

# Two Year College Planning Guide Book

Class of 2025



## Important Guidance Office Contact Information

**School Phone:** (518) 884-7150

**Guidance Fax:** (518) 885-1585

**School CEEB Code:** 330-305

\*You will need this code when registering for the ACT or SAT test and possibly for some financial aid forms

**School Website:** [www.bsccd.org](http://www.bsccd.org)

Please see the **Guidance** page for additional information.

### **SCHOOL COUNSELORS:**

Ms. Colleen Bengle

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Mrs. Christina Carlson

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Mrs. Lyndsey Wilcox

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## Responsibilities for the College Application Process

<https://student.naviance.com/ballstonspa>

Username = last name + 1<sup>st</sup> two letters of 1<sup>st</sup> name

### Students will:

- ✓ Add active applications to “Colleges I am applying to” under the Colleges tabs in Naviance
- ✓ Request transcripts in Naviance
- ✓ Complete the Counselor Notification Form
- ✓ Send official SAT or ACT scores to colleges you have applied to via [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) (if required)
- ✓ Review available scholarships
- ✓ Remember that requests for transcripts are due **3 weeks prior** to your first college application deadline.

### Counselors will:

- ✓ Submit the official high school transcript

# BALLSTON SPA HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

## TIMELINE

### JUNIOR YEAR

#### JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH

- Research colleges
- Explore interests and majors
- Attend Junior conference with your school counselor

#### APRIL, MAY, JUNE

- College visits and tours
- Take your SAT/ACT exams
- Attend College Fairs
- Register for NCAA Clearinghouse (for DI & DII athletes)

#### JULY, AUGUST

- Continue college visits
- Start your applications



### SENIOR YEAR

#### SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

- Research and apply for scholarships on Naviance and Schoology
- Identify colleges you wish to apply to
- Identify application deadlines

#### DECEMBER - GRADUATION

- Complete FAFSA form (Opens in December)
- Apply for Scholarships
- Receive results, and make decision by May 1 for four year colleges

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## Admission Types

### Early Decision

binding; early deadline; one school

### Early Action

non-binding; more than one school

### Rolling Admission

no deadline; reviewed as received

### Regular Admission

concrete deadline, then reviewed

## College Visits

- Tour (in-person and virtual)
- Meet with admissions staff
- Attend a class
- Talk to coaches
- Visit dorms and the dining hall
- Campus activities
- Campus safety
- Surrounding community

## Questions to Ask

- Most common major?
- Admissions requirements?
- AP/IB/College credit transfer?
- Graduation rate?
- Average class size?
- Scholarship process?
- Part time jobs?
- Car on campus?

## Financial Aid

- **Free App for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

<https://studentaid.gov>

Opens December 2024

- **TAP Application**

NYS Schools

- **CSS Profile**

Selective schools institutional aid

## Scholarships

- Schoology & Naviance
- Online search engines
- School, state or company specific scholarship

## Application Checklist

- Application
- Transcript
- SAT/ACT Scores (test optional)
- Essay
- Resume/ Portfolio
- Letters of Recommendation (counselors and teachers)
- Application Fee



**Please contact your School Counselor on Schoology or visit the School Counseling Office for more information.**



# ADMISSIONS INFORMATION SUMMARY - 2023

## COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Campus Name	ENROLLMENT		STUDENT ONLY HOUSING	HONORS PROGRAM	EOP ADMISSION	
	Full-time	Part-time			Projected Freshman Enrollment	H.S. GPA
Adirondack	1,400	1,270	On Campus	No	40	70-85
Broome+	2,515	3,001	On Campus	No	35	72-83
Cayuga+	831	2,648	Off Campus	Yes	8	70-84
Clinton	316	690	Off Campus	Yes		
Columbia-Greene+	461	986	No	Yes		
Corning	1,225	2,676	On Campus	Yes	28	72-85
Dutchess+	2,556	4,491	On Campus	Yes	60	77-82
Erie+	4,546	3,301	Off Campus	Yes	16	75-88
FIT+	6,885	986	On Campus	Yes	61	78-82
Finger Lakes+	1,957	3,374	On Campus	Yes	17	79-86
Fulton-Montgomery+	691	1,160	On Campus	No	50	70-87
Genesee+	1,445	2,878	On Campus	Yes	60	70-83
Herkimer+	1,054	976	On Campus	Yes		
Hudson Valley+	4,481	4,660	Off Campus	Yes	45	75-86
Jamestown	1,407	2,349	On Campus	Yes		
Jefferson+	1,166	1,126	On Campus	Yes	28	73-81
Mohawk Valley+	2,318	3,221	On Campus	Yes	45	76-87
Monroe+	4,431	3,852	On Campus	Yes	48	75-84
Nassau+	6,711	5,285	Off Campus	Yes	44	76-82
Niagara+	2,114	1,724	On Campus	Yes	20	69-86
North Country	595	980	On Campus	No		
Onondaga+	2,797	4,523	On Campus	Yes	46	70-84
Orange+	1,991	2,994	No	Yes	25	70-84
Rockland	2,556	2,916	Off Campus	Yes	35	70-84
Schenectady+	1,013	2,677	Off Campus	No	11	72-84
Suffolk+	9,117	10,926	No	Yes	50	72-80
Sullivan+	633	1,048	On Campus	No		
Tompkins Cortland	1,074	3,368	On Campus	Yes		
Ulster+	992	1,923	No	Yes	20	77-85
Westchester+	4,222	4,585	No	Yes	35	75-85

### Transfer. Guaranteed.

Start your education at one of our community colleges. Once you graduate, SUNY will help you transfer seamlessly to one of our four-year colleges.

