

The Lowell School's College Planning Guide



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Lowell School is to create an environment in which students with learning differences can achieve success and reach their potential. Students are challenged to grow intellectually, emotionally and socially in an environment that supports and enriches each student. The goal for our students is to develop a love for learning, to build self-confidence and to be able to effectively advocate for themselves. The Lowell School utilizes an interdisciplinary team approach designed to provide all students with the programming and services that address their specific learning styles.

We accomplish this by:

- Small class size
- Individual and group instruction
- Multi-sensory approach to learning
- Enriched state approved curriculum
- Maximizing students' strengths while remediating weaknesses
- Providing experiences and opportunities to facilitate the development of effective learning strategies and personal growth.

The primary goal of the College Department at The Lowell School is to help students design and plan their postsecondary dream. Whether the student wants to go to a two or four year college or university, or/attend culinary, film, or design schools, start a business, or go to work in a trade of his or her choice, The Lowell School's College Advisor will help each student develop the appropriate post secondary transition plan. Throughout the student's time at The Lowell School, teachers and related service providers encourage all students to be proactive about their education and future plans.

Table of Contents:

- College Readiness By Year
- College Terminology
- The Differences in Disability Rights between High School and Post Secondary Education
- College Admissions Overview
- Types of Support Programs Available
- Assessing your College Preferences Worksheet
- College Search Form
- Campus Visit Checklist
- College Application Checklist
- NYC SAT Prep Services
- CUNY START Overview
- CUNY Certificate Programs
- How to Apply for Financial Aid
- Financial Aid Frequently Asked Questions
- CUNY Financial Aid Offices
- Scholarship Information
- Online Resources

Readiness Activities by Year

Building a Strong Foundation

Plan for your transition to the "real world" all four years of your high school education. Focus on the steps in your planning and you will successfully reach your goals. Finding the right educational 'fit' involves more than meeting entrance requirements. The school environment should be a place where you can be successful academically, emotionally, and socially. Your participation starts freshman year and continues throughout your time at Lowell. As you go through your high school career, talk with your family and counselor about the following:

- High school course work and grades (GPA)
- Standardized test scores
- Co-Curricular involvement
- Community service activities
- Work experience
- Self-Advocate/Self-Awareness skills

What are some of your options for Life After Lowell?

- College or University
- Vocational/Technical Schools
- Art and Design Schools
- Gap Year Experience
- Military Career
- Full-Time Employment
- Bridge/Life-Skills Program

Getting Started!

- Research your goals.
- Learn the requirements for achieving your post high school goals.
- Are your goals achievable?
- Discuss with your parents and counselor your post high school transition goals.

Freshman Year

- Practice necessary organizational skills. (Morning routine, be on time to class, organize class materials, schedule after school study time, etc.)
- Advocate by using the academic supports available at Lowell.
- Use a planner to assist with organization and time management.
- Join a club, team, or volunteer in the community. Keep track of volunteer hours.

Sophomore Year

- Work on building your life skills:
 - Wake up on your own using an alarm.
 - Use public transportation independently.
 - Create a budget for yourself.
 - Apply for a New York State Non-Driver's ID or a Learner's Permit.
- Think about getting a summer job or applying for Summer Youth Employment.
- Speak with college representatives at The Lowell School's College and Career Fair.

Junior Year

Everyone should have high expectations and great dreams for success in life. What you may have to do, however, is adjust your thinking about the manner in which you will achieve your dreams. Keep your expectations high but adjust your post high school plans to fit your individual needs. Know the specific nature of your disability, how it affects you in the classroom and community, and how to share the information with others.

- Consider services and supports that you will need in post secondary life.
- Explore your career options by volunteering, completing a job shadow experience, or a career internship.
- Obtain an official State Photo ID.
- If you're considering college, take the PSAT in the fall and SAT in the spring.
- Speak with college and trade school representatives at The Lowell School's College and Career Fair in March.
- Visit campuses and disability service providers to verify the available services and how to access them.
- Create a personal education file at home and include your latest IEP, SAT score report, report cards, and re-evaluation reports.
- If you would like to play a Division I or Division II sport, **you must register** with the NCAA Eligibility Center at NCAA.org.

PSAT and SAT Information

The PSAT and SAT are administered through The College Board. To see test dates and to register, go on The College Board website, www.collegeboard.org. It is your responsibility to research schools you would like to apply to and determine if the SAT is an admissions requirement. Most two year CUNY and SUNY colleges **do not require** the SAT. We encourage students who are taking the SAT to study independently or enroll in a private prep class. Most local community colleges offer preparation classes through their continuing education office or adult education programs. Please contact those schools directly for a schedule and pricing.

Students who want to receive testing accommodations for the PSAT/SAT, must have a completed Psycho-Educational Evaluation. The College Advisor will start the application process for testing accommodations in your sophomore year. It is important, to note, that The Lowell School **does not** administer Psychological/Academic testing.

- The PSAT is offered once a year in the fall to all juniors.
- The **SAT is administered** twice a year at The Lowell School (fall and spring). Only **students who have approved accommodations through The College Board can take the SAT at The Lowell School**. Students that **do not** have approved accommodations through The College Board must take the SAT at a National Testing Center. Information on testing centers can be found at www.collegeboard.org.

The Lowell School does not administer the ACT. Use the following link, www.actstudent.org, to find which schools offer it.

Senior Year

- Know your academic strengths and challenges, and how they affect you in the classroom and community.
- Continue to actively participate and discuss your transition plan with your School Counselor and the College Advisor.
- Consider supports and services that you will need in post secondary life.
- Volunteer or work at a location that will provide you exposure and involvement with potential career interests.
- If you are planning to retake the SAT, register on-line and speak to the College Advisor about requesting accommodations as soon as possible.

September:

- Create a professional email address and an organization system to keep track of information.
- Attend College Fairs, visit colleges, and register in the admissions office for a tour. (Colleges keep a record of all visits and use these visits to document interest.)
- Review college websites to obtain information about applications, cost, financial aid, and support programs. Check that you meet the admissions requirements.
- Meet with the College Advisor.
- Memorize your social security number and mailing address. You will need them for college/program applications.

October:

- Compile a list of the colleges/programs you would like to apply to and take note of the following:
 - Is a letter of recommendation needed and from whom?
 - What is the application deadline? **If you are applying to a school using the Early Admission or Early Decision option, please let the College Advisor know as soon as possible.**
 - Create a document that tracks your user name and password for each application and for the FAFSA.
 - Note application fees.
- Review the list and costs with your family and the College Advisor.
- Register for the SAT if the college you are applying to requires it for admission.
- File FAFSA, TAP, and financial aid forms required by each school.
- Research scholarships and start the application process, as necessary.

November:

- Give your final list of colleges to the College Advisor.
- Compile information needed for applications and start applying. (Keep this information in a folder.)
 - Application
 - Resume
 - Essay
 - Letters of recommendation
 - Please note: **application fee must be paid for at the time you submit your application or it will not be processed.**
- Take note of your application number or student ID number that is assigned to you.
- Print a copy of your completed application.
- Have the Psycho-Educational Evaluation completed if you want to apply for accommodations in college.

December:

- Transcript Request Forms are due to College Advisor.
- SAT scores will be posted to your College Board account. **You are responsible for sending your scores *electronically* through your College Board account to each college to which you applied.**

January and beyond:

- Continue to research and apply for scholarships. (Check out local opportunities in your community, i.e. religious and civil organizations.)
- **Check your email regularly.** (Most schools will inform you via email if you have been accepted or rejected.)
- Compare any acceptances you receive, including the financial aid and scholarship opportunities, and share this information with the College Advisor.

- **Notify the college that you would like to attend by their deadline.**
 - If required, also include a deposit and immunization records.
- Contact the Admissions Office of the school you will be attending to find out if you are required to take a Placement Test. **If you need accommodations for the Placement Test, you must contact the Disability Office before you register for the test.**
- Enroll at the Disabilities Office and ensure their office has the documentation needed for you to receive accommodations.

College Terminology

Academic Advisor/Counselor - This person will help you select the correct courses, review the course requirements in the field you have selected to pursue and help you with any academic problems you may encounter. At some institutions, academic advisement is conducted by faculty as part of their job duties. Other institutions may designate specific staff as academic counselors.

Academic Probation - All colleges require students to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) to remain in school. Any student not maintaining satisfactory progress toward his/her educational objectives will be placed on probation for a semester.

Alumni - people who have graduated from the institution.

ACT and SAT - These letters are acronyms for the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Both tests are designed to measure a student's level of knowledge in basic areas such as math, science, English and social studies. Colleges may require the results of either the ACT or SAT before granting admission.

