

**College Handbook**

**2012-2013**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

* Introduction
* College Planning Calendar
	+ College Planning for 9th and 10th graders
	+ Junior Year Calendar
	+ Senior Year Calendar
* Types of Colleges
* Application Options
* Standardized Testing Information
* Factors to Consider in Selecting a College
	+ How to Build a College List
* Applying to College
	+ College Application Checklist
* What colleges look for in Applicants?
* Writing Thank You Letters
* Financial Aid
	+ How to Complete the FAFSA
	+ Financial Aid Checklist
* Almost there…
* Resources

**Introduction**

**College Counseling and Career Readiness Program**

All of Global Kids’ programs are designed to prepare young people for success in the sophisticated workplace of the 21st century. In our College Counseling and Career Readiness Program, students receive intensive help and ongoing one-on-one support as they prepare for life after high school. More than 95% of Global Kids’ seniors graduate from high school and close to 90% go on to college, many receiving financial support and scholarships.

**Key components of our program include:**

* exploration of college options
* campus visits including tours, overnight trips, and class auditing
* assistance with the college and financial aid application process
* job readiness training including resume preparation, interviewing, and workplace etiquette and professionalism.
* internships with businesses and non-profit organizations
* site visits and career panels at leading corporations

College Coordinator

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**One final:** The person most responsible for successfully completing this process is you. We are here to guide and advise you, but you must make the important decisions and follow through in meeting all deadlines. We suggest you designate a specific place at home to keep all college related materials. Having a separate folder for each college you are considering will help you organize your materials. **Please keep a copy of everything you submit to the colleges.**

Choosing a college is an adventure! Remember to have fun along the way!

**JUNIOR YEAR CALENDAR**

**Fall Semester**

**September**

* Prepare for the PSAT given in October which includes National Merit Scholarship competitions.
* Fill out the lunch form *even if you do not eat the school lunch!* If you qualify for free or reduced lunch, you will be eligible for fee waivers for SAT & ACT exams and College Application.
* Attend the NYC College Fair at the Jacob Javits Center.

**October**

* Take the PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.
* Attend the Big Apple College Fair.
* Explore volunteer work, community service, extracurricular activities, etc.

**December**

* Go on-line to learn more about college and career opportunities. Suggested websites are available in the helpful website section of this Handbook.
* PSAT score reports are sent to schools.

**January**

* Begin registration for upcoming SAT Reasoning/ Subject Tests or the ACT Test.

**SAT:** [*www.collegeboard.com*](http://www.collegeboard.com)

**ACT:** [*www.actstudent.org*](http://www.actstudent.org)

**Spring Semester**

**February**

* Continue registration for SAT Reasoning or SAT Subject Tests and/or ACT Tests.
* Continue your online research and request information from colleges.
* Begin listing the activities and accomplishments that make you special!
* Look into college summer programs and or internships.

**March**

* Create a list of colleges you are interested in applying to.
* Schedule an appointment with your counselor to go over your college list and to go over your senior year course selections.
* Register for your SAT/ACT Tests.
* Start to identify teachers that will write your letters of recommendation.
* Review your High School transcript for accuracy. All of your high school courses and exams should be listed with correct grades. Make sure all corrections are returned to your guidance counselor immediately.

**April**

* Continue scheduling appointments with your counselor.
* Visit college campuses during “Spring Break” and speak with college representatives.
* Attend the NACAC National College Fair at the Jacob Javits Center.
* Continue Summer Program Search.
* Identify the two (2) junior subject class teachers that will write your recommendation letters.

**May**

* Take the SAT Reasoning or Subject Tests.
* Continue searching for colleges.
* Pursue volunteer and extracurricular activities.
* Continue requesting teacher recommendation letter for college.

**June**

* Take SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests or ACT Tests.
* Continue research colleges that might be of interest to you.
* Arrange to visit college campuses over the summer.

**Summer**

* + Contact colleges for information, catalogs and applications and financial aid forms.
	+ Visit campuses of interest.
	+ Create a resume of high school accomplishments including activities, awards, jobs, etc.
	+ Select a calendar to use senior year for key dates and deadlines.
	+ Talk to students who attend colleges that you are considering and ask questions!!

**SENIOR YEAR CALENDAR**

**Fall Semester**

**September**

 **Your senior year begins!!!**

* Double-check your course schedule for accuracy and completeness.
* Check your transcript carefully. Your freshman through junior year transcript will be sent to the colleges to which you apply. If necessary, request transcript corrections.
* If you have not yet done so, ask two faculty members to write your college letters of recommendation. **Remember,** the college recommendation letters process is a great deal of work for your teachers or Global Kids Trainer. They work very hard to show the colleges that you are an excellent candidate.

