

# The College Search for Parents and Families

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HOW TO STAY CALM, COOL AND COLLECTED AS YOUR STUDENT GETS READY TO LEAVE YOU, MAYBE FOREVER, AND YOU HONESTLY HOPE THEY MAKE GOOD CHOICES AND DON'T COME BACK TO LIVE IN YOUR BASEMENT.

# XAVIER UNIVERSITY



Cincinnati, OH  
5,000 undergraduates  
90 majors, including nursing, finance,  
biomedical sciences, sport marketing  
NCAA Division 1: Big East  
86% accepted into medical school

# Starting the adventure

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BABY STEPS FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENT

# Your College Search Timeline

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Junior Year and before: Research

Junior/Senior Year: Visit

Fall of Senior Year: Apply

Senior Year: Get Admitted

By May 1 of Senior Year: Choose

# THE PARADOX

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How do you know what  
you want when you  
don't know what you  
want?

# Get on the same page

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**Students:** Just who are you, anyway? What do you think of when I say “college”?

**Parents:** What do you hope and dream for your student? What kind of school? What financial parameters do you have?

**Together:** Have a conversation. No judgements, just compare notes.

# A little bit of research

Define your deal breakers

Narrow the search if you can

CollegeBoard Access Sign In Search

BigFuture Get Started Find Colleges Explore Careers Pay for College Get In Make a Plan

Home / Find Colleges / College Search

## College Search

Save Selections Clear All Selections

SELECT FILTERS

- Test Scores & Selectivity
- Type of School
- Location
- Campus & Housing
- Majors & Learning Environment
- Sports & Activities
- Academic Credit
- Paying
- Additional Support Programs
- Diversity

Save Selections Clear All Selections

You have 3,806 college options. Choose a category on the left to find the right ones for you. We'll help along the way.

Not sure where to start? Go to College Search Step-by-Step, an interactive guide.

<http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>

# Your friendly neighborhood admission counselor

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Find your admission counselor on the college's website.

You'll see our friendly faces at your school, on Zoom and even at the local coffee shop.

Help us help you.





# The College Fair

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A chance to learn more about schools from the experts

Get a list before you go and highlight the schools you want to visit

Don't ignore schools you've never heard of-you might find your dream school!

# So, you're at the fair. What should you do?

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Introduce yourself to the rep.  
It's a conversation.

Use the Strive Scan app to  
preregister your information.

Ask the reps about what is  
important to you.

PS: We're usually lined up  
alphabetically.



# The power of email

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Have your student create an email that will be just for the college search.

Don't make me guess who you are.

Have a conversation with your student about appropriate communication.

A no-brainer: check your email regularly!

# I love emails like this:

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Dear Ms. Ritter,

Hello! My name is Sally Student and I am a junior at St. Mary's High School. Xavier is a school that interests me, and I wanted to know when the best time to visit campus would be.

Sincerely,

Sally Student

Chicagoland High School Class of '25

sallys.college25@gmail.com

# This, not so much:

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Hey my name is Jimmy Student and i attend Adams High School in the Chicago suburbs and i would love to attend your university. But as of now my grades are not good and my GPA is a 2.2. So i was wondering are there any admissions requirements or a certain GPA i will need to get excepted in?

# Questionable:

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Thank U whats the Gpa To Get  
In

# On the road

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THE INTERNET IS COOL AND ALL, BUT YOU NEED TO SEE THE CAMPUS TO REALLY GET TO KNOW IT

# Campus Visits 101

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Summer? School year?

Pre-register!

Two types:

- Individual/"Daily Visit"
- Open House

Ask for local  
recommendations



# Your typical campus visit

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Information Session

Campus Tour

Meal in the cafeteria

Coupon for the bookstore

Extras:

- Meet with professor/coach
- View campus event



You will be walking around campus, so plan your shoes and outerwear accordingly!

# Ask (and answer) questions!

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Visits are your time to be a detective.

Have some prepared questions ready for each school you visit.