Application/Acceptance/Admission - Application is the process by which a prospective student submits the required forms and credentials to his/her chosen institution. Application criteria may include one or more of the following: previous academic records, test scores, interviews, recommendations, and other information provided by the applicant. Depending on the application requirements of a particular school, the student can gain Acceptance to the institution if the decision to accept the application is positive. Admission is the status granted to an applicant who meets the prescribed entrance requirements of the institution. It must be noted that there is a wide variation nationwide in the Application/Acceptance/Admission policies of higher education institutions. Check the college catalog for specific requirements of the schools you are considering.

Associate's Degree - The Associate Degree is granted upon completion of a program of at least two, but less than four years of college work. Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees are conferred upon students who successfully complete programs designed for transfer to a senior college. The Associate Degree requires completion of a minimum of 60 credit hours, exclusive of physical education activity courses or military science courses, with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (a "C" average).

Audit - A student who does not want to receive credit in a course may, with approval of the instructor, audit the course as a "visitor." A student who audits a course usually cannot ask or petition the institution at a later date to obtain college credit for the audited course.

Bachelor's Degree - This is the undergraduate degree offered by four-year colleges and universities. The Bachelor of Arts degree requires that a significant portion of the student's studies be dedicated to the arts - literature, language, music, etc. The Bachelor of Science degree requires that a significant portion of the studies be in the sciences - chemistry, biology, math, etc. So if you are looking to go to medical school, for example, getting a Bachelor of Science in Nursing is one path that you may want to take. The minimum credit hour requirement for a Bachelor's Degree is 120 hours.

Bursar's Office – This office is responsible for all financial transactions of the institution.

Catalog- College catalogs provide all types of information parents and students need to know about a school. It lists, for example: the institution's history and philosophy, policies and procedures, its accreditation status, courses of study, degrees and certificates offered, physical facilities, admission and enrollment procedures, financial aid, student life activities, etc.

CLEP - The College Level Examination Program can be administered to students who desire to obtain college credit by taking proficiency tests in selected courses. If the student scores high enough on the test, college credit can be awarded. There is a charge for each test taken. Information concerning an individual institution's policies toward CLEP Tests can be found in the institution's catalog.

Commuter - A commuter is a student who lives off-campus and drives to class, or commutes.

Course Numbers - All courses are identified by numbers usually containing 3 or 4 digits, for example Freshman English might be 1113. The first digit indicates the class year in which the subject is usually taken, the middle 1 or 2 digits identify the course within the subject field (nobody I've ever met knows what they mean), and the last digit indicates the number of credit hours the course carries. A course number beginning with a "0" indicates that it does not carry credit hours applicable to a degree.

Credit Hours - Courses taken in college are measured in terms of credit hours. To earn one credit hour, a student must attend a class for one classroom hour (usually 50 minutes) per week for the whole semester (usually 16 weeks). Classes are offered in 1 - 5 credit hour increments, and sometimes larger amounts.

Curriculum - A curriculum is composed of those classes prescribed or outlined by an institution for completion of a program of study leading to a degree or certificate.

Degree Requirements - Those requirements prescribed by other institutions for completion of a program of study are generally termed degree requirements. Requirements may include a minimum number of hours, required GPA, prerequisite and

elective courses within the specified major, and/or minor areas of study.

Degrees - Degrees are rewards for the successful completion of a prescribed program of study. There are three basic types of degrees: Associate - obtainable at a two-year community or junior college, Baccalaureate or Bachelor's - offered by four-year colleges and universities, and Graduate - Obtained after the bachelor's degree, i.e., Masters or Doctorate.

Department - A department is the basic organizational unit in a higher education institution, and is responsible for the academic functions in a field of study. It may also be used in the broader sense to indicate an administrative or service unit of an institution.

Drop and Add - Students are generally permitted to drop courses from their class schedules and/or add other courses. Colleges allow varying lengths of time for students to add and drop classes. The college catalog or class schedule should note the correct procedures. Students usually need written approval from designated college officials to initiate dropping or adding a class. A small fee is often required.

Enrollment - This is the procedure by which students choose classes each semester. It also includes the assessment and collection of fees. Pre-enrollment is the method by which students select courses well in advance of the official enrollment date of the next term.

Extra-Curricular Activities - These are non-classroom activities that can contribute to a well-rounded education. They can include such activities as athletics, clubs, student government, recreational and social organizations and events.

FAFSA -Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The almost universal application for financial aid, including loans, grants, college work-study and other federal and state programs. It is often required before a student can be considered for scholarships also.

Fees - Fees are additional charges not included in the tuition. Fees may be charged to cover the cost of materials and equipment needed in certain courses, and they may be assessed for student events, programs, and publications.

Financial Aid - Aid is made available from grants, scholarships, loans, and part-time employment from federal, state, institutional, and private sources. Awards from these programs may be combined in an "award package" to meet the cost of education. The types and amounts of aid awarded are determined by financial need, available funds, student classification, academic performance, and sometimes the timeliness of application.

Fraternalities/Sororities (also called the Greek System) - Fraternalities (for men) and sororities (for women) are social organizations that are active in various activities. Through a process of mutual selection, called Rush (which takes place during a specified period of time), students may be offered the opportunity to "pledge" a certain fraternality or sorority. Not all colleges have these organizations.

Full-Time Enrollment/Part-Time Enrollment - A full-time student is enrolled in 12 or more credit hours in a semester (full-time status for a Summer term is usually 6 credit hours). A part-time student is enrolled in less than 12 credit hours in a semester (less than 6 in a Summer term).

Honor Roll - Students are placed on honor rolls for GPAs above certain specified levels. Criteria for President's, Dean's, or other honor rolls vary at different institutions. In most cases, students must be enrolled full-time to be eligible.

Humanities Courses - Humanities courses are classes covering subjects such as literature, philosophy, and the fine arts. Most undergraduate degrees require a certain number of humanities credit hours.

Junior/Community College - A Junior/Community College is a two-year institution of higher education. Course offerings generally include a transfer curriculum with credits transferable toward a bachelor's degree at a four-year college, and an occupational or technical curriculum with courses of study designed to prepare students for employment in two years.

Lecture/Laboratory/Discussion Classes - In lecture classes, students attend class on a regular basis and the instructor lectures on class material. Laboratory classes require students to perform certain functions in controlled situations that help them test and understand what is being taught in the lecture. Discussion classes offer students the opportunity to talk about material being taught, ask questions, and discuss material with their classmates. Discussion classes are often taught by Masters or Doctoral students, and are becoming more common on college campuses.

Letter Grades/Grade Point Averages (GPA) - Most colleges use both letter grades and GPAs in determining students' grades. Grades at most colleges are figured using the following method: As are worth 4 points Bs are worth 3 points Cs are worth 2 points Ds are worth 1 point Fs are worth 0 points To figure a GPA, simply multiply the number of hours a course is worth by the number of points for the letter grade, then add up the totals for each course and divide by the number of credit hours. The result is the grade point average.

Major/Minor - A major is a student's chosen field of study. It usually requires the successful completion of a specified number of credit hours. A minor is designated as a specific number of credit hours in a secondary field of study.

Mid-Term Exams (Midterms) - During the middle of each semester, instructors may give mid-term exams that test students on the material covered during the first half of the semester. Some classes have only two tests, a midterm and a final.

Non-Credit Courses - These are classes or courses that do not meet the requirements for a certificate of a degree at a given institution. Non-credit courses may serve one of several purposes: to explore new fields of study, increase proficiency in a particular profession, develop potential or enrich life experiences through cultural and/or recreational studies.

Pass/Fail Courses - Pass/fail courses do not earn letter grades or grade points for students. If a student passes a pass/fail course, he/she receives a "P" (pass) or "S" (satisfactory) on the transcript and the credit hours. If the student does not pass the course, they will receive an "F" (fail) or a "U" (unsatisfactory) on the transcript and no credit hours. The evaluation for the pass/fail course is not figured into the student's GPA.

Prerequisite Courses - A prerequisite course is a course taken in preparation for another course. For example, Accounting 1 is a prerequisite for Accounting 2.

Private/Public Institutions - Private and public institutions differ primarily in terms of their source of financial support. Public institutions receive funding from the state or other governmental entities and are administered by public boards. Private institutions rely on income from private donations, or from religious or other organizations and student tuition. Private institutions are governed by a board of trustees.

