

GUIDE TO COLLEGE ADMISSIONS



PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE
JFK HS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to answer the most frequently asked questions about the college admissions process. It is impossible to cover all aspects of the process in a brief publication. Additional questions and concerns should be addressed to your guidance counselor.

During the spring of the junior year, your guidance counselor will meet with you and your parents formally to initiate the college process. Through individual and class meetings, you will become aware of a process to identify schools appropriate for your interests and capabilities. You will also become familiar with the standardized testing process. This handbook should serve as a handy reference throughout the college search and application process.

Entrance to the colleges of choice is dependent upon the successful completion of a number of variables. No two students are viewed the same, nor will they have the same credentials. College Admissions is a human process subject to a number of considerations. Your best profile is four years of top grades in challenging courses, strong standardized test scores, solid letters of recommendation, and involvement (and leadership) in meaningful activities.

Please remember, the goal of this process is to find a good match between you and a college. It is tempting to compare yourself with classmates, but a place where one person will thrive might be unpleasant for another. Your job throughout this process is to complete a careful self-analysis, to recognize both your strengths and weaknesses and to approach, thoughtfully and seriously, the task that lies ahead of you.

Good luck on this exciting journey!

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I

TIME LINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES



TIME LINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

SEPTEMBER

1. Return the autobiographical questionnaire that was mailed to you with your junior conference appointment. This information will help your counselor to offer the college a more complete description of you. Organizing all of your information will also help you to prepare the activity resume for your college applications.
2. Return your activity sheet (resume) and unofficial transcript with correction, if any, to the Counseling Center on the date indicated.
3. Create “Common Application” on web (www.commonapp.org). You must register to create a user name and password.
4. Sign into Naviance and complete the FERPA Agreement under “Colleges I am Applying To”.
5. Notify your counselor if you will be applying under an **Early Decision** or **Early Action** program.
6. SAT and ACT registrations are online. Be aware of registration deadlines for October, November and December SAT and SAT Subject exams. Check to see if the colleges you are applying to require SAT Subject exams.
7. When asking a teacher for a recommendation, provide a stamped envelope addressed to each college you wish to receive the recommendation letter. Write your name and social security number on the inside flap.
8. NCAA forms are available online and should be submitted by student athletes who are requesting certification. Please remember to check for updated regulations and procedures.
9. Use the admission information in Naviance and other sources to narrow your list. Make sure you have at least one or two “safe” schools as well as one or two “reach” and two to four “target” schools.
10. **Begin your applications!** Work on rough drafts of any essays you are required to write. Be sure to ask your English teacher or your counselor to read them over.
11. Attend the Senior Night meeting with your parents and **read all the literature you receive at home from the Counseling Center.**
12. Throughout the fall, many College Reps will be available to meet with students during 9th period in the Guidance Conference Room. Be sure to listen attentively to announcements during homeroom for this important information. A monthly list of representatives will be posted in the Counseling Center.

OCTOBER

1. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with your counselor to review your applications and to answer any question you may have.
2. **Refer to the College Application Procedure form for step by step instructions. All priority deadlines are noted on this form.**
3. It is your responsibility to have your SAT, SAT Subject and/or ACT sent directly to all the colleges to which you are applying.

4. “Early Action and Early Decision applications are due in the Counseling Center no later than October 15th. (Generally due at College Admissions Office no later than November 1st or 15th.)
5. Ask two teachers who know you well for letters of recommendation.
6. Make campus visits to as many of the colleges on your list as possible. Get a feel for the campus. Talk to students, take a tour, sit in on a class and try to stay overnight in a dorm.

NOVEMBER

1. Meet with your counselor to clarify any questions you may have as you continue with the college application process.
2. If the colleges you are considering require the CSS Profile Financial Aid form, it should be filed at this time. This form is available online. The deadline for submitting all completed applications to the Counseling Center is the week before thanksgiving.

DECEMBER

1. Early Decision / Early Action applicants should notify the Counseling Center the outcome of these applications.

JANUARY

1. FAFSA forms will be available in the Counseling Center and online at **FAFSA.ed.gov/**. The TAP (for New York State schools) form is part of the FAFSA.
2. Attend the Financial Aid meeting at P-OB JFKHS for assistance in completing the FAFSA. The exact date and time will be on the calendar and on the P-OB website.

FEBRUARY

1. Mid-year grades will be mailed to colleges.
2. Be sure to notify the Counseling Center about the results of your applications.

MARCH / APRIL

1. Many colleges mail their decisions at this time. You may want to revisit the schools to which you have been accepted.
2. Speak with your counselor to clarify your final decision. Inform the Counseling Center of your results and final decision.

MAY

1. **Candidates reply date is May 1st. This is the last day to notify colleges of your decision to attend.**

II

GATHERING INFORMATION



GATHERING INFORMATION VIA THE INTERNET

All colleges have created web pages which can be accessed through your home computer or with one of several computers in the high school. You can download applications and more to your home computer. You can usually find website addresses in many of the college handbooks. You can try to find your college websites under:

1. <http://connection.naviance.com/pob>
2. www.collegeboard.com
3. www.fastweb.com

We encourage you to explore Family Connection by Naviance, our website that allows students and families to investigate, research, track and plan for the college admissions process.



III

THE COLLEGE VISIT/INTERVIEW



THE COLLEGE VISIT

The best way for you to learn about the educational program, faculty, facilities, atmosphere and spirit of a college is to visit the campus, particularly when the college is in session. (If you visit during a school day, bring a College Visitation Form with you. Have the form signed by a college official and return it to your counselor.)

College visits enable you to:

1. Learn what college admissions officials expect from a candidate.
2. Observe the academic atmosphere, sit in on classes.
3. Evaluate the environment of the school.
4. Observe and talk with students who are attending and with whom you would associate.

When you visit the college, observe:

1. Size of classes.
2. Library facilities (e.g., computers, hours).
3. Department you are likely to select as a major.
4. Laboratory facilities.
5. Composition of the student body.
6. Dormitories and study facilities; location, size, policies.
7. Dining facility; quality of food.
8. Campus setting – beauty, orderliness and cleanliness.
9. Infirmary and health services.
10. Religious facilities.
11. Facilities for leisure time, cultural programs, athletics, social life.
12. The college students – do they appear to be happy, lively and friendly?
13. The attitude of the faculty toward students.
14. The students – are they friendly and courteous toward visitors; are they serious and businesslike toward their work?



QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGES

What should I ask about admissions?

- What information about me is evaluated for admission? What is more important/least important?
- Do I need to take a college entrance exam before admission? Which one?
- What if I don't have a good high school average? Are there alternative admissions programs?
- Is credit given for advanced placement courses?
- When should I apply?
- How will I know if additional information (letters of recommendation, biography) is required?
- Should I make a visit to the campus? When?
- Who makes the decision on my application?
- When will I know if I've been accepted?
- What can I do if I'm not accepted?

What should I ask about academic life?

- Do I have to choose a major right away?
- What about the transfer process from a two-year to a four-year college?
- Are interdisciplinary majors available?
- Can I design my own program?
- What kind of academic advisement is available?
- What are the campus academic facilities (library, labs)?
- Can I participate in a cooperative study/work program in my field?
- Is ROTC available?
- Can I complete a bachelor's degree in less than four years?
- Will I have evening classes?
- Is remedial help available?
- What opportunities are available for study abroad?
- Are visiting student programs encouraged?
- Is special assistance available for handicapped students?



POSSIBLE TOUR GUIDE QUESTIONS

- What do you like best/worst about being a student here?
- How large are your classes?
- Who teaches you? Can you get help from your professors?
- Where do you study?
- Do students talk much about grades?
- Have you ever been in a faculty home?
- Do you talk much about national politics and issues? Are students politically active?
- Where can I get a copy of the campus newspaper?
- Where do most students hang out?



