

As spring 2026 college decisions come in...

Prepare

Be thoughtful

- Admissions decision season can be an emotional time. Undoubtedly, there will be exciting news, but there will also be disappointment.
- Don't speak dismissively about any colleges; a place that's not a fit for you could be someone else's dream school.

Get organized

- Check each school's decision release date via a reputable source (official e-mails, applicant portals, etc.). You should receive all decisions from U.S. colleges by April 1.
- Check your Junk/Spam folders for any important emails.
- Make sure your portal log-in and password are working for each college. Most decisions are preceded by an email telling you to check your decision on the school portal.
- *If affordability is a factor in your decisions*, chat with your family about what range of costs would be a financial fit.

Prepare emotionally

- Decide where and with whom you'd like to be when opening the decision.
- Decide whom you do or don't want to tell afterwards and when.
- Take some time to process before posting results to social media.
- Tell yourself: no matter what happens, you are worthy! ❤️

Decision

Admitted?

- Pay attention to any communications you receive! There may be invites to optional admitted students events in Seattle or at the university campus, etc.
- **By their enrollment deadline** (for most schools, May 1): notify your college of choice with your intention to enroll and pay your deposit if applicable.

If you received or are waiting for a financial aid package:

- Remember there's no rush to accept the package if you have questions or concerns.
- Attend our March 25 virtual webinar at 6:30pm on "Comparing financial aid awards and considering appeals," (recording available after March 30)
- You can meet with your college counselor to discuss any questions before accepting your aid package!

Ready to enroll?

- You can only enroll (place a deposit) at one institution; you cannot hold a space at two schools to delay decision time.
- If you submitted standardized test scores, send official tests from the testing company.
- In late June, the college counseling office will automatically send a final transcript to the one institution you plan to attend (as listed in SCOIR).
- Don't forget to share your good news with the teachers who wrote your recommendations!

Not enrolling? Decline your admit!

- Notify the college/university that you are going elsewhere. In many cases, you will be able to decline the offer of admission through your applicant portal.

Waitlisted?

- Take a deep breath. This news is disappointing, as there is no guarantee a school will go to their waitlist.
- **Read our [waitlist FAQs](#) thoroughly**, including instructions and suggested timeline for writing a Letter of Continued Interest (LOCI).
- Read the university/college's waitlist instructions carefully! **Most colleges require you to opt into a spot on the waitlist.** (NOTE: UW requires you to opt onto the waitlist by April 1.)
- **Remember to submit your enrollment and deposit at another college/university where you were admitted** (by their enrollment deadline). If you are offered a spot off the waitlist, you can withdraw from that school where you deposited.

Denied?

- Take a deep breath. There's nothing fun about a denial. Acknowledge your feelings, but remember that a college admissions office does not determine your worth. Admissions decisions include factors that are simply out of your control, such as year-to-year institutional priorities.
- Focus on the great options you have rather than those you don't. Keep your chin up, and be proud of what you have achieved at Lakeside.

For Everyone

Follow-up's & Thank you's

- As always, keep your SCOIR account updated and your counselor abreast of every decision you receive. Schedule a meeting if that would be helpful.
- Send a thank you note and update to your recommendation writers. This is a basic courtesy and expectation anytime someone writes on your behalf!
- Who else do you want to share the news with?