

## SECTION 21D - SECTION 21G

### D. COLLEGE EXPOSURE & PREPARATION

**TIP!** See [Appendix G2 College Exposure, Planning, Enrollment and Persistence Flow Chart](#).

#### COLLEGE EXPOSURE/EXPLORATION

Coaches help expose students to post-secondary pathways starting in 9th grade (or as early as possible, if they come into foster care at a later age). Sometimes, young people cannot envision themselves attending or succeeding in college or a post-secondary setting, as they may not have performed well in school and/or they may not know many (or any) adults who graduated.

Early post-secondary exposure, combined with career exploration and career development activities, can help young people envision success and start to plan and prepare for their post-secondary journey.

If **“[Conduct College Exploration/Exposure](#)”** is selected as a Goal\*, some of the associated Steps include:

- Young person to meet with College Specialist and/or Coach to learn more about college
- Enroll in First Star Academy *if student is entering 9th grade* (See [Appendix G1 First Star Academy Overview](#))
- Attend peer group related to college
- Explore colleges online
- Attend a college fair
- Visit college(s)
- Discuss college experience with current/former student or credible messenger
- Engage foster parent/parent and/or significant adult figure(s); encourage them to provide support
- Discuss college options with other adults involved in the young person’s life

\*If youth is still in high school/HSE program, Coach to meet with the high school guidance counselor and student to discuss options, progress towards graduation, and a plan for the remainder of high school. (see [Appendix F6 High School Graduation Checklist](#)).

Coaches should also identify 9th grade students that could benefit from **First Star Academy**, a rigorous 4-year college preparation program. One Saturday each month, students participate in academic and life skills programs at the College of Staten Island. After the first year, students experience college life for an entire month while living at the university’s apartment-style residence halls, deepening their involvement in the programs. See [Appendix G1 First Star Academy Overview](#).

If the young person is interested in a trades, vocational, or other post-secondary pathway, the Goal **“[Explore vocational or other sector-based certificate programs/post-secondary pathways](#)”** should be selected.

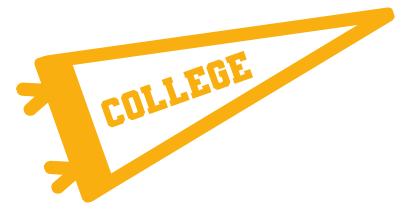
In this case, the next step would be:

- Meet with Coach and/or Career Development Specialist (and high school counselor, if applicable) to explore other post-secondary pathways. (Then proceed to the [Career Development Goals Roadmap](#) in [Appendix E Goals & Steps Guide and Worksheets](#).)

If after this meeting a vocational or other career pathway seems to be the best fit, then the appropriate goals should be selected in the Career Development section (e.g., enrolling in a workforce or vocational program, etc.).

## PREPARATION/PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

If the young person is in a high school and wants to attend college, the goal “[Conduct College Preparation](#)” should be selected. It is the Coach’s role to ensure that students have the supports they need to succeed in high school and are enrolled in the proper coursework in order to graduate and pursue their post-secondary goal.



Starting in the 9th grade, the student should be meeting with their Coach, Guidance Counselor, and the College Specialist. These meetings can take place separately, but all parties should be on the same page.

Key preparation/planning activities include:

- Review the student’s current (or most recent) transcript** with them to determine what their college roadmap could look like, based on their performance and the high school that they are enrolled in. For students in the 9th grade, even if performance was not strong in previous years, it should be emphasized that a 4-year school is an option if they remain on-track with their studies.
- Provide an overview of 2-year vs. 4-year college pathways**, and what each would entail in terms of their high school performance. See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 22E](#) for additional guidance.
- Review the financial resources available to foster youth and a typical college budget.** This is important, as some students may be under the impression that they cannot afford college. In reality, as long as the student maintains good academic standing and attends a CUNY or SUNY school, in almost all cases the student will have to pay little or nothing toward the cost of college. If their Coach/College Specialist follows all of the application and financial aid steps appropriately, the student will likely be able to cover most or all of their living expenses (food, transportation, etc.) without having to earn additional income. See [Appendix G19 College Budget Tools](#).
- Inform young person about **The Dormitory Project** (see [Appendix G13 Fair Futures Guide to the Dorm Project](#) and **ACS College Room & Board** options (see [Appendix G14 ACS College Room & Board](#)), if they are still in foster care.
- If appropriate, discuss out-of-state and private college options, and the pros and cons of these pathways. If a student is academically qualified, some highly selective private institutions will cover the full cost of attendance, and ACS provides funding to cover incidentals. Other private colleges may require students to take on debt to cover costs.

