



AIM Academy

College Handbook



Terms to Know

Academic Accommodations	Alternative forms of presenting information and/or in the completion of work by students which meets the requirements of the course. Accommodations are granted based upon disability documentation and may include extended test time, note takers, texts on tape, extensions on assignments and the use of various computer software programs.
ACT	American College Testing—a college admission test similar in its use to the SAT. The ACT is scored from 0 to 36 in each of four areas: Reading, English, Math and Science. A composite score is also provided. The ACT also offers an optional writing section which is recommended as colleges which require it vary upon their selectivity ratings. A score conversion chart for the SAT/ACT is provided in this manual.
Admissions Counselor	The college representative who is responsible for presenting information about the college, representing the school to prospective students and families, and reading student applications.
Candidate Reply Date (National Reply Date)	The date by which colleges require accepted applicants to notify the school that they plan to attend. If a student does not respond by the deadline, the school may offer the spot to another student. Typically, the date is May 1 st .
Candidate Notification Date	The date a school informs students of their admissions decision. For most schools, the date is April 15 th .
Class Rank	AIM does not calculate class rank and prefers to consider each student as an individual. Teachers and advisors completing college recommendations will estimate class rank to the nearest decimal if requested on the form.
Certificate Programs	Specific short-term training available at community or technical colleges.

College Board Code	The College Board Code (CEEB) is a number that identifies AIM to testing services and colleges. AIM's number is 393-401
Common Application	One application that is accepted at 296 colleges to reduce the number of applications that students may have to complete.
Case Load	Some colleges may require supplemental information in addition to the application. Each college has a requirement for the number of credits a student must enroll in each semester to be considered a full-time student. As an accommodation, students with a learning disability may qualify for a reduced course load.
Deferred Admission for a Gap Year	After being accepted and admitted, students may choose to delay their enrollment for a year in order to pursue other interests (travel, work, maturity, assist family, etc.). However, students may not enroll at another institution and they must pay a commitment deposit.
Demonstrated Interest	Methods in which students can show attraction to a college which may include requesting information, campus visits, optional interviews, sending thank-you notes and other forms of contact.
Disability Documentation	The psycho-educational assessment which is required to obtain academic accommodations at a college, as well as student's IEP and RR if applicable.
Disability Support Services (DSS)	Each college has its own policies regarding requirements and timeliness of the evaluation (most are within three years) so inquiries are recommended. A service which goes by various names at colleges that determines accommodations for students who must present the office with disability documentation. DSS may be a separate office than a support center which may offer tutoring or other assistance.
Early Action	This admission plan is similar to Early Decision but allows students until May 1 to accept or decline offers of admission. Students are not required to attend the college to which they have been accepted.

Early Decision	This admission plan allows students to apply to their first-choice colleges early in the fall of their senior year. Under this plan, students agree by contract to attend the college to which they have applied by early decision if offered admission. Students may use the early decision option for only one college application and must remove all other applications if accepted. If students are not accepted under the early decision plan, their applications usually join the regular applicant pool and are considered on the regular decision timetable.
ETS	Educational Testing Service - the testing agency of the College Board.
GPA	Grade point average. Cumulative Grade Point Average is not routinely reported at AIM because we prefer not to use a system that measures students against one another.
Modification	A change in a college program or course to allow for equal access or opportunity for completion. Some modifications may include an exemption from a foreign language requirement, a reduced course load, or time extension for graduation.
Open Admissions	An admissions policy which varies by college, but oftentimes refers to admitting any student with a high school diploma or GED.
PLAN	A "Pre-ACT" test—the PLAN is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career /training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years.
Priority Registration	An accommodation in which a student may be allowed to select courses prior to the majority of students in the school.

PSAT	PSAT Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test - the PSAT is a preliminary SAT typically taken by students in their sophomore or junior year of high school. The test is an indicator of success on the SAT and results are used for selection of top scholars for merit scholarships.
Regular Admission	Most college application deadlines are between January 1 st and March 1 st and return decisions to applicants by April 1 st . Admitted students should reply to the college in which they decide to enroll by May 1 st .
Retention Rate	The percentage of students who return for their sophomore year at the college.
Rolling Admission	Colleges using a rolling admission policy review applications as they are received and render decisions for each applicant as his or her file is reviewed.
ROTC	Reserve Officers Training Corps - a scholarship program wherein the military pays for most college expenses plus a stipend. Selected students train during the summers while enrolled in college and meet the military service obligation after graduation.
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test—a college admission test divided in three sections: critical reading, math, and writing. The SAT is scored from 200 to 800 for each section.
SAT Subject Test	SAT Subject Tests are subject tests given in a range of subjects. Most schools do not require SAT Subject Tests for admission, though very selective schools may. SAT Subject Tests scores are also used for placement in freshman courses. Many schools now accept the ACT in lieu of SAT subject tests, but if you are applying to highly competitive colleges, you should check requirements for these tests.
School Profile	The AIM school profile is a description of AIM that includes information about academic programs, courses, and other policies. A copy of the school profile is included in this manual.

- Selective Admission A college's selectivity rating is determined by the number of applications they receive and the number of openings that they have available.
- Substitution/Waiver The replacement or cancellation of a class as long as the waived class does not alter a student's requirements for graduation. Most applications require: a **school report** (including a transcript, school profile and often other information supplied by the guidance department); a **counselor recommendation** (usually completed by a student's academic advisor); and **teacher recommendations** in one or more subjects.



College Counseling Program **Student Calendar**

Freshman Year

- Talk to your parents/advisor/teachers about your plans.
- When selecting electives, consider taking courses that will develop a variety of skills.
- Grades are important. Colleges want to see courses and grades from all four years of high school. See your teachers after school or during office hours for extra help.
- Look into the various extracurricular programs available – volunteer options, work, clubs, sports, performing arts, etc.
- Pursue community service opportunities.
- Keep a list of awards and honors you receive.
- Write down all the activities that you were involved in - both paid and volunteer options and description of what you did.
- Develop good study habits.

SUMMER:

- Get a job or volunteer at an organization of your choice. Work experience is one section on most college applications.
- Keep your academic skills fresh by attending AIM summer program or doing "homework."
- Read daily



College Counseling Program **Student Calendar**

Sophomore Year

Sophomore year of high school marks the beginning of the testing process for college admission. In Sophomore year, students at AIM take the PLAN, the preliminary test for the ACT. It is also the time that students and their families begin planning for updated psycho-educational testing to qualify for ACT accommodations and ultimately for university and college accommodations. AIM provides students with individual guidance that begins the more intensive college selection process. Students are encouraged to begin compiling a list of colleges to visit in the summer after their Sophomore year so that they begin to get a feel for the size, location, and type of college that will best fit their needs.

September

- Advisor confirms that student's classes satisfy college requirements.
- Take electives and get involved in extra-curricular activities that reflect career goals
- Psychologists will register students for the PLAN
- Paperwork and portfolios are gathered to ensure that all possible testing accommodations are being applied for
- Service-Learning opportunities are scheduled for the year that will provide students with meaningful work and will enhance their college applications

October- November

- College Fair and Parent Information Session at AIM
- Preparation for PLAN in Language Arts and Math classes.
- Various colleges and universities are scheduled to visit AIM throughout the year

December-February

- Students take the PLAN in December.
- Sophomores and their parents meet individually with Administration to review scores and discuss options

January/ February

- Students begin group meetings with Administration to begin outlining college selection process.
- Career Academy Interest Inventory and career exploration activities

March

- Spring Break: Students are encouraged to begin college and university visits
- Look at possible majors and develop a list of potential colleges

April/May

- With the guidance of college counselors and college admission professionals, students prepare for mock interviews in preparation for Summer college visits
- Career Fair and Careers Express Workshops at AIM
- Attend College Fairs at area schools and colleges
- Fulfill community service requirement
- Document all honors and awards student has received

June

- Consider selecting honors courses for the following year

Summer

- Continue college visits.
- Develop resume building activities such as service learning, jobs, internships, leadership opportunities

Websites of Interest

- **ACT**
 - www.grockit.com
 - AIM Provided Google app for free ACT tutoring
 - <http://www.act.org/aap/disab/>
 - List of ACT Accommodations
 - <http://www.collegeboard.org/>
 - Website for ACT Testing Registration and Information
- **College Research**
 - www.princetonreview.com
 - Resource for researching college and university statistics
 - http://www.ldonline.org/article/College_Planning_for_Students_with_Learning_Disabilities
 - Article on planning college for students with LD
- **Application Process**
 - www.commonapp.org
 - Resource for understandings application process



College Counseling Program Student Calendar

Junior Year

Mission: Junior year of high school is the most critical year for college preparations. Junior year at AIM provides students with all necessary experiences, processes, and guidance for their college selection process. The final goal is to make sure that students have received all needed ACT work and accommodations, have been provided experiences that will enhance their application and resume, and have thoroughly researched and compiled a list of various colleges and universities. To achieve this goal, students participate in a bi-weekly college preparatory course and parents are scheduled to meet with the college guidance counselor at least 3 times per year.