Registrar - The registrar of an institution is responsible for the maintenance of all academic records and may include such duties as: maintenance of class enrollments, providing statistical information on student enrollment, certification of athletic eligibility and student eligibility for honor rolls, certification of the eligibility of veterans, administering probation and retention policies and verification of the completion of degree requirements for graduation.

Schedule of Classes- Colleges publish and distribute a Class Schedule book for each semester, during the previous semester. With the help of academic advisors and/or faculty members, students make up their own individual class schedules for each semester they are enrolled. Courses are designated in the Class Schedule by course department, course number, time and days the course meets, the room number and building name, and the instructor's name. A class schedule is also simply a list of classes a student is taking, which includes course name and number, time and location of the class, and possibly the instructor.

Student Identification Card (I.D.) - A student ID is usually required in college. It is similar to a driver's license and generally includes a photograph of the student, a student number (ID number), the student's name, the name of the college and possibly the semester enrolled. The card is often required for admittance to functions sponsored by the college or for identification when cashing checks or for other purposes, and to receive student discounts.

Syllabus - An outline of the important information about a course. Written by the professor or instructor, it usually includes important dates, assignments, expectations and policies specific to that course. Some are quite lengthy.

Textbooks - Books required of students enrolled in college classes. Professors notify students which books they must purchase (and sometimes additional, optional textbooks) at the beginning of each semester/class. Students can purchase new or used textbooks, or rent textbooks.

Transcript - The transcript is a permanent academic record of a student at college. It may show courses taken, grades received, academic status and honors received. Transcripts are not released by the college if the student owes any money to the college.

Transfer of Credits - Some students attend more than one institution during their college career. When they move or transfer from one college to another, they also transfer accumulated credit hours from the former institution to the new one. The new institution determines which courses will apply toward graduation requirements.

Tuition - Tuition is the amount paid for each credit hour of enrollment. Tuition does not include the cost of books, fees, or room and board. Tuition charges vary from college to college and are dependent on such factors as resident or out-of-state status, level of classes enrolled in (lower, upper or graduate division), and whether the institution is publicly or privately financed.

Undergraduate - An undergraduate is a student who is pursuing either a one-, two-, or four-year degree.

University - A university is composed of undergraduate, graduate, and professional colleges and offers degrees in each.

Withdrawal - Students may withdraw from courses during a semester, but there are established procedures for doing so. The college catalog and/or Class Schedule generally specifies the procedures. Written approval from a university official must be secured, and some fees must be paid.

THE BIG DIFFERENCE

The Differences in Disability Rights and Responsibilities Between High School and College

One key step to a successful transition from high school to college is to anticipate and be prepared for the differences between the two settings. This is especially true for students with disabilities. In addition to dealing with the same transition issues that all students face, they also have the added challenge of changes in how support services are requested and arranged. In college, students must play a more active role and assume more responsibility. The chart below compares the legal rights and responsibilities in high school versus those in college.

The Differences Between Secondary & Postsecondary Disability Laws

Question	Secondary (High School)	Postsecondary (College)
What is the law?	IDEA and Section 504	ADA and Section 504 (Subpart E)
What is the intent of the law?	IDEA: To provide a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to students with disabilities. 504: To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability is denied access to, benefits of, or is subjected to discrimination in any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.	To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.
Who is covered under the law?	All infants, children and youth requiring special education services until age 21 or graduation from high school.	All qualified individuals with disabilities who meet the entry age level criteria or particular program entry criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by the ADA.
Who is responsible for identifying and documenting the need?	School districts are responsible for identifying, evaluating and planning educational services at no expense to the parent or individual.	Students are responsible for self-identification and for obtaining disability documentation from a professional who is qualified to assess their particular disability. The student, not the institution, assumes the cost of the evaluation.
Who is responsible for initiating service delivery?	School districts are responsible for identifying students with disabilities and providing special instruction, individualized education plans, and/or accommodations.	Students are responsible for notifying the Office of Disability Services staff of their disability and of their need for accommodations. Accommodations (not special education) are provided on a semester by semester basis in order for students with disabilities to have equal access to the institution's programs, services and activities.
Who is responsible for enforcing the law?	IDEA is basically a funding statute, enforced by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U.S. Department of Education. ADA/504 are civil rights statutes, enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).	Section 504 (Subpart E) is a civil rights statute enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education. The ADA is also a civil rights statute enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
What about self-advocacy?	The parent or guardian is the primary advocate. Students with disabilities should learn about their disability, the importance of self-advocacy, the accommodation(s) they need, and ways to become a self-advocate.	Students must be able to communicate what their disability is, their strengths, weaknesses, and how the disability impacts and functionally limits major life activities. They must be able to identify and justify any requested accommodations.

College Admissions Overview

What Are Colleges Looking for?

Colleges seek students who desire further education, have demonstrated a strong work ethic and solid achievement in high school, and have interests in extracurricular activities or community service. Colleges are seeking a student who will be a good match for their campus and will offer something unique to their environment.

While criteria for admission vary from college to college, most colleges are looking primarily at an applicant's course selection and grades. Other factors include ACT or SAT scores, extracurricular activities, the personal essay, and recommendations from teachers, advisor or counselor. The weight that each of these factors is given varies widely. Most admissions officers are willing to have frank discussions with students and guidance counselors about the relative importance of admission criteria at their colleges.

Where to Apply?

Applying to between five and eight schools is a reasonable rule of thumb. These should include schools from each of the categories described below: reach schools, match schools, and safety schools.

What are Reach Schools?

Reach schools are a student's top choices and the most competitive schools to which he or she is applying. Admission to this group of schools is considered possible but not likely.

What are Target Schools?

Target schools are those schools that provide a good fit for students in a variety of categories, including: necessary support services, the proper academic environment, the desired locale and campus character, and other considerations. Schools in this group should be schools to which admission is anticipated but not "guaranteed".

What are Safety Schools?

Safety schools are those schools that provide most or all of the characteristics important to a student and to which a student is very likely to be admitted.

College Tours

Despite all the work that you have done researching colleges, the best indicator of which college will be right for you will be your college visits. In addition to considering academic programming, the availability of support, and the other critical factors that we have outlined, it is important that you get a sense of the campus life at the schools on your list. Remember, this is the place where you plan to spend the next four years. We suggest that you begin planning college visits in the spring of your junior year and complete as many as feasible during the summer recess. It is also possible for you to plan visits during the fall of your senior year, but you will want to limit the number of visits during the fall to allow yourself plenty of time to complete applications and keep up with your senior coursework.

How do I make a College Tour appointment?

- Call the admission offices or look on their website for a list of open houses
- Plan weekday visits. While weekend visits are sometimes possible, they are typically much less comprehensive and informative.
- Schedule a meeting with support personnel in advance of the visit. It is crucial that you see the support facilities in person.
- Talk to students as well as admission office

Completing Your Applications

Students are required to seek out assistance in a timely manner from the College Advisor. This process will help the students utilize strategies and self-advocacy skills. While we are here for support, we want students to initiate this process as they will be required to do in college.

- Early in the year, ask your teachers/counselors for a letter of recommendation.
- Review your college essay requirements early and arrange to work with a teacher/counselor to complete the essays.
- Find out the application fees for the colleges to which you will apply. Check to see if the fee is waived if you submit it online or if there is financial need.
- Read and follow directions on your application carefully. Mistakes on your applications reflect badly on you as a candidate. Do not submit your application until a parent or counselor has reviewed it.
- Be sure that you have accurate information before completing applications. You will need to check with your parents about some information.
- Keep a calendar of your deadlines.
- misplace information as they process the thousands of applications they receive, you can easily supply a copy.
- Be sure that you have sent your official SAT scores from your College Board account.
- Be sure your email address is appropriate, and your Instagram/Facebook, and other social media accounts portray you in a positive light.

College Application Tips and Pertinent Information

- Use your legal name on all applications.
- Keep your user name and password in a safe place.
- Keep a copy of every application that you send.
- Answer all questions.
- Optional information is just that, but if you are going to fill in that section, make sure that you fill it in completely.
- If you are including your school counselor's name in the application, be sure his/her name is spelled correctly and you include their correct email address.
- The school address is: 142-45 58th Road, Flushing, NY 11355
- The school phone # is: 718-445-4222
- The school fax # is: 718-353-6942

- Fill out the family section completely and thoroughly — do not leave a space blank because you do not know the answer — go find the answer.
- List awards, activities or distinctions you have received since 9th grade, including honor roll, clubs and sports in school and outside of school

Letters of Recommendation

How Many?

- Most colleges require two or three letters of recommendation from people who can speak to your abilities within the classroom.

Whom Should I Ask?

