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What's FAFSA??

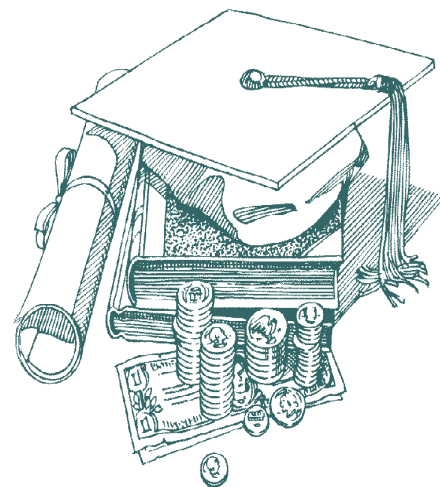
The **FREE** Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA for short, is a form that you must fill out to be eligible to receive federal financial aid. The easiest and quickest way to apply is on-line. You can find the application on-line at the FAFSA website... www.FAFSA.ed.gov. You can also get a paper copy from your high school counselor, any college financial aid office or your public library. You will find numerous tips and frequently asked questions at the FAFSA website. Here are a couple to get you started....

1. **I probably don't qualify for aid. Should I apply for aid anyway?**
Yes. Many families mistakenly think they don't qualify for aid and prevent themselves from receiving financial aid by failing to apply for it. You should apply for financial aid every year, even if you think you won't get any. More than two-thirds of families qualify for some financial aid. In addition, there are a few sources of aid such as unsubsidized Stafford and PLUS loans that are available regardless of need. The FAFSA form is free. There is no good excuse for not applying.
2. **How do I apply for a Pell Grant and other types of need-based aid?**
Submit a FAFSA. To indicate interest in student employment, student loans and parent loans, you should check the appropriate boxes. Checking these boxes does not commit you to accepting these types of aid. You will have the opportunity to accept or decline each part of your aid package later. Leaving these boxes unchecked will not

increase the amount of grants you receive.

3. **Where can I get information about Federal student financial aid?**

On the web at www.studentaid.ed.gov, by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 1-800-730-8913 (if hearing impaired) and ask for a free copy of The Student Guide: Financial Aid from the US Department of Education. This toll free hotline is run by the US Department of Education and can answer questions about federal and state student aid programs and applications. You can also write to the Federal Student Aid Information Center, PO Box 84, Washington, DC 20044.



4. **How soon after January 1 should the FAFSA form be sent in? Is it better to wait until the income tax forms have been completed?**

Send in the form as soon as possible after January 1. Do not wait until your taxes are done. Although it is better to do your taxes early, it is ok to use estimates of your income, so long as they aren't very far off from the actual values.

(Continued on next page)

WHAT'S FAFSA? (Continued from page 1)

You will have an opportunity to correct any errors later. If you wait too long, you might miss the deadline for state aid. Most states require the FAFSA to be submitted by March 1, and some even as early as mid-February.

Before you and your parents fill out the FAFSA, make sure you have all your materials together. You'll need the following:

- You and/or your parents' previous-year tax returns. If you haven't done your taxes yet when you fill out the FAFSA, use year-end W-2 forms.
- Your driver's license and Social Security card.
- W-2 forms and other records of money earned.
- Records of untaxed income, such as welfare, Social Security, AFDC or ADC, or veterans' benefits.
- Current bank statements.
- Current mortgage information.
- Business and farm records.
- Records of stocks, bonds, and other investments.

These figures will be used to determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC), the amount of money the federal government believes that you and your family should be able to pay toward your education for one year. Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to fill out the FAFSA. It's a good idea to photocopy it and practice filling it out first in pencil.

Keep in mind that schools may have their own deadlines and additional applications for awarding student aid. Check with the school's financial aid department.

Make a photocopy of the completed FAFSA to keep for your records and mail it to the processor as soon as possible, after January 1 of the year you plan to start college (2007). Be sure to mail it by mid-February to meet most colleges' deadlines.



