

A Glossary of College Counseling Terms

Applying to college is complicated.
It even has its own language.

ACT: The American College Testing assessment is a curriculum-based test that includes four sections: English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Each section is scored 1-36 and students receive a single composite score of 1-36, representing the average of the four individual scores. There is an optional writing section of the ACT. The test is administered up to 7 times per year, depending on the test center location. Additional information, including practice questions and registration forms, can be found at www.act.org, www.review.com and www.kaplan.com.

Accelerated Degree Programs: Some colleges offer combined programs to allow students to complete an undergraduate and a graduate degree in a reduced period of time. Examples include a combined BS/MD program, such as one offered at Lehigh University and Drexel University College of Medicine where a student would earn a BS and a medical degree (MD) in 7 years rather than the usual 8. These programs are different from **Early Assurance programs** and **Combined Degree programs**.

Acceptance Rates: Colleges publish this annual statistic to show what percentage of students whose applications are submitted are offered a place at the college.

AP courses: Advanced Placement courses are offered in many high schools. The courses are taught using a standardized curriculum and culminate in a standardized exam that is administered each May. Based on their scores on the exam, students may qualify for college credit or advanced standing. AP courses are indicated as such on the student's transcript.

AP courses that high schools may offer include: Art History, Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chinese Language and Culture, Computer Science A, English Language, English Literature, Environmental Science, European History, French Language, Comparative Government and Politics, US Government and Politics, Human Geography, Italian Language and Culture, Japanese Language and Culture, Latin: Virgil, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Music Theory, Physics B, Physics C, Psychology, Spanish Language, Spanish Literature, Statistics, Studio Art, US History and World History.

The College Board is in the process of redesigning the curricula and corresponding exams for a number of AP subjects. Redesigned courses have already been introduced in AP Biology, AP Spanish Literature and Culture, AP Latin, AP US History, AP European History and AP Chemistry.

Applications: Each college and university will require that students submit an application to be considered for admission. Applications are available from the office of admission and online.

Application Fees: Each application requires an application fee, with these fees ranging from \$25-\$100. Most colleges will provide fee waivers to students who have a demonstrated financial need. Students can request fee waivers themselves or counselors can request them by contacting the college or university office of admission. Application fee waivers are also available www.nacacnet.org and through both the Common Application and Coalition Application.

Athletics: High school athletes should include their experiences on their applications as evidence of athleticism, commitment and leadership. Students who plan to participate in college athletics should also register with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) at www.ncaa.org.

College sports are separated into three “divisions” known as Division I, II and III. Students should remember that only Division I institutions can offer athletic scholarship awards.

Campus Culture/Campus Climate: Prospective students and families should evaluate the campus culture to see if they would feel comfortable and supported there. Elements of campus culture and climate might include the presence and acceptance of varied political groups, LGBTQ+ students and faculty, students from diverse racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Campus Visit: Campus visits are recommended when they are geographically and financially feasible for the student. Colleges and universities expect that students living a reasonable distance from campus will make an effort to visit. If visiting the campus is overly burdensome, the student or counselor should contact the admission office directly to explain the situation. Visits should always be arranged through the admission office, and can be coordinated with the following:

- **Interview:** A one-on-one opportunity to speak with an admission counselor on campus. Some colleges and universities will offer alumni interviews to students who live too far from campus to visit so that students can meet locally with alumni representatives.
- **Group Session:** If students plan to visit campus and no interviews are available, they can arrange to participate in a group session where they will hear about the college and have an opportunity to ask questions.

- Tour: A guided tour of the campus is an important part of the college visit.

Campus Visits – Virtual: In spring 2020, many colleges cancelled their on-campus visits and accepted student events in response to the coronavirus (Covid 19). Colleges often post virtual tours on their websites, and such tours can also be found at www.ecampustours.com , www.youvisit.com and other similar sites.

Career Services: The career services office on campus will usually offer skills workshops and other programs to help students prepare for jobs before and after graduation. This office also coordinates internships for students, some as early as the first semester of freshman year.

CEEB Code (school code): A six-digit code assigned to each school by ETS (Educational Testing Services) that must be included on all applications and all standardized testing forms.