- Your counselor may know you best. He/she should write the letter of recommendation from your "counselor".
- Some colleges will request letters from teachers of specific subjects. Check your applications early. If a specific subject area is not designated, choose a teacher who knows you quite well.
- If you can select a teacher who also knows you from experience outside the classroom, that will be helpful.

When Should I Ask?

- As early as possible. The more time you give a faculty member, the more time and thought can be put into the letter.
- As soon as your college list is complete, your requests should be made (if not sooner).
- Asking in the spring of your junior year is a good option, especially if your senior year teachers may not know you well by the time you submit your applications.
- Inform letter writers of your earliest deadline.

How Do I Get The Best Letters?

- Work hard and ask questions in class. People love to write about motivated students.
- Talk with the letter writer and tell them important things about yourself including extracurricular activities, your resume and goals. Ask them if they can write you a favorable letter.

Tips

- On the application form, waive your right to view recommendation letters as this will add credibility to them.
- After you are accepted to college, write a thank you letter to the people who wrote letters and tell them where you are attending.

College Application Process - Advice from College Admissions Counselors

The following tips come from college admissions counselors and are based on examples of the negative experiences they have had with students in the application process.

Email, Etiquette, Social Networking and Other Electronics

- Use an appropriate email address.
- Use full words and sentences, not text message abbreviations.
- Have an appropriate message on cell phone and voice mails.
- Double check any social media accounts for appropriateness.

College Visits/Interviews

- Turn off your cell phone.
- Wear clothing appropriate for a college visit that you will be potentially judged. Do not wear clothing representing another college, especially a competitor.
- Solid and accurate reasoning for choosing a college should be stated to this standard question.
- Be attentive — don't tap, yawn, look out the window. Nervousness is expected, and mentioning this feeling can put both the interviewer and interviewee at ease.
- Don't chew gum.

Applications

- Make sure that the major or college division you enter on the application actually exists at the college to which you are applying.
- Do not send information for College B to College A.
- **Proofread, Proofread, Proofread.** Ask teachers and advisors to look everything over again.
- Select colleges based on your research, not exclusively on your friends' opinions or who attended in previous years.
- Be honest.
- Hanging out with friends or going to the mall is not an extracurricular activity to list.
- Read the instructions, including word count.

Parents

- Students going to college are expected to be independent and should take the initiative in the process, contacting the schools, writing the essay, etc. Help can certainly be given, but all contacts should be made by the student.
- Parents should attend the interview, if/when invited by the admissions counselor.

Types of Support Programs Available

Schools offer different types of support programs for students with disabilities. Most schools will offer at least basic services while others will offer a comprehensive model to accommodate students needing a range of support.

Colleges' self-reported programming for students with disabilities should be carefully evaluated by talking directly with the faculty of each support center. Please see the "College Support Availability" form to assist you in evaluating their services.

Below is an explanation of the different types of support programs available. Some schools have unique aspects to their programs, but most fit into one of the following three groups.

Basic Services

- Schools offer the accommodations required by the Americans with Disabilities Act in order to receive federal funding.
- Schools create their own parameters on what they determine to be "reasonable accommodations" and require documentation for a student to receive them.
- Students need to be strong advocates to obtain the services they deserve.
- At times, a school with a small enrollment can offer the personal attention that students need without having a comprehensive program.
- These programs will have a limited staff; oftentimes there is only a single staff member who has little specific LD expertise as they serve all students with disabilities.
- There is no admissions application process for these services, but documentation must be presented and approved to receive accommodations. This should be done after enrolling at the school but before classes begin.
- Students requiring modest accommodations but who feel more comfortable knowing that greater support is available will do better with either coordinated services or comprehensive services.
- Typical accommodations include:
 - taped texts readers note takers
 - extended time books on tape separate testing area
- Typically a writing lab and possibly a math lab are available and open to every student. These programs are typically staffed by undergraduates.
- There is no additional cost for these services.

For a student to consider a college with basic services, he/she should be able to explain his/her strengths and weaknesses, recognize the helpful learning strategies necessary for success, and advocate for accommodations/support/help. As there is not much assistance with organization, he/she should also be able to plan his/her time accordingly, be able to take effective notes from lecture, and be able to study independently for approximately 20 hours per week.

Colleges for Students with Learning Differences

There are two colleges in the United States that are solely dedicated to students who learn differently. Their admission requirements are different from a typical college as well as their academic approach. They are:

- Beacon College (FL)
- Landmark College (VT)

Colleges with comprehensive academic support programs for students with learning differences have programs that are designed to help students with diagnosed learning disabilities succeed at the college level. Typically, students must apply to these support programs directly, which requires the student to complete a supplemental support program application in addition to the general college admissions application. There is often an **additional fee** for these programs to cover the services offered. Services provided vary by school but often include testing accommodations, regular tutoring provided by a learning specialist, and access to technology designed to assist students with learning disabilities.

- Adelphi University (NY) - Learning Disabilities Program
- American International College (MA) - Supportive Learning Services (SLA)
- American University (DC) - Learning Services Program
- Augsburg College (MN) - Center for Learning and Adaptive Student Services (CLASS)
- Barry University (FL) - Center for Advanced Learning (CAL)
- Beacon College (FL)
- Centenary College (NJ) - Academic Bridges to Learning Effectiveness
- College of Mount St. Joseph (OH) - Project EXCEL
- Concordia College (NY) - Concordia Connection
- Curry College (MA) - Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL)
- Dean College (MA) - Arch Learning Community
- DePaul University (IL) - Productive Learning Strategies (PLuS)
- Dowling College (NY) - Program for College Students with Learning Disabilities
- East Carolina University (NC) - Supporting Transition & Education Through Planning & Partnerships (Project STEPP)
- Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ) - Regional Center for Students with LDs
- High Point University (NC) - Learning Excellence Program
- Hofstra University (NY) - Program for Academic Learning Skills (PALS)
- Iona College (NY) - College Assistance Program (CAP)
- Landmark College (VT)
- Limestone College (SC) - Program for Alternative Learning Styles (PALS)
- Long Island University, Post (NY) - Academic Resource Program (ARP)
- Lynn University (FL) - Institute for Achievement and Learning
- Manhattanville College (NY) - Higher Education Learning Program (HELP)
- Marist College (NY) - Learning Disabilities Support Program

- Marymount Manhattan College (NY) - Access Program
- McDaniel College (MD) - Academic Skills Program
- Mercyhurst College (PA) - Learning Differences Program
- Mitchell College (CT) - Bentsen Learning Center
- Molloy College (NY) - Success Through Expanded Education Program (STEEP)
- Mount Ida College (MA) - Learning Opportunities Program (LOP)
- Muskingum University (OH) - PLUS Program
- Northeastern University (MA) - Learning Disabilities Program
- St. Thomas Aquinas College (NY) - Pathways Program
- University of Arizona - SALT Center
- University of Connecticut - Building Opportunities for Students with Learning Disabilities
- University of Denver (CO) - Learning Effectiveness Program (LEP)
- University of the Ozarks (AR) - The Jones Learning Center
- University of Southern Illinois, Carbondale - The Achieve Program

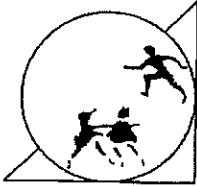
Colleges with Asperger's or High-Functioning Autism Support Programs

- Adelphi University (NY) - Bridges to Adelphi Project
- Fairleigh Dickinson University (NJ) - Compass: College-based Support for Students with Asperger's
- Marshall University (WV) - The College Program for Students with Asperger's Syndrome
- Pace University (NY, downtown campus) - OASIS: Ongoing Academic & Social Instructional Support (formerly the BOSS Program)
- University of Connecticut - SEAD: Strategic Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Assessing Your College Preferences

Ask yourself the following questions to get a better sense of what you should look for in college.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In what type of environment do I learn best?• Do I function best in small classes with more personal attention?• Can I be successful in a large lecture class with 100 or more students?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should I consider a two-year or four-year degree program?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I want to stay at home and commute to college or live on campus?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How far away am I willing to go from NYC?• Do I feel most comfortable in a rural, urban, or suburban area?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I need any special health services?• Do I have any disabilities that require support or accommodations?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What academic support services do I need?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What majors interest me?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What activities, clubs, or sports interest me?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do I have family responsibilities that affect my college choices?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can I afford?	