**TIP!** For all post-secondary planning/preparation activities, broken by grade and semester, see [Appendix G4 College Planning and Preparation Timeline](#).

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## GOALS & STEPS

For students whose Goal is to “[Conduct College Preparation](#)”:

**Required Steps** include:

- Meet with high school counselor, Coach, and/or College Specialist to put a plan in place; ideally engage parent/foster parent
- Develop a college list (6 CUNY, 4+ SUNY, and others if eligible)

**Potential Steps** include:

- Enroll in A.P. classes
- Take PSATs
- Work with school to request needed accommodations on PSATs, SATs and A.P. exams
- Receive PSAT or SAT tutoring (or enroll in prep program)
- Take SATs
- Re-take SATs
- Re-take Regents exams to bring scores up to CUNY’s college readiness standards (70+ in Common Core Algebra and 75+ in Common Core ELA).

**TIP!** Students with disabilities should refer to [Appendix G3 College Planning for Students with Disabilities](#).

## E. COLLEGE APPLICATION & SELECTION

### COLLEGE ADVISING



The College Specialist will assist the student in applying to colleges at the appropriate juncture, typically in the summer/early fall of that student's last year. However, if students are applying to 4-year colleges, they should be preparing their materials in their Junior year.

Students should aim to have their college applications and the FAFSA completed by the end of October ideally, and by the end of November at the latest - they should not wait until the school's admissions deadline to apply. This will put them in the best position to be accepted into opportunity programs, receive school-based financial aid, and more.

However, if students are applying to selective 4-year colleges that will require essays and recommendations, it is especially important that they begin preparing these materials before the start of their senior year they should be preparing their materials in the summer following their Junior year. See [Appendix G4 College Planning and Preparation Timeline For High Schoolers](#).

### **FOUR KEY QUESTIONS THAT STUDENTS SHOULD THINK ABOUT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS:**

#### **Question 1: Is the student qualified for and interested in attending a 4-year college directly out of high school, or is a 2-year CUNY college more appropriate?**

Generally speaking, 4-year colleges should be the starting point for students who are academically eligible to attend, as students attending 4-year schools tend to experience better on-time graduation outcomes than students who start at 2-year schools. (It also often takes high performing students 2.5 to 3 years to earn an Associate's degree, and another 2+ years to transfer and finish a Bachelor's degree.) Students with GPAs in or above the 75-80 range and SAT scores above 400/section can feasibly begin to look at 4-year schools.

That said, many students enter their senior year without the academic credentials needed to obtain admission to a four-year college, or with developmental needs in reading, writing, or math. These students should be matched with a two-year college and great care should be taken to ensure that they are connected with a support program or enroll at Guttman Community College, as students in these programs are much more likely to graduate college in a timely fashion.

**Question 2: What majors/fields of study is the student interested in?** This will help narrow down potential colleges.

**Question 3: Where does the student want to live during college, and what is the student's housing situation right before entering college?** This may be informed by the student's housing/permanency status.

The major categories here are:

- Somewhere out of the city.
- Somewhere in the city but in a dorm (in the Dorm Project, for instance).
- Somewhere in the city and not in a dorm (i.e. in a foster home).

**Question 4: Are there other aspects of a potential school that are especially meaningful to the student?**

These might include prestige, demographics/diversity of the student body, proximity to family, size of the school, and more. It's vital that everyone involved in the college coaching process listen carefully to what the student considers to be important in evaluating a school match.