To Register for the
SAT Reasoning & SAT Subject Tests
log on to www.collegeboard.com

SAT reasoning and
SAT Subject Test Dates
2006/2007

Test Date	Due	Late
January 27	Dec. 20	Jan. 4
March 10**SAT ONLY	Feb. 2	Feb. 14
May 5	Mar. 29	Apr. 11
June 2	Apr. 27	May 9

To Register for the
ACT
log on to www.actstudent.org

ACT Test Dates
2006-2007

Test Date	Due	Late
February 10	Jan. 5	Jan. 6-19
April 14	March 9	March 10-23
June 9	May 4	May 5-18

10 Tips for Winning Scholarship Applications

Before you submit your scholarship application, check out these tips, provided by scholarship sponsors nationwide.

Tip #1: Apply only if you are eligible.

Read all the scholarship requirements and directions carefully to make sure you're eligible before you send in your application.

Tip #2: Complete the application in full.

If a question doesn't apply, note that on the application. Don't just leave a blank. Supply all additional supporting material, such as transcripts, letters of recommendation and essays.

Tip #3: Follow directions.

Provide everything that's required, but don't supply things that aren't requested — you could be disqualified.

Tip #4: Neatness counts.

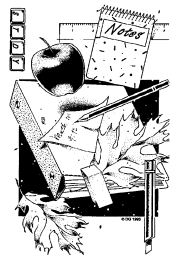
Always type your application, or if you must print, do so neatly and legibly. Make a couple of photocopies of all the forms before you fill them out. Use the copies as working drafts as you develop your application packet.

Tip #5: Write an essay that makes a strong impression.

The key to writing a strong essay is to be personal and specific. Include concrete details to make your experience come alive: the who, what, where, and when of your topic. The simplest experience can be monumental if you present honestly how you were affected.

Tip #6: Watch all deadlines.

To help keep yourself on track, impose your own deadline that is at least two weeks prior to the official deadline. Use the buffer time to make sure everything is ready on time. Don't rely on extensions — very few scholarship providers allow them at all.



Tip #7: Make sure your application gets where it needs to go.

Put your name (and Social Security number, if applicable) on all pages of the application. Pieces of your application may get lost unless they are clearly identified.

Tip #8: Keep a back-up file in case anything goes wrong.

Before sending the application, make a copy of the entire packet. If your application goes astray, you'll be able to reproduce it quickly.

Tip #9: Give it a final "once-over."

Proofread the entire application carefully. Be on the lookout for misspelled words or grammatical errors. Ask a friend, teacher or parent to proofread it as well.

Tip #10: Ask for help if you need it.

If you have problems with the application, don't hesitate to call the funding organization.

SOURCE: Kay Peterson, Ph.D.

What is the Status of My College Application?

Those of you who have sent applications may already be receiving letters, postcards or e-notifications that something is missing. Actually, it usually isn't – but just isn't filed yet.

It's College Application time, and the Class of 2007 is thoroughly involved in the very serious business of applying to colleges. The first of the early applications have already been mailed, and soon regular deadline applications will be sent off. The process of application, with its possibility of rejection as well as for acceptance, is stressful for everyone involved.

Some of the stress can be reduced. Most seniors have the process well in hand and there should be little or no last minute panic. Essays are being written, auditions prepared, portfolios assembled. Students have contacted their recommenders. Students who are still selecting colleges to which they will apply have taken or registered for the standardized testing, determined their priorities, and organized the task at hand. To be so well into the process early December means that students have time to present thoughtful applications.

At every national conference of college and admissions counselors, several sessions address various tension points in the process of communication between applicant and college. One of them is this: as deadlines are met, the college admissions offices fill up with mail — applications, recommendations, transcripts, and so forth. All of this needs to be filed before folders are read and often, during the filing period, colleges send letters to applicants noting that some materials are not yet in the files.

It might help to know that colleges face a MOUNTAIN of admissions mail every day—mail that requires very systematic and careful handling. As a result, there will be a very reasonable delay between the moment your application arrives at the admissions office and the time it is processed and placed into your file. A colleague sent me descriptions of the process from a number of admissions officers – among them the following:

From a large public university: “I wish I had a photo that I could send you of thousands of pieces of mail sitting in the mail bins waiting to be processed. Maybe this bit of information will help... we employ an “army” of students to help us process the mail. We receive so much mail that all some of the students do is simply slit open envelopes; other students will date stamp the materials; and yet others place the information in the proper bin (Part I- Early Decision, Part I- Regular Decision, High School Transcript- Early Decision, etc.) From the bins, our processing staff enters the information into the computer. We estimated that we received over 100,000 pieces of information for our freshman applicants alone last year. (Each application requires Part I & Part II, or the Common App and our Supplement, the Secondary School Report, the HS transcript, test scores, and at least one letter of recommendation.)