The Lowell School

College Search Form

Name of School: _____ Location: _____

Size: _____ Cost: _____

Majors I'm interested in: _____

What type of application is accepted (paper, online, Common Application)? _____

When is the application due? _____

Admission requirements (check all that are required):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SAT or ACT scores | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application fee (if so how much?)
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental application |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter of recommendation | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transcript | <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio of work |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Resume |

LD SUPPORT

Have you had updated testing and is it on file at Lowell? Yes/No

What type of support for LD is offered? _____

Is there a separate LD application?	Yes/ No
Separate office to be sent to?	Yes /No
Separate essay?	Yes /No

Deadline for supporting materials?

Campus Visit Checklist

Visiting a college campus helps you get a sense of what a college — and life at that college — is like. This can help you decide whether the college is right for you.

GATHER INFORMATION

Find out what you need to do to apply, and see if the college's class and major offerings are what you want:

- Take part in a group information session at the admission office.
- Interview with an admission officer.
- Pick up financial aid forms.
- Sit in on a class that interests you. If classes aren't in session, just see what the classrooms are like.
- Meet a professor who teaches a subject that interests you.
- Talk to students about what they think of their classes and professors.
- Get the names and business cards of the people you meet so you can contact them later if you have questions.

EXPLORE THE CAMPUS

Get a feel for student life, and see if this college is a place where you will do well:

- Take a campus tour.
- Talk to current students about the college and life on campus.
- Check out the freshman dorms, and stay overnight with a student, if possible.
- Visit the dining hall, fitness center, library, career center, bookstore, and other campus facilities.
- Talk to the coaches of sports that you may want to play.
- Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus.

CHECK OUT CAMPUS MEDIA

Tune in to learn what's happening on campus and what's on students' minds:

- Listen to the college radio station.
- Read the student newspaper.
- Scan bulletin boards to see what daily student life is like.
- Go to the career center and learn what services it offers.
- Browse the school's website and any campus blogs.
- Read other student publications, such as department newsletters, alternative newspapers, and literary reviews.

GET THE MOST OUT OF A CAMPUS VISIT IN 6 STEPS

1 DECIDE WHERE AND HOW

See if your school arranges group trips to colleges or if you could get a group of friends together and visit the campus. A family trip is another option and allows you to involve your family in the process.

2 PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Before you set out, get a map of the college campus and pick out places of interest. Call the college's admission office to schedule a guided tour of the campus.

3 TAKE YOUR OWN TOUR

Just wandering around the campus on your own or with friends can be the best way to get a feel for what a college is like.

4 EXPLORE THE FACILITIES

Find the spots on campus where students gather or ask a student where the best place to eat is to get a feel for the character of the college. Visit the library and check out the gym or theater. Ask an admission officer if you can tour a dorm and a classroom.

5 MAKE CONNECTIONS

Talk to current students. Ask the students at the next table or sitting nearby what they like best about the college.

6 TAKE NOTES

During your visit, write down some notes about your experience. What did you see that excited you? Are there aspects of the college that you don't like? If so, what are they?

Questions to Ask During Your Visit:

ASK TOUR GUIDES/STUDENTS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- What does the college do to promote student involvement in campus groups, extracurricular activities, or volunteerism?

ASK PROFESSORS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- Can a student be mentored by professors, graduate students, or upperclassmen?
- How are professors rated by the college? Does the college think mentoring and meetings for project guidance are important?
- How does the college help students have access to professors outside class? Do professors join students for lunch, help with community service groups, or guide student organizations?
- How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

ASK FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- How much has your total college cost for each student risen in the past year?
- How much do your students usually end up owing when they graduate?
- What is the average income of graduates who had the same major that interests me?
- Will my costs go up when your tuition goes up, or can we use the same tuition rate I started with so I'll know the costs for four years?
- How many students usually graduate in the major that interests me? How long do these students usually take to get their degree? In what ways does the college help students graduate in four years?

College Application Checklist	Date completed
Get the application	
Make a note of the regular application deadline	
Make a note of the early application deadline	
Request high school transcript sent	
Request midyear grade report sent	
Find out if an admission test is required	
Take an admission test, if required	
Take other required or recommended tests (e.g., SAT Subject Tests, AP Exams, IB exams)	
Send admission-test scores	
Request recommendation letters	
Draft initial essay	
Proofread essay for spelling and grammar	
Have someone read your essay	
Complete college application	
Make copies of all application materials	
Pay application fee	
Send application	
Confirm receipt of application materials	
Send additional material, if needed	
Make a note of the regular financial aid deadline	
Submit FAFSA	
Submit college aid form, if needed	
Receive letter from office of admission	
Receive financial aid award letter	
Meet deadline to accept admission and send deposit	
Accept financial aid offer	
Notify the colleges you will not attend	

Web-Based Services for SAT Prep

These sites contain a wealth of free SAT study content including streaming video, a custom study plan creator, and many practice problems. Some even have free practice tests. Check out the sites below to get started:

- INeedAPencil.com
 - Number2.com
 - Majortests.com
 - FreeVocabulary.com
 - SATexamprep.com
-

New York City Services

- **THE Options Program at Goddard Riverside Community Center** - Free SAT preparation and can make free counseling with well-trained private college counselors. Available for all grade- levels. www.goddard.org
- **The Harlem Center for Education** - Free summer classes for SAT and college prep. www.harlemctred.com
- **Learning Leaders** - Places tutors in NYC public schools with knowledge ranging from SAT prep to GED tutoring. www.learningleaders.org
- **The Door** - Offers young people ages 12-21 comprehensive educational (including free SAT prep), health, nutritional and counseling programs, as well as legal services for young people in need of civil legal representation. www.door.org
- **College Directions Program at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center** - CDP provides Bronx residents with college preparation, information, and assistance. See website for full list of services. All services are free of charge. www.khcc-nyc.org
- **Expanded Horizons** - The goal of Expanded Horizons is to help disadvantaged young people achieve acceptance into college. The program empowers youth by engaging them in educational, recreational, and preparatory activities ranging from college trips and SAT preparation classes to individual counseling and workshops. www.henrystreet.org
- **Minds Matter** - Minds Matter pairs high-achieving, low-income high school students with dedicated mentors to achieve academic excellence and expand educational horizons. By working with their mentors and attending top-tier summer college prep programs, Minds Matter's students gain academic and social enrichment while strengthening their college applications. Program activities include researching and selecting summer programs and/or colleges/universities, preparing applications, applying for scholarships and financial aid, and attending weekly Test Prep and Writing & Critical Thinking classes. Applicants apply during the spring of their freshman year. www.mindsmatter.org
- **Let's Get Ready** - Let's Get Ready's specially trained Coaches are current college student volunteers who will teach you SAT strategies to do your best on the test, help you to complete the college application process and provide you with information on various ways to obtain financial aid. These Coaches recently completed college applications and took the SATs themselves. www.letsgetready.org

About CUNY Start

Program Overview

CUNY Start provides intensive preparation in academic reading/writing, math, and "college success." The program enrolls prospective CUNY students who have been accepted to college because they have a high school or GED diploma, but are not ready for college-level work based on their scores on the CUNY Assessment Tests.

Students who have enrolled in CUNY Start re-take the required CUNY Assessment Tests. Past students have shown significant skill gains when they re-test; many have bypassed required remedial coursework entirely.

Program Options

Full Time

- 25 hours per week
- Mondays through Fridays, 9am – 3pm
- Academic Reading/Writing and Pre-College Math
- Locations: Borough of Manhattan Community College, Bronx Community College, College of Staten Island, Hostos Community College, Kingsborough Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Queensborough Community College

Part Time

- 12 hours per week
- Afternoons and evenings
- Academic Reading/Writing or Pre-College Math
- Locations: Borough of Manhattan Community College, Hostos Community College, LaGuardia Community College

CUNY Certificate Programs

Many certificate programs are career focused and give students skills need to find employment. Programs offer students the opportunity to take credit and non-credit classes. Fields of study include business, graphic arts, aviation and cruise operations, culinary arts, food management, hospitality, food service, liberal arts and sciences, health sciences, engineering technologies, and office administration. Some schools also offer associate degree and weekend college and additional programs through their office continuing education division.

