

ROADS to SUCCESS

Grade 12

Applying to College

Family Newsletter

College Admissions 101

Roads to Success is a new program designed to help middle and high school students prepare for their futures. This newsletter will keep you posted on what we're doing in school, and how families can follow through at home.

For more information about Roads to Success, please visit our website: www.roadstosuccess.org.

Did you know?

Of college freshmen surveyed at four-year schools in 2011:

58% attended their first-choice college.

52% of students reported that at least some of their college financing came from loans.

SOURCE:

The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2011
Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA

Congratulations on being the proud parent of a high school senior! There's a lot to do in the year ahead, particularly if your student plans to go to college in the fall. The decisions are big, the stakes feel high, and every step may be filled with drama. Here's a list of what to expect and resources to help you cope.

Choosing Colleges

If your teen isn't sure what school she wants to attend, now is the time for further research. Online tools like RUReadyND.com can help narrow her search.

Students sometimes sort college choices as reach, match, and safety schools to rate their chances of getting in. Applying to at least one of each is recommended. Research shows that students often do well at the most difficult schools that will accept them, so it's good to aim high for at least one (reach) school.

If possible, students should visit their top choices to see

how each campus feels.

Completing Applications

Applications are usually due in late fall or early winter. Some schools have rolling admissions, and accept applications throughout the year. Check college websites for details.



Note: Encourage your teen to write all deadlines on a calendar, and refer to it often.

Finding Financial Aid

Students should not reject a college choice because it costs a lot. Expensive schools often have financial help available, so it's definitely worth applying. It's good to have a cheaper option in mind as a back-up.

All needs-based federal and state financial aid is

triggered by the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and parent info is required. You can begin the application on January 1. State deadlines and more info can be found at www.fafsa.ed.gov. (Some schools also require families to complete the CSS Profile. See www.collegeboard.org for details.)

Following Through

College acceptance letters arrive in March and April. If your student has applied for financial aid, he will also receive a letter from each school explaining what's being offered. Students have until May 1 to accept or reject a school's offer of admission. Then, they'll send a deposit to guarantee a spot for fall. During the summer, the school will provide information about housing assignments and freshman orientation.

For more info . . .

RUReadyND.com
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/>

Grade by Grade

Roads to Success seniors receive a **College Application Tracker** to chart the admissions requirements at their chosen colleges and plan their progress for each. All students try an online application to a local school, and write an essay suitable for a college application or job interview.