**Please write Thank You notes to your teachers who have written letters of recommendation for you.**

* Check **collegeboard.com** for upcoming SAT I Reasoning Test dates and SAT II Subject Test dates and registration deadlines.
* Check **act.org** for upcoming ACT Plus Writing test dates and registration deadlines.

**Note the Important Deadlines in October and the Deadlines in November and December:**

**November**

**Student Deadlines**

• **Rolling Admission:** Thursday, November 7th **.**• **CUNY Applications:** Thursday, November 7th **.**• **SUNY Applications:** Thursday, November 7th **.**• **Deadlines of December 15th or later:** Thursday, November 7th **.**• Make sure you are aware of all admissions and/or Priority Deadlines (inform the

College Office of any “Priority” or “Scholarship” deadlines that may be specific to an individual college that you are applying to) for all colleges to which you apply. Visit the “Admissions” sections of individual college websites to find this information.

**December**

Put together your family financial papers. The College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS Profile, see ***collegeboard.com)*** should be filed as soon as possible for those schools that require it.

* Early Decision and Early Action Applicants should hear from their colleges by mid-month.

***FURTHER EARLY DECISION (ED)/EARLY ACTION (EA) PROCEDURES***

**IF YOU APPLIED EARLY DECISION**

* Please inform the College Office immediately once a decision has been received.

**IF YOU APPLIED EARLY ACTION**

* If students are ADMITTED to their EA college(s), they can choose whether or not to withdraw some or all of their remaining college applications.

**January**

Immediately after January 1, 2013 file the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form. Please visit ***fafsa.ed.gov*** to learn about applying for financial aid. In addition, you may have to complete the CSS Profile (see ***collegeboard.com*** and the websites of the individual colleges to which you are applying). Many colleges’ deadlines for submitting **completed** 2012 taxes are as early as March 1, some require completed taxes even earlier than that – complete your taxes as soon as possible.

• **MIDYEAR REPORTS are sent to the colleges**

**Spring Semester**

**February**

* Use the Presidents’ Week recess to visit the campuses of colleges that you have not yet seen.
* Make sure you have completed all financial aid applications/forms: FAFSA, CSS Profile,
* TAP Tuition Assistance Program – please visit ***hesc.com*** (Higher Education Services Corporation of New York State) for more information regarding the TAP Grant, and any other financial aid forms your colleges may require.
* The College Office will send out all Mid Year Reports to the colleges you are applying to.

**It is imperative to meet all financial aid deadlines set by the various colleges to which you have applied.**

**April**

 **Most colleges mail their Regular Admissions decisions this month.**

**May**

You must accept admission to **one, and only one,** college by **May 1 and make a tuition deposit. You cannot double deposit.** If you do, you may forfeit your acceptance at both institutions.

* Please be considerate of students on waiting lists of colleges that have accepted you, but that you do not wish to attend, and promptly decline these colleges’ offers of admission.
* You should have received your **TAP** acknowledgement. If the school you will be attending is different from the one listed on your TAP acknowledgment, change the school and correct any incorrect financial data. Return the correction form to the processor **by May 1.** (Tuition Assistance Program grants are available only for New York State residents who attend college in New York State, visit ***hesc.com*** for more information.)
* Apply for the summer job you’ve been thinking about.

**June**

 **The College Office mails your final grades and certification of graduation forms to the college that you have indicated you will be attending.**

* If you will need to take out loans to help pay for college, contact your college’s financial aid office for information regarding how to obtain college loans if you have not already done so.

**Remember: All colleges reserve the right to rescind your acceptance if your academic performance during your senior year does not meet its standards.**

**Types of Colleges**

## Community Colleges

Community colleges are a wonderful option for students who want to further their educations close to home while expanding future college and career opportunities. Because community colleges receive public tax dollars at the local, state and federal levels, tuition is very low when compared to four-year public and private institutions. Community colleges design their two-year programs to transfer credits to a four-year college or university, so after a few semesters at a community college, you can transfer and go on to earn a bachelor of arts or science at a four-year school with many of your general education requirements behind you.

## Career Colleges and Vocational/Technical Schools

These institutions offer specialized programs that prepare students for a specific trade or industry. Career colleges are worth considering if you are focused on a specific field or have already identified your ideal career, such as being a chef or an auto mechanic. Be sure to check that the college is accredited and which classes and credits will transfer to public colleges and universities in case you decide to go on to earn an undergraduate or graduate degree later. They tend to have higher costs, which could mean graduating with more debt.