- When do you declare your major? What are the most popular majors?
- Tell me about the housing. Are some dorms better than others? Do many students live off-campus? Why?
- Do students study hard? What is the attitude towards working hard?
- What's the biggest issue in local campus politics?
- What impact do fraternities and sororities have? Athletics?
- What are weekends like?
- Are the arts supported here?
- Where do students come from? Is this a diverse community?
- Why did you choose this school? Where else did you apply?
- What kinds of kids do you think are happiest here? Which ones are least happy?

The College Interview

Many colleges suggest that applicants become involved in a personal interview.

The Group Interview: Usually held on campus and used primarily as a means to disseminate information about the college and give applicants a chance to ask questions.

The Individual Interview: Candidate goes “one-to-one” with an admissions officer; the candidate may or may not receive a rating from the interviewer. In some cases, a student from the college may sit in on the session.

Alumni Interview: Sometimes graduates from the college will interview candidates. The interview may take place in the interviewer’s home, in the candidate’s home, or at the high school. The purpose of this interview may be to dispense information and get a general sense of the applicant.

High School Interview: College and university representatives visit high schools each year. Students are invited to chat with the representative in the Counseling Center. These “interviews” are rarely intended to be more than a chance to ask questions, but, occasionally, students have made very positive impressions on the college representative in these sessions, and their candidacies have been greatly enhanced.

In addition to the formal and informal setups described above, students may also come into contact with college representatives at College Nights and at College Fairs.

MAXIMIZING AN INTERVIEW

- Treat every interview as if it is your first choice school.
- Be prepared to intelligently answer the question “tell me about yourself.”
- Read parts of the catalog thoroughly ahead of time.
- Most admissions counselors will ask if you have any questions. This is perhaps the most important part of the interview because the questions you ask demonstrate how interested you are and your level of maturity and confidence.

Carefully prepare a list of questions following these suggestions:

- Be aware of current national, state and local affairs.
- Do not be afraid to mention (and try to find a way to do it) your strengths – academic and/or non-academic.
- Choose ahead of time at least one subject or interest that you know well and try to bring it up. Be prepared to discuss it at length.

Here are some additional suggestions that have proven useful to candidates through the years. You may want to review them before you are involved in an interview.

1. Be on time and make sure to get the interviewer's name. (It's a good idea to write a thank-you note a day or so after your interview.)
2. Don't be afraid of the person interviewing you. He or she is not "out to get you".
3. Don't fight with the interviewer. He may challenge a response you provide, but it's usually a test of your flexibility and your capacity to think on your feet. Try to see it this way and respond accordingly.
4. Show, through your own grooming and dress, that the interview is important to you.
5. Be positive. For example, rather than whining about your science teacher's cloudy explanation, discuss how the situation provided you with a chance for independent study.
6. Show that you are knowledgeable about the college and indicate that you are applying for appropriate reasons. Be prepared to ask intelligent questions.
7. Stress all of your strengths and admit to some of your weaknesses. If the interviewer asks why your SAT scores are so low point to the good job you've been able to do on a daily basis in the classroom and in your outside activities.
8. Be honest. If your career plans are uncertain, say so. It's O.K. to be undecided.



POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Why do you want to go to college?
- Why do you want this college?
- Tell me about yourself. Who are you? Describe yourself.
- How would your friends describe you?
- How are you different from other students applying here? Why should we admit you? We have many qualified applicants. Why do you think you are a good match for this college?
- What political issue (local or national) concerns you most? Why?
- How do you like Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK High School? What has been the most positive experience you have had? The most negative?
- If you could redo high school, what would you do differently?
- What books or authors have made a lasting impression on your way of thinking?
- If you could be any fictional character, who would you be and why?
- If you could be one historical figure, who would it be and why?
- What is your role in the school community? What would your teachers say about you as a person?
- What is the most significant contribution you've made to your school?
- What are you looking for in a college?
- What are some of your goals (personal and career) for the future?
- Tell me about a particular class or assignment in which you found yourself most stimulated intellectually.
- What is your reason for participating in athletics (or student government or the newspaper, etc.)? What are the satisfactions?
- What has been your favorite subject in high school? Why?
- What might you study in college?
- What events would you deem critical to your life thus far?
- Who has most influenced you?
- How have you spent your summers?
- How do you spend your free time?
- Do you have any questions? (It is crucial that you have some questions for the interviewer.) This question will be asked in EVERY interview.

Other advice:

Do not chew gum

Watch your language; avoid slang

Dress neatly – school attire or better

Arrive on time

Shake hands firmly

Make eye contact

Be yourself

Always write a thank you note

IV

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

What do colleges consider in determining whether they will accept an applicant? Although few colleges would give exactly the same weight to all items in this list, most would agree that the following would be considered important in determining an applicant's fitness for college.

1. **Academic Record:** Most colleges consider your overall academic average to be the most important single indicator of how well you are likely to do in college.
2. **Quality of Courses:** Many colleges look more favorably upon a high average if it has been obtained while taking the more difficult, challenging courses than if it has been obtained by taking a great many of the so-called "easy" courses. It should be noted that many colleges use only the academic courses in re-computing your average for acceptance to their school. For example, they are most interested in your English, History, Math, Science and Language courses. Pay attention to the strength of your senior year course work. If you don't have solid course work you are inviting extra scrutiny.
3. **Percentile Placement:** John F. Kennedy High School does not provide a numerical rank. However, we do indicate your percentile placement.
4. **Entrance Examination Scores:** Most colleges require students to take either the SAT or ACT, which measure one's ability to do college-level work. Some colleges require you to take SAT Subject tests. It is recommended that students for whom English is not a first language take the TOEFL exam. You will know what tests are required by the colleges by checking the appropriate section of the college catalog.
5. **Activity Record:** While colleges are primarily interested in your academic record, they are also interested in leadership qualities, unusual interests, abilities and talents. Colleges would rather see a sustained interest in a specific activity than a long list of activities which only indicates casual involvement.
6. **Recommendations:** Your counselor will write a recommendation on your behalf, so be sure to make him/her aware of any information which should be included. Many colleges also require recommendations from teachers who know you well enough to provide an accurate assessment of your attitude and abilities.
7. **Essay:** For most colleges, an essay is an important part of the admissions process. When evaluating students of comparable achievements, the essay can be the determining factor in the admissions process. Special attention ought to be given to uniqueness of context and to excellence of style.
8. **Interview:** Few colleges require applicants to come for a personal interview; some encourage informal meetings and visits, and others may schedule local alumni interviews. Check your college catalog.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

There's no surefire formula that will guarantee a good application, but you can help yourself by keeping the following in mind. Read through all the information received before filling in any information on the application. **It is your responsibility to be aware of application deadlines.** You will increase your chances of producing a strong application if you allow yourself plenty of time. Create a rough draft of your application. Revise and rewrite. Make sure you have completed all portions to be filled out by the applicant. (Be certain to sign where indicated). Remember, the application is your opportunity to make a statement to an admissions committee; do not lose this opportunity. If you need to download a portion of the application, check to see if it requires your signature.

You may apply to as many colleges as you wish, but **usually it is not necessary to submit more than nine or ten applications** (remember too, that colleges charge an application fee). Your final list of colleges should typically include one or two colleges which are "reach schools", a few which are "target" or where you have a better than even chance, and a few which are "safe," or where admission is reasonably certain. Make sure that every college that is on your list is one you would be happy to attend.

APPLICATIONS – WHAT, WHEN AND HOW MANY?

WHEN TO APPLY – EARLY DECISION EARLY ACTION, REGULAR, ROLLING

There are several basic admissions plans about which you should be aware. It is important that you carefully read the information supplied by the colleges when you begin the application process, because there are differences among various college programs.

Early Decision: Most colleges have adopted plans whereby students can apply early in the fall, usually by November 1st or 15th. One of three actions will be taken: acceptance, denial or deferral to the regular applicant pool for later assessment. Most early decision applicants will hear decisions by December 15th.

If you are accepted to the college of your choice under an Early Decision, **YOU AGREE TO WITHDRAW ALL OTHER APPLICATIONS AND ATTEND THAT COLLEGE.** This is a binding agreement. Financial aid is estimated based on information you supply. You may apply to only one college through the early decision process. Obviously, you must be absolutely sure that you want to attend this college. Therefore, you should only apply Early Decision if you are positive you want to attend.

