

SOLEBURY.EDU

COLLEGE COUNSELING NEWSLETTER



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A Penny for your Thoughts

Financial Aid

What exactly *is* financial aid? Financial aid is money that helps students pay for college. It can be funds that students pay back, work for, or receive as a gift. The four most common forms of financial aid are loans, grants, work-study, and scholarships.

Students can receive aid through the federal government. Nearly all colleges require that you submit the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. This form is available online at <http://www.fafsa.gov>. The 2027-2028 application is expected to be available on October 1, 2026. Even if you do not think that you will be eligible for need-based aid, we would still encourage you to apply. The FAFSA is free! It will also allow colleges to consider you for aid in case there are any changes to your financial circumstances, and it will open up to the doors to several low-interest loans.

Most schools have a priority deadline for applying for financial aid through FAFSA. Typically this has been somewhere around February 1-15, but that may change with the earlier filing capability. Check with the individual admissions offices. States will also have a filing deadline to be considered for state funding, but typically this is much later than colleges. *Our recommendation is to apply as early as possible.*

Fill out the form completely, and estimate if necessary! It is better to meet the deadline and make changes later than to miss the deadline and potentially miss out on financial aid. If the form is incomplete, that will also delay the processing of the FAFSA. However, the ability to populate the form with last year's tax information should minimize the need to estimate.

Before filling out the FAFSA, students and parents must first [create an FSA ID](#), which will allow you to fill out the form, save your progress along the way and do follow-up with any federal loans.

Some schools may also require that you fill out either their own financial aid supplement or the **College Scholarship Services (CSS) Profile**. This is done in addition to FAFSA. This may be particularly important if you are applying Early Action or Early Decision. Use the college's form. It will not only speed up processing, but it will save you money. There is a non-refundable application fee for the Profile, as well as a fee for each school to which you send the information. Similar to the FAFSA, the CSS Profile will use 2025 tax year information. Note that you can only fill out the Profile online [here](#).

Looking for an estimate of your tuition? All colleges should have **Net Price Calculators** on their websites. [Here](#) is a good place to start. If you need help finding a school's calculator, please reach out to us and we'll be happy to help!

Erin is working with Certified College Funding Specialist, Financial Educator and Educational Consultant Candace L. Powell Kinard to coordinate fall programming for our families. Stay tuned for a calendar invite!

A Dime A Dozen

Scholarships

Our office is compiling a list of several independent scholarship opportunities, which is in no way exhaustive. There are thousands of scholarships for which you may be eligible. The process takes time, but can be absolutely worth it. And some scholarships are renewable all four years!

If you do your own scholarship search, do not pay for it! There are plenty of free scholarship search engines online, such as [fastweb.com](#), [scholarships.com](#) or [collegeboard.org](#), and free scholarship apps such as or [Scholly](#). No search that you pay for will give you better results than free searches of this type. Local organizations and businesses will often have their own scholarships as well, with fewer students applying, so it can be beneficial to do a search within your town/county.

While most colleges will automatically consider you for merit scholarships when you apply for admission, you should also check with the schools to which you apply to see if there are any special scholarships, or any forms, nominations or interviews required for consideration for their standard scholarships. They may also have endowed scholarships for upperclass students who meet certain criteria.

College Visits

Here & There

This month, Erin is going through the lists of colleges that you are following on SCOIR and will be reaching out to several of them to see if they can visit Solebury this fall. Most visits will be on campus, although some of the colleges may opt to visit online due to their location or the lack of a regional counselor.

These college visits will be added to SCOIR, and information about registration and expectations will be in the next newsletter. Solebury also plans to continue offering transportation to area college fairs, along with a fall college tour weekend, so look for notices about that as we get closer to the dates.

Visiting colleges is super helpful! If you're near a campus this summer, stop by for a tour, information session, or informal visit. Even if it's not on your preliminary list, it may help you narrow that search down by type of institution, location, and more!

*Upcoming Test Dates**

ACT | September 19

Later test dates include
October 17 and December 12.

Register [here](#).

SAT | August 22

Registration is open for all
fall 2026 test dates,
including: September 12,
October 3, November 7 and
December 5.

Register [here](#).

*Solebury does not register
students for these tests.



Important Dates

August 1 – Common App launches for 27/28 applications

August 7 – Registration deadline for August 22nd SAT

August 14 – Registration deadline for September 19th ACT

August 28 – Registration deadline for September 12th SAT

September 12 – 9th Annual HBCU Expo
BCCC Bristol, 10am

October 1 – Bucks County Regional College Fair
BCCC Newtown 6:30-8pm

Spotlight: Colorado Colleges

PHL - DEN

Speaking of college visits, Erin recently traveled to the annual Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools (ACCIS) conference in Denver, Colorado. Hosted by the University of Denver, Erin spent time getting to know the university and city, including a hike in Red Rocks! Just a 3.5 hour flight from Philadelphia, with so much to do and such beautiful weather, Denver is worth a visit. And so are the colleges below:

University of Colorado, Boulder

Located in the incredibly cool city of Boulder, CU Boulder is a large public university just an hour from Denver. Fun fact? CU Boulder is the only university that has designed, built and sent space instruments to every single planet. The largest employer in Colorado, with research that has led to 190 new companies, at CU Boulder there is something for everyone.

Colorado State University, Fort Collins

Colorado's flagship, located in the quirky town of Fort Collins, CSU is an affordable out-of-state public university. The first to host an Air Force ROTC, CSU is just one of 23 public four-year universities in Colorado. Popular programs and majors include veterinary science, agriculture and atmospheric science. And you've got the Rocky Mountains just outside your dorm!

Colorado School of Mines, Golden

With majors in engineering, science and math, Colorado School of Mines is a STEM-based institution that you will not soon forget. The #1 institution for Mineral and Mining Engineering, Mines' traditions include the "M" Climb, E Days Cardboard Boat Race, and silver diplomas for graduates. Mines has 6,300 undergraduates and a deep focus on energy and the environment.

Colorado College, Colorado Springs

Just 60 minutes from Denver, Colorado College is a liberal arts institution of about 2100. Perhaps what is most unique about Colorado College is the Block Plan, where students take just one class at a time, for about 3.5 weeks (followed by a 4.5 day break!). Highlight programs include their Career Catalyst Program, countless study abroad opportunities, and strong faculty mentorship.

University of Denver, Denver

With 70% of students coming from out of state, DU is a popular destination for undergraduates. A medium-sized private university of about 6,000, DU is on the quarter system, has a 2 year housing requirement, and features its innovative and personalized 4D Experience. DU students are incredibly well-rounded: Alpine Club and Dungeons & Dragons are the two most popular!

Next stop: Pittsburgh! Stay tuned for updates from University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University and Duquesne University in the August newsletter!

Invest in Yourself

The Cost of College

The financial aid process can be tedious and time-consuming. But with the help of scholarships and need-based aid, colleges that seem unaffordable can be within your reach. Ultimately, you may or may not want to take out loans. That is a decision that you should discuss with your family. Keep in mind, though, that college is an investment, and higher average salaries usually correspond with higher degrees.

Hope summer is bringing you the very best combination of peace and productivity. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

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Schedule a meeting with me!

Our handbook!