For each potential school match, it is important to consider the graduation rate and cost of attendance of the school.

Graduation rates differ widely between schools; some graduate just 10 or 20% of their students, while others have graduation rates of 98 or 99%. Some of this has to do with the preparedness and affluence of the students who attend those schools, but the level of support available at the school is also an important factor in graduation rate.

## Resources for assessing graduation rate and cost of attendance include:

[College Scorecard](#), a publicly available resource from USDOE that includes information about annual costs, timely graduation rates, long-term outcomes for students who enrolled as freshmen, and socio/economic and racial diversity at the school.

[College Results Online](#), which offers a deeper dive into graduation rates for specific student demographics, as well as information about collateral statistics such as first-year retention and transfer rates.

**A student's permanency and housing status may influence their decision.** (See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 23](#)).

For example, student situations may impact eligibility for certain programs:

**Students in foster care and aging out, who have not received their housing yet**, are eligible for free room and board through The Dormitory Project or ACS College Room & Board.

**Students who are adopted, reunified, or aged out; and with housing**, are not eligible for The Dormitory Project or the ACS College Room & Board Programs.

See [Appendix G13 Fair Futures Guide to the Dorm Project](#) and [Appendix G14 ACS College Room & Board](#) for more information.

**TIP!** If a student is eligible for **The Dormitory Project** or **ACS College Room & Board Programs** and wants to live in NYC in a dorm setting, the Coach should refer the student to the College Specialist to help the student apply.

## EXPLORING 4-YEAR COLLEGES

For students exploring 4-year colleges, the major categories are: SUNY schools, CUNY schools, and private schools.

**FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON IN CARE, THERE IS OFTEN A SCHOOL THAT THE STUDENT WILL BE ABLE TO GRADUATE FROM WITHOUT DEBT.**

### Guidelines for students applying to 4-year schools include:

Students are encouraged to submit, at a minimum, the full complement of free applications to CUNY and SUNY schools. See [Appendix G5 Applying to CUNY Tip Sheet](#) and [Appendix G6 Tips for Applying to SUNY for Youth in Foster Care](#).

Students interested in 4-year CUNYs are counseled to include no more than one 2-year CUNY, ranked at the bottom of the application (since they will be accepted there automatically).

- Students can always direct admit to a different 2-year CUNY later in the process if they want; 2-year CUNYs other than Guttman accept 100% of first-time applicants on a rolling basis.

Students are encouraged to apply for **Opportunity Programs**, which provide additional financial assistance and a range of supports. See [Appendix G8 Opportunity Programs](#) (and [Appendix G9 CUNY Support and Opportunity Programs](#)).

Students should consider non-profit private schools and out-of-state public schools as long as these schools have **100% of need met financial aid policies** and/or are willing to commit to covering the student's tuition/room and board gap.

Schools that students in care can attend for free (and have 100% of need met financial aid policies) include:

- All of the Ivies (e.g. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Cornell, Columbia), Barnard College, Georgetown University, Vanderbilt University, Union College, and more.
- Students who wish to attend a private school in NYC and the surrounding area should be advised of CUNY/SUNY options which may, in many cases, be an equivalent (or even better) fit and be far less costly to attend.
- There are also organizations such as the Posse Foundation that offer full tuition scholarships. Unfortunately, it can be very challenging for a student to be able to find more than a couple thousand dollars in scholarships per year from publicly listed scholarships.

If possible, students should avoid applying to for-profit schools! In almost every case, these schools require students to take on student loan debt while also offering a lower-quality education and credential than the student could get at a college that they could attend without taking loans.

### **Guidelines for students planning to attend 2-year/community colleges:**

- Incoming 2-year college students should start at CUNY due to the support programs and proximity to agency resources. The student generally guides the decision regarding the specific CUNY school choice based on proximity to where they expect to live and choice of majors. See [Appendix G5 Applying to CUNY Tip Sheet](#).
- While there is some variation between the quality of CUNY community colleges, and it is worth reviewing graduation rates in the process of considering options, the differences are generally fairly small, with the exception of Guttman Community College, which has a 3-year graduation rate of 45%.