From a mid-sized private university: “We track mail received per day by application type. Last year in November (alone), we received 900 frosh applications. It took us four days to get this mail (opened), let alone counted, stamped and sorted.

From a private college: “Typically we receive more than half of our applications right at the deadline. They are processed in the order in which they arrive, and it takes us about three weeks to get all of the applications processed and in files. We do enter quite a bit of data on each applicant into our student database, so for most of our data entry people it is physically impossible to process more than a certain number of applications in one day.”

From a large public university: “We never receive a complete application all in one envelope since we require that ACT/SAT scores be sent to us directly from the testing agency. There always are sorting and matching processes that must take place daily since we receive hundreds (sometimes thousands) of applications, transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc. each and every business day!”

From another large public university: “This morning the U.S. mail delivered 30 tubs full of applications, counselor statements, and teacher recommendations to our office. Two staff members spent all day just opening the envelopes; another fifteen concentrated on logging everything in; and yet our mail room still looks as though a paper bomb went off in it.”

In other words, if a student gets a note from a college saying that a piece of your application is missing, DON'T PANIC! The material in question is usually in the admissions office itself, somewhere in those sacks of mail and as yet un-filed. The letters go out as a sort of insurance. Admissions offices, too, are under pressure to get all the folders complete for timely and considered reading. Harvard, for example, is very careful when asking for a second copy of any material to note that this sort of difficulty would in no way jeopardize an applicant's chance of admission. This assurance was reiterated at this year's conference by spokespeople for the college admissions offices, but many recognized that their procedures and budgets might not give them the latitude to write and mail a gracious letter.

The appropriate response to a postcard or a letter like this is merely for the student to ask his/her counselor to call and verify the file. Usually by the time the counselor calls the Admissions Office with a request to check the file, it is usually complete. Keep copies of everything that is mailed.

We counselors do the same. If applying online, the application should be printed out before being sent off – the application programs support making hard copies. So, should any document be missing from an admissions file, there's plenty of time to fax a duplicate.

As students complete and send their applications, the pressure is reduced. The anxiety of waiting for the colleges' responses, however, remains.



SCHOLARSHIPS

☐ Sun Trust Off to College Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Seniors. *Not* based on GPA or financial need.
15 chances to win – one winner every two weeks from Oct.-May
Website: <http://www.suntrustededucation.com/sweeps/default.asp>

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☐ Southern California Mothers of Twins Club, Inc

Award: varies

Eligibility: Seniors who are planning on attending college and are of multiple birth.

Website: www.semotc.org

Deadline: **February 1, 2007**

☐ Gates Millennium Scholars

Award: varies

Eligibility: Seniors, with a minimum 3.3 GPA, who show financial need and are of African American, American Indian, Asian Pacific Islander American, or Hispanic American origin. Fill out FAFSA and Pell Grant Applications.

Website: www.gmsp.org

Deadline: **January 12, 2007**

☐ Discover Card Tribute Award

Award: \$2,500 (9 state scholarships) \$25,000 (9 national scholarships)

Eligibility: Juniors with a minimum cumulative (9th & 10th grade) 2.75 GPA who have special talents, have overcome obstacles, or excel in leadership or community service.

Website: <http://www.discoverfinancial.com/data/philanthropy/tribute.shtml>

Deadline: check website in December

☐ Ron Brown Scholar Program

Award: \$10,000 per year for four years.

Eligibility: African-American seniors who plan on attending college and demonstrate excellence, leadership potential, community service and financial need.

Website: www.ronbrown.org

Deadline: **January 9, 2007**

☐ Quest Scholars Program

Award: varies

Quest Scholars Program is a national non-profit organization dedicated to connecting high-achieving low-income students with scholarships, internships, mentorship, and other educational opportunities

Website: www.questbridge.org or (650) 566-8391

☐ AAA Travel High School Challenge

Award: \$10,000 - \$25,000

Eligibility: Grades 9-12. Online test in January followed by State and National Competition. Most questions are travel related.