September

- Psychologists will register students for the Fall ACT (Testing window: 10/26/13 – 11/17/2013)
- Psychologists submit paperwork and documentation for special testing accommodations
- Service-Learning opportunities are scheduled for the year that will provide students with meaningful work and will enhance their college applications

October- November

- Parent Information Session at AIM
- College Fair
- Preparation for ACT in Language Arts and Math classes.
- Dates for ACT:

October 26, 2013 – November 17, 2013*

December 14, 2013 – January 5, 2014

February 8, 2014 – March 2, 2014*

April 12, 2014 – May 4, 2014

June 14, 2014 – July 6, 2014*

* Recommended for AIM Juniors

- Various colleges and universities are brought into AIM to present to the Junior class

December-February

- ACT results are returned to AIM. Juniors and their parents meet individually with administration and college professionals to review scores and discuss options

January/ February

- Students begin group meetings with psychologists. Discussions revolve around interests, strengths, needs, and testing accommodations.
- Discussion about eligibility to take English classes at Cabrini College in Senior year begins
- With the guidance of college admission professionals, students prepare for potential interviews.
- February ACT Testing: 2/8/2014 – 3/2/2014

March

- Spring Break: Continue college and university visits
- Register for June ACT
- Individual student and parent conferences with AIM staff.
- Begin initial discussion to explore interests, abilities, test results, goals, and appropriate colleges or alternatives.

April

- Practice sessions for the common application are begun
- Students continue to write college essays with the guidance of AIM writing teachers, administration, and college counselor.
- Follow-up conferences at AIM with students, parents, and college counselor

May

- SAT College Fair at Villanova University
- Job shadowing experiences begin

June

- ACT Testing

Summer

- Continue colleges and visits.
- Continue working on application essay
- Decide which teachers you would like to have write your letters of recommendation
- Prepare for Cabrini College English 101 Coursework
- Attend AIM's Summer ACT Prep Program.
- Complete Common Application
- Use summer months to gain exposure to fields of interest (e.g. volunteer, job shadow, employment).

Websites of Interest

- **ACT**
 - www.grockit.com
 - AIM Provided Google app for free ACT tutoring
 - <http://www.act.org/aap/disab/>
 - List of ACT Accommodations
 - <http://www.collegeboard.org/>
 - Website for ACT Testing Registration and Information
- **College Research**
 - www.princetonreview.com
 - Resource for researching college and university statistics
 - http://www.ldonline.org/article/College_Planning_for_Students_with_Learning_Disabilities
 - Article on planning college for students with LD
- **Application Process**
 - www.commonapp.org
 - Resource for understanding application process



College Counseling Program Student Calendar

Senior Year

Mission:

Senior year of high school can be incredibly daunting for students who are transitioning from high school to college. On top of their increased school workload, students also have to handle massive amounts of college paperwork. Students at AIM are guided through this process. They work closely with teachers, administration, and college counselors to stay organized, enthusiastic, and invested in the college application process. The year is divided into three parts. Part one consists of making sure that students follow the appropriate timetable to ensure that all their forms are complete and on time. Part two consists of waiting for acceptance letters and then taking time to weigh all possible options. Part three consists of picking a path and then working closely with the chosen college or university to make sure the transition from AIM is smooth and that they are ready for their freshman year of college. To achieve these goals, students meet regularly with AIM administration and psychologists, and their progress is closely monitored throughout the year.

August

- Cabrini dual enrollment classes begin

September

- Talk to your advisor to make sure that your portfolio is as strong as possible and will satisfy AIM's graduation and college admission requirements.
- Consider signing up for the Honors option for classes that you have interest in.
- Register for the ACT or SAT as necessary—seniors should make sure that they have registered to have official copies of their standardized tests (ACT/SAT) sent directly to their selected colleges. Seniors are responsible to check individual colleges for their score reporting policies.
- Final ACT dates: October 26, 2013 – November 17, 2013
- Begin test prep independently or sign up for tutoring as needed.
- Familiarize yourself with the college application process.
- Begin completing common application.
- Add and delete schools to your list of colleges. Make sure you meet the college's requirements.
- Check on requirements for LD program and possible separate application.

Double-check deadlines!!!

- Most early decision deadlines are between October 1 and November 1; if you are going to use this option, get your application process started.
- Students meet individually with Mrs. Roberts to discuss plans for next year

October

- AIM Academy College Fair
- Individual colleges visit throughout the month.
- Make a final list of schools and submit to college counselor by November 1st.
- Continue to prepare for standardized tests.
- Give any recommendation forms to appropriate faculty and make sure that your portions of the form are completed. Forms must be given to teachers two to four weeks before any deadline. Please include addressed envelope to the respective colleges.
- Begin writing your college essays and have them proofread by English teacher and college counselor.

November

- List of colleges to apply to should be submitted to college counselor by November 1st.
- Continue working on college applications.
- All essays should be completed early in the month.

December

- Early decision replies usually arrive this month.
- If not already done, make sure your standardized test scores are getting sent to the schools of your choice.
- Schedule any remaining college interviews as necessary.
- Begin scholarship search and application process. Research local scholarship opportunities during winter vacation.

January

- Cabrini dual enrollment classes begin
- Investigate and apply for various financial aid options. You must complete the FAFSA paperwork prior to February 1st. See www.fafsa.ed.gov for more information.
- Have transcripts sent to colleges that you are applying to.
- You may wish to contact the admission offices of the schools to make sure they received all of the required materials.
- Continue to aggregate your community service hours.
- Write thank you notes to the admissions officer following interview.

February

- Complete your scholarship applications.
- If you applied for financial aid with FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks of applying.

March/April

- All college decisions received by April 15th. Review each offer and seek additional information, if necessary. Make final decision.
- Financial aid awards will be included in your acceptance letter or should arrive soon after.
- Compare the offers that you receive, including the financial aid and scholarship opportunities.
- When you choose a school that has accepted you, you will have to send your commitment along with a check as a deposit. This should typically be done by May 1st.

May

- If you were placed on a waiting list and have decided to wait for an opening, inform the college that you are still interested. Ask the admissions counselor how you can strengthen your application.
- Notify the colleges that accepted you that you will not be attending their institution as applicable.
- Senior internships.

June

- Final transcripts sent to colleges. All offers of admissions are contingent upon your current level of achievement during your final term of high school.
- Contact your college to determine when fees are due for tuition and room and board. Find out when any student orientations begin.
- Graduation

SUMMER AFTER GRADUATION:

- Participate in freshman orientation programs at the college you will attend.
- Make sure that you will have some sort of medical insurance while in school.
- Gather any experience that you believe will benefit you in the future - either for school, summer jobs, or careers.

What is the Difference Between High School and College for Students with Learning Differences?

High School: The school district is responsible for identifying a student's disability and creating the appropriate environment for the student to learn as documented in the I.E.P.

College: The student must identify his/her disability to the college and to advocate for the necessary accommodations from the disability resource center and faculty. The I.E.P. does not exist.

High School: A student is eligible for accommodations based upon a diagnosis.

College: An updated psycho-educational assessment, typically including a WAIS test and an achievement battery (*typically, although this is determined by each school*) is necessary for a student to qualify for the necessary accommodations.

High School: Parents act as primary advocates and receive official reports from the school.

College: Students must be able to self-advocate for his/her needs and may or may not allow contact between the school and parents.

High School: The faculty and school may establish study halls and study times.

College: Students must be able to plan and manage their time independently and/or seek out any necessary assistance.

