VOCABULARY of COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Rolling Admission
First-come, first-served. The school considers each application as soon as all required materials have been received. The institution then notifies each applicant of acceptance or rejection as soon as possible. If accepted, a student is not obligated to attend.

Regular Admission
Many institutions operating on a non-rolling basis will set a deadline that applicants must meet. No matter how high the quality of the applicant, if he/she does not meet this deadline, the applicant is not considered. If accepted, the student is not obligated to attend.

Early Decision
This type of deadline is the earliest and also the most serious. This is an appropriate means of applying for the student who is absolutely positive that he/she will attend the school, if accepted. It is BINDING — students who apply under this type of deadline should know that this is a legally-enforceable document promising to attend if admitted.

Early Action
Similar to Early Decision, in terms of the institution having early deadlines; however, this is a non-binding agreement. A student is not obligated to attend if accepted. Early Action is appropriate for the student who is uncertain or is an early-planner, as the response from the school comes quickly. This gives the student ample time to hear back from other schools, consider his/her options, and/or possibly negotiate a scholarship/financial aid package.

Restrictive Early Action
Restrictive Early Action is a non-binding early application option. Applicants do not apply to any other private college/ university under that school's Early Action, Restrictive Early Action, Early Decision or Early Notification program. Applicants may apply to other colleges and universities under the Regular Decision option.

Early Admission
Admitting students of superior ability into college courses and programs before they have completed the standard high school program. These students forego (a portion of) their senior year to attend.

Wait-List
A term used by institutions to describe a process in which they may initially delay offering admission. It is a contingent offer only. The student may or may not receive an offer of admission.

STARS
The Self-reported Transcript and Academic Record System (STARS) lists all classes and associated grades that have been taken for high school credit.