Coalition Application: The Coalition Application was created in 2015 as an alternative to the Common Application. As of the 2019-2020 admission cycle, the Coalition for College Access, Affordability and Success has 140 member institutions, all of which agree to meet certain criteria in terms of graduation rates and financial aid. The Coalition Application also offers a set of college preparation tools and allows students to create an application “locker,” where they can store their application materials throughout high school. For the 2019-2020 application year, the Coalition Application requires students to respond to one of the following prompts in 500-550 words:

- Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
- Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.
- Has there been a time when you’ve had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs? What is the hardest part of being a teenager now? What’s the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?
- Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.

College Degrees/Diplomas: Students who graduate from college each receive a diploma which shows the year of graduation and the degree earned.

- Associate of Arts (A.A): usually for majors in non-STEM fields and designed to be completed in 2+ years
- Associate of Science (A.S): for majors in STEM-related fields and designed to be completed in 2+ years
- Bachelor of Arts (B.A): designed to be completed in 4+ years
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.): for majors in art, music and dance which usually contain a conservatory component and designed to be completed in 4+ years
- Bachelor of Science (B.S): for majors in STEM-related fields and designed to be completed in 4+ years

College Search: There are many resources available for students during the college search. These resources are also very helpful for counselors to use while working with students. Some of these resources are:

- www.collegeboard.com
- The Public Library
- www.nacacnet.org (National Association for College Admission Counseling)
- www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator (National Center for Education Statistics)
- www.wiredscholar.com
- www.xap.com

Common Application: The Common Application is created each year for use by applicants to almost 900 member colleges, in the United States and more than 15 other countries. Students are able to complete a single application and electronically submit copies to participating colleges and universities. Many of the institutions will, however, require that supplemental items be submitted before the Common Application is considered to be complete. Common Application resources are also available in Spanish. More information about the Common Application is available at www.commonapp.org.

For the 2020-2021 cycle, students filing through the Common Application will provide a response (up to 650 words) to one of the following writing prompts:

- Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

- Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you would like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma – anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.
- Describe a topic, idea or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- Share an essay on the topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

As with the **Coalition Application**, many colleges will require supplemental writing in addition to the central personal statement.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) provide, among other services, college and career counseling. Counselors at CBOs offer important support for students who need more guidance than they can receive from within their high schools. Some examples of community based organizations would be:

- Churches, Synagogues and Mosques
- Boys' and Girls' Clubs
- Community Centers
- College Bound, Inc.

Community College: Community colleges, which are part of state and city systems, offer Associate's Degrees (A.A.s), which are designed to be earned in 2 years, rather than the four years needed to earn a Bachelor's Degree (B.A.). Community college students often transfer to another institution after receiving their A.A. in order to earn a B.A. Community colleges offer both full-time and part-time programs and many have Honors Programs as part of their offerings.

Cost of Attendance: This is the actual cost of a student's enrollment, and may include transportation to and from campus (as a resident or a commuter), books, food, lab fees and clothing.

CSS Profile: The College Scholarship Search Profile is a common financial aid form used by many private and public colleges and universities. It is used in addition to the **FAFSA** form. The form can be found online at www.collegeboard.com/profile. The CSS profile is generally available by October of the senior year. Colleges and universities may also require their own financial aid forms.

Decision Plans determine how and when students submit applications and when they will receive college admission decisions. The plans offered by each college will be detailed on the admissions page of its website.

- **Early Action:** This plan is similar to early decision, but is non-binding, meaning that although students receive their decisions early they remain eligible to apply to other colleges and do not have to make a commitment until May 1. Early action is available at a growing number of colleges.
- **Early Decision:** Under this plan, a student applies to a single college or university and makes a commitment to attend if admitted. In this case, students apply by an early deadline (usually November 1) and are notified of the decision by mid-December. If admitted, the student must enroll in that college or university and cancel all other pending applications. Early Decision is considered a binding agreement. Early decision is an option at many colleges.

Under most early decision plans, students can be admitted, denied or deferred. An applicant who is deferred will be placed among the regular admission pool of applicants and notified in mid-April. A deferred early decision application is no longer binding.