Early Action: This plan is early notification. Most applications are due at the college by November 1st or 15th with a reply date some time late December or mid-January. It is not a binding agreement. You may continue to apply elsewhere, and enroll elsewhere, if you wish.

Regular Decision: This is the “usual” way to apply to college. You can apply to as many schools as you wish. Regular decision deadlines vary from school to school; however, they tend to fall on January 1st or 15th for competitive colleges. You will usually hear a decision on or around April 1st and you have until May 1st to reply. (The sooner you say ‘yes’, however, the better your housing assignment usually will be.)

Rolling Admissions: This means that your application will be evaluated as soon as it is complete, and you will usually hear a decision within a month. Many state colleges utilize Rolling Admissions. Consequently, many popular public universities can have full classes as early as January 1st. Sooner is better for rolling admissions. To maximize your chances, applications for universities such as Penn State, Wisconsin, Maryland, California and Michigan should be submitted by **October 15th!**



TRANSCRIPT

Your transcript is the most important part of your application. It is the cornerstone. It is a picture of your academic accomplishments and progress through your years of high school. Keep in mind:

1. Obviously, colleges like to see strong grades.
2. Colleges like to see a positive grade trend that shows consistent improvement over the course of your high school career. On the other hand, colleges also like to see strong, consistent grades. (Negative trends can hurt you. Use junior and seniors years to pull up sinking marks.)
3. Junior and senior years are very important.
4. Work as hard as you can to ensure you achieve the best marks possible.
5. Colleges may use your first semester senior year grade to make decisions. (Early Decision decisions will be made on 9th, 10th, 11th and possibly first quarter of senior year grades.) Remember colleges will receive your final transcript and will red flag a precipitous drop in your senior year grades.

II. STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

Your SAT or ACT scores are still an important part of most colleges' admissions policies.

You are responsible for sending your standardized test scores to the colleges. Discuss this procedure with your counselor in order to determine your best strategy.

You are responsible for sending SAT and SAT Subject test scores to colleges. You can do this online at the College Board's website (www.collegeboard.com). You need the code numbers for each college. You can find these ON THE WEBSITE.

You will also need P-OB's CEEB #334-532 and your test registration number. (A credit card is necessary.)

When you register for the SAT or SAT Subject test, you get to send your scores to four colleges for free. There is a charge for additional schools.

You must re-send your scores each time if you want a college to see each test you take. (For example, you send your October scores to Villanova. Then you take the SAT again in November. You must send the scores again if you want Villanova to see your November results. Just because you sent them in October does not mean Villanova automatically gets them again.)

V

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

AND

COLLEGE ESSAY



LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Your Letter of Recommendation

All records from P-OB JFKHS are considered confidential and may not be released to a student or his/her family. Know what forms the colleges require. Most colleges request that your guidance counselor complete a recommendation form and secondary school report in addition to an official transcript. Make certain that your high school Counseling Center has these forms at least **three** weeks before the application deadline.

Following is a word of caution about letters of recommendation from outside sources that are unsolicited by the college such as a letter from the college alumnus who works with your father but who has only met you twice. This type of recommendation may have little or no impact. Submit only letters written by those who have observed your performance in some area, be it athletics, drama, or a summer job. Also, avoid too many (more than three) recommendations.

In addition to the school/counselor recommendation, you may be asked to submit teacher recommendations. Be aware of these requirements and pick teachers who know you best and will take the time to write a meaningful assessment of your performance. You may want to schedule a fifteen minute conference with them to make certain they are well informed about you. Please give your teachers a **stamped envelope addressed to each college** with the recommendation form. Make sure to write your name and Social Security number on the inside flap. Make sure teachers are aware of deadlines and contact them beforehand to make certain that the recommendations were mailed.

- **Remember, you need to give your teachers at least three weeks to write your recommendations.** Do not expect them to write a letter for you over the weekend. Teachers are busy people. Some teachers are extremely involved at college application time. Ask early, as soon as you know who you want to write the letters.
- It is a good idea to send teachers a thank you note.

Your College Essay

The essay portion of your college application is extremely important. Through these essays you have the opportunity to convey to admissions personnel the things that are most important to you. Make sure that your essays contain information that is of some value. The best essays are not only well-written, but present what are often ordinary events from an unusual perspective.

In your essays, describe thoughts, events or personal characteristics that you have not communicated elsewhere in the application. Don't rewrite your transcript or activity sheet. Be honest and accurate. If you feel that the questions do not give you an opportunity to reveal and express important information, include an additional sheet.

What makes a good impression? Enthusiasm, intelligence, talent, leadership, maturity, writing ability, creativity, and perseverance may be some of your traits. All are high on the list, but no one expects to find them all wrapped up in one person. What colleges want is honest insight into a real person and what is special about you. A good essay conveys the writer as a real and valuable person, worth knowing. It expresses who you are and what you've accomplished; and fills in the gaps in the statistics, explaining what four years of facts won't show.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All college applications ask the same basic question. Who are you and what makes you different from other qualified applicants we must consider? Most schools, however, have their own way of asking for this information. Below are essays from the common application. Review them.

- Evaluate a significant experience or achievement that has special meaning to you.
- Discuss some issue of person, local, national or international concern and its importance to you.
- Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you and describe that influence.

In addition, below you will find some of the more creative wordings used by colleges and universities in the past.

- If you were to describe yourself by a quotation, what would that quotation be? (Dartmouth)
- What is the best advice you ever received? Why? And did you follow it? (University of Pennsylvania)
- Write a letter to your new college roommate introducing yourself and describing your background. (Carleton)
- Ask and answer the one important question that you wish we had asked. (Carleton)
- Please describe your reaction to the quotation, "He does not possess wealth, it possesses him." (William and Mary)
- Given the authority to establish a holiday, what would you choose to commemorate? (Stanford)
- Suppose you had the opportunity to spend a day with anyone. With whom would it be and how would you spend your time? (Stanford)
- Drawing upon some personal experience, write a fable. (Stanford)

- Imagine the year is 1881. You may expect to live another 35 years. What person would you most want to know well during that time? For what reasons? (Swarthmore)
- Identify a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence. (Wesleyan)
- Share with us what other (Wesleyan) students would learn from you both inside and outside the classroom. (Wesleyan)
- You have just completed your 300-page autobiography. Please submit page 217. (The University of Pennsylvania)
- If you could introduce one new idea or material thing to a primitive culture, what would it be? (College of the Atlantic)

PRE-WRITING SUGGESTIONS

1. **Prepare** an inventory of yourself before you write. Make an outline of your achievements; make a list of your hobbies, jobs, community service – anything that may be positive about you.
2. **Consult** with your guidance counselor. There are materials in the library and guidance resources center which can provide helpful hints on how to write a good admissions essay.
3. **Consider** some of the following tips on how to write your essay:
 - a. Never accept your first draft as final. Write a rough draft, put it away for a while and then re-read it objectively. Ask yourself if you have been repetitive, boring or disorganized. Have you said all the things you wanted, have you included too many trivial items?
 - b. Seek the opinions of others. Show it to an adult whose opinion you respect. For example, guidance counselor, teachers, parents.
 - c. Make the essay unique and interesting. You are competing with many other applicants; try to make your essay stand out. Give the admissions staff a reason to remember you and select you over other candidates.
 - d. Provide quality, not quantity. Merely listing twenty extracurricular activities is ineffective. Rather describe in detail a meaningful leadership role you have helped in one of them.

- e. Follow directions carefully. You may feel the application does not provide enough space for all you have to say. Remember, the designers of the question are probably testing your ability to organize and write concisely.
- f. Know your subject. Make sure you know enough about your topic to write a credible essay. Make sure you stay focused on the topic.
- g. Pay attention to form. Be neat; your essays should be stored on a disk for easy revision.



DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

1. **Plan ahead** – leave time to write and rewrite your essays – with time in between. This will allow for fresh reviews and revisions of the original work.
2. **Tell the truth** about who you are.
3. **Tie yourself to the college:** Why are you interested in attending and what can the institution do for you? Be specific. Go beyond: “XYZ College will best allow me to realize my academic potential.”
4. **Read the directions carefully** and follow them to the letter. If the essay is supposed to be 500 words or less, don't submit 1,000 words.
5. **Consider the unique features of the institution.** For example, a liberal arts college will be impressed with the variety of academic and personal interest you might have while an art institute would be most interested in your creative abilities.
6. **Be positive**, upbeat and avoid the negatives, like “I am applying to your school because I won't be required to take physical education and a foreign language.”
7. **Emphasize what you have learned.** Provide more than a narration when recounting an experience.
8. **Write about something you know**, something only you could write.
9. **Make copies of everything**, just in case.

DON'T

- A. **Force it;** be too funny, too sad, too cute, and too silly. (“I enjoy playing the piano and guitar but not simultaneously.”)
- B. **Be redundant** – essays should not be a rehash of information already provided on other parts of the application or on your high school transcript.
- C. **Let modesty cover up your greatest assets** (and achievements).
- D. **Worry about trick questions.** Your readers are genuinely interested in your answers.
- E. **Be afraid to confess your anxieties** or indecisiveness. Admission officers are people who enjoy helping people and can be quite moved by the knowledge that you need them.
- F. **Have a parent, sibling, friend or “advisor”** write your essay. It's always a good idea to have someone review it for corrections; however, your essay should be your unique voice.

“A WORD ABOUT SUNY”

Starting 2010, Stony Brook University and Binghamton University join other schools-including California State Schools and Rutgers-that are strongly encouraging or requiring freshman applicants to self-report their high school records online using **STARS** (Self-Reported Testing and Academic Record System)

SUNY is encouraging students to go green by using **STARS**. It will benefit by saving paper, trees, labor, postage, and energy costs. Students can easily submit their **STARS** record by following the steps below. Since all **STARS** information is verified by the college in which the student enrolls, there is no concern regarding record accuracy.

SELF-REPORTED TESTING AND ACADEMIC RECORD SYSTEM PROCEDURES

STUDENTS SHOULD:

1. See how it works at:
<http://selfreportedtranscript.com/howitworks>
2. Obtain a copy of their unofficial high school transcript from your guidance office which will be mailed to you in August of your senior year.
3. Go to <http://selfreportedtranscript.com> and refer to their unofficial transcript to complete the **STARS** form, entering all information exactly as it appears on their transcript.
4. Using your Stony Brook ID or Binghamton ID (sent with Stony Brook’s and Binghamton’s application acknowledgment), submit your **STARS** record to Stony Brook, and Binghamton.

STONY BROOK AND BINGHAMTON WILL:

1. Send the student immediate electronic confirmation that his or her **STARS** record has been received and posted to Counselors’ Tracking Center. If a student does not receive this confirmation, Stony Brook and Binghamton did not receive his or her **STARS** record.
2. Verify the accuracy of the **STARS** transcript by comparing it to the official final transcript for enrolling students only. If misrepresentations occur, Stony Brook and Binghamton reserves the right to rescind the offer of admission.

VI

FINANCIAL AID



INTRODUCTION TO FINANCIAL AID

There is a staggering amount of federal, state, institutional and local financial aid available every year. The fact is that most of the students who apply for aid and who need it do receive all or part of what they need to attend their first choice college. And the likelihood of receiving aid becomes greater as the cost of the college gets higher. The most expensive schools often have the most aid to give. During the application process it is good common sense to pick colleges with a range of costs, including some that are within your reach financially, but you should never eliminate the college you really want on grounds of cost alone.

Another point to keep in mind: the admissions decision and the financial aid decision are made separately and independently of one another, usually in different offices on campus. The admissions decision comes first and, in most cases it makes no difference whether or not you are a candidate for financial aid. It is only after you are admitted that the financial aid staff will review your aid application and make its own aid decision.

The kind of financial aid we're discussing here is the specified amount of money that is offered to a student to help handle educational expenses. Most financial aid is given because the student has a mathematically determined need for it, and the amount of that aid is limited to the student's calculated need. Simply stated, a student's need is determined as the difference between the cost of attending the school and the family's resources: $\text{Cost} - \text{Resources} = \text{Need}$.

Family resources are determined as:

- h. the amount the student's parents can pay from their income and assets;
- i. the amount the student can contribute from earning, plus savings account(s);
- j. any amount that is being contributed as a non-repayable gift

The student and parents are responsible for paying what they can; financial aid is intended to supplement such efforts, not substitute for them.

FEDERAL AID

When it comes to federal financial aid, *all students are eligible* to get a piece of the aid pie. However, you must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER January 1st. Here is a brief listing of the current federal funding programs for undergraduates. If you have any questions or need a FAFSA, go on-line: www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 1-800-4-FED-AID.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible you must:

- k. Have financial need.
- l. Have a high school diploma, GED or pass an independently administered test approved by the U.S. Department of Education
- m. Be enrolled in an eligible program
- n. Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- o. Register with Selective Service, if required
- p. Complete forms as required
- q. Make satisfactory academic progress

CSS / FINANCIAL AID PROFILE

Some colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools and scholarship programs use the information collected on **PROFILE** to help them award private, *nonfederal* student aid funds. Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require this form.

You can apply online to get your own customized **PROFILE** Application packet. The packet includes a personalized **PROFILE** Application – the questions that all students answer plus any *additional* questions required by the particular colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools and scholarship programs from which you are seeking aid.

If one or more of the schools to which you are applying also requires another CSS form (like the Business/Farm Supplement), it is included in your customized packet.

In order for CSS to *customize* your **PROFILE** Application packet, you need to register.

HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

STEP 1

Check with each college's financial aid office to determine which forms you need to file. Don't wait to be accepted to college before filing an application for financial aid. Fail early to ensure that you're considered for all available funding. The most important forms are:

1. **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)** – Everyone applying for federal and most other financial aid must complete this form. File online at www.fafsa.ed.gov
2. **NYS Express TAP Grant and Scholarship Application (ETA)** – NYS residents attending a college in NYS use this free form with the FAFSA to apply for a TAP grant and to request payment for NYS scholarship awards. If you list a NYS college on your FAFSA, you will receive a TAP ETA by mail if you use the paper FAFSA; or you will be prompted to complete the TAP ETA online if you complete the online FAFSA.
3. **PROFILE** – Some colleges may ask you to file this form to be considered for college-funded aid (the college's own grants and scholarships). There is a fee for filing this form.
4. **College-specific financial aid application** – Some colleges may ask you to complete their own financial aid application to be considered for their own college-funded grants, scholarships and loans.

The FAFSA and the PROFILE forms are available in your guidance office or on the Internet. Request the college's own financial aid application, if required. Follow each college's filing requirements and deadlines.

STEP 2

Complete and mail the FAFSA as soon as possible **after** January 1 of your high school senior year. If your family hasn't yet completed their income tax returns, estimate your family's income as accurately as possible. You'll have the opportunity to make corrections later in the process. Keep your password and pin number in a safe place to update your information if necessary. If you're a NYS resident applying to colleges in the state, make sure you include a New York college on your FAFSA to begin application for a NYS TAP grant. Complete any other financial aid forms required by the colleges. Meet all deadlines. Keep a copy of all the forms you file.

By filing the FAFSA, you will be considered for:

- Grants and scholarships from private colleges and universities (some colleges may require an additional form)
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Job programs from private colleges and universities
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Stafford Loan or Federal Direct Loan
- Loan Programs from private colleges and universities.

STEP 3

You'll receive your Federal Student Aid Report (SAR) approximately 30 days after submitting your FAFSA. Review your SAR's information carefully. Follow the directions to correct any errors.

STEP 4

In the spring (usually March or April), you'll receive financial aid "awards" or "packages" from the colleges that have offered you admission, each with a different combination of grants, scholarships, work-study and loans to help you meet college expenses.

Determine your "net cost" by subtracting from tuition and fees and room and board (if you're living on campus) all grants and scholarships plus the total amount of your loans.