### **Key notes on Guttman Community College:**

All students looking at 2-year colleges should consider **Guttman Community College**, which has a range of on-site supports and a higher graduation/persistence rate compared to other 2-year CUNY schools.

The Guttman Community College model is based on national best practices and incorporates experiential learning. While it is academically rigorous, it also can be a good fit for students with remedial needs. This is because it offers “co-requisite” courses rather than remedial classes, meaning that students with remedial needs can fulfill them while earning credits at the same time. It has an extended-year schedule (the semesters are “Fall 1, Fall 2, Spring 1, and Spring 2”) which allows students to take more coursework if needed.

### **The Guttman Community College application process and other considerations when applying includes:**

Guttman accepts students on a first-come, first-serve basis and typically does not accept applications after the February 1st admissions deadline. Thus, the key to getting in is to apply via the CUNY portal as soon as it opens in the fall and to make sure to sign up for an informational session as soon as it is offered.

In January/February, the student should receive an email for an Orientation/Informational Session at Guttman. If the student does not sign up for one, he/she cannot proceed with the application process. Guttman will not allow students who miss the Orientation/Informational Session to enroll. There are no exceptions under any circumstances.

- The Coach should be aware of this deadline and remind the student to check their email.
- The Coach should also ensure that the student still has access to the original email address the student provided on the CUNY application.

After the Orientation/Informational Session, students will have to sign-up for an interview. While the interview is technically not to screen for academic eligibility, it does not hurt to prep the student so that they can explain why Guttman is a good fit for them.

### **Reasons Guttman Community College may NOT be a good fit:**

- There are a limited number of majors.
- Students are not encouraged to hold full-time (or even part-time) jobs during Year 1, which is very intensive academically. As most foster youth should receive full financial packages, and are eligible for work/study, this typically should not be an issue, unless the young person has other life/financial responsibilities (e.g., parenting).
- Guttman Community College is a single-site school, class sizes are small, and the model is heavily focused on peer/group work. For some students, this provides a very supportive, collegial environment. Other young people may find this socially overwhelming (particularly if they are very introverted) or might just prefer a more conventional college campus setting.

## **COLLEGE SELECTION**

Once the student receives letters of acceptance, the student should sit down with the Coach, College Specialist, Guidance Counselor, and parent/caregiver (if applicable) to discuss selection. If a meeting with all of these individuals cannot happen in one setting, separate meetings can occur; Coaches should ensure, however, that the advice given is consistent.

Review [Appendix G12 Selecting a Best-Fit College](#), which outlines key factors to consider when selecting a college.

## Key Factors for Selecting a Best-fit College:

### LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Housing options;
- Campus location;
- School size;
- Campus diversity & demographics;
- Food plans;
- Safety statistics.

### ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS:

- Majors offered;
- Academic standing requirements;
- Support Programs;
- Retention & graduation rates;
- National college rankings.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

**TIP!** See [Appendix G19: College Budget Tools](#).

## COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Once the student selects the college, they need to officially send their acceptance (typically by May 1st for selective 4-year colleges) and accept all financial aid grants (while rejecting all loans unless they are absolutely necessary to meet the cost of attendance). Schools typically request that students submit a “commitment deposit” in order to secure their space in the incoming class; this fee can often be waived by contacting the admissions office at the school and requesting a waiver due to the student’s foster care status.

## F. FUNDING COLLEGE & FINANCIAL AID



There are many financial resources available to college-bound students in foster care. The key funding streams available to foster youth (some require maintaining a 2.0 or higher GPA) that students should apply for include:

### Federal PELL Grant

### New York State TAP grant

ETV (Education & Training Vouchers)

Opportunity Programs (SEEK/CD, EOP, HEOP, CUNY ASAP)

### Foster Youth College Success Initiative

### The nsoro Scholarship

The Dormitory Project or ACS College Room & Board  
(if interested/eligible)

The Coach should ensure that the student is meeting with the College Specialist to apply for all of the above forms of aid. Applying for all forms of aid and College Specialist meetings are **Required Steps** to ensure that no student “falls through the cracks” due to a lack of staff knowledge about these supports.

