

STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE SELECTION

1. **DETERMINE THE TYPE OF COLLEGE YOU WANT TO ATTEND:** Small, Large, Private, Public, Commuter, Residential, Liberal Arts, Technical, 2 year, 4 year, etc. Think about the environment and class size with which you are most comfortable.
2. **DECIDE HOW FAR FROM HOME YOU ARE WILLING TO TRAVEL:** Home on a regular basis or only once or twice per year? Can you afford to fly to and from the college? Is being in a warm climate as important as attending the best college for your academic interests?
3. **HAVE AN HONEST DISCUSSION WITH YOUR PARENTS:** Are your expectations and theirs the same? How much money will they be able to contribute to your education? Will they be visiting colleges with you?
4. **CONSIDER YOUR ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR INTEREST:** Do you know what major you wish to study? (Many students do not – so don't panic.) Is it important to you to play a specific sport, be involved in a theatre group, write for a college yearbook, etc.? Make a list of areas of interest that are important to you.
5. **RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH:** Attend college fairs, do internet and college catalog research, talk to friends, alumni, counselors, neighbors, etc. Develop a list of colleges that meet your criteria. Narrow that list to 3-6 colleges.
6. **REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON YOUR SHORT LIST OF COLLEGES:** Get catalogs, look at WEB sites, college applications and financial aid brochures, etc. Review admission criteria, program availability, support services, extracurricular activities and identify colleges to visit and/or to submit applications.
7. **SCHEDULE COLLEGE VISITS AND INTERVIEWS:** Several weeks in advance contact colleges to make appointments to visit or attend an open house program. Schedule a tour and visit with all appropriate offices – i.e.: admissions, financial aid, special academic services, coaches, academic departments, etc. Confirm your appointments prior to your visit.
8. **BE PREPARED FOR YOUR INTERVIEW:** Learn all that you can about the college and create a list of questions to ask interviewers. Take an unofficial transcript, list of your extracurricular activities and test scores with you to the interview to help determine your eligibility. Dress appropriately, be on time, get the name, address and phone number of those you meet with so you can write thank you notes. Make notes about what you liked and didn't like about the visit and college. *Be sure to tour the local community as well as the campus.*
9. **COMPLETE ADMISSION APPLICATIONS AND FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIP FORMS BY REQUIRED DEADLINES:** It is essential that you identify application deadlines and meet them. The earlier you apply for admission and financial aid the better. Remember that your Guidance Office personnel are very busy and may take weeks to complete your application before it is mailed.
10. **ASSESS YOUR ADMISSION OFFERS AND SELECT THE COLLEGE YOU WILL ATTEND:** Evaluate your admission offers, financial aid packages and how well each college meets the criteria you have established. Contact colleges to ask any unanswered questions. Identify the institution you plan to attend and make the appropriate deposits by the required deadline.