

# **Galway High School**

## College Planning Guide



# Important Guidance Office Contact Information:

<b>School Phone:</b> (518) 882-1221
<b>Guidance Fax:</b> (518) 734-0346
<b>Galway School CEEB Code:</b> 332-030 *You will need this code when registering for the ACT or SAT test and possibly for some financial aid forms. If there is financial hardship or you are on free/reduced lunch, please contact your school counselor. For additional SAT Test Prep visit <a href="http://www.khanacademy.org/SAT">www.khanacademy.org/SAT</a> .
<b>SAT TEST DATES AND REGISTRATION DEADLINES:</b> <a href="http://www.collegeboard.org">www.collegeboard.org</a>
<b>ACT TEST DATES AND REGISTRATION DEADLINES:</b> <a href="http://www.actstudent.org">www.actstudent.org</a>
<b>School Website:</b> <a href="http://www.galwaycsd.org">www.galwaycsd.org</a> Please see the <b>Guidance</b> page for additional information.
<b>High School Counselor:</b> Ms. Kathy Morck <b>Phone:</b> (518) 882-1221 ext. 3811 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:kmorck@galwaycsd.org">kmorck@galwaycsd.org</a>
<b>Guidance Secretary:</b> Ms. Camilla Colangelo <b>Phone:</b> 518-882-1221 ext. 3810 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ccolangelo@galwaycsd.org">ccolangelo@galwaycsd.org</a>

# Junior Year Checklist

## Fall–Winter

### College Planning

- Meet with your counselor about your coursework and college plans
- Check college websites for admission requirements
- Create a professional email address to use when applying for scholarships, registering for college entrance exams and completing college applications
- Meet with college admissions recruiters when they visit your high school
- Attend college information events in your community ([www.collegenights.org](http://www.collegenights.org))

### College Search

- Tour local campuses and visit non-local colleges during winter and spring breaks
- Try online college fairs and virtual campus tours (<https://campustours.com>, [www.youvisit.com/collegesearch](http://www.youvisit.com/collegesearch), [www.thecollegetour.com](http://www.thecollegetour.com))
- Use college search sites to explore your college options (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>)
- Prepare your college list

### Career Exploration

- Attend a local career fair
- Research career options and their education requirements, median pay and projected growth rates (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- Make a list of careers that may interest you and research the education level required for each profession
- Talk with professionals in careers you are curious about and ask about their work
- Enhance skills that would be useful in a career of interest through your extracurricular activities

## Spring

### College Entrance Exams

- Register and take your college entrance exams—check first with your high school to see if they administer them on-site
- Several colleges are test optional—check <https://fairtest.org/>, for the most comprehensive list
- SAT, with optional essay ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)); free SAT test
- prep help ([www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat))
- ACT, with optional writing section (<http://www.act.org>); free ACT test prep help (<https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html#prep>)

### Academics

- Prepare for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
- Plan your senior year schedule with your counselor
- Review your college preparation coursework and GPA with a college advisor
- Create a list of teachers, coaches and other mentors who will be able to write personalized letters of recommendation

### Summer Preparation

- Apply for summer jobs or internships  
Seek volunteer opportunities in your field of interest
- Register for community college courses and earn college credit while in high school, also referred to as dual/concurrent enrollment
- If you took the SAT or ACT, review your test scores to determine if retesting is necessary

## Summer

### College Application Preparation

- Check websites of colleges on your list; review admissions application process and timeline
- Draft your application essays and/or personal statement; work with a college advisor for feedback
- Prepare a scholarship resume and/or a “brag sheet” that includes all your non-academic activities and honors
- Communicate with college admission representatives for questions you may have

### College Finances

- Register for an FSA ID, which will be required to complete the FAFSA online in the fall; your parent(s) must also register for an FSA ID (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>)
- Learn about the different types of financial aid (<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types>)
- Visit College Board's BigFuture EFC Calculator to see how financial aid can help pay for your education (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/calculate-your-cost/expected-family-contribution/efc-calculator>)
- Search and apply for scholarships ([www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com), <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>)
- Learn how money works; take a financial literacy course ([www.fdic.gov/resources/consumers/money-smart/index.html](http://www.fdic.gov/resources/consumers/money-smart/index.html))
- Use the College Scorecard to compare costs, degree programs and outcomes for the colleges you are interested in (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>)
- Save money for college