## TAP AND PELL GRANTS

**The PELL grant is a federal grant and TAP is for students attending college in New York State.** Both applications should be filled out as soon as the student applies to colleges. While TAP and Pell usually consider family income when determining financial aid eligibility, students who are in foster care, aged out of foster care, or were adopted out of foster care after reaching age 13 are considered independent students, which means that they do not need to submit financial information for their parents or foster parents. In practice, current and former youth in care almost always receive the full TAP and Pell awards. If a student is applying to a CUNY or SUNY school, these awards alone will fully cover their tuition and fees, and they will receive a \$2,000+ reimbursement per semester to use for dorming or other living expenses. See [Appendix G7: Completing the FAFSA & TAP Applications](#) for detailed information on how to apply and important tips. Students who are undocumented may not file FAFSA, but they are likely eligible for state TAP funding through the [Jose Peralta New York State DREAM Act](#).

## ETV

**The Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV)** provides youth in foster care, adopted from foster care after age 16, or aged out of foster care, with up to \$5,000 per year, depending on financial need. The funding can be used for accredited college or vocational/technical training programs. If students have outstanding balances on their college accounts, ETV will issue a check directly to the college; otherwise, students receive a monthly check in the mail after checking in with an advisor, which helps them with income smoothing.

Checks are not provided in the summer months, however. Coaches should help students get summer internships or paid employment, if needed.

See [Appendix G10 Educational and Training Vouchers](#) for detailed information, how to apply, and key tips.

### **OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS (SEEK/CD, EOP, HEOP, CUNY ASAP)**

First-time freshmen who enroll in college in New York State have access to a group of programs called “**Opportunity Programs**”.

These programs include benefits such as:

1. Admissions to the college for students whose applications would normally be rejected
2. Additional funding (type and amount varies by school)
3. Connections to supportive adults
4. Academic tutoring and career support
5. A summer program to help students get oriented to the school

Opportunity programs are very similar across colleges, but they have different names like SEEK, CD, EOP, or HEOP depending on the type of college where the program is located (see the table below).

Type of College	Name of Opportunity Program
City University of New York (CUNY) 2-Year Colleges	CD (College Discovery)
City University of New York (CUNY) 4-Year Colleges	SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge)
State University of New York (SUNY) All Colleges	EOP (Educational Opportunity Program)
Private Colleges (i.e. Colgate, Columbia, Cornell)	HEOP (Higher Education Opportunity Program)

Note that CUNY has other outstanding program offerings outside of its Opportunity Programs, including [ASAP, ACE, and Start](#). (Students cannot be in SEEK/CD and ASAP/ACE/Start at the same time - for more information about these programs and how to choose between them, see our guide to Support and Opportunity Programs at CUNY ([Appendix G9 CUNY Support and Opportunity Programs](#))).

**It is critical for students going to CUNY or SUNY schools to apply for the opportunity programs if they can, particularly if they are applying to competitive 4-year colleges;** the opportunity programs at these schools can vastly increase the chances of being accepted, particularly when the school is an academic “reach”. Students interested in enrolling in an Opportunity program should check [Appendix G8 Opportunity Programs](#) for more information and make sure to apply well before the college’s regular admissions deadline: ideally, their application and any needed supporting documents should be submitted by the end of October of their senior year, as Opportunity Program spaces fill up quickly.

### **CUNY ASAP AND ACE**

In addition to its Opportunity Programs, CUNY offers two key support programs to students attending its 2-year colleges and some of its 4-year colleges. They are called ASAP and ACE and are highly recommended to students in care.