## Liberal Arts Colleges

These schools offer four-year degree programs focused on a general liberal arts education in the humanities and sciences (including art, literature, languages, philosophy, history, mathematics and science). The ending degree is a bachelor’s in liberal arts rather than in a particular subject area or specific discipline as a major or minor. Liberal arts undergraduates often go on to graduate schools or professional schools to earn degrees in medicine, law, business or theology.

## Public 4-Year Colleges

Public four-year colleges offer undergraduate programs that lead to a bachelor's degree in the arts or sciences (B.A. or B.S.) -- they do not offer graduate programs. They are public, because they receive taxpayer funding from their states and the federal government. If you are in-state, or a resident of the state where the school is, your tuition will be much more affordable, because you and your family have paid taxes that help support these colleges. If you are out-of-state, meaning you do not live in the state where the school is located, the tuition is substantially higher, and you may want to consider your [college financing and financial aid](http://www.mycollegeoptions.org/Articles/1/1/FAFSA/Paying-for-College.aspx) offers when deciding to attend an out-of-state college.

## Public Universities

Different from public colleges, public universities generally consist of three types of schools: colleges where you earn a bachelor's degree, professional schools and graduate schools. Universities offer advanced post-graduate educational opportunities, such as master's degrees and doctoral degrees. They may include schools of medicine and law. Many students go from colleges into universities to earn advanced degrees.

##  Private Colleges and Universities

These private institutions are funded primarily by organizational endowments, alumni contributions and other funding outside of government agencies and taxpayer funds. The cost of attending private colleges and universities is usually much higher than public colleges and universities. Although tuition may cost more, do not count these private colleges and universities out -- they tend to offer more [financial aid](http://www.mycollegeoptions.org/Articles/1/1/FAFSA/Paying-for-College.aspx) and [scholarships](http://www.mycollegeoptions.org/Articles/1/12/Scholarships-and-Grants/Paying-for-College.aspx) than public institutions.

**Application Options**

**Early Decision (BINDING)**

Under the Early Decision (ED) plan, some colleges allow the student to apply to his or her first choice college early in the fall term (usually by November 1 or 15) and receive an admissions decision in mid-December.

* This program is desirable for students who have strong academic credentials and a very strong preference for one particular college. Because the student is clearly indicating to the college that it is his or her 1st choice and that he or she will attend if accepted, **in some cases,** applying Early Decision can increase a student’s chance of admission.
* If accepted under an Early Decision plan, **the student is not permitted to apply to any other colleges. Before applying ED, the student and family should discuss how important it is to them to have the opportunity to compare financial aid packages offered by colleges to which the student might have been accepted as a Regular Decision applicant.**
* If a student is not accepted under the Early Decision Plan and is “deferred,” the student will be reconsidered later in the year with the regular application pool. However, a student may also be not accepted in December.

**Early Action (NOT BINDING)**

The Early Action (EA) plan follows the same application and notification timetable as the Early Decision Plan but allows the accepted candidates until May 1 to accept or decline the offer of admission.

**School Reports and other materials in time to meet the colleges’ ED/EA deadlines.**

**Rolling Admissions (NO SET DEADLINE-FIRST COME FIRST SERVE)**

A Rolling Admissions procedure means that the college’s Admissions Office will review an applicant’s file which can include: the student’s application, high school transcript, SAT I Reasoning Test and SAT II Subject tests (and/or ACT plus Writing), and teacher recommendations as soon as possible after the completed application is received. It is in the student’s best interest to submit his or her application as early as possible before degree programs fill up. Decisions are issued within a few weeks after they are made. Students should consult college websites for priority filing dates that, if met, often make students eligible for additional scholarships. Many state universities as well as some private colleges use the rolling admissions process. **In many cases your chances of admission are improved considerably by applying as early as possible before academic programs are filled to capacity.**

**Deferred Admission**

At some colleges, students who have been admitted to the school may elect to delay enrollment for a year or a semester. Students might choose this option to earn money for college or to pursue special programs. A deposit is often required by the college to hold a place in the next entering class, and it is the college’s right to expect the student to be able to account for the time spent between graduation from high school and actual matriculation at the college. The student who defers admission cannot attend another college during the time off without the approval of the college that defers admission.