## Most Common College Types

Type of Institution	Description	Degrees Offered	Admissions
<b>Career and Technical Education (CTE) Institution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A CTE institution focuses on a highly specialized curriculum; can be nonprofit or for-profit</li> <li>• Geared for students who want to learn a specific skill and find employment within two years</li> <li>• Examples include cosmetology, HVAC, culinary and automotive technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates of completion</li> <li>• Associate of Applied Science (AAS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed application for admission</li> <li>• High school transcript showing proof of completion</li> </ul>
<b>Community College Junior College (2-year)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A college is an institution with multiple academic departments</li> <li>• Offers traditional academic, continuing education and remedial programs</li> <li>• Offers technical programs, such as cosmetology, HVAC, culinary and automotive technology</li> <li>• Offers general education prerequisite courses required for most bachelor's degree programs at four-year colleges and universities</li> <li>• Ideal for students looking to transfer to a four-year college and pursue a bachelor's degree, students looking to earn an associate degree or certificate, and students looking to further their education</li> <li>• Some colleges offer a limited number of bachelor's degree programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates of completion</li> <li>• Associate of Arts (AA)</li> <li>• Associate of Science (AS)</li> <li>• Associate of Applied Science (AAS) May offer limited:</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (BA)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science (BS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incoming freshmen and transfers</li> <li>• Completed application for admission</li> <li>• High school transcript showing proof of completion</li> <li>• College transcript, if previously attended</li> <li>• College placement testing may be required depending on the school</li> </ul>
<b>College (4-year)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A college is an institution with multiple academic departments</li> <li>• Offers traditional academic programs; may offer technical, continuing education and remedial programs</li> <li>• Offers general education prerequisite courses and upper-level, major-specific undergraduate and graduate courses</li> <li>• Colleges can be specialized in a specific area or liberal arts based</li> <li>• Liberal arts colleges offer primarily liberal arts majors, yet many offer degrees in STEM fields as well</li> <li>• Colleges (especially liberal arts colleges) tend to be smaller than universities and offer fewer majors; they may not offer graduate degrees (master's and doctoral)</li> <li>• Some colleges offer associate degree programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (BA)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science (BS) May offer limited:</li> <li>• Associate of Arts (AA)</li> <li>• Associate of Science (AS)</li> <li>• Associate of Applied Science (AAS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incoming freshmen and transfers</li> <li>• Completed application for admission</li> <li>• High school transcript showing proof of completion (more selective colleges require a higher grade point average)</li> <li>• College transcript, if previously attended</li> <li>• Supplemental documents may include essay, personal statement and/or academic resume</li> <li>• SAT or ACT score may be required depending on the school</li> </ul>
<b>University (4-year)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A university is an institution with multiple schools and colleges (college of liberal arts, school of engineering, college of business, etc.)</li> <li>• Offers traditional academic programs; may offer technical, continuing education and remedial programs</li> <li>• Even though universities tend to focus more on research and specialized majors, most universities have a college of arts and sciences that offers liberal arts programs</li> <li>• Universities tend to be larger than colleges and offer more majors; they offer graduate degrees (master's and doctoral)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (BA)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science (BS)</li> <li>• Master of Arts (MA)</li> <li>• Master of Science (MS)</li> <li>• Master of Business Administration (MBA)</li> <li>• Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD)</li> <li>• There are many other graduate and undergraduate degrees, but these are the most common</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incoming freshmen and transfers</li> <li>• Completed application for admission</li> <li>• High school transcript showing proof of completion (more selective universities require a higher grade point average)</li> <li>• College transcript, if previously attended</li> <li>• Supplemental documents may include essay, personal statement and/or academic resume</li> <li>• SAT or ACT score may be required depending on the school</li> </ul>

# Choosing the Right College for You

Your college selection is an important decision, but where do you start?

Use the tools and resources in this chapter to help you choose where to apply.

## Research College Options

Every person is different. Your background, interests and personality are just a few things that make you original and unique.

Depending on many factors, each person has a different experience preparing for college. Let your personal interests, goals and situation influence your decisions throughout the process.

## Consider Your Academic Strengths

The best way to identify a career field or major course of study is to look at the academic subjects you already enjoy, especially those in which you perform well. Identify majors that concentrate in these subject areas to ensure selection of a major you'll likely enjoy and do well in. Once you've identified a major or majors, identify colleges that offer those majors.

## Explore Career Options

Identify careers that interest you and determine which majors will best prepare you for that career. Investigate the academic requirements necessary to enter into those majors.

To help get you started, visit the following resources and career assessment websites:

\* [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)—Occupational Outlook Handbook provides hundreds of job descriptions, including education requirements and median pay.

\* [www.khanacademy.org/college-careersmore/career-content](http://www.khanacademy.org/college-careersmore/career-content)—Videos and articles containing detailed information on several types of jobs as well as general advice when starting in the workplace.

\* <https://roadtripnation.com>—Videos and interactive tools to help students determine the right college type, major and career.

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>—Career exploration exercises and educational requirements needed to achieve college and career goals.

\* [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)—The U.S. Department of Labor's interactive database of occupational information.

## Determine Support Services That Are Important to You

Colleges offer more than just academics to help students succeed. Health and wellness care, counseling, child care, food support, tutoring, mentoring, disability services and legal support are examples of support services made available to students to help them succeed at college.

Research support services offered by the colleges you are interested in and determine if these services meet your needs.

## Make Your Decision

Base your final decision on the type of student you are, your educational goals and what situation best fits your needs. Talk to friends, family, teachers and counselors for help with identifying your goals in going to college.

Use the worksheet on the following page to do some self-discovery.



## A Note about School Accreditation and Licensing

Accrediting and licensure agencies provide third-party oversight and ensure the college is providing the quality of education promised to the student. Due to colleges having different accreditation agencies, credits earned at one college may not be transferrable to another college. Check with the admissions department to determine which of your credits will transfer.

For more information about accreditation and state licensing, visit the U.S. Department of Education at [www.ed.gov/accreditation](http://www.ed.gov/accreditation).