**ASAP** is a program that focuses on helping students graduate from CUNY community colleges as soon as possible (in 3 years or less) through a combination of advisement, tutoring, early registration, block scheduling, free metrocards, book vouchers, and other resources. Students in ASAP have a 3-year graduation rate of 53%, which is more than double that of their peers who are not in a support program - students not in ASAP graduate in three years 25% of the time.

While ASAP is only available at 2-year colleges, a similar program called **ACE** is now available at John Jay and Lehman College, two 4-year colleges in the CUNY system.

**Students cannot participate in both ASAP/ACE and College Discovery/SEEK - they need to pick one of the two.**

For more information on ASAP/ACE and on how to choose between the program offerings, see [Appendix G9 CUNY Support and Opportunity Programs](#).

Finally, students attending CUNY and enrolled in any support or opportunity program (including SEEK, CD, ASAP, ACE, or Start) can receive additional foster-care specific support and resources through CUNY’s Foster Care Initiative (FCI).

## SCHOLARSHIPS

There are several scholarships available to current/former foster youth, see [Appendix G11 School-Based Aid and Outside Scholarships](#).

Two important scholarships to know about include:

- **The nsoro Foundation scholarship:** Any current/former foster youth who is aging out or aged out of foster care and applying to college or in college is eligible (adopted students are not eligible). The scholarship requires a 2.0 high school/college GPA upon enrollment and encourages students to maintain above a 2.0. It provides a minimum of \$2,000 per student each year towards tuition, room, board, fees, books, and/or a laptop. Once accepted, students do not have to re-apply each year, and nsoro will fund them all the way through the completion of a Master's program. Every year, two scholars are selected to receive a \$10,000 scholarship.
- **New Yorker's For Children Nick's Scholars Program:** This scholarship is for youth who are aging out or aged out and have a 2.5 GPA or above; it's competitive, but provides a \$500-\$700 monthly stipend to students among other supports.

## THE FOSTER YOUTH COLLEGE SUCCESS INITIATIVE (FYCSI)

FYCSI is a program specifically for foster youth to provide them with additional financial assistance to help them succeed in college. Students are eligible if they were in foster care at/after age 13 and admitted and enrolled in a SUNY or CUNY college or university, or at a private college or university that participates in the FYCSI program. To apply, eligible students should fill out [the FYCSI eligibility application](#) on the OCFS website. See [Appendix G20 Foster Youth College Success Initiative Information Sheet](#) for detailed information on the supports, application process, etc.

## THE DORMITORY PROJECT AND ACS COLLEGE ROOM & BOARD PROGRAMS.

**The Dormitory Project** is a collaboration among ACS, CUNY, and the New York Foundling (a foster care agency) that enables foster youth attending any CUNY college to live in dorms affiliated with Queens College, the City College of New York, and John Jay College.

The Dorm Project provides students with room & board (a meal plan and a dorm), full tuition coverage, a daily stipend of \$30.93, monthly metro cards, and books. The program also provides academic and social-emotional supports including a College Coach, Tutor, and a summer inclusion program.

For students in foster care dorming outside the Dorm Project, ACS has a College Room & Board Program that provides all of the same financial supports without the additional academic and social-emotional supports. Note that while the stipend is offered year-round for students in the Dorm Project, the College Room & Board stipend is only disbursed when school is in session for the student, though this can include the Winter and Summer terms as long as the student demonstrates that they are enrolled in classes and dorming away.

These programs can be a great option for students who are aging out of foster care and have not yet secured housing and who want to have a dorm experience. Students can remain in the dorm until age 25 or until their college graduation.

One important advantage of The Dormitory Project and ACS College Room & Board is the weekly stipend that students receive. This helps students better manage their finances and makes them much less likely to leave college due to financial reasons. It combines their various forms of funding and instead of receiving a financial aid reimbursement in a large lump sum, it helps them smooth their income throughout the year. Students who are not in this program receive PELL/TAP reimbursements in late September/October and February/March, and can struggle to manage this amount of money and make it last until the next semester.