Website: <http://www.aaa.com/travelchallenge>

Deadline: check website in December for more info

☐ Patrick Kerr Skateboard Scholarship

Award: \$1,000 - \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior with a 2.5 or higher GPA planning on attending a 2- or 4-year college. Must be a skateboarder.

Website: www.skateboardscholarship.org

Deadline: **April 20, 2007**

☐ National Commission for Cooperative Education Scholarships

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior with a 3.5 or higher GPA planning on attending one of the eleven participating colleges.

Website: www.co-op.edu

Deadline: **February 14, 2007**

☐ US Bank Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school senior planning on attending a 2- or 4-year college.

Website: www.usbank.com/studentbanking

Deadline: **January 31, 2007**

☐ Sam Walton Community Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Seniors not Wal Mart/Sam's Club employee or family members (other scholarships available for employees and family members...see website) 2.5+ GPA, SAT/ACT scores and financial need.

Website: www.walmartfoundation.org

Deadline: **January 11, 2007**

☐ Sons of Italy Western Foundation Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Applicants must be wholly or partly of Italian ancestry and completed a foreign language course in high school. Selection based on scholastics, activities, leadership and financial need.

Website: <http://www.sonsofitalyca.org/scholarship.html>

Deadline: **February 28, 2007**

☐ Dream Deferred Essay Contest on Civil Rights in the Middle East

Award: \$500 - \$2,000

Eligibility: American youth 25 yrs and younger. Essay required. See website for details

Website: <http://www.hamsaweb.org/essay/>

Deadline: **January 31, 2007**



SCHOLARSHIPS



American Planning Association High School Essay Contest

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: High school juniors & seniors. Essay required. See website for details.

Website: <http://www.planning.org/institutions/hseessay.htm>

Deadline: **January 10, 2007**

Signet Classic School Essay Contest

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school juniors & seniors with recommendation by their English teacher. Essay required based on the book *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. See website for details.

Website: <http://www.planning.org/institutions/hseessay.htm>

Deadline: **April 16, 2007**

Common Knowledge

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: High school students. Monthly online quiz.

Website:

<http://www.cksf.org/index.cfm?Page=FindScholarships&Subpage=HSAcademicSeries>

Deadline: Varies

Optimist International Essay Contest

Award: up to \$6,000

Eligibility: High school students under the age of 19. Essay "I want to make a difference because..."

Website:

<http://www.optimist.org/default.cfm?content=members/mbrcdpa5.htm>

Deadline: **February 28, 2007**

American Coed Pageants

Award: over \$20,000

Eligibility: Girls interested in participating in the 24th annual Miss Southern California American Coed Scholarship Pageant.

Website: www.americancoed.com

Deadline: **February 9, 2007**

Orange County Mensa Scholarship Program

Award: \$300 - \$1,000

Eligibility: 550 word essay describing applicant's career, vocational, or academic goal toward which the scholarship will provide aid.

Website: www.ocmensa.org

Deadline: **January 16, 2007**

Elks National Foundation Awards

Most Valuable Student Competition

Award: \$1,000 - \$15,000 per year for 4 years

Eligibility: seniors – selection based on academics and leadership.

Website: www.elks.org/enf/scholars/mvs.cfm

Deadline: **January 12, 2007**

Legacy Award

Award: \$ 1,000.

Eligibility: Child or grandchild of an Elk member.

Website: www.elks.org/enf/scholars/legacy.cfm

Deadline: **January 12, 2007**

**APPLY TO COLLEGES AND FOR
SCHOLARSHIPS ON-LINE NOW.**

**...DON'T WAIT...
DON'T BE LATE**

CHECK OUT THE
CAREER/COLLEGE CENTER...
THERE'S A WEALTH OF
INFORMATION!!



Why We Chose the Colleges We Chose

Different schools match different students. FastWeb asked high school and college students what they looked for in a college. Here's what they said.