# WORKSHEET: CHOOSING THE RIGHT COLLEGE FOR YOU



## STEP 1

In the top row, make a preliminary list of colleges that the interest you.



## STEP 2

Think about important factors you want your college to have. Then, prioritize each factor in the level of importance column



## STEP 3

Cross off colleges that appear to not have what you're looking for. Rank remaining colleges in order of preference.

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FACTORS TO CONSIDER	COLLEGE (FILL IN NAMES OF COLLEGES THAT INTEREST YOU)			
		1.	2.	3.	4.
	<b>Program of study:</b> Which programs does the college offer to help you achieve your career goals?				
	<b>School size:</b> Do you prefer a large or small college? What is the student population?				
	<b>Class size:</b> How large do you like your classes to be? What is the student-to-teacher ratio?				
	<b>Support programs:</b> Which programs does the college offer to help you stay in college and graduate?				
	<b>City and neighborhood:</b> Do you prefer a city or a small town? What is the population of the city or town?				
	<b>Campus culture:</b> When visiting each college, get a feel for its "personality." How does it match yours?				
	<b>Distance from home:</b> How close do you want to live to your family?				
	<b>Extracurricular activities:</b> Do you have activities in your life that you can't live without?				
	<b>Religious affiliation:</b> Do you want to attend a college affiliated with your religious beliefs?				
	<b>Net price:</b> While one college may appear to be less expensive, what will your final cost be after receiving grants and scholarships? Use <a href="https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price">https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price</a> to identify your likely estimated cost.				
	<b>Financial aid options:</b> Does the college have special financial aid options? These could include things such as a tuition payment plan to spread out your payments or a guaranteed cost of attendance as long as you are enrolled.				
	<b>Outside learning options:</b> Does the college offer internships, externships, study abroad or service learning opportunities?				
	<b>Housing options near campus:</b> How close or far is housing? Will you need a car, or are where you live, shop and work within walking or biking distance?				



# 20 Questions to Ask College Representatives

Whether you meet them at a college fair or on a campus visit, college representatives genuinely enjoy talking to high school students and answering questions about their college. The following questions will help start a good dialogue.

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1. What makes your college unique?
2. What's the security like on campus?
3. For what academic programs is your college known?
4. What's the surrounding area like? Is it easy to get around?
5. How would you describe the students at your college? Where are most of them from?
6. What are the most popular majors?
7. Where do students hang out on campus?
8. How would you describe the academic pressure and workload?
9. What happens on weekends — are there things to do on campus or in town, or do most students go home?
10. What support services (academic advisers, tutors, etc.) are available?
11. Are fraternities and sororities a big part of campus life?
12. Do I need to bring my own computer?
13. What are the housing options for freshmen?
14. What's the faculty like? Are they accessible outside of class?
15. Do many students live off campus?
16. Are there opportunities for internships?
17. Is there a sports complex or fitness center?
18. Is there job placement help for graduates?
19. What are the most popular clubs and activities?
20. Are there any big changes in the works that I should know about?

## Submitting Your College Applications

Every college has a different application process with different directions to follow. Read them carefully and use the worksheet on page 10 to organize the information for the colleges you are considering. Make one copy for each college to keep with your application materials.

If you need help, there are many resources you can call on to help guide you, such as parents/guardians, teachers, school counselors and volunteer organizations.

### WAYS TO APPLY

- Paper
- Electronic

To determine the best way to apply, go to the admissions page on each college's website and look for more information.

Consider using the Common Application (known as the Common App) by visiting [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). More than 1,000 colleges and universities participate in this one-stop-shop for college admissions where you can apply, keep track of collegespecific deadlines and more.

### APPLICATION COSTS

Application fees vary among colleges. Many colleges will waive the application fee for those who meet certain qualifications, such as applicants who received fee waivers for taking college entrance exams. Check with the college admissions office to determine the circumstances under which the college will waive the application fee.

You may also work with your high school counselor to obtain a fee waiver from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC).

### DEADLINES

While some colleges offer rolling admission, meaning colleges review applications in the order they are received with no application deadline, other colleges implement a regular decision policy that requires students to submit their applications by a certain date. Deadlines are important. Be sure to pay attention to and meet each college's date for application. If applying with a paper application, be careful to note whether the deadline is based on the arrival or postmark date. If the deadline is the arrival date, make sure to include several days for postal delivery.

### EARLY DECISION AND EARLY ACTION

Many colleges allow you to apply under an "early decision" or "early action" program. Typically, you have to apply earlier than most applicants, but you also find out earlier whether you have been accepted. Early decision is a binding commitment by you to the college of your decision to attend if admitted and offered a satisfactory financial aid package. This commitment to the college is typically given in November or December. Early action is similar to early decision, but the binding commitment by you to the college is not required until the spring (typically May 1, which is National College Decision Day). These programs are not for everyone. Generally, only those who have a clearcut, first-choice college should apply under these programs. If you believe early decision or early action is right for you, check with the college admissions office to determine how to apply.

### TRANSCRIPTS

As part of the admissions process, you or your school counselor will need to request and submit an official copy of your high school transcript (and college transcript if you have already earned some college credits) for each college where you plan to apply.