STEP 5

Review your financial aid award letters and compare your net costs. Follow the colleges' instructions to accept or reject the offers of admission and financial aid, usually by May 1. Then, review your financial aid with your chosen college. In particular:

- Follow up on your loans. Check with your college financial aid office for their student and parent loan application procedures. Know what you are borrowing and the repayment terms.
- NYS students attending college in the state: Follow up on your NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grant. Review, and if necessary, correct the data on your Express TAP Application (ETA) sent to you by NYSHESC.

STEP 6

You must apply to renew your financial aid each year – on time – or risk losing it! Check your college's deadlines.

Questions to ask the colleges

- Which forms are required to be considered for all forms of aid?
- What are your requirements for merit aid? For need-based aid?
- What are the renewal requirements?
- What are the application deadlines?
- Are there state programs that I should know about?
- When will you notify me of my aid eligibility?
- How will outside scholarships affect my financial aid package?

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

Major sources of aid

Grants and scholarships are funds you do not have to repay. They are available from colleges, your state, the federal government, professional and service organizations, private foundations and many employers. Some grants are based on your financial need while others are awarded for academic merit, a specific career goal or group affiliation.

Work-study programs provide opportunities to earn money while you're in college by working part time on campus or in the community.

Educational loans for college costs may be made to you and/or your parents. This aid must be repaid, usually with interest. Loans are sponsored by the federal government, many private colleges and banks.

Alternatives for parents and students include interest-free tuition payment plans, low-interest loans, lines of credit, tuition tax deductions and credits.

Grants and Scholarships

Grants and scholarships from NYS private colleges and universities

- Aid from a college varies each school year. Eligibility is determined primarily by financial need as calculated from the financial aid forms you completed (need-based awards). Colleges may also take into account academic achievement, or talent in athletics, music or other fields (merit awards).
- To be considered for aid from many private colleges and universities, you'll be asked to file the FAFSA. An additional college financial aid application or the PROFILE may also be required for the college's own grants and scholarships. Check with each financial aid office to determine which forms you need to complete in order to be considered for need-based and merit-based aid. File the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1. File all other financial aid forms by their specified deadlines.

Federal Pell Grants at NYS private colleges and universities

- Pell Grants are awarded to undergraduate students enrolled full or part time in degree or approved certificate programs. In 2010-11 Pell Grant awards ranges from \$555 up to \$5,500.
- Eligibility for Pell is based on financial need determined by total income, net worth (excluding home and family farm equity), family size and the number of children in college. To apply, file the FAFSA.

NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) grants at private colleges and universities

- TAP is a grant program for NYS residents attending a NYS college full time. In 2010-11 awards for first-time freshmen at private colleges and universities ranged from \$425 to \$4,925 per year for up to four years (five years for certain programs).
- Eligibility for TAP is based on NYS net taxable income.
- To apply for TAP, you must first file the FAFSA. If you list a NYS college or university on your FAFSA, New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (NYSHECS) will send you a pre-printed NYS Express TAP application (ETA) by mail or you will be prompted to complete an on-line TAP ETA if you file the FAFSA online. Review the data printed on your ETA and, after you decide which college in the state you will attend, sign and return your corrected ETA to NYSHECS. If you have questions about TAP, call 1-888-NYSHECS,

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)

- Funded jointly by the federal government and the colleges, FSEOG awards range up to \$4,000 per year to full or part-time enrolled undergraduate students with financial need who are Pell Grant recipients. Colleges select recipients and determine award amounts based on the FSEOG funds available at their college. To apply, file the FAFSA.

Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP)

- HEOP is a comprehensive program for academically and economically disadvantaged NYS students. It provides financial aid to cover the majority of college costs, academic tutoring and educational counseling. For information, contact the college's admissions office or the HEOP office.

Scholarships from private sources

- Grants and scholarships are available from many community organizations. Check your Naviance/Family Connection Account on a weekly basis for updated scholarship information. Go to <http://connection.naviance.com/pob>

Student Loans

Federal Stafford Loans – Subsidized and Unsubsidized

- *Unsubsidized Stafford Loan:*
Eligibility is not based on financial need. You are responsible for paying the interest charges on the loan. Interest begins to accrue immediately. Repayment on the principal and interest begins six months after you're no longer enrolled at least half time. However, you may begin to pay on the interest and/or principal sooner.
- *Subsidized Stafford Loan:*
Eligibility is based on your financial need as calculated from information you provide on your FAFSA. There is no income cutoff as long as you demonstrate need. The federal government pays the interest on the loan while you're in college. You begin repayment six months after you're no longer enrolled at least half time.

Federal Perkins Loan

- Undergraduates may borrow up to \$4,000 per year; up to \$20,000 total for undergraduate study. Graduate/professional students may borrow up to \$6,000 per year. The maximum total for all years of study is \$50,000. The federal government pays the fixed 5% interest until you begin repayment. Repayment begins nine months after you're no longer enrolled at least half time (up to ten years to repay). Exceptional financial need and the availability of funds determine eligibility. To apply, file the FAFSA.

Alternatives for Parents and Students

Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (FPLUS)

- Parents and/or stepparents may borrow up to the cost of attendance, less other financial aid, each year for each undergraduate dependent child. Eligibility is not based on need. FPLUS loans can be used to meet your calculated family contribution. The interest rate is variable, currently capped at 9%. Parents may have up to ten years to repay. Interest paid may be tax deductible.

Alternative Loans

- Many lenders offer alternative loans to help families pay for college. These loans offer competitive interest rates and varying, flexible repayment terms. For information, check with your college financial aid office.

Loan Programs from Private Colleges and Universities

- For information, check the college's catalog, or contact the financial aid office.

Work-Study

Federal College Work-Study Program (FCWS)

- Eligibility is based on financial need. Students usually work 10 to 15 hours per week. To apply, file the FAFSA.

Federal Incentive Programs for Higher Education

- Visit [the New York State Higher Education Service website at www.hesc.com](http://www.hesc.com) or consult your tax advisor for information about: the Hope Scholarship (tax credit), the Lifetime Learning Credit (tax credit), the Student Loan Interest Deduction (tax deduction, education savings accounts (tax free), IRA withdrawals, employer-provided education benefits, community service loan forgiveness, and expanded benefits for pre-paid tuition plans.

Important Financial Aid Phone Numbers

Federal Student Aid Info Centers (FAFSA, Pell Grants, FSEOG, Perkins Loans, Stafford Loans)	800-4-FED-AID 800-433-3243
NYSED (TAP, Merit Scholarships, Scholarships of Excellence, Empire State and Liberty Scholarships)	518-474-5642 800-642-6234
CSS/Financial Aid Profile	800-778-6888

VII

Information for the Student Athlete

Interested in playing a sport in college? The information on the following pages is re-printed from the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Eligibility Center Website. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with this website!

www.eligibilitycenter.org





NCAA FRESHMAN-ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

KNOW THE RULES:

Core Courses

- **NCAA Division I requires 16 core courses as of August 1, 2008.** This rule applies to any student first entering any Division I college or university on or after August 1, 2008. See the chart below for the breakdown of this 16 core-course requirement.
- **NCAA Division II requires 14 core courses.** See the breakdown of core-course requirements below. Please note, Division II will require 16 core courses beginning August 1, 2013.

Test Scores

- **Division I** has a sliding scale for test score and grade-point average. The sliding scale for those requirements is shown on page two of this sheet.
- **Division II** has a minimum SAT score requirement of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.
- The SAT score used for NCAA purposes includes **only** the critical reading and math sections. The writing section of the SAT is not used.
- The ACT score used for NCAA purposes is a **sum** of the four sections on the ACT: English, mathematics, reading and science.
- **All SAT and ACT scores must be reported directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center by the testing agency. Test scores that appear on transcripts will not be used. When registering for the SAT or ACT, use the Eligibility Center code of 9999 to make sure the score is reported to the Eligibility Center.**

Grade-Point Average

- Only core courses are used in the calculation of the grade-point average.
- **Be sure** to look at your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses on the Eligibility Center's Web site to make certain that courses being taken have been approved as core courses. The Web site is www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- **Division I** grade-point-average requirements are listed on page two of this sheet.
- **The Division II** grade-point-average requirement is a minimum of 2.000.