Colleges and universities prepare a financial aid package for each aid-seeking student who is admitted under early decision. The package is the same as what the student would be offered in the regular pool, so students are not penalized financially for applying early. They do, however, lose the opportunity to compare financial aid offers. If the offer of financial aid from the institution where the student is insufficient, the student can be released from the early decision commitment, but also forfeits admission to the university.

- **Open Admission:** This policy for admission requires only that a student have graduated from high school or received an equivalency diploma (GED).
- **Regular Admission:** Under this plan, students usually apply between January 1 and March 15 of the senior year. Once a student's application has been reviewed, the college or university issues a decision. Most students will be either admitted or denied, meaning they are either offered a place in the freshman class or not. Students will generally receive their decision letters by April 15. Students who are not admitted, but who meet the college or university's criteria for admission, may be offered a place on the **wait list**. Students on the **wait list** may be offered admission if places in the class remain available once the May 1 **universal reply date** has passed.

- **Restricted Early Action:** This plan is a hybrid of the Early Decision and Early Action plans. While the decision from the college is non-binding, students who apply to college under a Restricted Early Action are limited in terms of other applications that they may file simultaneously. Restricted Early Action policies vary greatly, so it is important to read them carefully.
- **Rolling Admission:** Under this plan, the admission office notifies applicants as their applications are processed rather than waiting for a general spring mailing.

Demonstrated Interest: Because colleges and universities are concerned about their applicant **yield**, many pay close attention to an applicant's level of interest, or how interested a student appears to be in the particular college or university. In addition to campus visits, students can use the following to express their interest: attendance at college fairs, participation in in-school visits and local events, and e-mail contact with college representatives.

Deposits: The money required by a college or university to hold a student's place in the entering class. There are several types of deposits:

- Non-refundable: Can be required only on May 1 or later.
- Refundable: Can be required at any time
- Housing: Can be required at any time, but must be refundable until May 1.

Diversity on Campus: This is the mix that results when students come from varying ethnic, religious, geographic, and economic backgrounds. Diversity also includes sexual orientation, age, cultural experience, political philosophy and national origin. Colleges and universities list existing student groups on campus in their publications and on their websites. In addition, the following list is a sampling of websites providing information about student groups on campuses across the country:

- Catholic Colleges www.catholiccollegesonline.org
- Christian Colleges www.christiancolleges.com www.cccu.org
- Fellowship of Catholic Students www.focusonline.org
- Fraternities and Sororities www.greekpages.com
- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities www.hacu.net
- Jewish Student Organizations www.hillel.org
- LGBTQ+ www.campusclimateindex.com www.campuspride.org
- Muslim Student Organizations https://www.internationalstudent.com/study_usa/religious-schools/us-islamic-schools
- National Black Student Union www.nbsu.org
- Young Democrats www.yda.org
- Young Republica www.youngrepublicans.com

E-Mail: Students can ask questions or make comments by sending e-mail to the office of admission. E-mail is the primary way that colleges communicate with students through the application process, so students should check their e-mail on a regular basis — and at least once per week.

E-Mail Addresses: Students should understand that colleges will usually communicate with prospective students using e-mail rather than phone or text. Students can create a separate e-mail address for the college process and should check that e-mail frequently.

E-Mail Etiquette: Students should write their e-mails using proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.

ESL: English as a Second Language (also known as English Language Learning/ELL)

EFC: The **expected family contribution** is the amount the government believes a student and their family can pay for a student's college costs. The EFC is the same regardless of the actual cost of the institution the student attends.

Essay: See Personal Statement/Essay

FAFSA: Every student who applies for federal financial aid must complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid**. The form is available online at www.studentaid.ed.gov and www.fafsa.ed.gov . The forms can be filed no earlier than October 1 of the student's senior year, and should be filed as soon as possible thereafter. Students and families use prior prior year (PPY) income tax information when filing the FAFSA. For students graduating from high school in 2021, FAFSA forms can be submitted in October 2020 using information from tax year 2019 (filed April 2020).

In order to file the FAFSA, students and parents/guardians each need to register for an FSA ID by visiting <https://www.fsaed.gov>. Each individual must complete their own application for an FSA ID.

Students can include up to ten colleges and universities in their initial filing, and can add others using the FAFSA correction form. Many counselors advise students to list colleges alphabetically on the FAFSA form.