Your SUNY AA or AS degree will come with guarantees.

- Guaranteed acceptance to a SUNY four-year college
- Guaranteed junior standing in a parallel program
- Satisfaction of completed general education requirements
- Maximum acceptance of core courses in your SUNY Transfer Path

### 2024-25 EOP Income Eligibility

Household Size	Eligible Income
1	<b>\$26,973</b>
2	<b>\$36,482</b>
3	<b>\$45,991</b>
4	<b>\$55,500</b>
5	<b>\$65,009</b>
6	<b>\$74,518</b>
7	<b>\$84,027</b>
8	<b>\$93,536*</b>

*\*For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$9,509 for each additional person.*

**1.800.342.3811**  
**[www.suny.edu/attend](http://www.suny.edu/attend)**

**[askSUNY@suny.edu](mailto:askSUNY@suny.edu)**

+Contains 2022 Data.

 Not Offered

# 20 Questions to Ask College Representatives

Whether you meet them at a college fair or on a campus visit, college representatives genuinely enjoy talking to high school students and answering questions about their college. The following questions will help start a good dialogue.

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1. What makes your college unique?
  2. For what academic programs is your college known?
  3. How would you describe the students at your college? Where are most of them from?
  4. Where do students hang out on campus?
  5. What happens on weekends — are there things to do on campus or in town, or do most students go home?
  6. Are fraternities and sororities a big part of campus life?
  7. What are the housing options for freshmen?
  8. Do many students live off campus?
  9. Is there a sports complex or fitness center?
  10. What are the most popular clubs and activities?
  11. What's the security like on campus?
  12. What's the surrounding area like? Is it easy to get around?
  13. What are the most popular majors?
  14. How would you describe the academic pressure and workload?
  15. What support services (academic advisers, tutors, etc.) are available?
  16. Do I need to bring my own computer?
  17. What's the faculty like? Are they accessible outside of class?
  18. Are there opportunities for internships?
  19. Is there job placement help for graduates?
  20. Are there any big changes in the works that I should know about?



# Financial Aid 101

What is financial aid? Financial aid is money that can help you pay for college. Some aid needs to be paid back or earned, and some aid is a gift. Here are the most important things you should know about financial aid.

## 4 QUICK FACTS ON FINANCIAL AID

### 1 MORE THAN \$185 BILLION IN AID IS AVAILABLE

There are four main sources:

- Federal government (largest source)
- State governments
- Colleges and universities
- Private organizations

### 2 THE FAFSA IS THE PLACE TO START—AND IT'S FREE

To qualify for many types of aid, you'll need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This gives you access to these types of aid:

- **Grants and scholarships:** money you don't have to pay back
- **Work-study jobs:** paid, part-time work that's generally on campus
- **Loans:** money you need to pay back, usually after you graduate

### 3 THE FAFSA IS CONVENIENT

Complete the form online at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) or download paper forms there. You can import your family's tax information directly from the IRS website.

Begin filling out your FAFSA Be sure  
to also opt in to the College Board Opportunity Scholarships at [cb.org/opportunity](https://cb.org/opportunity) for a chance at the Complete the FAFSA scholarship worth \$1,000.

### 4 MORE AID IS OUT THERE

Once you've completed the FAFSA, you should apply for these types of aid:

- Financial aid at the colleges to which you are applying
- Private scholarships for which you're eligible

Once you identify a college that's a good fit for you, you should investigate your financial aid options. Each college has its own financial aid policies—guidelines for deciding who qualifies for aid, what type of aid is available, and similar questions.

To be sure you understand what's available, check to see if the answers to these questions appear on the college's website or in their print materials. If not, schedule a phone meeting or an interview with a member of the financial aid staff if you're going to be visiting the college.

## QUESTIONS FOR FINANCIAL AID OFFICERS:

- What's the average total cost—including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, travel, and other personal expenses—for the first year?
- How much have your costs increased over the last three years?
- Does financial need have an effect on admission decisions?
- What's the priority deadline to apply for financial aid, and when am I notified about financial aid award decisions?
- How is financial aid affected if I apply under an early decision or early action program?
- Does the college offer need-based and merit-based financial aid?
- Are there scholarships available that aren't based on financial need, and do I need to complete a separate application for them?
- Does the college require me to fill out the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®?
- If the financial aid package the college offers isn't enough, are there any conditions under which it can be reconsidered, such as changes in my enrollment status or my family's financial situation (or that of a family member)?
- How does the aid package change from year to year?
- What are the terms of the programs included in the aid package?
- What are the academic requirements or other conditions for the renewal of financial aid, including scholarships?
- When can I expect to receive bills from the college?



