

# 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.

It's always a good idea to visit the campus and talk to someone who went to the school if possible. If you can't, a lot of these answers are on the internet.



## LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ **School size (student to faculty ratio):** You may want to consider the overall size of the school and think about whether 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 home, or close by? Look up the surrounding cities and towns. Is the state a place that shares your values? How might the area be different from the place you currently live?
- ☐ **Campus diversity and demographics:** Think about how important it is to go to a school where people share backgrounds with you. Does the school have cultural organizations that you might be interested in? You can learn more about a school's student body by looking up the school at [collegescorecard.ed.gov](https://collegescorecard.ed.gov).
- ☐ **Housing options:** Will you commute from 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? How much does it cost, and how flexible is it?

## ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ **Majors offered:** You have hopefully begun to narrow down what you want to major in, so be sure the school offers the major(s) you are interested in. Remember that you don't need to major in exactly what you want your career to be.
- ☐ **Support Programs:** Check to see if school has Opportunity Programs or any other support groups. These can provide academic and financial support, 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 [collegescorecard.ed.gov](https://collegescorecard.ed.gov). *This can help you understand the chances of successfully graduating from this campus.*
- ☐ **National college rankings:** If this is important to you, there are several organizations that rank colleges based on different criteria. Two examples include the [New York Times' Build Your Own College Ranking Tool](#) and the [U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges](#).

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ **Tuition cost/financial aid options:** If you're currently in foster care, College Choice will likely cover all of your tuition costs that exceed your financial aid. If not, the cost of attendance can be a really important factor in deciding where to go to college. To get an idea of how much a school will cost, go to the [Net Price Calculator](#) and type in the name of the school.
- ☐ **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.