High School: Attendance in school is mandatory and monitored.

College: Colleges and professors vary on attendance requirements. While some believe that it is a student's responsibility to attend, others factor it into the student's grade.

High School: Schools may be required to adjust a course to meet a student's needs.

College: Course adjustments or reduced course loads are at the discretion of the college.

Adapted from sources from the University of North Carolina and the University of New Hampshire

Website of interest:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

ACT vs. SAT Which Test should be Taken?

Both the SAT and the ACT are examinations used in the college admissions process for the purpose of rating a student's abilities and likelihood for success in college. For many students, testing is not the best way to measure a student's ability. Although there are more schools moving away from this admissions requirement (see www.fairtest.org for a list), they are still a minority.

The ACT is a test based on a high school curriculum. The best way to prepare for the test is by taking a challenging course load in high school. Tutoring can help for many students, but not everyone improves their scores through tutoring.

The SAT is designed to measure aptitude in order to predict success in college. Recent research is finding that a student's GPA is a better predictor of success in college than the SAT, and this is probably true for the ACT as well. Tutoring is typically helpful for the SAT as there are various strategies (e.g., whether to guess or not) that can be implemented to improve scores.

The ACT and SAT test different areas of knowledge and ask different types of questions. Each can be more challenging than the other in certain areas. If a student is strong in math and has difficulty attending to details, the ACT is the test to take. If a student has a strong vocabulary and is challenged by reading graphs and charts, the SAT should be taken. Generally, students with learning differences have performed better on the ACT than they have on the SAT.

If you are uncertain which test to take, it is recommended that students take both the PLAN (pre-ACT) and PSAT (pre-SAT) during the sophomore year in order to see which examination the student prefers. Students are also welcome to take both the ACT and SAT if they are so inclined.

Accommodations: Prior approval for accommodations are required for the PSAT, SAT, and the ACT and are determined and granted by each testing agency. An evaluation (disability documentation) similar to the one used for admission to AIM is required for approval. Check each agency's websites for documentation requirements. ACT requires that testing be completed within three years of the date of application for accommodations while SAT will allow for testing that is five years old.

SAT/ACT Conversion of Scores

SAT to ACT		ACT to SAT					
SAT Verbal + Math Score	ACT Composite Score	ACT Composite Score	SAT Verbal + Math Score				
		36	1600				
1570-1600	35	35	1580				
1510-1560	34	34	1530				
1450-1500	33	33	1460				
1390-1440	32	32	1410				
1350-1380	31	31	1360				
1310-1340	30	30	1320				
1270-1300	29	29	1280				
1230-1260	28	28	1240				
1200-1220	27	27	1210				
1160-1190	26	26	1170				
1120-1150	25	25	1140				
1090-1110	24	24	1100				
1050-1080	23	23	1060				
1010-1040	22	22	1030				
970-1000	21	21	990				
930-960	20	20	950				
890-920	19	19	910				
840-880	18	18	860				
800-830	17	17	820				
750-790	16	16	770				
700-740	15	15	720				
630-690	14	14	670				
570-620	13	13	600				
510-560	12	12	540				
450-500	11	11	480				
410-440	10	10	430				
400	1-9	1-9	400				
Adapted from <u>The K&W Guide to Col</u>							
<i>STEPS</i>							

Test Prep

There are a variety of options available to students to prepare for the ACT or SAT. Some choose to study during the summer and others after experiencing their first test in order to get a better feel for test items and where to focus their efforts.

Here are some options to consider:

- 1) Private test prep companies.
- 2) Hire an individual tutor for a specific section or two. Contact the guidance office for the list of tutors.
- 3) Students work independently. Motivated students can buy one of many test prep books and ask for assistance from teachers as necessary.

These sites offer a full length practice test:

www.act.org

www.collegeboard.com

www.princetonreview.com

The following sites allow students to work on specific sections of a test, strategies, and vocabulary:

www.Number2.com

www.testprepreview.com

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.

Coordinated LD Services

- The majority of colleges fit into this category.
- Schools may inform faculty of the student's need for accommodations, but the student will need to be moderately active in regard to self-advocacy.
- They will have a "Learning Center" (or similarly named program) with additional services for LD students.
- There will be an LD specialist and professionals with some specific LD experience and/or training. The specialist may be involved in the admissions process.
- The center will usually work on a drop-in basis with part-time staff and peer tutors who may be undergraduate or graduate students. There is not necessarily a single service provider who will work with the same students routinely.
- Some programs will provide group workshops to assist students with learning strategies, advocacy training, note-taking and test-taking skills.
- These services will **not** include intense 1:1 work several times per week.
- There is no additional cost for these services.
- Additional accommodations include:
 - Organizational assistance Group workshops
 - Course substitutions Pre-enrollment preparation

Comprehensive Program

- This program offers the most support for students with a learning disability.
- The program may have a separate admissions process from the college.
- The program will have several learning specialists; professional tutors are available as well as peer tutors in some areas.
- Students will have an assigned advisor who the student meets with on a scheduled basis.
- Students are involved in developing their support plans and typically have to sign a contract agreeing to participate for the semester or year.
- There is a greater opportunity for 1:1 attention and support and a student typically works with the same tutor(s) consistently.
- There is often a fee for this level of service, and students are usually allowed to wean themselves from this level of service to less structured, coordinated services available.
- Assistive technology is readily available.
- There is usually a separate building/space for the program.

- There may be mandatory programs that the students have to participate in (classes, workshops on organization, self-advocacy, etc.)
- Writing labs and math labs are also typically available to all students.
- Additional accommodations may include:

Monitoring of grades	Monitoring of attendance
Classes taught at center	Feedback to parents
Notification to faculty	Priority registration

**Colleges with Comprehensive
Support Programs**

Adelphi University	New York
Alliance University College	Calgary, Canada
American International College	Massachusetts
American University	Washington, D.C.
Augsburg College	Minnesota
Barat College	Illinois
Barry University	Florida
Beacon College	Florida
Brenau University	Georgia
Calhoun Community College (2-year)	Alabama
Centenary College	New Jersey
College Misericordia	Pennsylvania
College of Mount Saint Joseph	Ohio
Community College of Allegheny County (2-year)	Pennsylvania
Concordia College	New York
Curry College	Massachusetts
Davis and Elkins College	West Virginia
Dean College (2-year)	Massachusetts
DePaul University	Illinois
Dowling College	New York
Earlham College	Indiana
East Stroudsburg University	Pennsylvania
Eastern New Mexico University - Roswell (2-year)	New Mexico
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania
Endicott College	Massachusetts
Fairleigh Dickinson University	New Jersey
Finlandia University	Michigan
Fontbonne University	Missouri
Fresno City College (2-year)	California
Gannon University	Pennsylvania
Georgian Court University	New Jersey
Graceland University	Iowa
Grambling State University	Louisiana
Green Mountain College	Vermont
Heartland Community College (2-year)	Illinois

Hofstra University	New York
Iona College	New York
Johnson State College	Vermont
Lake Erie College	Ohio
Landmark College (2-year)	Vermont
Lewis and Clark Community College (2-year)	Illinois
Limestone College	South Carolina
Long Island University - C.W. Post	New York
Loras College	Iowa
Louisiana College	Louisiana
Lynn University	Florida
Manhattanville College	New York
Marist College	New York
Marshall University	West Virginia
Marymount Manhattan College	New York
McDaniel College	Maryland
Mercyhurst College	Pennsylvania
Metropolitan College of New York	New York
Metropolitan Community College - Longview (2-year)	Missouri
Metropolitan Community College - Penn Valley(2-year)	Missouri
Miami Dade College (2-year)	Florida
Middlesex County College (2-year)	New Jersey
Mitchell College	Connecticut
Monmouth University	New Jersey
Morningside College	Iowa
Mount Ida College	Massachusetts
Muskingum College	Ohio
New England College	New Hampshire
New Jersey City University	New Jersey
New York Institute of Technology	New York
Northeastern University	Massachusetts
Northern Arizona University	Arizona
Notre Dame College	Ohio
Pine Manor College	Massachusetts
Post University	Connecticut
Pratt Institute	New York
Reinhardt College	Georgia
Rochester Institute of Technology	New York

Roosevelt University	Illinois
Sacred Heart University	Connecticut
Saint Gregory's University	Oklahoma
Saint Thomas Aquinas College	New York
Schreiner University	Texas
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale	Illinois
Southern Vermont College	Vermont
Spencerian College - Lexington	Kentucky
Stephens College	Missouri
SUNY at Alfred	New York
Truckee Meadow Community College	California
Union College	Nebraska
University of Arizona	Arizona
University of California - Irvine	California
University of Denver	Colorado
University of Hartford	Connecticut
University of Indianapolis	Indiana
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	North Carolina
University of the Ozarks	Arkansas
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh	Wisconsin
Ursuline College	Ohio
Utica College	New York
Vincennes University	Indiana
West Virginia Wesleyan College	West Virginia
Westfield State College	Massachusetts
Westminster College	Missouri

QUESTION: Are colleges that offer comprehensive support programs less challenging than colleges without them? Are these "learning disabled" schools?