Many students apply to colleges while still attending high school. College acceptance is often contingent upon your grades. You will also need to send a final transcript to the college you will attend.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

If your colleges require recommendations, letters or specific forms, you will need to ask your teachers and/or other adults to be references. Some colleges even ask for peer recommendations. When identifying whom you should ask, consider your relationship with the person and how well you've done in your activities with them. Writing recommendations can be time consuming for the people writing them. They might also be writing them for other students. Give your references plenty of time and mak

sure they are aware of recommendation deadlines. One month before your earliest deadline should be sufficient, but inquire as to your reference's schedule when asking.

A recommendation is a favor. No one is required to recommend you to a college. Here are some commonly accepted rules of etiquette to follow:

- When giving your references the forms, include a pre-addressed envelope to the appropriate address with the correct amount of postage on the envelope if they are meant to mail it directly to the college.
- Write thank-you notes to your references.

### ESSAYS

If your colleges require essays, they will usually give you specific questions or topics for your essays. Here are some tips to follow:

- Check for spelling and grammar mistakes. Most software programs offer this feature, but don't rely entirely on the computer.
- Have someone proofread and provide constructive feedback on your essay. • Don't exceed the word limit, if any is given.
- Be yourself. Don't second-guess what the college would like you to think or say in your essay.
- Don't stray from the question/topic.

Everyone goes about the writing process differently. Brainstorming and outlining are two methods that might help you.







# WORKSHEET: ORGANIZE YOUR APPLICATION INFORMATION

Make copies of this page, and complete the information for each college you are seriously considering.

<b>COLLEGE NAME</b>	
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## COLLEGE INFORMATION

Address for application: \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip: \_\_\_\_\_

School website: \_\_\_\_\_

Application website: \_\_\_\_\_

Admissions office phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

CEEB code\* (College): \_\_\_\_\_ (High School): \_\_\_\_\_

Federal School Code:\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ FAFSA submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

\*CEEB codes can be found at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

\*\*Federal School Codes can be found at <https://studentaid.gov/fafsa-app/FSCsearch>.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations required? YES  NO

	Requested	Received	Thank You Sent
Reference 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference 3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## VISIT/VIRTUAL EVENT

Name of Person You're Meeting	Date/Time	Location
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## CONTACTS

Name	Phone	Email	Notes
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

<b>APPLICATION DUE</b>	/ /
	____:____ ET/ CT/ MT/ PT
<input type="checkbox"/> Postmark date	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrive-by date
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit online date	
Application Submitted	/ /

## ESSAYS

Essays required? YES  NO

	Complete
Topic 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Topic 3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

## TRANSCRIPTS

High school transcripts requested? YES  NO

College transcripts (if already earned college credits) requested? YES  NO

## ENTRANCE EXAMS

Test required  Test optional  Test blind

Ordered scores sent from ACT/SAT? YES  NO

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Other requirements? YES  NO

Task	Complete
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

# The College Application Essay

Unlike every other aspect of the application, you control your essay. Make sure that the glimpse you give the admission committee into your character, background, and writing ability is the very best possible. Along with the essay, most colleges rate “character and personal qualities” as extremely important in their admissions decisions. Your character shows in three places on the application: the interview (if you have one), your involvement in extracurricular activities, and your essay. Of the three, the essay is the most immediate and illuminating to admissions as they read through thousands of applications.

Remember, colleges are not looking solely for straight “A’s” and high SAT scores. They are looking for good citizens for their campus communities. Share your opinions but avoid anything too risky or controversial. Your essay will be read by a diverse group of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, so, try to appeal to the broadest audience possible.

Keep these key application essay tips in mind:

- Have I answered the question?
- Does my introduction engage the reader? Does my conclusion provide closure?
- Do I use concrete experiences as supporting details?
- Have I used active-voice verbs wherever possible?
- Is my sentence structure varied, or do I use all long or short sentences?
- Are there any clichés such as cutting edge or learned my lesson? Appropriate language should be used.
- Do I use transitions appropriately?
- What parts of the essay need elaboration or are unclear?
- What parts of the essay do not support my main argument?
- What does the essay reveal about my personality?
- Have an adult look over your essay. Revise, Revise, Revise.

For students using the Common Application, the essay length is capped at 650 words. The application and essay prompts are available after August 1<sup>st</sup>. Students should complete a rough draft of their college essay over the summer. Essay prompts are often similar from year to year; prompts are below:

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- 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 any 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.

# What is the FERPA Waiver?

Since FERPA is a complex law, we want to provide some key information before you respond to the FERPA waiver question.

## **Q: HOW DOES FERPA RELATE TO YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION?**

A: FERPA gives you the right to review confidential letters of recommendation under certain circumstances **IF**:

- You are enrolled in college and that college saves the recommendations for enrolled students, OR
- You are 18 or older.

## **Q: IN THE APPLICATION YOU'LL BE ASKED IF YOU WANT TO WAIVE THIS RIGHT. WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO DO THAT?**

A: Waiving your right let's colleges know that you do not intend to read your recommendations, which helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful. Some recommenders may refuse to write a letter for you unless you waive your rights. Check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy. The institution does not save recommendations post-matriculation (you can check if a school saves recommendations post-matriculation in the My Colleges tab).