Personalize your questions.

We want to know about you, too!

# Here are a few good questions

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Are classes taught by professors?

What do students do on the weekends?

What is the placement rate?

How do I find an internship?

Can students have cars on campus?

Do students graduate in four years?

What is the profile of admitted students?

# After the Visit

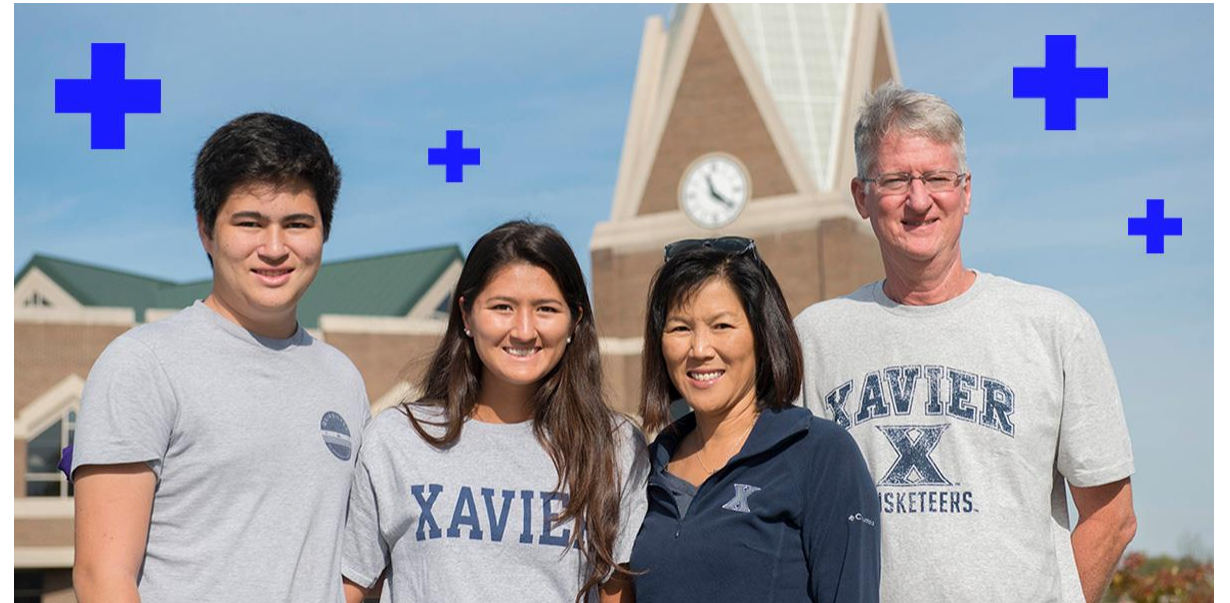
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Debrief in the car

Take notes and photos

Determine what your student liked and what they didn't.

Follow up with your counselor.



**Your Campus Visit Hot Spot**

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**COLORADO**

# Campus Visit Hot Spot: Colorado

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Denver University (6,000)

UCCS (12,000)

Regis University (1,500)

Western Colorado Uni. (2,000)

UC Boulder (30,000)

# Finding your academic fit

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- What kind of academic experience do you want?
- Don't get hung up on the name of a major.
- Don't have a major? Know what you like, and find out about resources at that school.

# Finding your social fit

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- Campus AND the rest of its environment
- The rule of three
- How will this school get you where you want to go?



# Your financial fit

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- “Sticker price” vs. actual cost
- Net Price Calculators
- College Navigator
- Talk to your school counselor and find your Rachel



# The admission process

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THE PERCEPTION



THE REALITY



# Building your school set

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Reach or Stretch Schools

Target Schools

Foundational Schools

# ~~Highly Selective~~



# Highly Rejective

- Everyone is awesome.
  - Less of a way to predict who is admitted and who is not.
  - Schools can “shape” the class
  - Admit rates of 15% or less.
- (There are **39** schools that fit into this category.)