DIVISION I 16 Core-Course Rule

16 Core Courses:

- 4 years of English.
- 3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy).

DIVISION II 14 Core-Course Rule

14 Core Courses:

- 3 years of English.
- 2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 2 years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 3 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or non-doctrinal religion/philosophy).

PLEASE NOTE: Beginning August 1, 2013, students planning to attend an NCAA Division II institution will be required to complete 16 core courses.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Division II has no sliding scale. The minimum core grade-point average is 2.000. The minimum SAT score is 820 (verbal and math sections only) and the minimum ACT sum score is 68.
- 14 core courses are currently required for Division II. However, beginning 2013, students will be required to complete 16 core courses.
- 16 core courses are required for Division I.
- The SAT combined score is based on the verbal and math sections only. The writing section will not be used.
- SAT and ACT scores must be reported directly to the Eligibility Center from the testing agency. Scores on transcripts will not be used.
- Students enrolling at an NCAA Division I or II institution for the first time need to also complete the amateurism questionnaire through the Eligibility Center Web site. Students need to request final amateurism certification prior to enrollment.

For more information regarding the rules, please go to www.NCAA.org. Click on "Academics and Athletes" then "Eligibility and Recruiting." Or visit the Eligibility Center Web site at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Please call the NCAA Eligibility Center if you have questions:

Toll-free number: 877/262-1492.

NCAA Eligibility Center
06/18/09 LK:cr

NCAA DIVISION I SLIDING SCALE CORE GRADE-POINT AVERAGE/ TEST-SCORE New Core GPA / Test Score Index		
Core GPA	SAT Verbal and Math ONLY	ACT
3.550 & above	400	37
3.525	410	38
3.500	420	39
3.475	430	40
3.450	440	41
3.425	450	41
3.400	460	42
3.375	470	42
3.350	480	43
3.325	490	44
3.300	500	44
3.275	510	45
3.250	520	46
3.225	530	46
3.200	540	47
3.175	550	47
3.150	560	48
3.125	570	49
3.100	580	49
3.075	590	50
3.050	600	50
3.025	610	51
3.000	620	52
2.975	630	52
2.950	640	53
2.925	650	53
2.900	660	54
2.875	670	55
2.850	680	56
2.825	690	56
2.800	700	57
2.775	710	58
2.750	720	59
2.725	730	59
2.700	730	60
2.675	740-750	61
2.650	760	62
2.625	770	63
2.600	780	64
2.575	790	65
2.550	800	66
2.525	810	67
2.500	820	68
2.475	830	69
2.450	840-850	70
2.425	860	70
2.400	860	71
2.375	870	72
2.350	880	73
2.325	890	74
2.300	900	75
2.275	910	76
2.250	920	77
2.225	930	78
2.200	940	79
2.175	950	80
2.150	960	80
2.125	960	81
2.100	970	82
2.075	980	83
2.050	990	84
2.025	1000	85
2.000	1010	86

**WANT TO PLAY
COLLEGE SPORTS?**

**YOU MUST
KNOW YOUR CORE
COURSE GPA.**



CoreCourseGPA.com

*Addressing Recruiting and Eligibility...at its
Core.*

John F. Kennedy High School has teamed up with CoreCourseGPA.com to provide custom online software to all student-athletes to assist in tracking their progress towards meeting NCAA initial eligibility requirements.

CoreCourseGPA.com calculates core course GPA for both the Division I and II, provides minimum SAT/ACT scores, and a detailed report

Core course credits earned and needed.

All student-athletes are encouraged to activate the FREE membership to begin tracking their Core course GPA and learn more about important recruiting topics. The sooner, the better - every Semester counts!

ACTIVATE YOUR FREE

Step 1: Go to www.CoreCourseGPA.com

Step 2: Click "Free New Member Account"

Step 3: Enter School ID and School Code

Step 4: Complete Registration Form

School ID: 334532

School Code: 741592188

We are pleased to inform you that John F. Kennedy High School is making CoreCourseGPA.com, a web-based software program, available to all John F. Kennedy High School student-athletes and their parents/guardians **free of charge**.

If your child has aspirations of competing athletically as a freshman at an NCAA Division 1 or Division II school, they must meet NCAA Initial-Eligibility minimum standards, including minimum core course GPA and SAT/ACT test score requirements. CoreCourseGPA.com is an innovative tool that allows you to easily track your son or daughter's progress towards meeting these requirements, beginning as soon as the first semester of their freshman year.

To **activate your child's CoreCourseGPA.com membership, follow these simple steps:**

1. Go to www.CoreCourseGPA.com
2. Click on "**New Free Member Account**" in the upper left corner and enter the School ID and School Code:
Students/Parents:
School ID: 334532
School Code: 741592188
3. Click ("**Continue**").
4. **Fill in the appropriate fields** in the **Create New Student Account form**.
Remember to write down the new Member Name and Password you have created
5. Click "Submit"
Congratulations! You have successfully created your CoreCourseGPA.com member account

To **login to your member account and begin using the CoreCourseGPA.com software, follow these simple steps:**

1. Go to www.CoreCourseGPA.com
2. Enter your **Member Name** and **Password** in the **Member Login** box in the upper right corner.
Use the Member Name and Password you created during the account activation process
3. Click "**Login.**"
Begin using your CoreCourseGPA.com account!

CoreCourseGPA.com incorporates the NCAA recognized core courses for John F. Kennedy High School into the online course entry forms, calculates BOTH Division I and Division II core course GPA, automatically factors weighted grades into calculations and tracks course requirements for BOTH Division I and Division II. Your son or daughter's core course information is saved for the duration of their high school career.

John F. Kennedy High School is proud to make this innovative software available to you free of charge. We believe CoreCourseGPA.com will be a very useful academic tool for you and your student-athlete.

CoreCourseGPA.com also provides you access to free recruiting webinars through FreeRecruitingWebinar.org, a nonprofit program. A schedule of webinars may be accessed on the FreeRecruitingWebinar.org website. Attending a webinar is highly recommended to learn more about the facts and rules of recruiting. The recruiting process starts in the freshman year. Make sure you are prepared.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT YOUR USE OF CORECOURSEGPA.COM IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR REGISTERING WITH THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER AFTER THE COMPLETION OF SIX HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTERS.

VIII

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MILITARY

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR MILITARY ACADEMIES

- See your Counselor during early spring of your junior year to discuss criteria for eligibility and steps to follow. Starting early is essential to obtaining an appointment to an academy.
- In the spring of your junior year, apply for a nomination from one or more government officials. You must obtain this nomination to compete for admission to all service academies except the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. For nomination forms and procedures, check the website of each academy.
- Take the SAT or ACT and have official copies of your scores sent to the specific academy.
- Take the qualifying Medical Exam.
- Take the Physical Aptitude Test which assesses strength, agility, flexibility, and endurance. It is recommended that you train for this test prior to taking it.

ADDRESSES FOR MILITARY ACADEMIES

United States Military Academy – West Point

USMA West Point, NY 10996-1796
Director, Candidate Guidance (Code 304)

United States Naval Academy

Annapolis, MD 21402-5018

United States Air Force Academy

Admissions Office, HQ USAFA/RRS
USAF Academy
Colorado Springs, CO 80840-5651

United States Coast Guard Academy

Application for Appointment as Cadet, U.S. Coast Guard) (CG-4151)
Director of Admissions, United States Coast Guard Academy
New London, CT 06320

(No congressional nominations required – based solely on national competition)

United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point

Admission Office, United States Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, NY 11024

THE ARMED SERVICES

Military life has changed a great deal since the Department of Defense announced the all volunteer force. By Congressional legislation passed in 1971, the military staffing budget has been greatly increased to raise military pay and to provide more benefits to service personnel. The Defense Department also has established Project Volunteer, a program to end reliance on the draft by improving the conditions of military life. Housing allowances have been raised, off-base military housing and health care facilities are being improved, and scholarships have been increased.