No. The level of challenge at a school is determined by the admissions criteria and not by whether the school offers a comprehensive support program. Schools specifically designed for students with learning disabilities include Landmark College in Vermont and Beacon College in Florida whereas the University of Arizona, Northeastern University, the University of Denver and Curry College offer comprehensive support but also serve students who do not require accommodations.

**Colleges with Coordinated
Service Programs**

Abilene Christian University	Texas
Adrian College	Michigan
Albertus Magnus College	Connecticut
Anderson University	Indiana
Anna Maria College	Massachusetts
Assumption College	Massachusetts
Appalachian State University	North Carolina
Arizona State University	Arizona
Baker University	Kansas
Bakersfield College	California
Ball State University	Indiana
Bay State College	Massachusetts
Becker College	Massachusetts
Beloit College	Wisconsin
Binghamton University	New York
Black Hills State University	South Dakota
Boston College	Massachusetts
Boston University	Massachusetts
Bradley University	Illinois
Brenau University	Georgia
Brigham Young University	Utah
Brown University	Rhode Island
Bryant University	Rhode Island
Cal Polytechnic - San Luis Obispo	California
Caldwell College	New Jersey
California State Polytechnic University - Pomona	California
California State University - Chico	California
California State University - Monterey Bay	California
California State University - Northridge	California
California State University - San Bernardino	California
Calvin College	Michigan
Case Western Reserve University	Ohio
The Catholic University of America	District of Columbia
Cazenovia College*	New York
Cedar Crest College*	Pennsylvania

Central Ohio Technical College	Ohio
Champlain College	Vermont
Clarion University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania
Clark University	Massachusetts
Colby-Sawyer College*	New Hampshire
Colgate College	New York
College of Charleston	South Carolina
College of New Jersey	New Jersey
The College of Saint Catherine	Minnesota
College of Siskiyous	California
College of William and Mary	Virginia
College of Wooster	Ohio
Colorado College	Colorado
Columbia Union College	Maryland
Connecticut College	Connecticut
Coppin State University	Maryland
Cornell University	New York
Daniel Webster College	New Hampshire
Davidson College	North Carolina
Denison University	Ohio
DePaul University	Illinois
DeSales University*	Pennsylvania
Dickinson College	Pennsylvania
Drew University	New Jersey
Duke University	North Carolina
Earlham College	Indiana
East Carolina University	North Carolina
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania
Eastern Kentucky University	Kentucky
Eastern Washington University	Washington
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania
Elizabethtown College	Pennsylvanis
Emmanuel College	Massachusetts
Emory University	Georgia
Evangel College	Missouri
Fairfield University	Connecticut
Ferris State University	Michigan
Ferrum College	Virginia
Fitchburg State College	Massachusetts

Florida A&M University	Florida
Florida Atlantic University	Florida
Florida Gulf Coast University	Florida
Florida Southern College	Florida
Florida State University	Florida
Franklin Pierce University	New Hampshire
George Washington University	District of Columbia
Georgetown University	District of Columbia
Georgia Southern University	Georgia
Georgia State University	Georgia
Georgian Court College	New Jersey
Grand View College	Iowa
Green Mountain College*	Vermont
Harding University	Arkansas
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	New York
Hocking College	Ohio
Hood College	Maryland
Illinois State University	Illinois
Indian Hills Community College	Iowa
Indiana University - Bloomington	Indiana
Indian Hill Community College	Iowa
Ithaca College	New York
Iowa State University	Iowa
Jacksonville State University	Alabama
Johnson and Wales University	Rhode Island
Juniata College	Pennsylvania
Kansas State University	Kansas
Kean University	New Jersey
Keene State College	New Hampshire
Kent State University	Ohio
Keuka College	New York
Keystone College*	Pennsylvania
Knox College	Illinois
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania
Lasell College	Massachusetts
Lawrence Technological University	Michigan
Lee University	Tennessee
Lehigh University	Pennsylvania
Lenoir-Rhyne College	North Carolina

Liberty University	Virginia
Linfield College	Oregon
Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge	Louisiana
Lynchburg College	Virginia
Manchester College	Indiana
Manhattan College	New York
Marian College of Fond du Lac	Wisconsin
Marywood University	Pennsylvania
Maryville College	Tennessee
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	Massachusetts
Miami University	Ohio
Michigan State University	Michigan
Middle Tennessee State University	Tennessee
Minot State University	North Dakota
Montana Technical College	Montana
National-Louis University	Illinois
Neumann College*	Pennsylvania
New England Culinary Institute	Vermont
New York University	New York
Nichols College	Massachusetts
North Carolina State University	North Carolina
North Dakota State University	North Dakota
Northern Arizona University	Arizona
Northern Illinois University	Illinois
Northern Michigan University	Michigan
Norwich University	Vermont
Nova Southeastern University	Florida
Ohio State University - Columbus	Ohio
Old Dominion University	Virginia
Pace University NYC	New York
Pennsylvania State Univ - University Park	Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh State University	Kansas
Providence College	Rhode Island
Quinnipiac University	Connecticut
Reedley College	California
Rhode Island College	Rhode Island
Rider University	New Jersey
Rocky Mountain College	Montana
Roger Williams University	Rhode Island

Saint Ambrose University	Iowa
Saint Anselm College	New Hampshire
Saint Bonaventure University	New York
Saint Leo College	Florida
Saint Michael's College	Vermont
Saint Thomas University	Florida
Salve Regina University	Rhode island
San Diego State University	California
San Francisco State University	California
San Jose State University	California
Santa Clara University	California
Santa Rosa Junior College	California
Seton Hall University*	New Jersey
Sierra College	California
Sonoma State University	California
Southeastern University	Florida
Southern Connecticut State University	Connecticut
Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville	Illinois
Southern Maine Technical College	Maine
Southern Methodist University	Texas
Southern New Hampshire University	New Hampshire
Southern Wesleyan University	South Carolina
Southwest Missouri State University	Missouri
Southwest Texas State University	Texas
Springfield College	Massachusetts
Standard University	California
Stonehill College	Massachusetts
Suffolk University	Massachusetts
SUNY at Albany	New York
SUNY at New Paltz	New York
SUNY at Stony Brook	New York
SUNY College of Technology at Farmingdale	New York
SUNY College of Technology at Delhi	New York
Syracuse University	New York
Tarleton State University	Texas
Temple University	Pennsylvania
Towson University	Maryland
Unity College	Maine

University of Alabama	Alabama
University of California - Berkeley	California
University of California - Los Angeles	California
University of California - San Diego	California
University of California - Santa Barbara	California
University of Colorado - Boulder	Colorado
University of Colorado - Colorado Springs	Colorado
University of Connecticut	Connecticut
University of Delaware	Delaware
University of Florida	Florida
University of Georgia	Georgia
University of Houston	Texas
University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign	Illinois
University of Iowa	Iowa
University of Louisiana - Monroe	Louisiana
University of Maryland - College Park	Maryland
University of Maryland - Eastern Shore	Maryland
University of Massachusetts—Amherst	Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts—Dartmouth	Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts at Lowell	Massachusetts
University of Memphis	Tennessee
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	Michigan
University of Minnesota - Duluth	Minnesota
University of Missouri - Columbia	Missouri
University of Nevada - Reno	Nevada
University of New England	New Hampshire
University of New Haven	Connecticut
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill	North Carolina
University of North Carolina - Greensboro	North Carolina
University of North Carolina - Wilmington	North Carolina
University of North Florida	Florida
University of North Texas	Texas
University of Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania
University of Puget Sound	Washington
University of Redlands	California
University of Rhode Island	Rhode Island
University of Rochester	New York
University of Saint Francis	Indiana
University of San Francisco	California