## **Q: STILL UNSURE HOW TO RESPOND?**

A: That's okay. Many students are. Before you respond to the FERPA waiver question, take a moment to discuss your decision with your counselor, another school official, or your parent/legal guardian.

<https://appsupport.commonapp.org/applicantsupport/s/article/What-is-the-FERPA-Waiver>

# Application Deadline Types and Admission Decision Options

The use of multiple admission plans by colleges & universities often result in confusion and concern among students, parents, and college admission counseling professionals. Admission plans vary among colleges. Therefore, it is very important to understand the specific guidelines and deadline dates of prospective schools. Below are examples of terms used by colleges and universities.

## Early Decision

Early Decision is the term used to describe the application process in which a binding agreement is made by the student to the college, that, if admitted, the student will enroll. Only a student who can make a deliberate and well-reasoned first choice decision should apply under an Early Decision plan because the institution will require a non-refundable deposit well before May 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Colleges take Early Decision applications very seriously. Most require the student and/or a parent and the school counselor to sign-off that they all understand and agree to the binding nature of the agreement.
- Students may apply to other colleges but may have only one Early Decision application pending at any time.
- College will respond to “application for financial aid” at or near the time an offer of admission is extended.
- Immediately upon acceptance, students must withdraw all other applications and make no subsequent applications.

## Early Action and/or Priority

Early Action and/or Priority are most often the terms used to describe the application process which permits a student to apply to a college and receive a decision during the senior year, well in advance of the normal response dates in the spring. For most colleges, the candidate is not committed to enroll at the particular college.

- Students may apply to other colleges.
- Students applying for financial aid will adhere to institutional aid application deadlines.
- Students will not be required to make a commitment prior to May 1, but are encouraged to do so as soon as a final college choice is made.
- Priority deadlines are often attached to scholarship deadlines.

## Regular Decision

Regular Decision is a term used to describe the application process in which the college reviews most of its applications prior to notifying the majority of its candidates.

- Students may apply to other colleges.
- Students applying for financial aid will adhere to institutional aid application deadlines.
- Students will not be required to make a commitment prior to May 1 but are encouraged to do so as soon as a final college choice is made.

## Rolling Admission

Rolling Admission is a term used to describe the application process in which the college reviews applications as they are received and offers decisions to students as applications are reviewed.

- Students may apply to other colleges.
- College may have a stated or recommended final application deadline.
- Students will not be required to make a commitment prior to May 1 but are encouraged to do so as soon as a final college choice is made.
- Students applying for financial aid will adhere to college aid application deadlines.

## WaitList/Deferred

Waitlist or Deferred are terms used by colleges to describe a process in which the college does not initially offer or deny admission, but extends to a candidate the possibility of admission in the future.

- Students should contact admissions to determine the parameters of the waitlist and timeline for final decisions.
- Students should ask admissions if there is anything that they can do to enhance their application.

# Preparing for Your College Interview

**RESEARCH.** Be familiar with the school's academic programs, extracurricular activities, and campus life. Look at the list of courses for programs you are interested in.

**ARRIVE ON TIME!** Ideally, it would be best to be there 15 minutes early if possible. Most interviews will last anywhere from 25 to 45 minutes.

**DRESS APPROPRIATELY.** Wear something that is comfortable, but that is also appropriate for this type of setting. Casual and clean. A dress, or shirt and tie are not necessary.

**BRING ALONG A COPY OF YOUR MOST RECENT HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT.** Know your GPA, rank, and test scores.

**BRING ALONG A COPY OF YOUR RESUME.** In your resume, include extracurricular activities, leadership positions, community service and jobs, as well as a list of your special skills and accomplishments. This will go into your file in the admissions office.

**BRING ALONG A LIST OF QUESTIONS** that are appropriate for the person interviewing you. It's fine to refer to this list; it will show the interviewer you have come prepared.

**PREPARE SOME GENERAL ANSWERS FOR COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS.** Remember, you won't be graded on your responses. The interview is a chance for the admissions officer to see aspects of you that are not reflected in your application.

**TRY NOT TO GIVE ONE-WORD ANSWERS.** If you are asked a "yes or no" question, follow up your "yes or no" with an explanation. After all, you've come to the interview to show the interviewer who you really are.

**MAKE EYE-CONTACT.** You don't have to stare into the interviewer's eyes, but you should make eye contact when you want to emphasize a point. If you are shy or uncomfortable making eye contact with a stranger, practice with friends.

**SAY "YES" OR "NO", NOT "YEAH", "UH-HUH", OR "NAH".** Never say "you know" or "whatever" in response to a question or to finish a thought.

**DON'T MUMBLE.** Enunciate your words. Speak with your head up. Practice. Take a cue from the interviewer. If he or she is leaning forward and seems to be straining to understand you, speak up.