Academic Programs:

"The thing I found most important in selecting a college was the type of programs available for my major. Were they accredited? Was the school known for its program in that subject?" *Kristen O'Brien, California State Polytechnic University.*

"The top priority on my list of things to look for was a school that would challenge me. Academic prestige was a definite factor, but I didn't want my college experience to be just about that," *Matt Stenerson, Stanford University.*

"The first thing that I felt I should look at was how the college rated in my major," *Emmanuel Situka, Texas A&M.*

Reputation:

"Even though I had applied to places like Yale and Princeton, I only did so based on the reputation of their quality," *Seth Pipkin, Brown University.*

"I decided to go to Texas A&M because they have one of the most illustrious engineering departments in the U.S.," *Emmanuel Situka, Texas A&M.*

"Like many students, I was tempted to simply look at the national rankings or to go by prestige to select a school, but this is not a good technique. In the end, I chose a school where I could see myself enjoying and succeeding at my studies," *David McGibbon, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Location:

"I am pretty much a country boy, and I don't like driving through big cities everyday. I picked my college based on its isolated location," *Andy Flippen, Gordon College, Georgia.*

"I chose Cal Poly because it is five hours from my house. I believe that it helped in my maturing process and got me fully involved in my school community," *Kristen O'Brien, California State Polytechnic University.*

"Stanford was right in my backyard, only an hour's drive away. Mom just loves seeing me once a week when I come home to do laundry," *Matt Stenerson, Stanford University.*

Size:

"Class size was one of the most deciding factors for me. I feel that I learn better in a smaller class environment," *Kristen O'Brien, California State Polytechnic University.*

"I would definitely prefer to attend a school with 5,500 undergraduates than one with 25,000-plus," *Seth Pipkin, Brown University.*

"To me, size matters. After visiting several highly competitive but extremely large universities, I found that I wanted an environment in which I could put a name with most of the faces I saw on campus," *Terri Bendyna, College of William and Mary.*

Diversity:

"I wanted a school with amazing people from all walks of life. I have been at Stanford only a few weeks and have already met people from the East Coast, the Midwest, Canada, Turkey and many other places. I've spent many a night talking to these people and hearing all of their awesome stories," *Matt Stenerson, Stanford University.*

"I've learned an immeasurable amount from the diversity of my classmates. Racially, ethnically, economically and even age-wise, my college is a cross-section of the entire world," *Andrea Pakieser, Harold Washington City College.*

Financial Aid:

"I labored over financial aid and scholarship offers, meticulously considering my calculations from a variety of angles. Eliminating the schools which would cost more than \$20,000 each year after scholarships and financial aid deductions seemed logical," *Terri Bendyna, College of William and Mary.*

"The best place to get information [on financial aid] is the financial aid office. If you really are interested in attending this university, they will find a way to help you pay for it," *Emmanuel Situka, Texas A&M.*

"[Dartmouth initially] offered me no aid. When I visited, however, I set up an appointment with the financial aid office. They said they would review my case but offered me no guarantees. When I got back home and received a letter from Dartmouth with my financial aid award, I was ecstatic," *Tina Catania, Dartmouth College.*

Advice:

"Talk to people!!! Your college counselor, your cousin who just finished his freshman year... anyone who can give you some current information about the world of colleges is a great reference!" *Andrea Pakieser, Harold Washington City College.*

"Early in your college search, absorb all the information that you can from different sources (students, friends, published reviews, counselors) and pick the one that best suits your career goals and personality," *David McGibbon, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

"Check out the library, talk to friends who are in college, look online. Be well informed when you make your decision," *Emmanuel Situka, Texas A&M.*

"My only words of advice are to apply to as many places as you can, visit the school after you get in, decide on the place that feels right and accept the fact that things happen for a reason," *Tina Catania, Dartmouth College.*

SOURCE: Michael Pugh for Fastweb

The Perfect College... By Accident

I often get asked why I chose Dartmouth. In my mind, there are too many reasons to name. I guess I should start with senior year and the exciting, stress-free college application process. I had gone through high school with the dream/delusion that I would go to Harvard. I had been the classic over-achiever in high school, taking part in everything that interested me while still keeping up my grades. I applied to a lot of schools, including those that I knew I would never go to for whatever reason. I applied to Dartmouth as one of those "I-might-as-well" colleges. When I got my acceptance, I thought nothing of it and didn't even open the large envelope I knew had my congratulations letter. I was waiting for Harvard.

When Harvard came - small, business size envelope - I didn't need to open it. I knew what was inside - the



standard form 'denial' letter because there were "so many qualified applicants." Or worse yet, a "wait-list" spot; in other words, just a few more months of agony to see if anyone decided not to enroll. I opened it anyway and was shocked to see the words I knew were printed there. I had always seen myself going to Harvard, had always dreamed of it. I went through periods of anger, sadness and a feeling of having wasted my time in high school doing so much.