**STANDARDIZED TESTING INFORMATION**

**PSAT/NMSQT**The **PSAT/NMSQT** (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) examination measures critical reading skills, math problem- solving skills, and writing skills. This test may be taken by sophomores and juniors; however, only your junior year score will be submitted to the National Merit Scholarship Competition. The PSAT/NMSQT is offered **only once each year. All juniors are advised to take this exam.** Please visit http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html to learn more about the PSAT including test taking tips and preparation.

**SAT I Reasoning Test**The **SAT I Reasoning Test** is an examination that takes approximately 4 hours to complete. It is a multiple choice exam with an essay. The SAT I Reasoning Test is designed to measure critical reading, mathematical, and writing skills. In conjunction with a number of other factors, your SAT I Reasoning Test scores are used by colleges in their admissions process.

**It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that SAT I Reasoning Test Score Reports are sent to the colleges to which you are applying.** The College Board has recently instituted a **“Score Choice”** option. If students wish, they may choose which SAT I Reasoning Test scores (by testing date, not by individual section scores such as only Critical Reading or only Math) and which SAT II Subject Test scores (by individual Subject Test, not bound to a testing date) that are sent to the colleges.

Please visit ***http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/score\_choice.html*** for a detailed description of SAT “Score Choice”. In general, colleges will consider your highest scores on each individual section of the SAT I Reasoning Test and your highest score on any individual SAT II Subject Test. Please know that colleges’ admissions policies vary regarding SAT Score Choice and that it is the student’s responsibility to make sure he or she adheres to each college’s policy.

**SAT II Subject Tests**The **SAT II Subject Tests** are one hour in length. They are designed to measure your knowledge of a particular subject and your ability to apply that knowledge. Many colleges require or recommend one or more SAT II Subject Test(s) for admission. Some colleges leave the choice of SAT II Subject Tests up to the applicant while others have specific requirements. Be sure to **carefully review** colleges’ Admissions websites to determine the standardized testing requirements of each college. In addition, if you have a sense of the subject area you wish to pursue in college, be sure to take the exam relating to that subject.

**ACT Plus Writing** (American College Testing Assessment)
The **ACT Plus Writing** exam, administered by American College Testing, is an alternative form of assessment to the SAT I Reasoning Test. **The ACT exam is offered “with Writing” or “without Writing”. If you choose to take the ACT exam, you must choose the ACT exam with the writing component (ACT Plus Writing).** One difference between the ACT and the SAT I Reasoning Test is that in addition to assessing a student’s academic performance, the ACT can also provide helpful information to assist a student in career planning. The ACT assessment program consists of four academic tests, a writing assessment, a Student Profile, and an Interest Inventory. Some colleges and programs (e.g., the 7-year Sophie Davis biomedical program at City College) require it. Be sure to check the requirements of the colleges in which you are interested!

**FEE WAIVERS: Ask your guidance counselor if you are eligible for fee waivers. If you are not able to get any, ask your GK trainer if we can provide you.**

**FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN SELECTING A COLLEGE**

The questions below are designed to help you evaluate many of the factors you should consider when choosing colleges to which you might apply. Your first task is to assign priorities to each of these factors. As you research various colleges and perhaps visit some college campuses, keep notes and/or record your impressions of the school. You are very likely to spend 4 years at a particular college; doing some research and making informed choices only makes sense.

**Your Interests:**

1. What fields and subjects interest you the most? If you are unsure about your academic interests, it might be best to look for colleges that offer a wide range of programs.
2. Why do you really want to go to college? What do you expect to gain from the experience?
3. Based on your academic history, what do you feel are your strengths?

**Location:**

1. Do you prefer a school in a large city, a college town close to a city, or a rural setting far from a major city?
2. Do you prefer a school close to home where you will be able to visit home easily for a weekend or Thanksgiving break?
3. Perhaps a school where it will be easy and financially feasible for your family to visit you?

**Academics:**

1. Does the college offer the program(s) in which you are interested?
2. Is the college known for a particular program?
3. What are the strengths or weaknesses of the program(s) in which you are interested?
4. What is the student-to-teacher ratio? How many students are there in a typical class?
5. How accessible are the college’s professors? Do undergraduates have the opportunity to assist professors in their research?
6. Will the academic work challenge me? Will it be too demanding and not allow time for extracurricular activities and socializing?
7. What grade average and standardized test scores will I need to be considered a strong applicant?
8. Does the school accept Advanced Placement credit? Is there a minimum score needed?
9. Is there an honors program available at the school? Who is eligible to participate?
10. Does the college offer/encourage study abroad or at another U.S. campus?
11. How many graduates go right into the marketplace? Is there a career services office that assists students with finding summer internships and jobs after graduation? Which firms recruit on campus?