**WHEN THE INTERVIEW IS OVER, SAY "THANK YOU" AND "GOOD-BYE".** Remember to smile and offer another friendly handshake.

**BE SURE TO GET THE INTERVIEWER'S CONTACT INFORMATION SO YOU CAN WRITE A THANK YOU CARD OR E-MAIL TO THE INTERVIEWER.** This is a great opportunity to ask any additional questions.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Questions Interviewers May Ask</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sample Questions to Ask Your Interviewer</b></p>
<p><u>About your high school experience:</u>            Has school been challenging? Which courses were challenging?            Have you worked up to your potential?            What outside factors affected your performance?            How would you describe your high school?</p> <p><u>About your extracurricular activities:</u>            Which activity has been most satisfying to you?            What is the most significant contribution you've made to your school?            What are your hobbies and interests?            Have you worked or been a volunteer?</p> <p><u>About college:</u>            What do you hope to accomplish in the next four years?            What interests do you plan to pursue in college?            What are some of your criteria for choosing a college?            What other colleges are you considering?</p> <p><u>About the world around you:</u>            What books and magazines do you read regularly?            What TV shows do you watch regularly?            What are your favorite movies?            What person, living or dead, would you most like to talk to and what would you talk about?</p> <p><u>About you:</u>            What do you do well? Your talents?            Tell me something about your family.            How would you describe your friendships?            By whom have you been influenced?            How would your best friend describe you? Would you agree?            Describe yourself with three adjectives.            What three wishes do you have?            What pressures have you had to confront? How have you gone your own way?            Tell me something that has had an impact on you.            What is the most difficult situation you've had to face?            What sets you apart as an individual in your school?            What do you think you can do for this college?            Tell me about yourself.</p>	<p><u>About the students:</u>            Describe the diversity of students on the campus.            What is the percentage of students from public, private and parochial schools?            What role do students have in shaping policy? On what committees do they sit? On what issues can they vote?</p> <p><u>About Social Life:</u>            What happens on weekends?            What percentage of students remains on campus on the weekends?            What is the role of fraternities and sororities on campus?            What role do team sports play in the social life here?</p> <p><u>About Housing:</u>            How does the college go about assigning roommates?            Does the college provide housing all four years?            What housing choices are available to students?            Are the dorms quiet enough for studying?</p> <p><u>About Dining:</u>            What kinds of dining facilities are on campus?            Are there different meal plans? How do students pay for them?</p> <p><u>About Recreational Facilities:</u>            What kinds of facilities does the student center have?            What other hangouts are there on campus?            What are the rules and regulations for recreational use of the gym?</p> <p><u>About Student Services:</u>            What kinds of health services are available for students?            Is there a doctor, nurse, psychologist, and academic counselor available on campus?            What statistics do you have on graduates? What percentage of graduates went on to graduate school?            Is there a job/career placement office on campus?            What services are there for special education students?            What security measures has the college provided for students? Have there been any problems?</p> <p><u>About Academics and Faculty:</u>            How many students are in a typical freshman class?            How does freshman registration work? How easy is it to register for classes?</p>





# Financial Aid 101

What is financial aid? Financial aid is money that can help you pay for college. Some aid needs to be paid back or earned, and some aid is a gift. Here are the most important things you should know about financial aid.

## 4 QUICK FACTS ON FINANCIAL AID

### 1 MORE THAN \$185 BILLION IN AID IS AVAILABLE

There are four main sources:

- Federal government (largest source)
- State governments
- Colleges and universities
- Private organizations

### 2 THE FAFSA IS THE PLACE TO START —AND IT'S FREE

To qualify for many types of aid, you'll need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This gives you access to these types of aid:

- **Grants and scholarships:** money you don't have to pay back
- **Work-study jobs:** paid, part-time work that's generally on campus
- **Loans:** money you need to pay back, usually after you graduate

### 3 THE FAFSA IS CONVENIENT

Complete the form online at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) or download paper forms there. You can import your family's tax information directly from the IRS website. Begin filling out your FAFSA on **October 1**. Be sure to also opt in to the College Board Opportunity Scholarships at [cb.org/opportunity](https://cb.org/opportunity) for a chance at the Complete the FAFSA scholarship worth \$1,000.

### 4 MORE AID IS OUT THERE

Once you've completed the FAFSA, you should apply for these types of aid:

- Financial aid at the colleges to which you are applying
- Private scholarships for which you're eligible

Once you identify a college that's a good fit for you, you should investigate your financial aid options. Each college has its own financial aid policies—guidelines for deciding who qualifies for aid, what type of aid is available, and similar questions.

To be sure you understand what's available, check to see if the answers to these questions appear on the college's website or in their print materials. If not, schedule a phone meeting or an interview with a member of the financial aid staff if you're going to be visiting the college.

## QUESTIONS FOR FINANCIAL AID OFFICERS:

- What's the average total cost—including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, travel, and other personal expenses—for the first year?
- How much have your costs increased over the last three years?
- Does financial need have an effect on admission decisions?
- What's the priority deadline to apply for financial aid, and when am I notified about financial aid award decisions?
- How is financial aid affected if I apply under an early decision or early action program?
- Does the college offer need-based and merit-based financial aid?
- Are there scholarships available that aren't based on financial need, and do I need to complete a separate application for them?
- Does the college require me to fill out the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®?
- If the financial aid package the college offers isn't enough, are there any conditions under which it can be reconsidered, such as changes in my enrollment status or my family's financial situation (or that of a family member)?
- How does the aid package change from year to year?
- What are the terms of the programs included in the aid package?
- What are the academic requirements or other conditions for the renewal of financial aid, including scholarships?
- When can I expect to receive bills from the college?