Selective Service Registration

Proclamation 4771 of the Military Selective Service Act, dated July 21, 1980, states that all males who are citizens of the United States, must register within 30 days of the 18th birth date.

You can register at any U.S. Post Office simply by filling out a Selective Service Registration form. Personal identification – such as a driver’s license or birth certificate is required.

If you have questions, call **708-6788-6888** or write: Selective Service National Headquarters, Registration Information Bureau, Washington, DC 20435.

Joining the Armed Services

If you are interested in joining any of the military branches, you are strongly encouraged to inform your counselor. The Guidance Department can arrange a meeting in school to meet with a recruiter. We will only do so with a parent’s approval, and your parent will be invited to attend.

IX

SCHOLARSHIPS



SCHOLARSHIPS

There isn't a college-bound student in the nation who doesn't know how tough it is to finance an education today. The cost at several well-known private universities has skyrocketed to over \$40,000 for one year and is rising steadily. Even the cost of attending a public institution has increased to the point where even middle-class or wealthier families are struggling to come up with enough money. Close to two-thirds of today's students receive some sort of financial aid, the bulk of which comes from the federal and state governments and another significant portion from colleges themselves that recognize that government dollars are enough. Most of this aid goes to students who have demonstrated financial need and who apply through the traditional application process.

Close to half of what students receive are loans that they or their families must pay back later. That leaves the family no option but to make-do with less or borrow more. While borrowing to pay for college is still an excellent investment, since a college graduate will earn significantly more than someone who does not graduate, there is great concern that too many students and families are taking on too large a burden by borrowing so much.

Alternatives

There have to be some alternatives for families other than borrowing more money and for students who don't quite qualify for need-based aid but who know paying college bills will still be very hard on their families. One of these alternatives is scholarships for students who have an outstanding talent and would like to be rewarded for it financially.

For all students of accomplishment who are seeking additional sources of college money, there is a large and too-often-overlooked reservoir of funds to tap. A merit scholarship is one that is based on specified performance or accomplishments rather than on financial need. Most colleges today offer their own merit scholarships, often to achieve their recruitment goals. We are all familiar with the many athletic grants awarded to top athletes. While in the past most of the funds went to those who participated in the high-profile sports of men's basketball or football that has changed dramatically. Now many women and men who excel in any of a variety of sports receive scholarships to play on a college team.

But colleges also award scholarships to excellent musicians and artists, to scientists and journalists, to student leaders, and to community activists. A college that wants to recruit you may offer you a scholarship, regardless of need. If you do qualify for need-based aid, the college may "sweeten the pot" by giving you more grant aid. Many colleges offer a higher percentage of grant aid (in comparison with loans) to students with high GPA's. To learn more about how colleges award scholarships, you should read their brochures and materials carefully. It's also a good idea to talk directly with an admissions representative and the head of the academic department in which you plan to enroll.

Many states also offer merit-based scholarships to their residents who attend college within the state such as NYS Merit Scholarship. This scholarship is based on your Regents Exam grades. These scholarships are often based on your high school grades, your score on the SAT, or your rank in your graduating class.

Scholarships: Myths and Misconceptions

The scholarship game is highly misunderstood by many high school students.

Myth #1: Scholarships are rare, elusive awards won only by valedictorians, geniuses and “wiz kids.”

Myth #2: All merit scholarships are based on a student’s academic record.

The truth is: many of the best opportunities are in such areas as writing, public speaking, leadership, science, community service, music and the arts, foreign languages, and vocational-technical skills.

Myth #3: You have to be a member of a minority group to get a scholarship.

The truth is: there are indeed some scholarships that are targeted toward women and minority students. There are also scholarships for which you must be a member of a specific national club or student organization (such as the National Honor Society), which makes these scholarships just as exclusive. But most scholarship opportunities are not exclusive to any one segment of the population.

Myth #4: If you have need and get financial aid, it’s useless to win a scholarship from some outside organization because the college will just take away the aid its offering.

The truth is: it’s true that if you get need-based aid, you can’t get more than the total cost of attendance (but remember, that includes room and board, books and other expenses, not just tuition). If the financial aid you’ve been awarded meets the total cost and you win an outside scholarship, colleges have to reduce something. But usually they reduce the loan or work-study portion of your financial aid award first, before touching the grant portion they’ve awarded you. That means you won’t have to borrow or earn as much. Also, most colleges don’t meet your full financial need when you qualify for need-based financial aid. So if you do win an outside scholarship, chances are your other aid will not be taken away or reduced.

Computer Scholarship Search Companies

In the past several years, many computer scholarship search companies have sprung up around the country. But college financial aid administrators and high school guidance counselors are largely distrustful of these companies. In fact, the Federal Trade Commission has issued warnings to students about many of these companies.

Most search companies are run by people who have little or no experience with financial aid or scholarships. They tend to charge a lot of money (between \$45 and \$200) for information that can be found, free of charge, in libraries, guidance offices, bookstores, colleges and now, on the Internet.

In addition, they don't tell you that all they do is provide you with a list of scholarships for which you may be eligible, but still have to apply for. When they say they guarantee you something, all they're guaranteeing is a list of potential sources.

Furthermore, some of the "scholarships" they list are federal or state programs or scholarships specific to one individual college (for which you will be eligible anyway if you attend there); some are not even scholarships but low-interest loans.

On the other hand, it is possible that a computerized scholarship search will locate a few of the more obscure awards that you could win. And, to be fair, not all people work with financial aid problems every day. Guidance counselors, financial aid administrators, and even the Better Business Bureau or Federal Trade Commission can give you insight into a computerized scholarship search company's offer of quick cash.

Types of Competition

There are three basic types of merit-based scholarship competitions:

- Programs that offer scholarships and awards primarily on the basis of specific performance in some area – through competitive judging of student writing, speeches, projects, artwork, performance or special tests.
- Programs that evaluate a student's past achievements in areas that may include academics, leadership or involvement in school and community.
- Programs that base awards on both past and present achievement by evaluating past academic reports and outside activities as well as performance in a current competition.

Start Web surfing at the excellent Financial Aid Information Page. This comprehensive site is a well-organized trove of information for both students and the parents who bankroll them. Especially useful is its rich collection of financial calculators, including programs to help estimate the amount parents are expected to pay for college under federal guidelines, various calculations on investments you may want to tap, and even projections on the cost of tuition at your kid's dream school four – or maybe five or six years from now. Simply plug in your financial data and the figures pop up on your screen. Keep a pencil or printer nearby, however, since you can't save personal information on the pages.

Another handy site is the Education Department's College Financing Page. There is the usual glossary of financial aid terms and a comprehensive rundown on federal college grant programs, mainly for low and moderate-income families, plus lots of detail on government guaranteed loans for all income levels. But the big draw here is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which almost all U.S. students applying for need-based aid must file to determine their expected family contributions. Consult illustrated online instructions for completing the FAFSA's sometimes confusing paper form. There's also FAFSA Express, downloadable software that lets you file your application via modem directly to the federal processing center – shaving two weeks off the wait mail filers will endure.

CUSTOM FIT

Of course, one way to ease the burden of tuition bills is through scholarships and grants. Thousands of them are out there, often reserved for students with very precise qualifications or majors. A great way to sift through the clutter is fastWEB, a database of 180,000 private scholarships, fellowships, grants and loans. A student registers for fastWEB by completing a detailed online profile. In about 15 minutes the system sends the student's mailbox a list of scholarships with additional alerts as new grants are added to the database. Be sure to consult fastWEB before paying for a private scholarship search service.

If yours is like most families, you'll be relying on loans to help with costs. A good place to check out borrowing options and repayment schemes is through student-loan powerhouse Sallie Mac's website (www.usagroup.com). Enjoy the free advice. At today's tuition prices, you'll need all the savings you can get.

WHERE TO LOOK

The Financial Aid Information Page
www.finaid.org

Great sources of general information, plus especially rich variety of online calculators.