University of South Carolina—Columbia	South Carolina
University of South Dakota	South Dakota
University of Southern California	California
University of Tampa	Florida
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	Tennessee
University of Tennessee at Martin	Tennessee
University of the Pacific	California
University of Tulsa	Oklahoma
University of Vermont	Vermont
University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire	Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse	Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin - Madison	Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee	Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point	Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin - Whitewater	Wisconsin
Ursuline College	Ohio
Utah State University	Utah
Vassar College	New York
Vermont Technical College	Vermont
Virginia Intermont College	Virginia
Wake Forest University	North Carolina
Waldorf College	Iowa
Washington University in Saint Louis	Missouri
Wells College	New York
Wentworth Institute of Technology	Massachusetts
Wesleyan University	Connecticut
Western Carolina University	North Carolina
Western Connecticut University	Illinois
Western Maryland College	Maryland
Western State College of Colorado	Colorado
Wheelock College	Massachusetts
Whitman College	Washington

*** Professional tutors may be available.**

Transition Programs

Most transition programs combine instruction in independent living skills with either education or work. The educational component of these programs varies considerably. Some of these programs lead to specific certification or an Associate degree while others focus on practical living skills.

- Academic Success - Gainesville, FL 1-800-956-8966 <http://www.academic-success.net/>
- Allen Institute - Hebron, CT 866-666-6919 <http://www.bahamacharter.com/geninfo.html>
- Anchor to Windward - Marblehead, MA (781) 639-0063 <http://anchor-to-windward.com/homepage.htm>
- Chapel Haven - New Haven, CT 203-397-1714 <http://www.chapelhaven.org/>
- Cloister Creek - Conyers, GA (770) 918-8217 www.cloistercreek.org
- College Excel - Bend OR 541-388-3043
- College Internship Program - Berkshire Center - Lee, MA (413) 243-2576 <http://www.berkshirecenter.org/>
- College Internship Program - Brevard Center - Melbourne, FL 1-800-243-5081
- The College Living Experience - Davie, FL (954) 370-5142 <http://www.cleinc.net>
- The Foundation for Independent Living - Coconut Creek, FL (954) 968-5045 <http://www.filinc.org/fjaug2001.html>
- Maplebrook School - Amenia, NY - 845-373-9511
- Minnesota Life College - Richfield, MN 612-869-4008 <http://www.minnesotalifecollege.com/>
- NYIT - VIP Program (516) 348-3354 Central Islip, NY <http://www.vip-at-nyit.org/VIP/GLP/Index.html>
- Scenicview Center - Provo, UT 866-723-6420 www.scenicviewcenter.org
- Taft College Transition to Independent Living Program - Taft, CA 661-763-7773 <http://www.taft.cc.ca.us/til/index.html>
- Thames Academy at Mitchell College - New London, CT - 800-443-2811
- Threshold Program at Lesley University - Cambridge, MA (617) 349-8181 <http://www.lesley.edu/threshold/thresholdhome.htm>
- UAB Horizons - Birmingham, AL (205) 975-6770
- VISTA - Westbrook/ Madison, CT (860)399-8080/ 203-318-5240 <http://www.vistavocational.org/index.html>

Guidelines for Documentation of a Learning Disability

From the recommendations of the Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)

Evaluation must be a formal, comprehensive assessment that documents the existence of a learning disability.

Testing must be administered by a professional diagnostician trained in the assessment of learning disorders. The written assessment must include their name, title, and professional credentials, including any licensing or certification information.

Testing should be recent (within three years).

The psycho-educational evaluation must include:

- I. Diagnostic interview: Academic history, history of learning processes; presenting problem; development, medical and psychosocial history; family history, including statement of English proficiency; and discussion of dual diagnoses where relevant.

- II. Assessments of:
 1. Aptitude: A formal intellectual assessment with all subtest and standard scores reported. Examples of acceptable measures are the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS IV) and Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities, Third Edition (WJ-III). The abbreviated version of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, called the WASI, is not accepted by most institutions.
 2. Academic Achievement: An assessment indicating current levels in reading comprehension and decoding ability, written language, and mathematics (calculation and problem solving). Scores need to be reported as percentiles and standard scores. Grade level scores are acceptable only if accompanied by percentiles and standard scores. (Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement is recommended.)
 3. Information Processing: Assessments of short and long term memory, auditory and visual perception, processing speed, executive function and motor ability. This information may be addressed in the discussion of results on the WAIS, or through such measures as the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability.

III. Clear statement of diagnosis: Note that such terms or phrases as "learning difference," "learning style," "academic problems," or "test anxiety" do not themselves constitute a learning disability.

IV. Clinical Summary:

1. Description of how the patterns in testing reflect the presence of a learning disability.
2. Must rule out alternate explanations of academic problems such as poor education, emotional problems, motivational issues, etc.
3. Indication of a substantial limitation to learning, or other major life activity, and the degree to which it impacts the individual *in the context for which accommodations are requested*.
4. Record of prior accommodations and statement as to why current specific accommodations are requested.

V. Recommendation for Accommodations: Must be directly tied to the diagnosis, be clearly supported by the data in the tests administered, and relevant to the context for which the accommodations are requested.

College Support Availability

The academic support accessible at colleges varies tremendously. Not many schools will offer all of the following options and not all of the following options will be necessary for you. Hopefully, this form will help you assess the level/ type of support available.

School: _____ Date of Visit: _____

Support Contact _____

Admissions Stats: What is used to evaluate students for admission?

<input type="checkbox"/> SAT/ ACT	<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of Recommendation
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Essay	<input type="checkbox"/> Interview
<input type="checkbox"/> Psycho-educational Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Application

Learning Support:

What type of support does the school offer? Basic Coordinated Comprehensive

Years of program at school? _____

Number of students in program? _____

Is there a separate admission process for support services? Yes No

If yes, what does it entail and how is student evaluated?

Fee for Service? Yes No

If yes, how much? _____

Are LD Specialists available? Yes No **Number?** _____

Staff: Student ratio?

Level of training?

Foreign Language Required? Yes No

What accommodations are available?

<input type="checkbox"/> Extended time	<input type="checkbox"/> Separate testing area
<input type="checkbox"/> Note-takers	<input type="checkbox"/> Readers
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral examinations	<input type="checkbox"/> Scribes
<input type="checkbox"/> Priority registration	

What type of assistive technology is available?

Recorded textbooks

<input type="checkbox"/> Tape recorders/ CD's	<input type="checkbox"/> Portable Keyboards
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading pens	<input type="checkbox"/> Kurzweil Readers

___ Voice activated dictation software

What other types of support are available?

___ Class Attendance Monitored ___ Tutoring Attendance Monitored
___ Course Substitutions available ___ Feedback to Parents available
___ Organizational Assistance ___ Priority Registration
___ Academic Advising ___ Academic Monitoring
___ Mentoring ___ Specific academic courses taught at center
___ Skills courses (reading comprehension, time management, advocacy development, academic strengths discovery, metacognition, etc.)

Academic credit received for special/required classes? Yes No NA

Who notifies faculty of classroom accommodations? Student Support Program

Is subject area tutoring available? Yes No **From?** Peers Professionals

Individual or Group Tutoring?

How many hours per week? _____ Maximum number of hours? _____

Is drop-in tutoring available? Yes No

How are peer tutors selected and trained?

Are counseling services available?

___ Individual ___ ADD/ ADHD counseling
___ LD Support ___ Substance Abuse Concerns
___ OCD Concerns ___ Career

Is there a summer preparation program? Yes No

If yes, is it: Required of all students or Specific to Support Program

Length of program?

School has a: writing lab math lab

If you meet with disability services for an interview, here are questions to be prepared for:

- What is your disability?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses in and outside the classroom?
- What accommodations/ support have you received in high school?
- What accommodations/ support are you seeking in college?