# What to Do When Your Financial Aid Award Isn't Enough

Colleges want to provide financial aid to their students, but they don't always have enough funds to meet the full need of every student. That means a school may not award you enough financial aid to cover all your college expenses. Or maybe your family's financial situation has changed, and you now need more aid than the college awarded you. If you're in either of these situations, follow these steps.

## 1 Contact the Financial Aid Office

Call or email the financial aid office. If someone there can't answer your question in a phone call or email, make an appointment to meet with a financial aid officer, if possible.

Talking with a financial aid officer can help you learn how you can make up the difference between what you need and what the college awarded you. Financial aid officers want to help you attend their college, so they'll work with you to find the right solution.

You can start by asking questions like the following:

- What are my options for receiving more aid?
- How can I find scholarships to help pay for college?
- Can I talk to someone at the college about finding part-time work?
- Do you have any advice about getting a private loan?

## 2 File an Appeal

If there's a significant change in your family's finances—such as a drop in income or unexpected medical expenses—you can submit an appeal asking the financial aid office to review your award. Call the office to find out what the college's standard appeals process is so you can follow it. Be ready to provide proof of the change in your circumstances, such as bank statements, pay stubs, or medical bills. But remember, it will take you time to prepare the appeal, and it will take the college time to act on it.

If your appeal isn't successful, you may want to consider applying for a private loan or explore other ways to pay for college.

## 3 Don't Be Shy About Asking for Help

No matter what your situation, don't be shy about contacting the financial aid office. Financial aid officers are there to answer your questions.

Visit [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org) for more information.

# How Do I Get Financial Aid For College?

<b>WHAT FORMS SHOULD I FILL OUT?</b>	<b>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</b>	FAFSA is required by almost all schools to qualify for financial aid You may begin your FAFSA application in December of your senior year. File the FAFSA online or by mail at <a href="http://www.studentaid.gov">www.studentaid.gov</a> . Call 1-800-4FED-AID for help with the FAFSA and to find out specific information about various federal student aid programs.
	<b>CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE</b>	This is a program of College Board (they do not award any money) Many schools require the PROFILE to award nonfederal student aid Allows you to give a complete picture of financial circumstances Register for the PROFILE online at <a href="http://www.collegeboard.org">www.collegeboard.org</a> . Not required by all schools. Contact the school to find out the deadline.
	<b>Other Forms</b>	The college you attend may have additional forms. Contact the college's Financial Aid Office for more information.

<b>FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>RE-PAYMENT</b>
Federal PELL Grant	For students who meet federal criteria for financial need. The expected Family Contribution is determined from the FAFSA.	NONE
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	Awarded to low-income students based on availability of funds for college. Must also be eligible for a Pell Grant.	NONE
NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)	Helps eligible New York residents attending in-state postsecondary institution spay for college. Apply by filling out the FAFSA.	NONE
Federal Perkins Loan	Students with exceptional financial need. 5% interest-rate loan.	Up to 10 years
Federal Stafford Loan	<b>Subsidized:</b> For students with financial need. Principal and interest are deferred. <b>Unsubsidized:</b> Awarded regardless of family income. Principal deferred until student leaves school, interest accrues while in college.	Up to 10 years
Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)	Allows parents/stepparents to borrow up to the full cost minus financial aid received.	Up to 10 years
Federal College Work Study	Allows a student with financial need to work part-time to earn financial aid award money	NONE
Private Grants & Scholarships	Financial aid offered by numerous private organizations (e.g., Elks, PTSA, CSEA, etc.)	NONE
Private Loans	Non-federal loans available to students/parents from banks, credit unions & other private sources.	Varies
NYS Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Incentive Program	The NYS STEM Incentive Program provides awards for fulltime study up to the annual tuition charged to NYS resident students attending an undergraduate program at the State University of New York (SUNY), or actual tuition charged, whichever is less, for the top 10 percent of students in each New York State high school if they pursue a STEM degree in an associates or bachelor degree program.	Agree to work in a STEM field in New York State for 5 years after graduation
Excelsior Scholarship	The program covers up to \$5,500 towards tuition for eligible SUNY and CUNY students. Applies to families who earn \$125,000 or less.	Agree to work in New York State for 4 years after graduation.

# Financial Aid Information (FAFSA and CSS Profile)

## **WHAT ARE NET PRICE CALCULATORS AND WHERE CAN I ACCESS THEM?**

Net Price Calculators are available on a college's or university's website and allow prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in the previous year, after taking grants and scholarship aid into account. The U.S. Department of Education Net Price Calculator Center can also link you to them here: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>.

## **WHAT IS THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)?**

The FAFSA is used to apply for federal student aid such as grants, work-study, and loans. You may also use the FAFSA to apply for most state and some private aid. <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>.

## **WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES FOR APPLYING?**

You should apply as early as possible. Submitting your FAFSA is only the first step in applying for federal student aid. Please check colleges' websites for preferred their filing deadlines.