Please go on the following website for a full list of programs :
<http://www.cuny.edu/academics/conted.html>

Abbreviated list below:

LaGuardia Community College

<http://www.laguardia.cuny.edu/Academics/Home/>

- Personal Trainer
- EKG Tech
- Medical Assistant
- Pharmacy Tech
- Phlebotomist
- Computer Repair

Queensborough Community College

<http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/academics/index.html>

- Accounting / Office Administration Technology
- Computer Information Systems
Options: Computer Programming, Microcomputer Applications Software
- Health Care Office Administration
- Medical Office Assistant
- Microsoft Office Applications Proficiency Preparation
- New Media Technology
- Photography
- School Secretary

Bronx Community College

<http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/?page=academics>

- Animal Care and Management
- Assistant of Children with Special Needs
- Automotive Mechanic
- Bilingual Early Childhood Assistant
- Early Childhood Assistant
- Licensed Practical Nursing
- Paralegal Studies

Hostos Community College

<http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/contedu/geninfo/certificates.html>

- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Basic Construction Management

- CAN
- Child Care Provider Training Program
- Clinical Medical Assistant
- Comp TIA A+ Certification
- Culinary Arts
- Healthcare Interpreter
- EKG
- EMT
- Hands on Automotive Transmission Program
- Home Health Aid
- Locksmith
- Medical Billing and Coding
- Microsoft Office Certifications
- Personal Trainer
- Pharmacy Technician
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Teachers Assistant
- Security Officers

Medgar Evers

<http://www.mec.cuny.edu/spcd/ace/programs.asp>

- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Patient Care Technician. *Includes CNA, Phlebotomy, EKG and CPR.*
- Geriatric Care Management Certificate
- Medical Billing and Coding Certificate
- Dental Assisting Program
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Pharmacy Technician Test Preparation
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Professional Pharmacy Technician
- Certified Coding Specialist Exam Review
- Certified Wedding and Event Planning
- Advanced Construction Management Certificate Program. NY State Real Estate Salesperson Licensing Certificate (75-hours)
- NY State Real Estate Broker Licensing Certificate (45 hours)
- Food Protection Certificate
- Bookkeeping and Accounting Certificate
- Child Development Associate (online)

Kings Borough Community College

<http://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/continuinged/>

- Accounting
- Administrative Assistant
- Certified Nurse Aide
- Child Care
- Clinical Medical Assistant Externship
- Computers
- Culinary Arts
- EKG Technician

Kings Borough Community College continued...

- Electronic Health Records
- Event and Meeting Planning
- Fitness and Sports
- Insurance
- Legal Affairs
- Medical Assistant
- Medical Billing
- Music and Dance
- Patient Care Technician for CAN
- Pharmacy Technician
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Practical Paralegal
- Real Estate Sales
- Taxi
- Urban Food Systems

Borough of Manhattan Community College

<http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/ce/>

- Hemodialysis Technician Program
- Medical Billing and Coding Training
- Bookkeeping with Quickbooks
- Paralegal Studies Program
- Certified Personal Training (CPT) Certification
- Cisco Networking Fundamentals

How to apply for Financial Aid:

All schools require you to complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in order to determine what federal and institutional aid you will qualify for. Also, some schools have their own financial aid forms you will need to complete, please contact each school directly to determine if they require additional information.

The following steps will walk you through the financial aid process:

1. Collect Documents

- Social Security numbers of student and parents (parents Social Security numbers are needed for dependent students)
- An FSA ID for you and one of your parents (see instructions below)
- W-2 forms and other records of money earned by student and parents, if you are a dependent student
- Students and parents' federal income tax returns (parents tax return is needed for dependent students)
- Current bank statements, current business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond and other investment records
- Alien registration card, if you're not a U.S. citizen

2. Get a FSA ID (do this ASAP)

Students and Parents should apply for a federal student aid FSA ID which is comprised of a user-selected username and password. With your FSA ID, you can sign your FAFSA electronically and complete the federal student aid process completely online. Also you can make corrections to your application once it is filed and access your information online. You will use the same FSA ID to reapply and to access your student aid records each year.

The FSA ID process consists of three main steps:

Go to - www.fsaaid.ed.gov

1. Enter your log-in information.
 - Provide your e-mail address, a unique username and password and verify that you are at least 13 years old.
2. Enter your personal information.
 - Provide your Social Security number, name and date of birth.
 - Include your mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number and language preference.
 - For security purposes, provide answers to five challenge questions.
3. Submit your FSA ID information.
 - Agree to the terms and conditions.

- Verify your e-mail address. (Note: By verifying your e-mail address, you can use your e-mail address as your username when logging into certain ED websites. This verification also allows you to retrieve your username or reset your password without answering challenge questions.)

3. Complete the FAFSA

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the application for federal student assistance. You can apply before you have been admitted to college starting October 1, for the 2017-2018 academic year, using 2015 tax return information. Apply online by going to www.fafsa.gov.

For free help in completing your FAFSA or to obtain a paper FAFSA you can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1800-4-FED-AID (1800-433-3243). For federal student financial aid information online you can go to www.studentaid.ed.gov.

IRS Data Retrieval Tool

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool allows you and your parents to access the IRS tax return information needed to complete the FAFSA. Students and parents may transfer the data directly into their FAFSA. It's available 2 weeks after you file your income tax return electronically. **If you are eligible to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, it is highly recommended that you use the tool for several reasons:**

- It's the easiest way to provide your tax data
- It's the best way of ensuring that your FAFSA has accurate tax information
- You won't need to provide a copy of your or your parents' tax returns to your college if requested

Note: To fill out and submit your FAFSA is **FREE**. There are websites and services not associated with the federal government that will charge you to fill out your FAFSA. You don't have to pay anyone for assistance and there are many free resources for help, such as the Federal Student Aid Information Center by calling (800) 433-3243 and the college you plan on attending.

4. Link to TAP from the Web

The TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) application is for New York State residents to apply for NY State financial aid. Once you complete your [FAFSA](#) online, you will be taken to a Confirmation Page. Click on the link to apply for New York State-based financial aid and you will be directed to the Higher Education Services Corporation ([HESC](#)) website in order to fill out your TAP application. If you miss the link you will receive an email from HESC after your FAFSA is processed with information on how to complete your TAP application.

5. Receive a Student Aid Report (SAR)

A few days after you complete the FAFSA you will receive an email from 'Federal Student Aid' with a link to your Student Aid Report (SAR). Your SAR contains a summary of your FAFSA information and a calculation of your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - the number used to determine your federal student aid eligibility. Review your SAR to see if any additional information or corrections may be needed. It's possible that you may need to provide additional information before your Expected Family Contribution can be calculated. You can also access your SAR at www.fafsa.gov with your FSA ID.

6. Receive the Award Notification

Once your FAFSA is complete and you demonstrate financial need, your selected college will send you an award notice indicating the financial aid programs for which you qualify. If you are not eligible for need based financial aid, you can contact the financial aid office at your college to find out other options to finance your education.

Financial Aid Frequently Asked Questions

When should I apply?

You can apply for financial aid even before you've been accepted to a college.

For the 2017–18 year, you will be able to apply between Oct. 1, 2016, and June 30, 2018. However, there are a few federal student aid programs that have limited funds, so be sure to apply as soon as you can once the FAFSA is available for the year you'll be attending school.

Do I have to reapply for financial aid every year?

Yes. You need to apply for financial aid every year. If your financial circumstances change, you may get more or less aid. After your first year when you apply, some information from the previous year's FAFSA will be filled in. Note that your eligibility for financial aid may change, especially if you have a different number of family members in college. Renewal of your financial aid package also depends on you making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree, such as earning a minimum number of credits and achieving a minimum GPA.

Should I pay for help to fill out my FAFSA?

No, you don't need to. If you apply using FAFSA on the Web at www.fafsa.gov, you can get online instructions for each question, and you can chat live online with a customer service representative. Another source for free help can be found at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Whether you apply online or use the paper FAFSA, You can call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) with questions about the FAFSA on the Web, the paper application process or about general federal student financial aid. You may also visit the financial aid office at your CUNY campus for financial aid help.

How could I check the status of my FAFSA application?

You can check the status of your FAFSA immediately after submitting it online. You can check the status of a paper FAFSA after it has been processed (roughly 7–10 days from the date mailed). Here's how:

- Option 1: Go to www.fafsa.gov and click **Login**.
- Option 2: Contact the [Federal Student Aid Information Center](http://www.fafsa.gov).

If your FAFSA is still being processed, you should wait a few days before checking the status again.

Is this the only financial aid application needed?

No. If you are a New York State resident then you should apply for New York State aid by filling out a TAP application at www.hesc.ny.gov

Do I need to be admitted before I can apply for financial aid at CUNY?

No. You can apply for financial aid any time after January 1. To actually receive funds, however, you must be admitted and enrolled at CUNY.

What should I (the student) do if my family has special circumstances that aren't mentioned in the application?

Talk to your financial aid administrator in your schools' financial aid office. If your family's circumstances have changed from the base year, due to loss of employment, loss of benefits, death or divorce, your school may decide to adjust data elements used to calculate your EFC. The adjustment might increase your eligibility for student aid.

