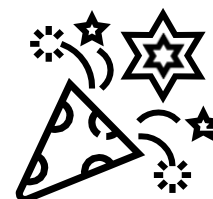


SELECTING A BEST-FIT COLLEGE



You got into several schools...Woo Hoo!

Here are some factors you may want to consider as you make your final college choice.

LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS

- School size (student to faculty ratio):** It's important to consider the overall size of the school, considering if you're comfortable with a small or large school
- Campus location/distance from home:** Consider the location of your campus, do you want to be far away from family and friends, or close to home?
- Campus diversity and demographics:** Check to see if there is a sense of community on campus and the overall demographics of the school. You can learn more about a school's student body by looking up the school at www.collegescorecard.ed.gov.
- Housing options:** Will you commute from your foster home or do you need to find housing? If you'll be in need of housing, you should see what the housing options are on or off campus!
- Food plans:** Does the school offer a meal plan and how accessible is it?
- Safety statistics:** Check statistics to be aware of the overall safety on campus.

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Majors offered:** You have hopefully begun to narrow down what you want to do so be sure the school offers the major(s) you are interested in!
- Support Programs:** Check to see if school has Opportunity Programs or any other support groups. This can be academic, financial but also emotional support to help you transition into college
- Retention and graduation rates:** Check the retention rates to see if freshmen normally return for their sophomore year, and check the graduation rate. You can learn more about graduation and retention rates at www.collegescorecard.ed.gov. *This can help you understand the chances of successfully graduating from this campus.*
- National college rankings: Do your research!** See what category the college falls under for national college rankings.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Tuition cost/financial aid options:** It's important to look at the price tag to know the cost of attendance, but don't let the sticker shock scare you. It's critical to compare financial aid award letters to see what financial aid options are available to you and what it will really cost you each year.
- Other costs:** College costs more than just the tuition and fees. You will need to think about living expenses like housing, food, travel, and other personal expenses to make sure you do not have too much of a financial gap.