**Size and Student Population:**

Smaller schools may be more nurturing and supportive whereas larger schools may offer greater diversity, both academically and socially. Some small colleges belong to consortia that enable them to offer greater resources while maintaining their supportive atmospheres.

1. Is the college small (fewer than 1000 students), medium-size, or large (more than 15,000)? Does enrollment matter to you? Does the college have graduate students?
2. Is the college ethnically/racially/culturally diverse?
3. Does the college attract students from all over the United States and the world or are the majority of students from the immediate region?
4. What are the students like? Will I fit in? Will I be able to make friends?
5. What kinds of student organizations are active on campus (political groups, college newspaper, student government, volunteer/mentoring groups, etc.)?
6. What is the male/female ratio?
7. What kind of religious life exists on campus? Can the school meet my special needs (dietary/religious/ medical)?
8. Do students primarily live on campus, off-campus, or do most students commute from home?
9. What is social life on campus like? How important are fraternities and

sororities? Varsity sports?

**Financial Factors:**

1. How much will it cost to attend this school (including tuition, fees, room and board, books, travel to and from campus, and spending money)?
2. Will I qualify for financial aid? Is the amount of financial aid offered negotiable? Does the college offer academic merit scholarships (as opposed to colleges that offer scholarships solely based on the family’s “Financial Need”)?
3. Will I go on to graduate school? Will this affect how much I can spend on my undergraduate education?

**Facilities:**

1. How are the college’s libraries and computer facilities?
2. Does the college/university provide technology?
3. Are there adequate sports and recreational facilities (e.g., a swimming pool, athletic fields for non-varsity players, music practice rooms)?
4. Is a wide variety of intercollegiate and intramural sports programs available? What facilities and programs are available for women?

**Living Conditions/ Safety:**

1. Is campus housing readily available? Is on-campus housing guaranteed for all four years?
2. Are the dorms coed? Are the bathrooms? Are single sex dorms available?
3. Are alternative housing arrangements available?
4. How safe is the campus? How does the college ensure safety on campus?
5. How accessible is the college to public transportation?

**Organizing a College List**

Once you know what you're looking for, you can start crafting a list of colleges that fit your specifications. Don't include a school on your list that you wouldn't be willing to attend. As your list takes shape, include schools that fall into one of the following three categories: match, reach and safety.

A **match** school is one where your academic credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools.

A **reach** school is one where your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average freshman. Reach schools are long–shots, but they should still be possible. If you have a 2.0 GPA, Harvard is not a reach school–it's a dream.

A **safety** school is one where your academic credentials fall above the school's range for the average freshman. You can be reasonably certain that you will be admitted to your safety schools.

Apply to a few schools from each category (many applicants apply to around three reach schools, three match schools and two safety schools). Separating them will help you manage your expectations throughout the admissions process. And it will ensure that you set ambitious goals and give yourself some back–up options.

**WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN APPLICANTS?**

**Transcript
Your cumulative average and the degree to which you have challenged yourself in high school are typically the two most important factors colleges consider when evaluating candidates for admission.** “Did the student take advantage of challenging courses offered at his or her high school?” is one of the first questions an admissions committee considers when evaluating a candidate. Colleges are interested in both the courses you have taken and the grades you have received. They will take into account the difficulty of your academic program as well as how successful you have been in your courses. They also look at trends in your grades; **a transcript that reflects steady growth is definitely a plus!** If something during your high school career has caused you to be less successful than you might have been otherwise, (you may want to speak to your Guidance Counselor, who can mention “extenuating circumstances” in his or her SSR letter of recommendation.)

**Standardized Tests**Your scores on standardized exams such as the **SAT I Reasoning Test, SAT II Subject Tests,** and the **ACT Plus Writing** are important not just for admissions but also for being awarded **merit scholarships** at some colleges.

**Essay**

Your essay(s) is a very important part of your college application. The essay affords you an opportunity to express your individuality; it will help to differentiate you from other candidates with similar averages and test scores. You may write about your special interests, talents, and influential experiences and people. If your only extracurricular activity is a job, you might write about how your job has been meaningful to you and/or your family. The general rule is “The essay should be something only you could write”—it should be as specific as possible, avoid generalities, and be in your voice. It might be helpful to look at one of the many guides available regarding writing the successful college essay. Remember that college admissions officers have also read these guides. It goes without saying that **you should only submit original work!**

Work on your essays carefully. Allow yourself enough time to write the essay and to revise it.