Here are some additional; questions to ask:

- Who does the tutoring and will I see the same person every week?
- Do you speak to parents to give them feedback on my progress?
- How often are reports sent out and do parents get a copy?
- Do you allow students to take a reduced course load and how does one qualify?
- How accommodations granted and what are my responsibilities in obtaining them?
- How does the support program work and what is my responsibility?
- What social/ emotional resources are available to students?

College Admissions 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, honors courses (as a measure of motivation and the desire to be challenged, as well as interest in a subject), extracurricular activities, the personal essay, and recommendations from teachers, advisor or counselor. The weight that each of these factors is given varies widely; most admission officers are willing to have frank discussions with students and guidance officers about the relative importance of admission criteria at their colleges.

Students should be aware of the specific requirements of the colleges being considered as some colleges will require two or more years of a foreign language and possibly certain arts courses.

Typical courses sought by colleges are met by AIM's graduation requirements:

Suggested Sequence of Courses-(21+ Carnegie Credits)

This sequence is based on a schedule of an eight period day. Beginning in grade 9 or 10 Latin I and then Latin II are offered. The total PE and Health needs are .4 and .6 credit hours respectively. Informational Technology is incorporated into all classes at AIM at the high school level. A fully curriculum implemented laptop program also provides for assistive technology support.

9th grade - 6.0 cr.

English (1.0)
Social Science/History (1.0)
Math (1.0)
Science (1.0)
Writing (1.0)
Phys. Ed. (.4)
Latin I/Advanced Word Study (1.0)
Internship/Career Awareness
Reading Comprehension/Wilson**

10th grade - 6.0 cr.

English
Social Science/History
Math
Science
Writing
Health (.6)
Latin I or II (1.0)
Internship/Career Awareness
Reading Comprehension/Wilson**

11th grade - 6.0 cr.

English (1.0)
Writing (1.0)
Social Science/History (1.0)
Math (1.0)
Science (1.0)
Internship/ Career Shadowing
Latin II (1.0)

12th grade 6.0 cr.

English (1.0)*
Writing (1.0)*
Social Science*
Math*
Science*
Internship/Career Exploration/Immersion

* If schedules permit, subjects may be taken through local colleges.

**If required in IEP

QUESTION: How are college admissions tests sent to colleges?

AIM will send the best score report(s) to each college unless otherwise notified. However, there are some schools that require that test scores be sent directly from the testing agency while others will accept them from the high school. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to check each college's requirement and have the scores sent as appropriate.

College Admissions Selectivity

Most Competitive

ACT Score of 29 and above

Usually fewer than one third of those who apply are accepted

Brandeis University, MA

Brown University, RI

Colgate University, NY

John Hopkins University, MD

Vassar College, NY

Middlebury College, VT

Northwestern University, IL

Wesleyan University, CT

Highly Competitive

ACT Score between 27 and 28

Usually between one-third and one-half of applicants accepted

American University, DC

Hampshire College, MA

Mount Holyoke College, MA

Bucknell University, PA

Northeastern University, MA

Providence College, RI

Rose-Hulman Inst. of Tech., IN

Wheaton College, MA

Very Competitive

ACT Score between 24 and 26

Accept one-half to three quarters of their applicants

Clark University, MA

Eckerd College, FL

Goucher College, MD

Hampden-Sydney College, VA

Hofstra University, NY

Ithaca College, NY

Knox College, IL

Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MA

Competitive

ACT Score between 21 and 23

Accept 75%-85% of applicants

Cazenovia College, NY

Cedar Crest College, PA

Daniel Webster College, NH

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, FL

Lesley University, MA

Marshall University, WV

Menlo College, CA

Sacred Heart University, CT

Less Competitive

Below 21 on ACT

Admit 85% or more of applicants

American International College, MA

Becker College, MA

Curry College, MA

Dowling College, NY

Johnson and Wales University, RI

Mount Ida College, MA

Useful Web Pages

College Search Engines

- ACT.org
- ApplyingToSchool.com
- careersandcolleges.com
- collegeboard.com
- collegeview.com
- petersons.com
- princetonreview.com

Testing

- ACT.org
- collegeboard.com
- fairtest.org (lists colleges that do not require the SAT or ACT)

Financial Aid/Scholarships

- careersandcolleges.com
- fastweb.com
- fafsa.ed.gov

Making the Choice #1- Where to Apply?

How many schools?

For most students, applying to between 5 and 8 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 match schools?

Match 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 Visits

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.

When do I visit?

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 an appointment?

- Make a calendar of dates in advance—a rough plan for the visits you plan to make.
- Call the admission offices of the schools you plan to visit, requesting specific dates for visits.
- Plan weekday visits. It is great to see the campus when it is active.
- Schedule a meeting with support personnel in order to discover what services are available.
- If you are interested in a specific program, athletics, music, drama, etc., schedule meetings with appropriate personnel in advance whenever possible.

What should I do on campus?

- Take a campus tour and attend a group information session.
- Interview with an admissions counselor if appropriate.
- Ask admissions to make arrangements for you to sit in on a class or two.
- Talk to students as well as admission officers. Spend an overnight in the dorm if possible.

Tips

- Eat in the dining common.
- Check out the activities on the bulletin boards, walls, and utility poles.
- Read the school newspaper.

- Ask students what they like and dislike about the college.
- Drive around the surrounding area of the campus.
- Ask students what they do on weekends.

QUESTION: Are college visits considered an excused absence?

Yes, however, a visit to one college in Florida should not take two weeks.

Completing Your Applications

To begin the process, be sure to submit your list of schools to your college counselor no later than November 1st. If you are applying to schools by the **early action** or **early decision** processes, be sure to submit this list to the college counselor no later than October 1st.

Please Note:

Students are responsible to seek out assistance in a timely manner from the guidance department. We want to emphasize that this process will help them 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 in college.

- As you add colleges to your final list, visit the school's web page to discover the admissions requirements, including deadlines, fees, the number and type of recommendations, and whether or not they will accept the common application as well as test scores sent from AIM.
- Early in the year, complete the teacher evaluation request form and ask your teachers/advisor for a letter of recommendation. Some may request a form to be completed. Remember, teachers are often writing letters for many of your classmates as well. The more time they have to work on your letters, the better.
- Review your college essay requirements early and arrange to work with a writing teacher to complete the essays. Again, the earlier that you begin this process, the better your essays will be.
- 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.
- Read and follow directions on your applications carefully. Mistakes on your applications reflect very badly on you as a candidate.
- 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.
- Complete applications neatly. In some cases, it is a good idea to make a practice copy of the application first. When you are satisfied with your responses, you can copy the information neatly to the original.
- If you are working with an educational consultant, be sure to discuss this with your college counselor so that your application process can be coordinated with the consultant.
- Keep a copy of your completed applications. If colleges misplace information as they process the thousands of applications they receive, you can easily supply a copy.

- Be sure that you have sent official ACT/SAT scores. In most cases, schools will accept the stamped copy of ACT scores that we will send with your application. Some schools will require that you send ACT scores directly from the testing service. Be sure to determine which schools must get scores in this way.
- Refer to the "College Applications Responsibilities" and "College Applications Checklist" on the following pages for greater detail.
- Be sure your email address is appropriate, and your myspace and Face Book accounts portray you in a positive light.

Specific Applications

The Common Application

The Common Application is one college application that is accepted by over 300 colleges and universities. Completing this form can save students significant time and energy as it can be submitted to several colleges with the click of a mouse.

There are several key components to realize about the common application:

- 1) It is not available to seniors until August 1st. Previous applications are removed and cannot be saved online. Be sure to write down your username and password - you can leave it with the college counselor if necessary.
- 2) After you have added the colleges that you will apply to, be sure to investigate their requirements - is there a supplement and if so what does it entail? Do they want one or two teacher recommendations along with the counselor/advisor letter on the secondary school report? Also check each school's web page to check for any other requirements.
- 3) Complete the student section of the Teacher Recommendation and Secondary School Report forms and submit them to the appropriate faculty as early as possible.

Individual College Applications

Most colleges will have a checklist of requirements for their application. This form is extremely important as it will inform you of all the necessary details. Be sure to give the teacher reference forms and guidance counselor recommendation forms to the necessary faculty members as early in the year as possible.