# The other 90% of schools:

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The average acceptance rate across the country for four year colleges in Fall 2022 was

68 percent.

# The application itself

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Gather your information before you start.

Use the student's contact information.

Complete ALL sections to the best of your ability!

Use your full name as it appears on your high school transcript.

You do not need to complete the full application in one sitting.

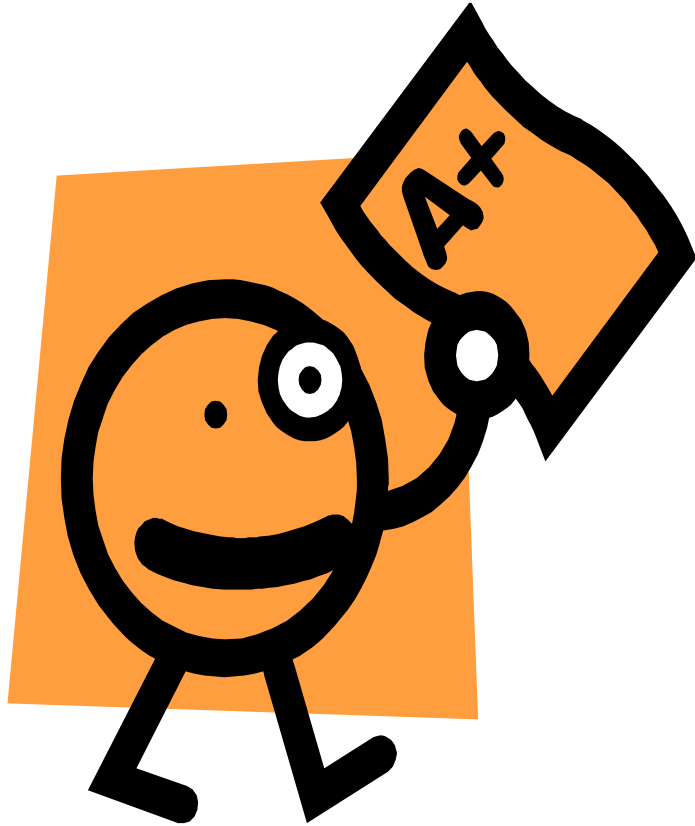
# Quantitative vs. Qualitative

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(OR THE FACTS VS. THE HUMAN BEHIND THEM)

# The Transcript

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- GPA
- Courses taken and grade trends.
- How did you take advantage of the curriculum you were offered?
- Are there specific course requirements for the major?



# List of Activities

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- There are no activities that count more than others
- It's not a contest to see how many things you've done; do what you love.
- Don't forget about work or family responsibilities
- Some schools don't even LOOK at activities as part of the process.
- It's OK to be "well lopsided."



# Letters of Recommendation

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- Can give further insight into the student
- Not just what you've done, but who you are.
- Usually accompanied by a school profile
- Help us to see the student in the parameters of that particular institution
- In other words, *a third party endorsement*

*Want to be really nice? Write a thank you note!*

# Essays and Personal Statements

This past year, I read about 1000 applications.

Over the course of my career, I've read more than **10,000** essays.



# Why do we ask for an essay?

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To provide further insight into you as a **PERSON**, not just a **STUDENT**.

To allow you to highlight your ability to write clearly, concisely and critically.

To give you a forum to show us (NOT tell us) what makes you **YOU**.

To help the admission committee see you as a member of that community.



# The Common Application

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1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

# No matter what topic you choose...

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Stay away from the common and cliché...make it YOURS.

Your thesaurus doesn't need to be your best friend.

Read it out loud before you submit. Does it feel like something you would say?

Is it important to you? Make sure it passes the "So What?" test.

You don't have to have the biggest story ever!

# Nothing is perfect... but it might come close

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- Why are you excited about this school in the first place?
- Can you see yourself as part of the community?
- Is this a **PERFECT** place? Or a **FANTASTIC MATCH** for your abilities, personality and goals?