## **WHEN CAN I APPLY?**

January 1<sup>st</sup> is the first date that you are eligible to file the FAFSA. Try to submit the form as close as possible to this date since school, state and private aid deadlines may be earlier than federal deadlines. Both the parent and the student need to obtain an FSA ID on the FAFSA website to complete the FAFSA, and this can take 1-3 days.

Tips:

- Attend our informational financial aid evening
- Read questions and instructions carefully - Common words like "household," "investments," and "parent" may have special meaning
- Apply early
- File online and use the data retrieval tool if possible
- Reach out to a financial aid office with additional questions

## **CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE**

Some colleges require submission of the CSS PROFILE to gain further family financial information. The PROFILE is completed electronically at <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>, starting October 1st. Colleges indicate on their websites if they require the PROFILE and the comprehensive list can be found on the above website.

# Student Athletes & the NCAA Clearinghouse

If you are a student-athlete who plans to compete athletically at a Division I or Division II school, you must register online at <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> and be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. In order to be certified by the NCAA, you must meet academic eligibility requirements. Be sure your course selections will meet these requirements.

If you would like more detailed information on NCAA core course and test score requirements please link to the web site at <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> (certain core courses and minimum test scores are required).

## **REGISTRATION PROCESS**

At the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade, register on-line at <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>. The registration process will include a request for your official transcript to be sent directly from the Guidance Office to the NCAA Clearinghouse. The transcript must include grades through the junior year of high school. After graduation, the Guidance Office will send the Clearinghouse a copy of your final transcript that confirms graduation from high school.

## **STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES ARE REQUIRED**

Please confirm on the NCAA website whether or not SAT/ACT test scores are required for participation at both Division I and Division II colleges.

## **CORE CURRICULUM**

Please see the Clearinghouse website for NCAA approved academic courses and requirements.

# College Search, Financial Aid and Scholarship Resources

Galway Central School's Guidance Webpage [https://www.galwaycsd.org/jr\\_sr\\_high\\_school/guidance\\_office](https://www.galwaycsd.org/jr_sr_high_school/guidance_office) includes numerous links for college, financial aid and scholarship information. The site also includes important dates, Guidance News, workshops and college summer programs and other information pertinent to high school students.

## **COLLEGE SEARCH SITES:**

[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)  
<https://www.niche.com/>  
<http://www4.studentsreview.com/>  
[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)  
<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>

## **TESTING SITES:**

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)  
[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)  
<https://www.kaptest.com/college-prep>

## **NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE**

<https://www.ncaa.org/>

## **FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP SITES:**

<https://finaid.org/>  
<https://www.hesc.ny.gov/>  
<https://www.scholarships.com/>  
<https://www.fastweb.com/>  
<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> (On-line free application for federal student aid)  
[www.css.collegeboard.org](http://www.css.collegeboard.org) (CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE)  
[www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org) (scholarship site)  
<https://www.suny.edu/attend/academics/eop/> (SUNY EOP)  
<http://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services/higher-education-opportunity-program-heop> (HEOP - private colleges)  
<https://www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-programs/seek-college-discovery/> (CUNY's EOP programs)  
<http://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services/higher-education-opportunity-program-heop> (NYS Excelsior Scholarship Program)

## **MILITARY SITES:**

<https://www.goarmy.com/>  
<https://www.gocoastguard.com/>  
<https://www.airforce.com/>  
<https://www.marines.com/>  
[https://www.navy.com/?campaign=van\\_navyjobs](https://www.navy.com/?campaign=van_navyjobs)  
<https://www.airforce.com/ways-to-serve/air-national-guard>  
<https://www.goarmy.com/explore-the-army/army-structure/reserve.html>  
<https://www.nationalguard.com/>

## **WORKFORCE SITES:**

<https://smartlu83.org/members/training-and-education/> (Apprenticeship for Lineworkers)  
<http://www.tricityjetc.org/> (Apprenticeship for Electrical Workers)  
[https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-announcements?f%5B0%5D=filter\\_term%3A561](https://dol.ny.gov/apprenticeship/apprenticeship-announcements?f%5B0%5D=filter_term%3A561)  
<https://regionalhelpwanted.com/capital-area-jobs/>  
<https://dol.ny.gov/jobs-and-careers>

## **SCHOLARSHIPS:**

[Guidance Office Scholarship Folder](http://www.galwaycsd.org/jr_sr_high_school/guidance_office)  
<https://www.cfgcr.org/>  
<https://www.scholarships.com/>  
<https://www.fastweb.com/>  
<https://www.appily.com/scholarships>  
<https://www.niche.com/colleges/scholarships/>  
<https://www.petersons.com/scholarship-search.aspx>  
<https://myscholly.com/search/>  
<https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/our-scholarships>  
<https://www.collegescholarships.com/>  
<https://college-scholarships.com/scholarship-information/free-scholarship-searches/>  
<https://scholarshipguidance.com/>  
<https://www.salliemae.com/scholarships/>

## **CAREER SEARCH SITES:**

<https://student.naviance.com/>  
[www.nycareerzone.org](http://www.nycareerzone.org)  
<https://public.careercruising.com/en/>  
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>  
<https://roadtripnation.com/>  
<https://onetonline.org/>