

College Planning Workshop

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The value of a college degree

Yes, a college education is very expensive.

Students don't know what they plan to be yet.

Many people have to borrow money to go to college.

Over a lifetime, on average, a college graduate earns **\$1 million more** than a HS graduate.



Tips to help you start your search

Talk to your school counselor early if you are interested so that you can find out about opportunities.

College Board Big Future
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>

College Greenlight:
<https://www.collegegreenlight.com/>

<https://www.higherheightsyouth.org/>
(free help from college admissions counselors) (475) 655-3117
157 Church Street, 19th Floor
New Haven, CT 06510

EMC: Helps families apply for financial aid, (203) 335-0381

Lafayette Hall, Room B140

900 Lafayette Boulevard

Bridgeport, CT 06604

<https://www.ecmc.org/students/college-access-centers.html>

Preparing for College

- Take the most challenging classes available to you, that you can be successful in.
- Make good use of your time outside of school (work, activities, home responsibilities etc.)
- Plan to take the ACT and SAT, multiple times if you can. Students can self-study FREE with Khan Academy. www.khanacademy.org
- SAT FEE WAIVERS:
- <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/sat-fee-waiver-student-brochure.pdf>
- ACT FEE WAIVERS:

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/FeeWaiver.pdf>

- Develop a preliminary list of schools, checking for academic profiles, GPA and test scores to see if they are a good match for you.
- Consider community colleges and college
- Take advantage of any college tours your high school offers and College Greenlight free student fly ins. You can also contact admissions offices directly and ask, and some will fly students in or reimburse.

Two Financial Aid Applications



Tip

Juniors can take advantage of

FAFSA4caster website

LEARN! Gain more awareness of aid eligibility and much more.

FAFSA

Free Application for Federal Aid

Federal Methodology

Available after October 1st

Required for Federal and State aid

www.fafsa.gov

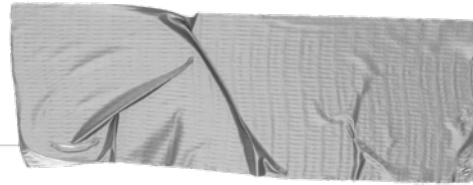
CSS Profile

Not used by every college, primarily by PRIVATE colleges.

Deadlines vary, so you must check the college website. Opens Oct. 1.

Request fee waiver

www.css.collegeboard.org



**Begin your search
with basics:**

- **Location**
- **Urban/Suburban/Rural**
- **Programs of Study/Major**
- **Size**
- **Campus appeal**
- **Activities/Athletics**
- **Social life**
- **Diversity**

Inside the Admissions Office:

What do they look for?

ACADEMIC FIT IS 1ST

- Does the student meet/exceed our entrance requirements?
- Can the student graduate on time?



After academic fit, they may consider:

Talents, leadership, ethnic and geographic diversity, athletic recruiting status, filling a specific slot, how the student is regarded in his/her community, teacher recs, work experience, personal statements, demonstrated interest in the college, major...



Your talent can be an incredibly important part of the application process.

Audio and video can be included in applications!

Just because music is something that helps you gain acceptance does not mean that you have to study music or only music when you attend. It's a way to open up opportunity for you.

SELECTIVITY: How difficult is it to get in?

1. Reach School

Your GPA and test scores fall in the low range of admitted students. Slim chance to be admitted.

1. Match/Target School

Your credentials fall in the middle range of accepted students.

1. Likely/Expected School

Your credentials are above the average accepted. Remember, it is only a good likely school if you want to attend. **You are more likely to earn merit money at these schools.**

1. Open Enrollment Schools

Community colleges, trade schools, vocational programs and other colleges with a mission to educate all.

CSCU Free Community College and CT Community College Compact Agreement

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Connecticut Compact Agreement with Community Colleges

CSCU Free Community College

How they read your transcript (see handout)

Rigor of curriculum

Prefer 5 core classes all 4 years

Grade trends in your core classes

Context of your school's offerings

How you compare with other applicants from your HS

Special circumstances

APPLYING

ADMISSIONS OPTIONS

- Early Decision
- Early Action
- Regular Decision
- Rolling Admissions

APPLICATION PIECES

Personal Statements
Supplemental Essays
Activities Page
Additional Information
Media (art, music, etc)
Test Scores (can be self reported)
Transcripts
Letters of Rec



DEADLINES

In this process they are very important, AND it is best to be well in advance of deadlines.

- Apply for Admissions
- Apply for Financial Aid.
- Send test scores.
- Do this several weeks before deadline.



PAYING FOR COLLEGE

- College is one of the most expensive “family purchases.”
 - Most families need help to pay for college.
 - Loans are available through the Federal Government.
 - Paying for college is an investment .
 - Full rides are rare.
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Types of Available Money

- **Grants and Scholarships**
 - Free money - does not need to be repaid
 - **Loans**
 - Must be repaid with interest
 - Federal loans have better terms than private
 - Repay for 10-25 years depending on terms
 - **Work Study**
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Scholarship Resources

- [FAFSA.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov) Federal Financial Aid
- [Findaid.org](https://findaid.org) All types of financial aid
- [Fastweb.com](https://fastweb.com) Private scholarships
- [Studentaid.ed.gov](https://studentaid.ed.gov) Paying for College
- [Cappex.com](https://cappex.com) Scholarship Matching

Tip

You should NEVER pay for access to scholarship information.

Don't let the “sticker price” scare you away from applying to college.

- Start with financial “safety” options such as local community college, commuting to local universities etc.
- Create a list including colleges where you are more likely to get **merit scholarships**.
- **(Hint: These are schools where you are near the top of their academic criteria.)**
- You should compare costs once you get your financial aid packages.
- Some scholarships “meet full need” or meet 80% of need, etc.

First Gen? Once you get there. . .

I'm First

College Green Light

Resources for college visits - ask if they have funding for visits, etc.

Ask about 1st gen resources on campus