Families can also use the FAFSA4Caster, found at www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov, to get an early estimate of possible aid packages.

Federal Pell Grants: The maximum grant for the 2019-2020 award year will be \$6195. Maximums in subsequent years will depend on budgetary approval. Students' eligibility is determined through their **FAFSA** filings.

Federal Student Aid: The Federal Student Financial Aid homepage offers extensive information about the types of financial aid that are available for students. The information is available in both English and Spanish.

- www.studentaid.ed.gov
- www.fafsa.ed.gov

Financial Aid Package: After receiving reports from **FAFSA** and **CSS** (if applicable), each college will prepare a financial aid offer, or package, for the student. The package will likely include a combination of need-based aid; loans, grants and work study.

The ratio of loans to grants within financial aid packages can vary greatly from institution to institution, and students should review the offers they receive carefully with an eye towards their actual cost of attendance. Financial aid packages will not necessarily cover the total cost for a student enrolling in the institution. Information about financial aid, in English and Spanish, is available at https://www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/knowledge-center/financing-college/collegeafford_all.pdf and https://www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/knowledge-center/financing-college/collegeafford_spanishlanguage.pdf

In addition to need-based aid, some college also offer merit aid, which is awarded based on a student's accomplishments, including grade point average, standardized testing, activities or background. Information about all available financial aid is available on each college's website.

First Generation/First Generation College-Bound: Students whose parents were born outside the United State and students whose parents did not complete a college degree. Many colleges offer fee waivers and/or special programs for these applicants.

Fly-In Programs/Visit Programs: Colleges offer fly-in and visit programs to enable prospective students to experience campus life. Some of these programs are designed specifically for low income students and/or students from underrepresented groups, including African American and Latinx students. Several websites, including www.CollegeGreenlight.com provide information about programs throughout the US.

HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities): A group of colleges and universities that were founded to expand college attendance for African American students before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided access to all institutions. The 101 HBCU institutions currently operating in the United States admit students regardless of race, but enrollment remains largely African American.

- www.hbcuconnect.com
- www.hbcunetwork.com
- www.univsource.com

GED: Students who have not graduated from high school but who plan to attend college can earn a General Educational Development diploma (GED). Information about how to earn a GED can be found at www.ged.com. Many community colleges offer GED programs.

GPA: A student's grade point average (GPA) is determined at the end of the junior year by averaging the grades received in all of the student's academic courses for the three previous years. Colleges may choose to recalculate GPAs based on their own formulas.

Grading Scale: High schools, colleges and universities use a point system to measure student grades. In many cases, the scale goes from 0.0 (F) to 4.0 (A).

The grading system used by a high school should be explained in the high school profile. In some cases, a weighted average is used, meaning that students receive a GPA adjustment for the work they do in honors or AP courses. For example, if the high school uses a one-step adjustment, a student who gets an A- in AP English would have the grade computed in the GPA as a 4.0 rather than as a 3.7, even though the A- appears on the transcript.

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs): A group of 470 United States colleges and universities where the overall enrollment is at least 25% Hispanic. Information can be found at www.hacu.net, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' website.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): A group of colleges and universities that were founded to promote college attendance for African American students before integration provided access to all institutions. These institutions admit students regardless of race, but enrollment remains largely African American. There are currently 101 HBCUs in the United States.

- www.hbcuconnect.com
- www.hbcunetwork.com

- www.hbculifestyle.com

Honors courses: Some high schools offer honors courses with advanced content as a complement or alternative to **AP** courses. Honors courses should be specified as such on the transcript.

International Students:

Visas: International students who wish to study in the US must have a valid F-1 student visa. The visas are issued by the Department of Homeland Security based on the school or college's submission of information through the SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) program. Many high schools, colleges and universities are authorized to use SEVIS to issue F-1 visas. These visas have a termination date at the conclusion of a student's course of study, but become invalid if the student fails to meet the requirements determined by the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security. When the student graduates from high school, the F-1 visa can be transferred to the college where the students will enroll.

Tuition and Fees: Most colleges and universities will require that the student produce bank statements proving the ability to pay tuition. Students should request several copies of their bank statements, because colleges and universities often require original paperwork.