When the emotions finally died down, I realized I would now have

to choose a college. I didn't want to go to Berkeley or UCLA. I had applied to almost every school in California not wanting to go there in the first place. I decided I would have to visit Dartmouth and the other schools back east before I decided. What had before seemed a clear and easy choice was now a dilemma. I realized I didn't know much about Dartmouth or even where it was. New Hampshire seemed so distant to me, so unlike Boston, where I had dreamed of living.

I visited, which was the best choice of my life. I immediately fell in love with the beautiful campus - it's closeness and sense of traditions, the relaxed atmosphere and beautiful setting of New Hampshire. I stayed with a student in the dorms and fell in love even more. The flexibility was great, the opportunities were endless, and most important, I felt at home here. Everything just seemed right and I knew that first night, this was where I wanted to go. I visited the other schools but nothing could compare to Dartmouth and all that it offered.

The amazing thing is, I almost never came here. I applied last minute on a whim and almost didn't visit. Then there was the obstacle of financial aid. At first, the school offered me no aid. When I visited, however, I set up an appointment with the financial aid office. They said they would review my case but offered me no guarantees. Again, I was crushed. In such a short time I had really fallen in love with a school and now I might not be able to attend because of financial reasons. When I got back home and received a letter from Dartmouth with my financial aid award, I was ecstatic. I sent in my intent to register immediately and began to love Dartmouth even more.



Now that I am here, I am so grateful that I took the time to visit this school. I realize that Harvard happened for a reason, in order to show me my other options. I have no regrets at all and am very glad that Harvard refused me. I don't think I miss anything at Dartmouth. The focus is on undergrads. It's a small enough school for us to know all our professors and for them to know us. The environment is challenging yet there is a very active and important social life alive with the Greek system. The opportunities are endless whether you are interested in government and the elections or science and the medical school. The campus is beautiful and the people are great. However, what strikes me the most is that I am not the only one to feel this way. Everyone who is at Dartmouth loves Dartmouth.

My only words of advice are to apply to as many places as you can, visit the school after you get in, decide on the place that feels right and accept the fact that things happen for a reason. Had I not applied or had I not visited, or had Harvard accepted me, I would not be here today. Dartmouth is my home and I love everything about it.

SOURCE: Tina Catania, Student, Dartmouth College.

Helping Your Child with the College Decision-Making Process



If there's one mistake my students make [when choosing a college], it's not listening to their parents," says Bruce Hammond, director of college counseling at Sandia Preparatory School in Albuquerque, N.M., contributing editor to the *The Fiske Guide to Colleges 2006* and author of *Discounts and Deals at the Nation's 360 Best Colleges*.

Parents can often balance the excitement students feel about leaving home with the knowledge that building a life in a new environment is difficult. They see the personal and extracurricular connections a student will need to be happy and successful in his/her college environment.

When considering a college for their student, parents should take into consideration these questions that are frequently overlooked in the decision-making process.

#1: Are they your student's kind of people? Will your student find a place he or she fits in?

That was a key question for Catherine, a third-year student at the University of Dallas. "I wanted a tight community," she says. "I wanted somewhere I could build a strong foundation for myself."

Does your child require a close-knit student community, or is he/she most excited by the possibilities of a very large student

body? Is he/she looking to connect with peers from a similar background, or does he/she desire a diverse group of students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds? You know your child best; assess his/her needs, personality and comfort level.

#2: Is the office of residential life accessible to the students? Can students switch if they get a terrible roommate, and how long does that process take?

Students eat, hang out and study in their rooms, and it needs to be a place where they feel comfortable. If the student faces tension or arguments in his/her room, it may cause his/her grades and social development to suffer.

#3: What is the ratio of residential/live-in counselors to students? How many hours a day are they required to be available to the students? How are they chosen and by what criteria are they evaluated?

Residential Adviser's (RA's) are the first line of defense in ensuring your child's physical and emotional health. They should be trained to spot signs of trouble such as depression, tension among students and eating disorders. They should also know basic first aid. They should be people with whom the students feel comfortable.