See [Appendix G13 Fair Futures Guide to the Dorm Project](#) and [Appendix G14 ACS College Room & Board](#) for additional information on how to apply, supports received, and key tips.

## OTHER SOURCES OF POTENTIAL FUNDING FOR CURRENT/FORMER FOSTER YOUTH APPLYING TO COLLEGE INCLUDE:

**Loans:** Students are also eligible for subsidized and unsubsidized loans. However, given the abundance of resources, loans are strongly discouraged.

**The NYS Excelsior grant** is also available to students in foster care and covers any remaining gap for the cost of attendance at CUNY and SUNY schools after TAP and Pell grants are applied. However, given that the financial aid typically available to current/former students in foster care exceeds CUNY/SUNY's cost of attendance, this is often not needed. The main group of students in care who benefit from the Excelsior scholarship is for undocumented students in care, since DREAM Act TAP doesn't always cover the full cost of college attendance.



The Excelsior Scholarship is very restrictive – for example, it requires students to stay on track to graduate from a bachelor’s program in 4-years, which can be challenging for some.

## **G. REMEDIAL/DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES**

When students enroll at a CUNY or at a 2-year SUNY school, they may need to take a developmental or remedial course to bring their academic skills up to a “college ready” level. Because remedial courses are very time-consuming, do not offer college credits, and generally are associated with poor academic outcomes, students are advised to avoid remedial courses by either placing out, enrolling in CUNY Start, or taking co-requisite courses wherever possible.

### **At CUNY, students can place out of remediation by:**

- Scoring above the cutoff score on the Regents exam (70+ on Common Core Algebra and 75+ on Common Core English).
- Earning a high ACT or SAT score:
  - 480+ on the SAT ERBW section or 20+ ACT English score to place out of Reading/Writing.
  - 500+ on SAT Math or 21+ ACT Math score to place out of Math.
- Passing a college-level course in the subject.
- Being considered “college ready” by CUNY’s Proficiency Index, which weighs students’ GPA and standardized test scores to evaluate their chances of passing a college-level course in English or Math. Little is known about how the Proficiency Index is calculated, and coaches working with students in care should not count on the Proficiency Index as a way of waiving remedial requirements. Proficiency Index scores can be accessed through the student’s CUNYFirst account.

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT COACHES CAN DO TO HELP STUDENTS AVOID REMEDIATION AT CUNY IS TO ENSURE THAT THEY PASS THE REGENTS EXAMS WITH SCORES ABOVE CUNY’S COLLEGE READINESS CUTOFF.**

Students who want to attend CUNY but are scoring below the cutoff should be encouraged to retake the Regents exam as long as there is a reasonable chance that they will be able to earn a score high enough to place out of remedial courses. Students in NYC schools can retake the Regents exam as many times as the test is offered.

**At SUNY 2-year colleges** students will generally need to pass a placement test OR already have passed a college course in the subject in order to place out of remedial classes. To avoid taking remedials, another option is to participate in either **CUNY Start and/or Math Start**, which do not require financial aid, but do not allow students to earn any credits. It’s also worth noting that they carry very strict attendance requirements.

- **CUNY students with two or more remedial needs** should consider enrolling in a semester-long remedial support program, called CUNY Start, before starting credit-bearing classes at their college - CUNY Start has shown strong outcomes in helping students resolve remedial needs and successfully transition to credit-bearing courses.
- **Students can resolve their math remedial need through a related program called Math Start** during the summer prior to their freshman year of college (or during the year). Math Start is an intensive 8 to 12-week program for students who need assistance building college-ready math skills.

See [Appendix G9 CUNY Support and Opportunity Programs](#) for more information on applying to CUNY Start and Math Start and some key considerations.

### **Some colleges, such as Guttman Community College, incorporate remedials into their credit-bearing courses.**

This is called a “corequisite course”. This is an effective way to provide the remedial support students may need while earning college credits. CUNY has promised to scale-up corequisite courses throughout the University and coaches/specialists working with students should look for opportunities for students to resolve their remedial needs through corequisite courses.

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