Financial Aid: Many colleges and universities will offer institutional aid to international students. Information about this can be found in the international student sections of the individual college and university websites or in publications such as The College Board's International Student Handbook and at www.internationalstudents.com.

Out-of-State Status: Students who are in the United States on F-1 visas will pay out-of-state tuition at all state and city universities because their visa status does not allow them to establish local residency.

Resources for International Students:

- The College Board's International Student Handbook
- www.internationalstudents.com
- www.edupass.org/finaid/undergraduate.phtml
- www.thecollegematchmaker.com/65-colleges-give-generous-aid-international-students

Learning Differences: Learning differences (sometimes called learning disabilities) include a broad spectrum of conditions that complicate a student's ability to learn in a

traditional setting. Accommodations, such as extended-time testing, verbal instructions, and other support services can be made available in school based on the results of a student's evaluation. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires colleges and universities to make reasonable accommodations for students with documented learning differences. More information can be found at www.ada.gov.

Letters of Recommendation/Support: Colleges and universities may require up to three letters of support for each applicant. Many colleges and universities provide checklists as part of the application as well as including space for written comments. Usually, if three letters are requested, two will be from teachers and one will be from a counselor. Teacher and counselor recommendations are best if they are confidential, and students should be encouraged to waive their right to see the letters in the FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy) section of the application and/or on the secondary school report (SSR). A universally accepted secondary school report can be found at www.nacacnet.org.

Students who are involved in activities outside of school may want an additional letter written on their behalf by their coach, supervisor or instructor. To be most useful, these letters should be sent by the writer to either the college counselor or directly to the admissions office so that confidentiality can be maintained. An outside letter can also be uploaded to the Common Application.

Net Price Calculator: The federal government mandates that all college and university websites include a net price calculator, a tool which allows prospective students to obtain an estimate of the real cost of attending a particular institution. Net price calculators (and the information required to use them) will vary by institution, so students should complete the process at each college or university.

Opportunity Programs: There are many opportunity programs that have been designed to encourage educationally and economically underserved students to attend college. The programs also provide support services for students after they enroll. Information can be found on individual college websites. Programs vary by state and information can generally be found on each state's education department website.

Personal statement/essay: Many colleges and universities require a personal statement as part of their applications. Students should take particular care with the essay, as it is an opportunity to showcase their writing ability. If a question is provided, students should make sure that their essay answers the question completely. If no question is provided, students can use a brief biographical essay, or may use the essay

questions on the Common Application as a guide. Students may want to supplement their essay by including a graded paper from an English or History/Social Studies class.

In addition to a personal statement, many colleges will also ask students to answer a question now being referred to as “The ‘Why Here?’ Question.” These types of questions require not only that the student explain their possible course of study, but also to detail why the student and their plans fit well with the particular college. While the description of the student can be used for various applications, research is required to make the “why here?” part of the answer specific to each college.

Profile - High School: The high school profile is prepared by the high school and should accompany each student’s transcript when it is sent to a college or university. The profile should describe both the school as a whole and the particular graduating class. The profile may also include a grade grid, or other reporting tool, with information about the current graduating class’s performance over the first six semesters of high school.

Profile - College: Most colleges provide information about the most recent class as part of a freshman class profile that is published in printed materials and on their websites. Information on a typical college profile might include number of applicants, geographic representation, representation of race, ethnicity and gender as well as middle 50% standardized test scores.

PSAT: The PSAT is offered to students in October of the junior year. Many schools also offer the test to sophomores and freshmen. The test is similar to the SAT, but scores are for preparation and guidance only and should never be reported to colleges. The PSAT models the **SAT**, but does not include the option of a student-produced essay.

When students receive their scores, the original test booklet is returned along with a score report showing their answers and the correct answers. The score report also suggests areas where the student needs to improve and offers study tips. Students can also access on-line assistance at www.collegeboard.com/quickstart. Students should use these tools in preparing for the SAT.

The full name of the PSAT is PSAT/NMSQT, which stands for National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. PSAT scores from the junior year are reported to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for use in determining winners of National Merit recognition and scholarships. Of the nearly 1.5 million students taking the test, those with the top 50,000 scores are selected for further review, including a review of their SAT scores.