# What to Do When Your Financial Aid Award Isn't Enough

Colleges want to provide financial aid to their students, but they don't always have enough funds to meet the full need of every student. That means a school may not award you enough financial aid to cover all your college expenses. Or maybe your family's financial situation has changed, and you now need more aid than the college awarded you. If you're in either of these situations, follow these steps.

## 1 Contact the Financial Aid Office

Call or email the financial aid office. If someone there can't answer your question in a phone call or email, make an appointment to meet with a financial aid officer, if possible.

Talking with a financial aid officer can help you learn how you can make up the difference between what you need and what the college awarded you. Financial aid officers want to help you attend their college, so they'll work with you to find the right solution.

You can start by asking questions like the following:

- What are my options for receiving more aid?
- How can I find scholarships to help pay for college?
- Can I talk to someone at the college about finding part-time work?
- Do you have any advice about getting a private loan?

## 2 File an Appeal

If there's a significant change in your family's finances—such as a drop in income or unexpected medical expenses—you can submit an appeal asking the financial aid office to review your award. Call the office to find out what the college's standard appeals process is so you can follow it. Be ready to provide proof of the change in your circumstances, such as bank statements, pay stubs, or medical bills. But remember, it will take you time to prepare the appeal, and it will take the college time to act on it.

If your appeal isn't successful, you may want to consider applying for a private loan or explore other ways to pay for college.

## 3 Don't Be Shy About Asking for Help

No matter what your situation, don't be shy about contacting the financial aid office. Financial aid officers are there to answer your questions.

Visit **bigfuture.org** for more information.

## HOW DO I GET FINANCIAL AID FOR COLLEGE?

<b>WHAT FORMS SHOULD I FILL OUT?</b>	<b>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</b>	FAFSA is required by almost all schools to qualify for financial aid You may begin your FAFSA application in December of your senior year. File the FAFSA online or by mail at <a href="http://www.studentaid.gov">www.studentaid.gov</a> Call 1-800-4FED-AID for help with the FAFSA and to find out specific information about various federal student aid programs.
	<b>CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE</b>	This is a program of College Board (they do not award any money) Many schools require the PROFILE to award nonfederal student aid Allows you to give a complete picture of financial circumstances Register for the PROFILE online at <a href="http://www.collegeboard.org">www.collegeboard.org</a> Not required by all schools. Contact the school to find out the deadline.
	<b>Other Forms</b>	The college you attend may have additional forms. Contact the college's Financial Aid Office for more information.

<b>FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>RE-PAYMENT</b>
<b>Federal PELL Grant</b>	For students who meet federal criteria for financial need. The expected Family Contribution is determined from the FAFSA.	NONE
<b>Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)</b>	Awarded to low-income students based on availability of funds for college. Must also be eligible for a Pell Grant.	NONE
<b>NYS Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)</b>	Helps eligible New York residents attending in-state post-secondary institution pay for college. Apply by filling out the FAFSA.	NONE
<b>Federal Perkins Loan</b>	Students with exceptional financial need. 5% interest-rate loan.	Up to 10 years
<b>Federal Stafford Loan</b>	<b>Subsidized:</b> For students with financial need. Principal and interest are deferred. <b>Unsubsidized:</b> Awarded regardless of family income. Principal deferred until student leaves school, interest accrues while in college.	Up to 10 years
<b>Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)</b>	Allows parents/stepparents to borrow up to the full cost minus financial aid received.	Up to 10 years
<b>Federal College Work Study</b>	Allows a student with financial need to work part-time to earn financial aid award money.	NONE
<b>Private Grants &amp; Scholarships</b>	Financial aid offered by numerous private organizations (e.g., Elks, PTS, Empire State, etc.)	NONE
<b>Private Loans</b>	Non-federal loans available to students/parents from banks, credit unions & other private sources.	Varies
<b>NYS Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Incentive Program</b>	The NYS STEM Incentive Program provides awards for full-time study up to the annual tuition charged to NYS resident students attending an undergraduate program at the State University of New York (SUNY), or actual tuition charged, whichever is less, for the top 10 percent of students in each New York State high school if they pursue a STEM degree in an associates or bachelor degree program.	Agree to work in a STEM field in New York State for 5 years after graduation
<b>Excelsior Scholarship</b>	The program covers up to \$5,500 towards tuition for eligible SUNY and CUNY students. Applies to families who earn \$125,000 or less.	Agree to work in New York State for 4 years after graduation

## **Start Your Scholarship Search**

**Where to find scholarships:** *Review the scholarship opportunities beginning the fall of your senior year.*

1. Naviance
2. HS School Counseling Schoology Group (select “College & Career” within the “Resources” section then “Scholarship Opportunities & Financial Aid”)
3. Ballston Spa Senior Awards Survey (Google Form is available February of senior year)
4. College websites

### **General Financial Aid Websites:**

[www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov)

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

*You should never pay money to get money!*