College Applications Responsibilities

	Student	Parent	AIM
<i>JUNIOR YEAR</i>			
Recommend type of support needed			X
Suggest colleges/ post-secondary programs			X
Set up psycho-educational testing for summer prior to junior year		X	
<i>SENIOR YEAR</i>			
By November 1st, submit final list of colleges applications to be completed		X	
Discover application needs - foreign language requirements, portfolios, auditions, interviews, etc.	X	X	
Request test scores to be sent from testing agency if the college will not accept them from AIM	X		
Complete application checklist (1)	X		
Assist student in meeting deadlines		X	X
Proofread essay	X		X
Proofread applications	X		X
Submit supplemental materials (2)		X	X
Mail applications			X
Schedule interviews, arrange auditions, college visits and transportation	X	X	
Contact colleges to verify completed applications for each college	X		
Accept college acceptance offer	X	X	

College Application Checklist

Current diagnostic testing on file?	Yes	No
ACT/ SAT taken	Yes	No

COLLEGES

<i>STEPS</i>								
Test scores sent to college								
References requested								
References received and submitted to college counselor								
Application acquired								
Application completed								
Application proofread								
<i>Supplement completed</i>								
<i>Supplement proofread</i>								
Essay completed								
Essay proofread								
LD application completed								
LD application proofread								
FOR FACULTY USE ONLY								
Application sent								
Essay sent								
Application fee sent								
References sent								
Supplement sent								
Transcript sent								
Test scores sent								
Diagnostic report sent								

Strengthening the Application

- Be able to enter at least one item in each section of the application which typically include work experience and extracurricular activities (including community service).
- Take challenging courses including honors level classes or a college course during the summer.
- Demonstrate strong interest in an area by participating in clubs consistently throughout high school.
- Prepare for the ACT and SAT by taking challenging courses. Test preparation can also be helpful.
- Take on leadership positions and opportunities such as peer mentoring, student orientation leader, student council, athletics, etc.
- Polish the application. Don't rush through the essay at the last minute and do not get somewhat personal. Interview if that suits your strengths and is available.
- Demonstrate interest without being a nuisance; contact the school to gather more information. Colleges keep records of your phone calls and emails, but don't badger them. It is best if parents allow their children to make contact as this demonstrates greater responsibility on their part.

Disclosure of a Disability

Some students question whether they should disclose a disability in the college admissions process. There are good reasons to do this, despite the discomfort that some students feel in announcing a learning disabled label that they feel inadequately characterizes them as students. First, students who learn differently have been shaped by their experiences, which have very often led to the development of significant determination, diligence, and advocacy skills—all important character traits for college success. Secondly, disclosing a disability may help to put in perspective a student's performance on standardized testing such as the ACT or SAT.

QUESTION: Does attending AIM negatively affect acceptances to competitive colleges?

No. The most important factor for admission to the most competitive colleges is a solid academic record, and for many students, attendance at AIM is the best way to achieve that result. In general most college admission officers do take the time to understand a student's academic history and are open to advocacy from a student's teachers and counselors. Four years of hard work producing a record of growth and achievement that will allow teachers and counselors to be strong advocates for a student is the best way to prepare for admission to very selective colleges.

College Application Process No-no's **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—you initials and last name are a good example
- Use full words and sentences, not text message abbreviations
- Have an appropriate message on cell and dormitory phone voice mails
- Double-check any facebook or myspace accounts for appropriateness

College Visits/ Interviews

- Turn off your cell phone
- Wear clothing appropriate for a visit that you will be potentially judged on do not wear clothing representing another college, especially a competitor
- Stand out for a class visit for the right reasons (stay awake, ask reasonable questions, do not talk in class or listen to your ipod)
- Favorite movies and books should be well considered prior to the visit—this is a frequently asked question
- Solid and accurate reasoning for choosing a college should be stated to this standard question
- Be attentive - don't tap, yawn, look out 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 you are sending the application to
- Double check envelopes and essays - do not send information for College B to College A
- Proofread, Proofread, Proofread and ask teachers and advisors to look everything over
- 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
- Type when possible

Parents

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

Writing Your College Essay

Essays should not be considered an "assignment" when applying to college, but rather an opportunity to share with an admission counselor a part of your personality that does not come through in a standard application. Some Do's and Don'ts when writing your essay:

Do's:

- Answer the question asked
- Write about something that you are familiar
- Expose yourself when answering the question and use specific examples and stories
- Try to mention the college for some reason - a visit you have made, something you read about, knowing someone who attended, etc.
- Check your grammar and usage
- Consider your audience - most admissions counselors are from 25-65 years old with a variety of ethnicities and backgrounds
- Ask someone else to read it and then ask them questions to make sure that it was clear
- Ask a writing teacher at AIM to proofread it (at least once), as well as your college counselor.

Don'ts

- Try to write what you believe others want to read about
- Exaggerate, but also don't be too modest; your goal is to give a fair and accurate picture of yourself.
- Include email abbreviations (i.e. "BTW", "GTG" etc.)
- Count on spellchecker to catch all errors

Sources: Randolph-Macon College, "Writing Your College Essay." Colleges that Change Lives E-news Bulletin, October 2004

Letters of Recommendation **Getting the Best One**

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 advisor 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 from math or English or one who knows you quite well.
- If you can select a teacher who also knows you from experiences 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. Teachers 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.

References www.collegeboard.com, 4/2007

After Applying

A couple weeks after submitting your application, it is recommended that student's call to ensure the receipt of the application and inquire about any missing materials. Even with online applications and electronic submissions, things can get misplaced. Some colleges will give students a username and access code to check their application status online. Many colleges will contact students when they are missing materials, but not all, so it is imperative that inquiries are made, preferably by the student and not what admissions counselors like to call "helicopter parents."

Keep working hard in your classes. Most colleges will want to see your mid-year grades and all will want to see your final grades. Acceptances have been revoked due to cases of "senioritis."

Consider completing scholarship applications and applying for financial aid.

If you are waitlisted, and want to remain on the waitlist, talk with the guidance office so that we can assist you.

Making the Choice #2 - After Acceptance

So how do I choose?

Once you have been admitted to a variety of schools on your list, we suggest that you review the material that you used to make your original selection of schools. It is also advantageous to plan additional school visits and to talk to current students and the academic support staff at the college as you make your school choice. Teachers, advisors, and parents can be helpful as you consider this choice, as can fellow parents and parents of alumni.

Some things to consider:

Campus

Many colleges host open houses and accepted student days to help students and families get a better feel for campus. Some schools also offer overnight experiences which allow students to obtain true first hand experience with college life and students. Be sure to check out the clubs and extracurriculars on campus to find out what there is to do outside of class.

Adjusting to Student Life

Ask colleges how they help students adjust to life on campus. Some schools require a weekly class called First Year Experience (or something similar) and may also offer a short (1-3 days) or long (3 week) summer orientation program. Check with the academic support center for suggestions that they may have/offer. How strict is the college's alcohol and drug policy?

Computers

Is the campus partially or completely wireless? Will the computer you own work well on campus? Does the college require any special hardware or software?

Campus Safety

Take another look at campus safety. How accessible are the dormitories and how many entrances are there to campus? Does the school have emergency "call boxes," a shuttle service, or a safety escort service? Most schools quietly publish their crime statistics - request a copy, but don't be surprised by a few small infractions.

Career Placement

Does the college offer a career development center that helps students write a resume, search for jobs, and host career fairs on campus? What percentage of the college's graduates enter the work force in to their majors?

Student Health Center

What services are available on campus and during what hours? What is the protocol for medical emergencies and if there is not a hospital on campus, how close is the nearest one? Can allergy shots, gynecological exams and other health and wellness programs be accomplished on campus?

Question: How are college placement tests administered?

After the decision has been made, some colleges will require students to take placement tests for freshman year courses. Oftentimes, these tests are administered during a brief summer orientation program. There are several schools, however, that like to have them completed prior to graduation from AIM. In that case, we are more than happy to help facilitate this process which may include an application for accommodations in order to get extended time on the test or simply allowing students to take an online exam in the guidance office. Please inform us on how we can be of assistance as at this point in the process the college will communicate directly with the student, typically at his/her home address.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Student Information:

Name: _____

D.O.B. _____

SS# _____ - _____ - _____

I, _____, authorize faculty and staff of _____ to release any information about my academic performance to the faculty and staff of _____. I further authorize the faculty and staff of _____ to release information regarding my academic performance and profile to the faculty and staff of the college or university named above.