**Never submit your first draft; put it aside and read it again on another day. Ask friends, parents, or a teacher to read what you’ve written.** On the other hand, don’t worry about “polishing” your essay too much—it may lose spontaneity and authenticity.

**Your essays should address the question(s) posed in each college application;** don’t attempt to write one or two extremely general essays and then use them for all of your college applications. Pay attention to the length of your essay; college admissions officers read hundreds, in some cases thousands, of essays and do not want to receive a five-page essay if a one-page essay is requested.

**Recommendations**

Most colleges require two teacher recommendations. Other significant adults who have supervised you in activities such as research, community service, employment, the arts, athletics, etc. may also write letters in support of your application. These supplementary letters of recommendation should specifically address your exceptional achievements in that specific field.

**Senior Grades
Your senior year grades are looked at very closely by the colleges, as is your senior year academic program!** A challenging program (including A. P. courses) is necessary for the most selective colleges. If you are an ED/EA applicant, the college(s) you apply to may request your 1st and/or 2nd marking period grades in their evaluation of your candidacy. If you are a Regular Decision applicant, colleges may request your second term senior year 1st and/or 2nd marking period grades to aid in their evaluation of your candidacy. In addition, colleges often review the courses you are taking 2nd term senior year to make sure that you are continuing to meet their standards of academic rigor. **\*\*\*Please Know: Colleges have withdrawn acceptances after receiving senior year grades.\*\*\***

**Shown Interest**

Generally speaking, colleges want to see that students have shown an interest in them, particularly small to medium sized colleges. The more interest a student shows in a specific college(s) could help a student’s chances for admission. On the other hand, very large colleges tend to be interested mostly in data such as grades and test scores when reviewing candidates for admission.

**Points to Remember:**

1. The appearance of your college application is important! The application is often a school’s only opportunity to find out about you.
2. Make photocopies of any materials that you mail to the colleges; documents can be misplaced.
3. **Most colleges are now requiring students to apply online. Many use the Common Application (commonapp.org). Make sure your online application is thorough and detailed.**
4. **Only click submit when you are absolutely certain that the information on your application is accurate, complete and you are comfortable with an admission officer reading it. Once you click SUBMIT it will be submitted....**

**The Application**

The application requests personal background information. Most colleges also require a personal essay which is used in making admissions decisions. **It is imperative that your material reach the college by the due date.** Some colleges will require an application fee before making the remaining parts of the application available to the student.

Visit the Admissions websites of the colleges to which you are applying to determine exactly what each college requires of its applicants. Read this information meticulously. It is crucial to follow all of the various colleges’ application instructions.

**Transcript**

Each college will carefully review your high school transcript. Colleges consistently report that a student’s grades and the degree to which he or she has challenged himself or herself academically by taking accelerated and AP courses are the two most important factors in evaluating applicants.

**The Secondary School Report (SSR)**

The SSR Guidance Counselor Letter of Recommendation is written on your behalf and sent to all colleges to which you apply. In this letter, your Guidance Counselor communicates to the colleges your personal attributes (as assessed by teachers, coaches, mentors, etc.) as well as your academic and extracurricular interests and accomplishments.

**Teacher Recommendations**

Most colleges request that 2 teacher recommendations be sent directly to them by your subject area teachers (most often, teachers of English, social studies, math, science, and foreign language). These recommendations are **in addition** to the Secondary School Report Guidance Counselor letter of recommendation. It is **your responsibility** to ask 2 teachers if they would be willing to write college letters of recommendation in support of your college applications. Inform your teachers of your various college application deadlines well before the actual deadline dates. Approach teachers with this request by late May/early June of your junior year. Some colleges will request that you submit one recommendation from a “humanities” teacher and one from a math/science teacher. Even if a college does not specify which teachers are to write your letters of recommendation, it is advisable to seek out recommendations from teachers in 2 different subject areas (not 2 math recs. or 2 social studies recs.).

Your teachers will be flooded with requests for letters of recommendation. A single teacher cannot write an unlimited number of recommendations and may have to decline your request. Please approach another teacher(s) if this is the case. Make sure your teachers know the deadlines for the recommendations.

