational opportunities. If you are concerned about the information that you are receiving or contacts that are being made by your recruiter, see your counselor.

Service Academies and ROTC Scholarship Programs

Students interested in the Military Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship programs *must begin as soon as possible* to insure that they receive full consideration.

Write and ask for a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire to the following address:

US Military Academy
Admissions Office
West Point, NY 10996

Naval Academy
Admissions Office
Annapolis, MD 21402

US Air Force Academy
Admissions Office
USAF Academy, CO 80840

Merchant Marine Academy
Admissions Office
Kings Point, NY 10024

Academy Nominations

To be considered for nomination to one of our prestigious service academies please complete the application found on website (www.blumenthal.senate.gov)

Instructions

An application file is considered complete in Senator Blumenthal's office when it contains the following five (5) items:

1. Completed application for nomination: Once received, the file will be updated as soon as possible. Applicants may check their status on-line by logging into the Senator's Service Academy website. Soon after your application has been completed, you will be sent an acknowledgment.
2. Official high school transcripts: Must arrive with the application package in a sealed envelope from your guidance counselor. Official college transcripts must be issued by the appropriate office.
3. SAT and/or ACT scores. Applicants may notify the SAT/ACT testing centers at (609) 771-7600 to request that scores be sent directly to Senator Blumenthal's office, SAT Code – 3330, ACT code 7113. Due to the cost of requesting original copies, guidance counselors may submit these scores with the candidate's official transcripts.
4. Two recommendations. These letters may be written by individuals (designated by an applicant), teachers, principals, coaches, employers, clergy, neighbors, or other non-family members who can accurately comment on an applicant's character, abilities and potential for success in an academy environment and subsequently, in military service. Each recommendation must be limited to one page. Additional letters beyond the designated two references will not be considered.

5. Signed Acknowledgment Form. Complete, sign, and mail your acknowledgment form.
You may download the forms from our website: www.blumenthal.senate.gov

Please submit the application materials listed in items 2 through 5 to Senator Blumenthal's Office:

*The Office of Senator Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator
Attn: Academy Nomination Coordinator
90 State House Square
Tenth Floor
Hartford, CT 06103*

Materials submitted to Senator Blumenthal's office will not be returned to the applicant. For an application to be considered complete it must be filled out entirely and all additional documents above received in Senator Blumenthal's Office by 5 p.m., Monday, October 15, 2018*. Any application file not completed by this time will not be considered. Those candidates who did not receive an appointment in previous years and desire to reapply are required to complete a new application package.

**We understand that SAT/ACT test scores may not be available by our October 15th deadline for tests taken in October. We will accept October scores when they come in, and your file will be deemed complete when those scores are received by our office.*

U.S. Senators

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal 1
90 State House Square, 10th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: 860-258-6940
Fax: 860-258-6958
www.blumenthal.senate.gov

Congressperson

Congresswoman Jahana Hayes
108 Bank Street, 2nd fl
Waterbury, CT 06702
Phone: 860-223-8412
<https://hayes.house.gov/>

The Honorable Christopher Murphy
One Constitution Plaza, 7th floor
Hartford, CT. 06103
Phone: 860 549-8463
Fax: 860-524-5091
www.murphy.senate.gov

Coast Guard Academy

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

US Coast Guard Academy
Admissions Office
New London, CT 06320

www.cga.edu

R.O.T.C. Scholarship Programs

R.O.T.C. scholarship programs involve a competitive application process as well. In addition to the written application, candidates must undergo a physical test. The first step in the process is to get an application:

Air Force ROTC

www.afrotc.com/scholarships

Army ROTC

www.goarmy.com/rotc

Navy ROTC

www.navy.com/careers/nrotc

Contact Information

If any of your questions or concerns were not addressed fully in this *Junior Post-secondary Planning Guide*, please feel free to contact or set up an appointment with your school counselor.

****Accuracy with your School Counselor's contact information is vital to the online application process**

Michael McGowan, School Counselor

mcgowanm@plymouth.k12.ct.us

860-314-2777 Ext. 5408

Lori Lusitani, School Counselor

lusitanil@plymouth.k12.ct.us

860-314-2777 Ext. 5409

Patricia Borda, School Counseling Secretary

bordap@plymouth.k12.ct.us

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