

INSIDE TRACK TO COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

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Basic Information

- 2600+ Four-Year Colleges in America
 - 25 Four-Year Colleges in NJ
 - 19 Community Colleges
 - 5 Proprietary Institutions
- Class of 2023 – 91,000+ High School Graduates
 - 72,000+ (80%) attended college



The College That's Right For You

- Make Choices Based on Who You Are
- Size matters: You don't have to go to a college bigger than high school
- Name Brand vs. Generic – college pedigree doesn't always count
- You don't need to pick a major to pick a college
- Don't be scared by the stories
- Most Importantly – Make Sure the College is a FIT!



What to Look for in a College

- Location
 - City vs. Country
- Large vs. Small
- SAT Averages
 - SAT vs. ACT / SAT-Optional
- Class Rank and GPA
- Average Class Size
 - Lecture Halls / Teaching Assistants
- Retention
 - % of students that return after first year

Different Methods of Applying

- Regular Admissions – you can apply to as many schools as you'd like, and weigh financial-aid packages before making a decision.
- Early Decision – you apply in the fall and find out in December if you are admitted.
 - The decision is binding; if you are admitted, you must withdraw all your other applications.
- Early Action – apply early and find out in December.
 - The decision is nonbinding; you are also allowed to apply to schools through the regular admissions.
- Direct Admissions
 - Students don't submit applications, but colleges provide "soft offers" of admission

Getting Started Helpful Hints

- **Application Do's**

- Start early, proof your work
- Involve your parents
- Know your college picks
- Inform your counselor where you apply
- Understand applications deadlines & conditions
- Think about how you want to market yourself

- **Application Don'ts**

- Complete in one afternoon
- Complete on your mobile device
- Misrepresent yourself
- Forget to review / proofread

Helpful Hints

- Create a college email
- Set up appropriate voicemail
- Keep your voicemail box empty
- Monitor social media use

What Colleges Review

- High School Transcript and Profile
- Application
- Essay
- Standardized Testing
- Recommendations
- Interview
- Interaction Quotient / Demo Interest

Transcript

- Strength of schedule
- Continue academic coursework
- Relevant coursework
- Exploration of interests
- Weighted or Unweighted?
- What makes a student stand out?

Application

- Co-curricular activities
- What is the contribution to campus?
- The character of the student
- Advice

Standardized Testing

- 2000+ schools that have dispensed with the standardized testing requirement for Fall 2025
 - 41 in NJ
 - 162 in NY
 - 27 in CT
- Test-Optional doesn't mean “easier” admissions
 - More emphasis on GPA and rank
- Practice makes perfect, except after 3x

Demonstrated Interest

- What is it?
- How to express interest?
- Easy win for you
- Reframe the idea!

Types of Financial Aid

- Grants
 - Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) - \$9,496/year
 - Pell Grant - \$7,395
- Loans
 - Stafford Loan – student is borrower; \$5,500–\$7,500
 - PLUS Loan – parent is borrower; COA – Fin Aid
- Scholarships
 - Need-based – financial situation is primary determinant
 - Merit-based – recipient may be determined by students' athletic, academic, artistic or other abilities

Interesting Websites

- **College Scorecard**
 - Search and compare colleges: their fields of study, costs, admissions, results, and more
 - scorecard.ed.gov
- **Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)**
 - Primary source for information on U.S. colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions
 - nces.ed.gov/ipeds
- **Federal Student Aid**
 - Main source for federal financial aid
 - [Studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)
- **NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority**
 - Main source for NJ state financial aid
 - <https://www.hesaa.org/Pages/Default.aspx>

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

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