**Remember, your teachers give a great deal of their own time to these letters. Please write brief Thank You notes to the teachers who have written letters of recommendation on your behalf. During May of your senior year, once you have made a final decision regarding which college you will be attending, remember the people who have written on your behalf and let them know what college you will be attending.**

**Recommendations from a Person Other Than a Teacher**

Colleges will often accept a supplementary recommendation from a mentor, a person for whom you have done volunteer work, a community organization that you have worked with, a professor with whom you have done research, or other such individuals. These may be submitted in addition to teacher recommendations. If you choose to submit a supplementary letter of recommendation, provide your recommender with a stamped, addressed envelope for every college to which the recommendation is being sent.

**Mid-Year Report**

All colleges require a report of your 1st term senior year grades, even if they have already offered you admission through Early Action or Early Decision.

**\*Remember,** when filling out any application, be sure to read and follow directions extremely carefully. To avoid making errors on your college applications, if possible print out a copy of the actual application and do all of your initial work on the practice copy. Make sure to double check spelling and grammar. **Submit your application once you are sure that you have carefully proofread for errors.**

**\*Deadlines are critical!** Each college will inform you of its application deadline in its application instructions and/or on the “Admissions” section of the college’s website. Be sure to adhere to the deadlines set by Tech’s College Office as well as the deadlines established by the colleges to which you are applying. **Again, the College Office deadlines are several weeks before the colleges’ deadlines to ensure that your Transcript, SSR Guidance Counselor Recommendation, and your 1st term senior year schedule reach the colleges on time.**

**EXAMPLE OF A SAMPLE COLLEGE INTERVIEW “THANK YOU” LETTER OR EMAIL**

Dear (Name of person who interviewed you):

I am very appreciative of the opportunity I had to be interviewed by you on (date of interview). I found our visit worthwhile in many ways. (Cite some specific examples.)

I found our discussion about (mention a specific point discussed during the interview which will exhibit to the interviewer that you were engaged and attentive during the interview) and the advice you gave me (be specific here too, if possible) very valuable.

Thank you for your time spent on my behalf.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE (Your name typed)

**Some additional points to consider:**

* Do not be afraid to mention in your thank you note something you forgot to mention during the interview.
* The thank-you note should be brief. Remember that you will have an opportunity to write about yourself and your reasons for considering the college on the application.
* Send the thank you note shortly following the interview (within a few days).

**FINANCIAL AID**

**SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID Grants and Scholarships: Money that you do not repay.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SOURCE OF AID**  | **MONETARY VALUE**  | **HOW TO APPLY**  |
| 1. College scholarships  | Varies, based on financial need. Some awards are based on academic merit.  | Complete the FAFSA and, in some cases, the CSS Profile and/or the college’s own financial aid application.  |
| 2. Federal Pell Grant  | Amount varies, based on financial need.  | Complete the FAFSA.  |
| 3. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)  | Amount varies, based on financial need.  | Complete the FAFSA  |
| 4. Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)  | Amount varies, based on financial need. NOTE: The TAP award can only be used at colleges in NY State.  | Complete the FAFSA and TAP application. Visit ***www.tapweb.org*** for more information.  |
| 5. National Merit & National Achievement Scholarships  | Amount varies.  | Take the PSAT exam. Please visit ***www.nationalmerit.org*** for more information.  |
| 6. Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP)  | The amount varies and is based on academic as well as economic criteria.  | The HEOP program is available only at private colleges in New York State. Please check with individual colleges to determine if you qualify for HEOP.  |
| 7. Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)  | The amount varies and is based on academic as well as economic criteria.  | This scholarship is available only to students attending a SUNY college.  |
| 8. ROTC Scholarships (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps)  | Pays for tuition, books, fees, and other expenses.  | Please visit ***www.rotc.com***  |
| 9. Various private scholarships (e.g., Posse, New York Times). Colleges may deduct all or part of these from item 1 above.  | The amount varies and may be based on various different factors.  | Apply directly to community agencies, corporations, unions, foundations, religious organizations, clubs, civic, and cultural groups. Check the College Office’s online Bulletin frequently. See websites at end of handbook  |