Students can be named “commended scholars,” “semi-finalists,” “finalists” and “winners.” Information about the program can be found at www.nationalmerit.org.

High schools can offer the PSAT to sophomores in either the fall or the spring. In addition, a PSAT 8/9 is offered in some high schools.

Public and Private Institutions:

Private colleges and universities are run primarily through the use of tuition, donations, and endowments.

Public universities are run primarily through the use of state and federal funds that are supplemented by tuition, fees, donations and endowments. In general, public institutions are less expensive than private institutions, but tuition is paid at different levels for residents and out-of-state students:

- **State Residents** (students who can prove that they live in a particular state) pay a lower tuition because it is assumed that their families’ taxes support the institution.
- **Out-of-State students** (who reside in other states or internationally) pay a higher tuition. International students studying on F-1 visas are generally considered to be out-of-state students.
- **Undocumented Students:** Students in California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah and Washington can qualify to pay in-state tuition, provided that they meet state-specified criteria.

Reading List: In addition to the excellent guides published by The College Board, The Princeton Review, Kaplan, and others, a well-stocked bookshelf might include:

- *Fiske Guide to the Colleges* (also available as iPad app)
- *Colleges That Change Lives* by Loren Pope
- *The Gatekeepers* by Jacques Steinberg
- *The Launching Years* by Laura Kastner and Jennifer Fugett Wyatt
- *The College Board’s College Visits and College Interviews*
- *I’m Going to College and You’re Not!* edited by Jennifer Delahunty
- *Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be* by Frank Bruni

Regional Events: Students can attend the information sessions and receptions that many colleges and universities hold in different regions to learn about the college and meet representatives from the admissions office.

Regions of the U.S.: The United States is divided into regions. States may appear in more than one region.

- Metropolitan Tri-State: New York, New Jersey and Connecticut
- New England: Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut
- Mid-Atlantic Region: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Washington, DC
- Mid-Western Region: Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Oklahoma and Wisconsin
- Southern Region: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Texas
- Northwestern States: Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming
- Pacific Northwest: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington
- Mountain States: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.
- Western States: Hawaii, California, Oregon and Washington

SAR: The **student aid report** is sent to the student once the **FAFSA** form has been processed. It includes the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) which is the amount that the family would need to pay towards the overall **cost of attendance**.

SAT: The SAT is usually administered in the United States 7 times per academic year. Most students will take their first SAT in the spring of the junior year, but the test may also be taken in the senior year. The SAT may be taken multiple times. Information on the SAT, as well as practice tests and other preparation tools, can be found at www.collegeboard.com, www.khanacademy.org, and other test preparation sites.

The SAT consists of sections on Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math. Together, these tests will take 3 hours and each will be scored on a 200-800 point scale. An optional 50-minute essay will be given at the conclusion of the 3-hour test for those who choose to take it. While fewer than 25 colleges currently require the essay section, many still recommend it.

Colleges will decide individually whether or not to require the essay section of the SAT.

Up-to-date information is available at www.deliveringopportunity.org .

SAT Score Choice: Students are able to select which scores are sent to colleges by test date (i.e., March 2019 but not October 2019). Colleges do, however, have the option of requiring applicants to submit all of their SAT scores and students must follow the instructions of the colleges to which they apply.

Scholarships: Legitimate scholarships are grants that do not need to be repaid, and can be awarded by the college or university or by an outside company or organization. Students should take care to seek scholarships through trusted sources such as:

- www.collegegreenlight.com
- www.fastweb.com
- www.goingmerry.com
- www.hsf.net (Hispanic Scholarship Fund)
- www.petersons.com
- www.wiredscholar.com

Scholarship Scams: Scholarship organizations are in the business of giving money to students, not taking money from students. There should not be any cost associated with applying for legitimate scholarships and students should be suspicious of any scholarship with a fee.

School Code (see CEEB Code)

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) allows for special administrations of the ACT, SAT and Subject Tests, with accommodations ranging from large-block answer sheets to extended-time testing. In order for a student to use SSD, the school must confirm that the student has a valid Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or psycho-educational work-up on file and that the student receives comparable accommodations in school.

