



Keeping On Track

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Choosing the Right School

Spring is the in the air and aside from increased levels of pollen causing allergy sufferers anxiety, college acceptance letters are causing high school students heightened levels of stress. Not only do students have to resist the urge to rugby tackle the postal workers to get their hands on mail from colleges, they also have to decide where to spend the next four years of their lives.

Understandably that can be a very taxing decision for a number of reasons. You might not know what you want to do with the rest of your life at age 18, so deciding on a college and intended major is a hard task. Also, college is one of the largest financial investments that you will ever make. In many cases every dollar counts in terms of financial aid. Finally, not everyone gets into their first choice college so deciding on where to go after your feel like your dreams and future happiness have been crushed is difficult. Just keep in mind that college rejection is a normal part of the college process and even Warren Buffett got rejected by Harvard. Here are some tips the team at SAGE Scholars assembled to help with the task of deciding which college or university is your best fit.

1

Ask questions of current students on campus. When you are on a college visit take the time to grab lunch at a common area and ask a few students what they think of the college, what classes they are taking, what campus life is like, etc.

2

Compare the Financial Aid Packages. College is a huge investment and if you are leaning towards one college in particular, but their financial aid package is lower than other colleges that you have been accepted to, contact their financial aid office and see if they will match other higher offers. If you don't ask, you won't receive any additional aid and once you are out of school and repaying colleges loans, you will be wishing that you did.

3

Sit in on a few classes. Arrange to sit in on a few classes that you think that you might want to take. Professors are usually very receptive to potential students sitting in on a class and this is a great way for you to get a better sense whether or not the school is for you. Just remember one class, isn't a fair representation of the entire school.

4

Play the tourist. If you are considering a college in a new location take the time to see what you think of the surrounding area. If you love camping, see if how far away the local camp grounds are. If you love going out to eat, check out the local restaurants. Just don't make your decision sole on the fact that the local town has great Mexican restaurants.