(signature of student)

(date)

Confidential

POST-SECONDARY TRANSCRIPT RELEASE

Suggestions for Academic Success for Students with a Disability

- Understand your disability well enough so that you can explain your learning style to the personnel in the support/ resource center, as you will most likely have to advocate for yourself.
- You very well may be required to request "reasonable accommodations" in your course work.
- At the beginning of the semester, write on a calendar all relevant dates, assignments, and appointments for the entire semester.
- Sitting in the front of the classroom will help reduce distractions and demonstrate to the instructor that you are motivated to learn.
- If you plan to attend tutoring, plan your sessions shortly after the class so that the information is still fresh in your head. If you do not attend tutoring, review your notes after class.
- To help manage your time, you should estimate that you will need to spend four hours outside of class for every hour in class. Include breaks in your studying as this will maximize your efforts.
- Start a study group if you learn well through listening.
- If you have trouble reading and do better with spoken language, look into getting texts or books on tape and/ or computer programs that will do this.
- Write down any questions you have as you study so that a tutor or the instructor can address them for you before the next class or test.
- If you feel that you are beginning to struggle, seek out assistance from the instructor, support staff, or disability resource center. Also, do not be afraid to contact someone at AIM~Academy In Manayunk – the staff and faculty will always be there for you. The hardest part in college for many students is managing time and seeking help when necessary.

Adapted from Brandeis University:

http://www.brandeis.edu/disability/brochures/info_services_students.html#suggestions_success

Financial Aid Terms to Know

College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS/Profile)	Some colleges require the submission of this form, possibly in addition to the FAFSA, especially for students applying early action/ decision as the FAFSA is completed after tax returns are complete. With this form, colleges estimate a student's financial need and EFC. There is a fee to complete this form.
Cost of Attendance (COA):	The total cost of attending college determined by the college following federal guidelines. Fees included in the COA everything from tuition, fees, and room and board to books, student loan fees, school supplies, and transportation to/from school.
Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	The EFC is calculated for federal aid programs and is the amount that a student's family is expected to give towards college expenses.
Financial Aid	The various options a student/ family has in order to pay for college.
Financial Aid Package	The various funds needed to make up the difference between the cost of college and the amount deemed a family can afford. Options include grants, work-study packages, and low-interest loans.
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)	The form that is submitted by a student or his/her family that includes information regarding the family's income and other financial information. From this form, the EFC is calculated and printed on the SAR.
Fees	Includes costs for student use areas, facility costs, student activity fees, parking, etc.
Grants	Money given to a student typically for a special talent or financial need which does not need to be repaid.
Loans	Money given to a student that must be repaid.
Pell Grants	Money given to students from colleges based on strict rules from the federal government which reimburses the college.
Scholarships	Money given to a student typically for a special talent or academic ability which does not need to be repaid.
Student Aid Report (SAR)	The report which informs families of their EFC which is based upon information submitted on the FAFSA.
Tuition	The costs of classes in college and does not include the other fees a student pays in college (books, room, board, fees, etc.)

Verification	The process in which a college validates the information submitted on the FAFSA by requesting signed income tax paperwork.
Work-Study Program	A federal aid program that allows students to earn money through working on the college campus.

Sources: Colleges that Change Lives E-news Bulletin, October 2004

Important Considerations **Regarding Financial Aid**

- Do not take a college off of your list of options due to the cost of attendance. Financial aid may be available.
- Saving money by choosing a less expensive college may result in an imperfect fit for the student. This may result in a transfer to another college.
- Most colleges want to make it possible for a student to attend and do not want finances to interfere. Also, federal aid may also be available.
- Families with high incomes may also qualify for aid by receiving low interest loans. Many colleges say that you should apply for aid regardless of your income.
- **However, by not applying for aid, you may increase the likelihood of receiving an acceptance letter to the college.**
- Look closely at the offers your child receives to determine the amount in loans versus free money.
- Use finaid.org/calculators to compare awards.
- To request more, don't call to "negotiate," but rather to ask questions on how a decision was made (without whining). Then explain how the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) doesn't match up with what you can afford by noting anything not covered in the paperwork.
- If you receive a better offer elsewhere, share this with the college and inform them of your child's desire to attend.
- Ask the college if they offer any merit scholarships that may be available to your child.

Source: Randolph-Macon College, "Affording Your First Choice College."

Financing College

Financial aid can help many families manage the costs of college. It is important that you research avenues for financing college as part of the college application process. Guidelines for eligibility, especially for federal programs, change frequently, so it is important for you to be working with current information.

Types of Financial Aid:

- Grants and scholarships (e.g., Pell Grant) provide funds that do not need to be repaid. Grants are typically awarded solely on the basis of need. Scholarships are awarded based upon specific criteria outlined by each scholarship program.
- Loans provide funds that must be repaid after graduation. Federal loan programs provide loans at a lower interest rate than most commercial loans.
- Work-study positions allow a student to earn money through a part-time job on campus. Work-study positions are typically arranged through the Financial Aid Office on campus.

Sources of Financial Aid:

- Federal Programs
 - Pell Grant
 - Federal Direct Student Loan Program
 - Federal Supplemental Educational Grant
 - Federal Work Study
 - Stafford Loans
 - PLUS Program
 - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
 - U.S. Public Health Service
- State Aid
 - Most states have programs that award aid on the basis of need and/or merit.
- Institutional Aid

Colleges offer a variety of programs to accepted students. In most cases, you should begin to investigate scholarship and grant programs offered by a college by contacting the college's Financial Aid Office.
- Private Grants/Scholarship

Many, many organizations offer scholarships and grants to qualified students. You should begin by researching those organizations with which you or your parents are affiliated (businesses, professional organizations, community service organizations, places of worship, etc.).

Applying for Financial Aid

To be considered for federal student aid, students and their parents must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students may also be required to complete the College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS), a non-federal form, to be eligible for state and institutional aid. There is a fee for the CSS.

For information about federal student aid options, visit <http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/>

FAFSA forms are available in December of the year prior to the award (i.e., December 2011 for the 2012-2013 academic year). Forms should be filed as soon as possible after January 1st of the year in which aid is sought, but you should check with each college to discover their procedures and deadlines. CSS forms are available in September of the year prior to the award. FAFSA forms are available in the AIM guidance office or at your local library. It is recommended, however, that the FAFSA be completed electronically at www.FAFSA.ed.gov. This option allows for quicker processing, more college options, and greater flexibility when amending the form. The CSS is also available online at www.collegeboard.com.

The following are some websites that address issues concerning financial aid and students with disabilities:

www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml

www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/postsecondary/#anchor889

www.heic.org/disabled.htm

www.heath.gwu.edu/PDFs/2003%20Finaid%20Document.pdf

www.limeconnect.com/

www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/financial-aid.html

Federal Student Aid Information Center 1-800-4 FED AID (1-800-433-3243)

Questions to Ask Colleges

Is the scholarship renewable for all four years?

What criteria need to be met in order to maintain the scholarship?

Will my scholarship be affected if I receive any additional scholarships from the college or other organization?

If I lose my scholarship for poor performance in a course, can it be reinstated?

If my families financial situation changes while I am I college, will my scholarship change?

If I don't earn merit aid in my first year, can I be eligible in future years?

Do I need to apply for financial aid every year in order to be considered for merit aid?

If I defer admission for a year, will I lose the scholarship?

Can I continue to receive the scholarship if I do a study-abroad program?

Resources

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc. Published annually.

The College Handbook. New York: The College Board. Published annually.

Custard, Edward, ed. The Complete Book of Colleges. New York: Princeton Review Publishing. Published annually.

Kravets, Marybeth and Imy F. Wax. The K & W Guide to Colleges for the Learning Disabled. New York: Princeton Review Publishing.

Lipkin, Midge. Colleges with Programs or Services for Students with Learning Disabilities. Belmont, MA: Schoolsearch, 1999.

Magrum, Charles T. and Strichart, Stephen S. Peterson's Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorders. Princeton, NJ. Published periodically.

"SAT/ACT Freebies." The Next Step, January/February 2007, page 45.

The Internet offers countless opportunities for locating up-to-date information about higher education. Some that have been used to create this bulletin include:

act.org

cnmoney.com

collegeboard.com