Single-Sex Colleges: The majority of colleges and universities in the United States are coeducational, but there are institutions where men and women study separately. In most cases, the institutions have relationships with other colleges and universities in their area that provide for both academic and social exchange.

In recent years, many women's colleges have updated their policies to welcome transgender women as applicants, but only St. John's University (MN) will enroll transgender men. Specific guidelines can be found on the individual college websites and at:

- Women's College Coalition (WCC) www.womenscolleges.org
- Men's Colleges www.univsource.com

Social Media: Students should be mindful of their social media footprints in high school and during the college process. The junior year is a good time for students to review their posts on Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, Twitter and other social media platforms to be sure they are presenting themselves appropriately and in the best light.

Students should also take advantage of the social media presence of colleges and universities. Students can participate digital groups, follow colleges on Twitter and Instagram, and be part of online chats about individual institutions and the college process in general.

Special Admissions Categories: Colleges and universities will sometimes admit students using special criteria to fill specific needs on campus. Some colleges are reexamining their use of special categories with an eye towards being more equitable. These special categories include, but are not limited to:

- Legacy: children, grandchildren or siblings of alumni or current students
- Athletics: students who will participate in varsity athletics
- Talent: students who have a talent (i.e., music, theatre, etc.)

State Aid Programs: Many states have individual programs that provide financial support for resident students attending in-state institutions. For example, New York offers the NYS Tuition Assistance Plan (TAP) which offers New York state residents who will attend a college or university in the state to qualify for additional assistance. Applying for TAP is part of the FAFSA form and no additional paperwork is required. The 2018-2019 maximum award was \$5165. Through the 2018-19 CalGrant program, California residents qualified for up to \$5742 at Cal State colleges, \$12,570 at UC campuses and \$9084 at private colleges in the state.

Subject Tests: These are hour-long tests offered in 20 subjects. Students can take up to three tests on each test date, and are encouraged to take Subject Tests immediately following the appropriate courses. As with the **SAT**, students are able to send colleges individual scores. Subject Tests are offered 6 times per academic year. Information on the Subject Tests, as well as a test date calendar, can be found at www.collegeboard.com, www.review.com and www.kaplan.com

Most colleges do not require any Subject Tests, but colleges can require and/or recommend up to three.

Students must register for the SAT and Subject Tests, online at www.collegeboard.com

Subject Tests include: Biology/EM, Chemistry, Chinese with Listening, French, French w/ Listening, German, German w/ Listening, Italian, Japanese w/ Listening, Korean w/ Listening, Latin, Literature, Math Levels 1 and 2, Modern Hebrew, Physics, Spanish, Spanish with Listening, US History, World History

Subject Test Score Choice: Students are able to select the Subject Test scores that they submit to colleges.

Super Scores: Some colleges and universities create what have come to be known as “super scores,” where a composite of the highest test score in each section, regardless of date, is created.

Test Optional/Test Flexible: An increasing number of colleges are electing to change to either test optional or test flexible policies. Colleges provide details of their individual policies in the testing section of their websites and a list test optional and test flexible institutions is available at www.fairtest.org.

Thank You Notes: Students who visit a college campus should take the time to write or e-mail a few words of thanks to the admission counselor with whom they met.

TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language is administered by the Education Testing Service (ETS) and is recommended for students with five years or less of English language usage. The test is 3 hours long and includes 4 sections: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Colleges may use the TOEFL score to complement the SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing score and colleges generally list TOEFL minimums on their international admissions websites. Registration information can be found at www.toefl.org. Support for students preparing for the TOEFL is available through www.duolingo.com and www.magoosh.com .

Transcript: The student’s high school transcript is the official record of a student’s coursework and grades from the four years of high school. The transcript is the document colleges use to evaluate an applicant’s academic preparation and ability.

Universal Reply Date: Colleges and universities that are members of **NACAC** and have deadlines use May 1 as their reply deadline for accepting offers of admission and requests to stay on the wait list. No college or university belonging to NACAC can require a non-refundable **deposit** before May 1.

Wait List: See **Regular Decision**

Yield: The percentage of students offered admission by a specific college or university that ultimately enrolls there. Colleges will offer admission to students on the wait list when their yield is lower than expected.