I'm not sure if I want to work during the school year. What should I enter for the questions asking if I am interested in work-study?

Some schools use this information to put together a financial aid package for you. Answering "Yes" to the question does not obligate you to accept a work-study position. It usually just means that the school will offer you work-study as part of your aid package if you qualify. If you indicate on the application that you are interested in work-study, you can change your mind and not accept the work-study later.

If I live with an aunt, uncle, or grandparent, should that relative's income be reported instead of parental information?

Only if the relative is your adoptive parent. Dependent students can be considered dependent only on their parent(s) and must report only parental information on the FAFSA. You must report any cash support given by relatives, but not in-kind support (such as food and housing) from relatives.

What if I live with a girlfriend or boyfriend who pays the rent?

You should not report any information for a friend or roommate unless the two of you are actually married or are considered to have a common-law marriage under state law. You must report any cash support given by the friend as untaxed income but should not report in-kind support (such as food). You would have to report as untaxed income the rent the roommate paid on your behalf.

When is student aid considered income when filling out your FAFSA?

Generally, grants, scholarships and federal work-study that do not exceed your cost of attendance are not considered income while filling out your FAFSA. Student aid is considered income when its taxable student grant and scholarship aid such as fellowships and assistantships which are reported to the IRS in your parents or your adjusted gross income.

If I am in the National Guard or am an active duty military member, am I considered a veteran for purposes of filling out the FAFSA?

If you were a member of the National Guard or were a Reservist called to active duty for purposes other than training and were released under a condition other than dishonorable, you are considered a veteran for FAFSA purposes.

If my parents are divorced, whose information do I need?

The parent with whom you lived the most during the 12 months preceding the date you completed the FAFSA. It does not make a difference which parent claims you as a dependent for tax purposes. If you did not live with either parent or lived equally with each parent, the parental information must be provided for the parent from whom you received the most financial support during the preceding 12 months or the parent from whom you received the most support the last time support was given.

What should you do if the parent with whom you live is remarried and the stepparent refuses to supply information?

If you are a dependent student and your parent is remarried, the stepparent's information must be included or you will not be considered for federal student financial aid. If you believe that your situation is unique or unusual other than the stepparent's simple refusal to provide the requested information, you should discuss the matter further with your financial aid administrator.

How does a family decide who should be counted in the household size?

Anyone in the immediate family who receives more than 50% support from a dependent student's parents or an independent student and spouse may be counted in the household size. For example, a sibling who is over 24 but still receives the majority of his/her support from the parents can be included. Siblings who are dependent (as defined by the FAFSA) as of the date you apply for aid are also included, regardless of whether they receive more than 50% of their support from the parents. Any other person who resides in the household and receives more than 50% support from the parents may also be counted, as long as they will continue to reside with your parents and the support is expected to continue through June 30, 2016. An unborn child who will be born during the award year may also be counted in the household size.

Household size and tax exemptions are not necessarily the same. Exemptions look at the previous year or tax year and household size refers to the school year for which the student is applying for aid.

My parents separated four months ago. I live with my mother. My parents filed a joint tax return and claimed me as an exemption. Do I report both their incomes, or just my mother's?

Report only your mother's income and asset information because you lived with her the most during the past 12 months. Use a W-2 Form or other record(s) to determine her share of the income reported and taxes paid on the tax return.

If I (the student) am separated but filed a joint tax return, how is the information reported?

You should give only your portion of the exemptions, income, and taxes paid.

Who qualifies to be counted in the number in college?

Any person (other than your parents) who is counted in the household and will be attending any term of the academic year at least half time. The person must be working toward a degree or certificate leading to a recognized education credential at a postsecondary school eligible to participate in the federal student aid programs. You (the student) need not be enrolled half time to be counted in the number in college.

I'm a dependent student, but whose information do I report if my parents are divorced or separated?

You report information about the parent you lived with for the greater amount of time during the 12 months preceding the date of application. If you didn't live with either parent, or if you lived with each parent an equal number of days, use information about the parent who provided the greater amount of financial support during the 12 months preceding the date of application. If you didn't receive any parental financial support during that time, you must report information about the parent who most recently provided the greater amount of parental support.

If the parent you receive financial support from was a single parent who is now married, or the parent was divorced or widowed but has remarried, your stepparents financial information is required on the FAFSA.

My parents don't support me and won't contribute to my education, so why am I still considered a "dependent" student?

It's a federal regulation. There are basic requirements a student must meet to be considered an independent student. If you do not meet these requirements but you still

believe you are truly independent of your parents, you may appeal for a “dependency override” in the financial aid office at your school. In unusual cases, the financial aid administrator can change your dependency based on adequate documentation of special circumstances you may have.

How do the schools I’m interested in, get my FAFSA results?

You can list up to 10 schools on your FAFSA. Those schools will receive your FAFSA results electronically.

What if I want my information sent to more than 10 schools?

When filling out your FAFSA enter 10 schools. After your FAFSA is processed you will receive a SAR (Student Aid Report), at that time you will be able to make modifications online or by phone and add additional schools.

CUNY Financial Aid Offices

Baruch College

151 East 25th Street, Room 880
New York, NY 10010
(646) 312-1360
www.baruch.cuny.edu

Borough of Manhattan Community College

199 Chambers Street, Room N365
New York, NY 10007
(212) 220-1430
www.bmcc.cuny.edu

Bronx Community College

2155 University Ave, Colston Hall, Room 504
Bronx, NY 10453
(718) 289-5700
www.bcc.cuny.edu

Brooklyn College

2900 Bedford Avenue, West Quad Center, Room 308
Brooklyn, NY 11210
(718) 951-5051
www.brooklyn.cuny.edu

The City College of New York

160 Convent Avenue, Administration Bldg. Room 104
New York, NY 10031
(212) 650-6656
www.cuny.cuny.edu

College of Staten Island

2800 Victory Boulevard, Building 2A, Room 401
Staten Island, NY 10314
(718) 982-2030
www.csi.cuny.edu

Guttman Community College

50 West 40th Street
New York, NY 10018
(646) 313-8011
guttman.cuny.edu

Hostos Community College

120 East 149th Street & Walton Ave, Room B112-115
Bronx, NY 10451
(718) 518-6555
www.hostos.cuny.edu

Hunter College

695 Park Avenue, Room 241 North
New York, NY 10065
(212) 772-4820
www.hunter.cuny.edu

John Jay College

524 West 59th Street, North Building Room 1280
New York, NY 10019
(212) 237-8149
www.jjay.cuny.edu

Kingsborough Community College

2001 Oriental Boulevard, Room U201
Brooklyn, NY 11235
(718) 368-4644
www.kbcc.cuny.edu

LaGuardia Community College

31-10 Thomson Avenue, Room C107
Long Island City, NY 11101
(718) 482-7218
www.lagcc.cuny.edu

Lehman College

250 Bedford Park Boulevard West, Shuster Hall, Room 136
Bronx, NY 10468
(718) 960-8545
www.lehman.cuny.edu

Medgar Evers College

1637 Bedford Ave., Room S108
Brooklyn, NY 11225
(718) 270-6141
www.mec.cuny.edu

New York City College of Technology

300 Jay Street, Namm Hall, Room NG-13
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(718) 260-5700
www.citytech.cuny.edu

Queens College

65-30 Kissena Boulevard, Jefferson Hall, Room 202
Flushing, NY 11367
(718) 997-5123
www.qc.cuny.edu

Queensborough Community College

Springfield Boulevard & 56th Avenue, Library Building,
Room 409
Bayside, NY 11364
(718) 631-6367
www.qcc.cuny.edu

York College

94-20 Guy R. Brewer Boulevard, Room 1M08
Jamaica, NY 11451
(718) 262-2230
www.york.cuny.edu

Scholarships

There are many types of scholarships provided by different organizations. Each scholarship provider has its own application, deadline, and rules to decide who is eligible for their scholarship. Here are some suggested ways to get started on your research for scholarships:

- U.S Department of Education has a free online scholarship search: www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/scholarship
- NY State free online search: www.HESC.com
- Foundations, religious, civic, local business, or community organizations you or your parents may be involved in
- You or your parents employer or their union
- Fastweb is a free database of scholarships: www.fastweb.com
- Big Future by the College Board, scholarship search engine: www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org

Below is a list of nation and local scholarships students can apply for, please see their website for application requirements and deadlines. Scholarships with an asterisk (*) are LD or ADHD specific.