# Keep In Mind

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- We admit far more students than we can enroll
- It's OK to tell a school you've moved on.
- Only apply to schools in which you are truly interested!





# The money question

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You will not get a financial aid package until you are admitted, so what can you do now?

- Scholarship Searches
  - [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
  - [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)
  - [www.goingmerry.com](http://www.goingmerry.com)
  - [www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)
- Talk to your school counselor and find your Rachel
- Net Price Calculators
- College Navigator



# Quick Mythbusting Comparison!

3.6 GPA  
 1290 SAT  
 SAI=10,000

	Private	Out of State Public	In State Public
Cost of Attendance	61,945	39,175	40,474
Merit Award			
Institutional Aid			
State Aid			
Federal Grant			
Federal Loan			
Work-Study Eligibility			
Total Aid Awarded to Student			
Out Of Pocket			

# Fun with the FAFSA

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The 2023-24 FAFSA has gone through a simplification. What does this mean for you?

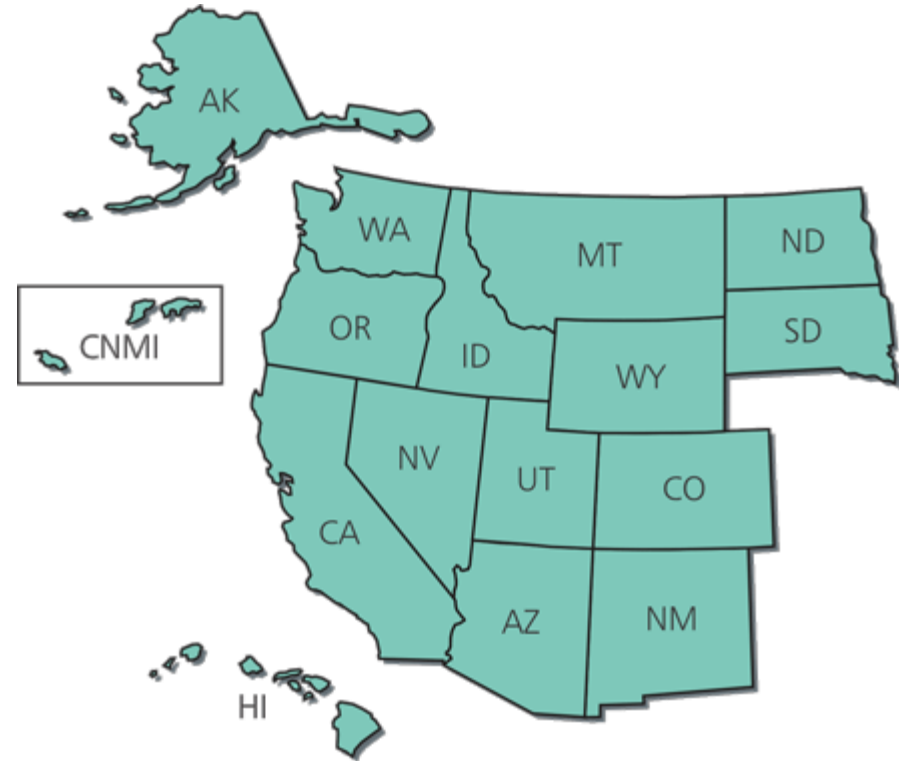
- The form **should** be simpler to complete.
- If you have completed a FAFSA with an older child, you will notice that the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) has been replaced with the Student Aid Index (SAI)
- Bottom line: we're all being introduced to the new form together. Stay in touch with your admission counselor for further guidance.

# Western Undergraduate Exchange

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## WUE

- 160+ Institutions Participating
- WUE amount and qualifications vary by school
  - Could be degree specific
- Great question to ask your admission counselor if you are looking at out of state schools in the West.



# What can you do now?

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- Help your student find their dealbreakers
- Be an advocate for them!
- Set up a college-specific email account
- “Find your Julie”
- Start your research and get out and visit!

# Questions?

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