FastWEB
www.fastweb.com

Database of 180,000 private scholarships, emails data on grants that match your profile.

NY STATE HESC – a detailed explanation of Federal and State loan, grant and scholarship programs.

*Remember to check Naviance on a regular basis. Any scholarship opportunity that is sent to Guidance is posted on the Naviance site!

GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

ADVANCED PLACEMENT – Admission or assignment of a freshman to an advanced course in a certain subject on the basis of evidenced that the student has already completed the equivalent of the college’s freshman course in that subject. In most cases the college also grants academic credit for college work that has been completed.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM (ACT) – An alternative test to the SAT constructed to assess each student’s general educational development and ability to complete college work. Specific test date information is available from your counselor.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE (A.S.) – The degree given for completing college program of at least two but less than four years of study, usually in a two-year institution such as a junior college or community college.

BACHELOR’S DEGREE (B.A. /B.S.) – The degree given for completing undergraduate college programs that normally takes four years, also called the baccalaureate degree.

CLASS RANK – The position of a student in his or her graduating class, figured according to grade average accumulated in grades 9, 10 and 11.

COLLEGE WORK-STUDY PROGRAM (CWSP) – A form of financial assistance through part-time work positions both on and off the college campus. (See financial aid information.)

COST OF EDUCATION – Generally, this includes the college tuition and fees as well as cost of room and board, books and supplies, and transportation expenses.

CSS PROFILE – A financial aid form used by certain schools.

DEFERRED ADMISSION – An accepted student can delay entrance to college by a year (or a semester).

EARLY ACTION – This process is used by a few selective colleges. It does not require you to enroll if you are accepted. Your application is evaluated and either accepted, denied or deferred. If it is denied, you will not be admitted. If it is accepted, you must decide by May 1st. If it is deferred, you will hear the final decision when regular applications are evaluated in April.

EARLY DECISION – Apply to your first choice college in early autumn and you’ll have an answer by mid-December. An application for early decision means that you must attend the college if you are accepted. It is a binding agreement. If you are denied early decision, your application may be considered in the general applicant pool. If you are admitted at this time, it is not binding.

FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE – A financial aid award to a student from a combination of two or more forms of financial aid (i.e. grants + work + loans).

GRANT - Usually a financial award which is not repayable.

LOAN – A loan is usually obtained from banks or college sources and must be repaid with interest. Most often they are [paid back after one’s education is finished].

N.Y. STATE GUARANTEED STUDENT LOAN (STAFFORD LOAN) – A loan program in which the federal government pays the interest on a student loan while the student is in school.

OPEN ADMISSIONS – The college admission policy of admitting all applicants who are high school graduates.

PELL GRANT – A federally sponsored and administered financial aid program that provides grants based on need for each undergraduate year. (See financial aid information.)

PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (PSAT/NMSQT) – This test is an abbreviated form of the SAT and is designed to give juniors an opportunity to practice taking a test which is similar but shortened (one hour) than the SAT. It is given in October of the junior year. It is also used as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

RESERVE OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) – Many colleges have units of ROTC which offer two and four-year programs of military training culminating in an officer's commission. In some colleges, credits for these courses can be applied toward fulfillment of degree requirements. Offered by the Army, Navy and Air Force scholarships are available.

ROLLING ADMISSIONS – A system used by some colleges in which admissions decisions are sent to applicants as they are processed. Such schools continue to accept applications until they reach maximum enrollment.

SCHOLARSHIP – A form of financial assistance which does not require repayment and is usually made to a student who shows potential for distinction, usually in academic performance.

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) – This test, graded on a scale from 200 to 800, measures a student's mathematical, verbal and writing ability.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS – One hour College Board tests in specific secondary school subject areas. Not all colleges require SAT Subject exams. You should check to see if the college in which you are interested requires them. Specific test date information is available from your counselor.

STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS – The amount the student is expected to contribute toward meeting the cost of his/her education from summer earnings, previous savings, and other resources.

TRANSFER PROGRAM – An educational program in a two-year college that is offered primarily for students who plan to continue their studies in a four-year college (e.g., Nassau and Farmingdale).

UNIVERSITY – A four-year degree granting school which is composed of a number of "schools" or "colleges," each of which encompasses a general field of study. In addition to a College of Liberal Arts, it may include schools of Education, Business, Allied Health Professions, Agriculture, etc., on the undergraduate level, as well as graduated level programs such as medicine, law, dentistry, etc.

X

SAMPLES & WORKSHEETS

COLLEGE APPLICATION CHEAT SHEET

Here are answers to questions that are typically asked on college applications. If you are asked anything that you are unsure of, **(DON'T GUESS!)** see your counselor!

- We **do not** offer block scheduling
- We **do not** rank
- CEEB Code: 334532
- Grade scale is out of 100
- The cumulative GPA is weighted if you took at least one honors or one AP class
- # of AP Courses available: 21
- # of Honor Courses available: 18
- Any class taken every day for a **full year is 1 credit** for the year
- Any **half year class** or **class taken every other day** is **.5** credit for the year

Counselors

Email Address

Mrs. Jessica Baker

Jbaker@pob.k12.ny.us

Ms. Sara Horney

Shorney@pob.k12.ny.us

Mr. Joseph Izzo

Jizzo@pob.k12.ny.us

Mr. Neil Lasher

Nlasher@pob.k12.ny.us

Mr. Jason Miller

Jamiller@pob.k12.ny.us

Mrs. Cristina Rivas-Laline

Crlaline@pob.k12.ny.us

Mrs. Jennifer Siegel

Jsiegel@pob.k12.ny.us

Mrs. Angela Sigmon

Asigmon@pob.k12.ny.us

Title: School counselor

Phone Number: 516-937-6364

Fax Number: 516-937-6384

COLLEGE VISIT WORKSHEET

(Take a worksheet with you to each college you visit)

College visited _____ Date _____

Interviewer _____ Phone: () _____

Admissions Officer _____ Phone: () _____

What I thought of:

Campus _____ Local Town _____

Classrooms _____ Campus Store _____

Dorms _____ Students _____

Dining _____ Transportation _____

Sports/Recreation _____ Other _____

Library _____

Would I fit in and feel comfortable here?

Does this school see to fit my needs?

My General Impression: (It's very important to write your impressions immediately after visiting a campus. No doubt you will be seeing several schools consecutively, and it is easy to confuse various aspects of each particular college).

If you visit during school days, you must have a College Visitation Form signed by a college representative. The day will be considered an educationally excused day. This form should be submitted to your guidance counselor for approval upon your return. These forms are available in the Guidance Department.

**PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL
COLLEGE VISITATION FORM**

INSTRUCTIONS: This form must be completed in full and submitted to the guidance office after you have visited your selected college (s). It is the student's responsibility to have the form signed by their counselor after the visitation and to submit the completed form to the attendance office. Please be reminded that you are responsible to make up **ALL** missed work for each of your classes including Physical Education. This form **MUST BE VALIDATED BY THE COLLEGE YOU VISIT.**

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT:

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Student Address _____

Phone Number _____ Parent Work Number _____

COLLEGE (S) VISITED	DATE(S) OF VISIT(S)	NAME OF COLLEGE OFFICIAL & TITLE	SIGNATURE	PHONE NO.

Student Signature _____ Parent Signature _____

Counselor Signature _____ Date _____

How to Write or Email Colleges

**Your street Address
Your Town, NY 11ZIP
Date**

**Director of Admissions
Name of School
City, State, Zip Code**

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am currently a student at Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School and will graduate in June, _____. I am interested in applying to your institution for the _____ semester and would appreciate a copy of your latest college catalog, application, and a list of scholarship opportunities. I am considering applying as a (an) _____ Major. I am involved in the following activities at Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School, _____ and would like any information you may have regarding the possibility of my continuing these activities' at your institution. Thank you very much for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Last Name, First Name

Sample
Legal-size Envelope (inside flap)

Undergraduate Admissions
Drexel University
3141 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2875

Sample
Legal-size Envelope (front)





Last Name, First Name



Sample
9" X 12" Envelope (inside flap)