



College Acceptance & Enrollment Deposit

Now that your student has been accepted to a college, the next step is for colleges to issue financial aid award packages. Please make sure you and your student complete the FAFSA first because that will be factored into the award package and may also delay colleges' ability to send financial aid packages. Also, the deadline to make a deposit is May 1. We advise that students review all financial aid award packages and visit the college campuses, if possible so that they can make an informed decision. Please be advised that some colleges have a nonrefundable deposit policy, so make sure that your student plans to attend the college before they submit a deposit.

Scholarship Benefits

As tuition costs continue to escalate, scholarships allow students to acquire an education that may otherwise not be affordable due to financial constraints. Scholarships also help students and families accrue less loan debt to pay for college. They lessen a student's financial worries, thus allowing them to focus on academics. Your student does not need to be number one in their class or an all-star athlete to get free money for college.

Scholarship Search

Students can search and apply for scholarships through different organizations' websites or scholarship tools. Many community organizations in Western Mass offer scholarships opportunities as well. A monthly scholarship list is distributed to SPS students via email and shared on our website. Remember to also look for opportunities at work, your bank, and place of worship. If your student has a summer or part-time job, see if their workplace offers scholarships for college going staff members. And if your student is aspiring to work in a specific career field, they should also research professional groups related to that vocation.

College Myths vs Facts

I do not have money; small private colleges are out of the question.

Small private colleges use the money they raised from alumni and other donors to make college affordable. Private colleges in some cases may offer more financial aid to attract students from every income level. What is important is making sure your student finds a school that meets their academic, career, personal, and financial needs.

My student is undecided about a major; they should go to a community college to figure out what they want to do.

Four-year colleges are great for the undecided student, too. Besides, students are not required to declare a major during their first two years at college. Colleges use the first two years to help students explore different career interests.

Expensive colleges are better than inexpensive ones.

Just because a college costs more does not mean it is a better school. Look instead at the school's academic offerings, quality of student life, and its research and extracurricular opportunities. Finding the right college is not about finding the most or least expensive college; it's all about finding the best fit for your student.

SPP Website:

https://www.springfieldpublicschools.com/parents/school-to-career_program/college_search_and_planning/scholarships

College Myths vs Facts (cont...)

Community college is lesser than traditional college.

The degree your student earned is more important than the school at which it was earned. In the end, if your student earns a degree at a legitimate/accredited college or university, with the least amount of debt, no degree is "better" than another. Community college is a great option for students who want to earn a two-year certificate in a technical or vocational field. Some students also attend community colleges to lower the cost of a four-year college education. Still others enroll in community colleges to test the waters to see if college is right for them.

My student is a very social person; they should attend a big university to meet more people.

While having a social network system is important for your student's continued development and wellbeing, it is impossible for them to have 20,000 close friends. What is important is not the number of friends they make at college but instead the healthy connections they form with others, and it can happen in any college environment regardless of size or student population.



FAFSA Website

<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION AND TIPS!