#4: What are the hours at the student health clinic? What about 24-hour emergency care? What does the college's health insurance cover, and are pre-existing conditions included in the coverage?

Get the answers before taking your son or daughter off your own insurance.

#5: What kind of psychological counseling or support groups are available? What resources are available for students dealing with stress or emotionally difficult situations?

During the college years, students often have some big issues to deal with. Find out who will be available when you're far away.

#6: What is the crime rate on campus?

The Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 requires all colleges and universities to produce an annual report of their safety and security proce-

dures, as well as statistics relating to criminal offenses reported to the police. Request a copy and read it.

#7: Does the school provide student escorts to accompany students walking home late at night? Students sometimes have evening classes or study sessions. Make sure that the college or university offers some way for students to get home safely after a long night at the library. If they don't, it could be a sign that the school doesn't take the necessary measures to ensure students' safety and welfare.

#8: What is the average increase in tuition and when are tuition increases next expected? Does the school have provisions to help students and parents cover the increases?

By asking these questions, you can plan your finances appropriately and not be hit with unpleasant surprises.

#9: Can you pick your academic advisor? How do current students feel about the advising system?

Students frequently change majors. A good advisor can help a student plan his/her classes, make career-planning decisions and graduate on time.

"I didn't expect to have my hand held," says Kristan Lunardini, 21, a senior at the University of Illinois at Chicago. "But I never realized I'd be totally on my own. Like, there's this timetable and requirements, they're always changing, and there's no one to help you figure it out."

#10: How competitive is the school and is it an environment your son or daughter can handle? Too much stress can cause illness and depression, lead to poor performance and even cause students to drop out. Talk to current students at the school. Ask them how many all-nighters they pulled last semester. Ask them to rate the level of competitiveness on a scale of 1 to 10. Do they have time for themselves? Do they spend their weekends in the library?

A competitive school isn't necessarily bad and can often inspire students to further achievement. The important thing is to ask whether it's the kind of environment in which your child thrives.

Choosing the right college can be one of the most important decisions a student makes, and can set the foundation for their post-graduate success. Help your student make an informed decision that will lead to an enriching and enjoyable college experience.



Senior Timeline

- ➔ Request teachers and counselors to write letters of recommendation...give out stamped envelopes addressed to the colleges' admissions offices. **DON'T FORGET TO WRITE THANK YOU NOTES.**
- ➔ Be sure SAT scores have been sent to colleges or released and sent under Score Choice. Retake tests if necessary.
- ➔ Register for January SAT & February ACT.
- ➔ Make copies of everything sent to colleges.
- ➔ Finish writing your essays and have them proofread by a parent, counselor or teacher.
- ➔ Start filling out FAFSA applications.
- ➔ Continue your scholarship hunt
- ➔ File your FAFSA!!
- ➔ Parents and students, complete your income tax forms as soon as possible. You will need those figures to fill out the FAFSA. Complete and return your FAFSA as quickly as possible. Check to make sure your colleges or state do not require any other financial aid forms.
- ➔ Keep working in your classes! Grades and courses continue to count throughout the senior year.
- ➔ Send mid-year grades to colleges, if necessary.
- ➔ Verify that colleges have received your applications.
- ➔ Send thank-you notes to those counselors or teachers who sent letters of recommendation

HOW CAN I START MY CAREER WHILE I'M STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL?

Do you want to be a veterinarian, a chef with your own TV show, have your own auto repair shop, or be a teacher? Perhaps you want to design graphics for the next dragon in a Lord of the Rings sequel, be a photographer for the Discovery Channel or be the next president of Nike. How about someone who wants to be a doctor, nurse or dentist? These are just a few of the types of classes that are offered through Coastline ROP.

Students can enroll in an ROP class and receive hands on experience or a chance to be placed at an internship site related to the class in which they are enrolled.

For a listing of all classes check our website at www.coastlinerop.net

Students may also pick up a catalog in their high school career center.

NOW is your chance to discover a career pathway and you are still in high school, while also be earning high school credits.

Spring registration is in progress now. Many second semester classes start January 29, 2007. Don't delay, classes fill up quickly. Sign up in the career center at your high school.



DON'T MISS....

OC National College Fair

Anaheim Convention Center

Sunday, April 22, 2007

1:30pm - 4:30pm