1. **The Coca-Cola Scholars Program Scholarship** is an achievement-based scholarship awarded to graduating high school seniors each year. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, and their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities. <http://www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/applicants/#programs>
2. **The Ron Brown Scholar Program** seeks to identify African-American high school seniors who will make significant contributions to society. Applicants must excel academically, exhibit exceptional leadership potential, participate in community service activities and demonstrate financial need. <http://www.ronbrown.org/Apply/EligibilityRequirements.aspx>
3. **Burger King Scholarship Fund** has several scholarships for graduating seniors included specific scholarships for employees and their family members. <https://www.scholarshipamerica.org/burgerkingscholars/information.php>
4. **The Wendy's High School Heisman Program** recognizes outstanding student athletes from high schools all over the country. We are looking for students who excel in a wide range of sports, school, and community activities. <http://www.wendyshighschoolheisman.com/applicants/>
5. **Futro Con Leche Scholarship Program** is provided on a competitive basis to graduating high school seniors of Hispanic Heritage. <http://www.hsf.net/en/scholarships/>
6. **The Gates Millennium Scholars (GMS) Program**, funded by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was established in 1999 to provide outstanding African American, American Indian/Alaska Native*, Asian Pacific Islander American**, and Hispanic American students with an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education in any discipline area of interest. <https://scholarships.gmsp.org/Program/Details/0fb486dd-d32c-4a4f-a0c5-d911d7d89cb7>
7. **The New York Water Environment Association** will be offering a total of six (6) \$1,500 scholarships and one (1) \$10,000. <http://nywea.org/scholarship/>
8. **The BigSun Organization** is proud to be able to help young athletes succeed in their academic pursuits. In order to do our part we are offering an annual scholarship to a

deserving student. All student athletes are eligible for this award, regardless of which sport they are participating in. <http://www.bigsunathletics.com/>

9. **The AXA Achievement Community Scholarship**, sponsored by the AXA Foundation, provides scholarship awards of \$2,000 each. Applicants must be United States citizens or legal residents and must have demonstrated ambition and self-drive as evidenced by an outstanding achievement in a school, community, or workplace activity. <http://www.axa-equitable.com/axa-foundation/community-scholarships.html>
10. **The Friends of James Beard Foundation Scholarships and the James Beard Foundation School Scholarships** have been established to assist aspiring culinary professionals who plan to further their education at a licensed or accredited culinary school. Professional grants are also available for independent work, study and travel. jamesbeard.org/education/scholarships-and-grants
11. **The State Farm Good Neighbor Scholarship Program** was established to provide financial assistance to high school seniors who plan to attend college, technical, or vocational school, but may not be able to meet the expenses of a higher education without such aid and often do not qualify for other scholarships. www.scholarshipamerica.org/statefarmgoodneighborscholarship
12. **Ronald McDonald House Charities New York Tri-State Area, Inc.**, along with RMHC Global, offers scholarships to students in financial need who have demonstrated academic achievement, leadership and community involvement. <http://www.rmhcnytristate.org/en/what-we-do/scholarships>
13. **The New York Times College Scholarship Program** Each student receives a four-year college scholarship, mentoring and summer employment. http://www.nytc.com/social_responsibility/college_scholarship_program.html
14. ***The RiSE Scholarship Foundation, Inc.** is a non-profit resource and scholarship opportunity for high school students who learn differently. http://risescholarshipfoundation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2010/05/RiSE_Application_2013-2014-final-.pdf
15. ***Fred J. Epstein Youth Achievement Award**, this award recognizes the strengths and accomplishments of young people with learning disabilities and ADHD. <http://www.smartkidswithld.org/award>
16. ***The Shire ADHD Scholarship** recognizes and supports individuals with ADHD in the US who are seeking to obtain higher education. <http://www.shireadhdsscholarship.com/US/about.aspx>
17. ***The Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarships** offer financial assistance to two graduating seniors with documented learning disabilities (LD) who are pursuing post-secondary education. <http://www.ncld.org/about-us/learning-disability-scholarships-awards/anne-ford-allegra-ford-scholarships>

10 Tips for Writing Effective Scholarship Essays

1. Read the instructions and make sure you understand them before you start writing.
2. Think about what you are going to write and organize your thoughts before you start writing.
3. Begin the writing process by writing an outline.
4. Make sure your outline touches on every aspect required per the instructions.
5. Write your essay by elaborating on each of the points in your outline.

6. Use clear, concise and simple language throughout the essay.
7. State your accomplishments without coming across as if you are bragging.
8. Make sure your grammar and spelling are impeccable.
9. Read the question again and then read your essay to be certain that the essay addresses every point.
10. Have someone with strong writing and editing skills proofread the essay before you submit it.

Online Resources

Financial Aid

- <http://www.howtopayforcollegehq.com> – Weekly podcast to help parents pay for college using debt free strategies.
- <https://collegeabacus.com> – A financial aid calculator to help compare college net price calculators and determine the cost of college.
- <http://costoflearning.com> – This tool gives college applicants and their families insight and clarity into understanding the TRUE cost of college.
- <http://www.collegemoneyman.com> – A podcast with information for parents and students about financial aid and scholarships.
- <http://www.financialaidletter.com> – Read real college financial aid award letters and get tips on decoding and translating them.
- <http://www.customcollegerankings.com> – A powerful yet easy-to-use tool to help find and compare colleges.

College Searches Websites

- <http://www.collegemeasures.org> – Makes available key data through websites enabling users to make smarter college decisions.
- <https://statfuse.com> – This tool helps students determine their chances of getting in to a specific college.
- <http://www.ctcl.org> – College That Change Lives supports a student-centered college search process providing information on colleges that indeed change lives.
- <http://www.collegedata.com> – An online tool to search for colleges, calculate your chances, track admissions, search for scholarships and more.

- <http://www.collegeview.com/index.jsp> – A search engine allowing you to choose specific categories related to college and gather information for the college list.
- <http://www.collegefactual.com> – Find a college and a major that fits your student with an affordable degree you can use.

College Planning Websites

- <http://www.parenttoolkit.com> – A toolkit that helps parents keep track of their child's educational journey from PreK through high school.
- <http://www.sreducationgroup.org> – Comprehensive information for students about their options for school.
- <http://www.ubind.co> – A site where you can tour universities, bind with recruiters and plan for college.
- <http://www.college-connections.com> – Expert college advice and educational consulting services to empower students for admissions success.
- <http://collegeappwizard.com> – This tool walks you through each step of the college planning process and helps you organize all the information in one location.
- <http://collegeprepready.com> – A college success coach that helps parents and students transition into college, providing them with tools to enter college prep with a competitive edge.
- <http://jlvcollegecounseling.com> – College counselor who helps families through the college admission process.

- <http://www.collegeright.com> – Helps students become savvy college shoppers and empower them to take control of the application process.
- <http://collegeconnect.info> – Personalized college planning, guidance and support.
- <http://www.ivywise.com> – Admissions counseling empowering students to reach their academic goals.
- <http://www.sixstepcollegeapplication.com> – Admissions counseling with free downloads for parents and an excellent blog.

Essays

- <http://www.collegeessayorganizer.com> – A search tool that delivers essay topics and helps students organize all essay questions in one place.
- <http://www.collegeessayguy.com> – Free resources, one-on-one essay sessions, online webinars, and in-person workshops to help with the college essay.

Social Media

- <http://www.socialassurity.com> – Helps teens, college students and athletes optimize their online presence.

Parent Information, Advice and Blogs

- <http://www.road2college.com> – A blog for parents giving the scoop on college admissions and financing.
- <http://teenlife.com> – Their mission is to help teens and their parents find and participate in meaningful learning opportunities (also provide an excellent blog with topics related to college prep)

- <http://knowsymoms.com> – A place for college parents and pre-college parents to gather and read stories and advice from other parents. and get college advice.
- <http://www.collegeadmissionbook.com> – Great information for parents and students about college admissions.
- <http://www.pocsmom.com> – Expert insider advice from a parent on college prep and the parent role in the process.
- <http://www.morethanatestscore.com> – A must read blog from Zinch for parents and students who are heading to college.
- <http://blog.thecollegeplanninggroup.com> – Excellent blog with information for parents and students about college admissions.
- <http://www.collegeparents.org> – A place for parents of the college-bound to ask and find answers about the college prep process.
- <http://www.harlancohen.com> – Get advice from the author of several books about college and a mini-course for parents.

Textbooks

- <http://simplebookswap.com> – Buy, sell and swap used textbooks with local students.

Study Abroad

- <http://www.semesteratsea.org> – A multiple country study abroad program with credits that transfer to college.