**Loans: Money that you must repay**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **KIND OF LOAN**  | **DESCRIPTION**  | **HOW TO APPLY**  |
| 1. Federal Perkins Loan (for students)  | Students borrow money to help pay for college. Please visit studentaid.ed.gov for more information. Click on the link “Federal Student Aid Programs”.  | Complete the FAFSA. Your college’s Financial Aid Office can help you through the Perkins Loan application process.  |
| 2. Federal Stafford Loan (for students)  | Students borrow money to help pay for college. Please visit studentaid.ed.gov for more information. Click on the link “Federal Student Aid Programs”.  | Complete the FAFSA. Your college’s Financial Aid Office can help you through the Stafford Loan application process.  |
| 3. Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)  | Parents borrow money to help pay for college. Please visit studentaid.ed.gov for more information. Click on the link “Federal Student Aid Programs”.  | Complete the FAFSA. Your college’s Financial Aid Office can help you through the PLUS Loan application process.  |
| 4. Private Student Loans, sometimes called Supplemental Loans or Alternative Loans.  | With the soaring costs of a four year college education, some students might choose to seek loans in addition to the loans discussed above.  | Be a smart consumer; look for loans with the lowest interest rates and best repayment options! Seek out help from your college’s Financial Aid Office but also from experienced, trusted financial advisors known to you and/or your family.  |

**What documents do I need to fill out the FAFSA?**

You will need records of income earned in the year prior to when you will start school. **You may also need records of your parents' income information if you are a dependent student**.

For the 2012-2013 school year you will need financial information from 2011. You may need to refer to:

* Your Social Security card. It is important that you enter your Social Security Number correctly!
* Your driver's license (if any)
* Your 2011 W-2 forms and other records of money earned
* Your (and if married, your spouse's) 2011 Federal Income Tax Return.
	+ IRS 1040, 1040A, 1040 EZ
	+ Foreign Tax Return, or
	+ Tax Return for Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federal States of Micronesia, or Palau
* Your Parents' 2011 Federal Income Tax Return (if you are a dependent student)
* Your 2011 untaxed income records
* Your current bank statements
* Your current business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond and other investment records
* Your alien registration or permanent resident card (if you are not a U.S. citizen)

To organize your information, you can print and complete a *FAFSA on the Web* Worksheet before you begin entering your information online. However, you are not required to do so. *FAFSA on the Web* will guide you through the questions that you must answer, and you can save your application and return to it later if you don't have the information you need to answer any of the questions.

**Keep these records! You may need them again. Do not mail your records to Federal Student Aid.**

**Almost there…**

|  |
| --- |
| **THINGS TO DO AFTER RECEIVING ACCEPTANCES AND DECIDING WHICH COLLEGE TO ATTEND**  |
|  | **YES**  | **NOT YET**  |
| **1.** My acceptance deposit has been sent to the college I will be attending.  |  |  |
| **2.** I have withdrawn from colleges that have accepted me but that I am not going to attend.  |  |  |
| **3.** I have completed my housing request form.  |  |  |
| **4.** I have found off-campus housing (if necessary).  |  |  |
| **5.** I have completed any requested pre-registration materials.  |  |  |
| **6.** I have received my TAP award. (Colleges **in New York State only.)**  |  |  |
| **7.** I have received my college bill.  |  |  |
| **8.** Date payment was mailed.  |  |  |

**Those Nagging Questions...**

There are a lot of questions that you’ll have along the college process, but there are plenty of great resources out there on the web to answer them.

**General advice is available at:**

The College Board Online at ***www.collegeboard.com***The Princeton Review at ***www.princetonreview.com*Great scholarship search services are also located on the web. A few to start with are:**The Financial Aid Page at ***www.finaid.org***Fast Web (www.fastweb.com) will e-mail you when there’s a scholarship that might interest you.
In addition, ***www.studentaid.ed.gov*** is an excellent resource.

**MORE RESOURCES: HELPFUL WEBSITES**

College Information, Financial Aid Information, and Scholarship Search Tools

* Federal Aid - ***www.fafsa.ed.gov***
* New York State Aid – ***www.hesc.com***
* Scholarship search service – ***www.fastweb.com***
* Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Calculator/Estimator -

***http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/***

* EFC Calculator (estimator) for CSS Profile (when prompted to “Pick a Formula”, choose “Institutional Methodology”) - ***http://apps.collegeboard.com/fincalc/efc\_welcome.jsp***
* ***www.studentaid.ed.gov***
* ***www.finaid.org***
* ***www.scholarships.com***
* The College Board – ***www.collegeboard.com***
* Common Application - ***www.commonapp.org***
* ***www.princetonreview.com***
* US News and World Report College database - ***www.usnews.com/usnews/home.htm***
* ***www.nacacnet.org***
* Search Engine – ***www.collegeview.com***
* ***www.collegeanswer.com***
* ***www.collegedata.com***
* ***www.ecampustours.com***
* Paying for College: A Guide to Financial Aid:

***http://www.usbank.com/studentloans/pdf/information/PAYFC1205.pdf***

* ***Unigo.com***
* ***UCAN-network.org***