

Life After York Q & A: Parent to Parent Advice

Creating and Finalizing the List

List of Desired Qualities in a College

- ▶ Size and Setting - large, medium, small; rural, urban, suburban.
- ▶ Public or Private - State? Faith-based? Privates may offer more financial aid.
- ▶ Location - Midwest or not. Proximity to a city. Distance from Elmhurst.
- ▶ Cost and rate of return - Affordability? Cost vs. expected salary.
- ▶ Reputation and ranking - Is their reputation national or regional?
- ▶ Major and/or minors - Close match or not? Flexibility of switching? Dedicated “school” or department within the college?
- ▶ Approximate freshman class-size - Typical class size? Taught by full professors?
- ▶ Quarters vs. semesters - This impacts when school starts and ends.
- ▶ Housing- For freshmen? How many years guaranteed? Learning communities, i.e., first year student, interdisciplinary theme, etc.?
- ▶ Extracurricular activities - Student interest vs. offering, i.e. music, drama.
- ▶ Sports - Offerings to play and watch: D1, D2, D3, club, intramurals.
- ▶ Social - Greek/non-Greek, Big 10, suitcase school.
- ▶ Study abroad - Offerings? In student’s major? Own programs or partnership?

High Level Considerations

- ▶ General - It is helpful to search purposefully, cast a wide net, and then narrow choices. This will save a lot of time and stress, and money in application fees.
- ▶ Financial - Approximate costs by using Net Price Calculator on all college websites. Discuss concerns with your student and apply only to the colleges you as a family are willing to pay for.
 - ▶ Be honest with your student as to what you can afford. Explain how student will need to pay for any shortfall, i.e., student loans, college merit awards, scholarships, employment, etc.
 - ▶ Discuss your family's position on traveling home, based on distance factors and who will pay for trips.
 - ▶ Merit awards from colleges come with GPA and perhaps service/other requirements.
- ▶ Readiness - May make a community college, in-state, or local college more appealing.
- ▶ Independence - Regardless of path, students can work on independence skills - laundry, basic meals, managing finances, etc.

Research!

- ▶ Library resources: There are lots of resources at the library. Information is available on every type of college and university, including rankings and student ratings.
- ▶ Online resources: Use the Naviance website* thru York. York provides each student and his/her parents a password for Naviance. Email the College and Career Resource Center (CCRC) if login info is needed.
- ▶ Other websites: Niche, College Confidential and College Board Big Future.

* <https://student.naviance.com/ychsil>

Creating Initial List & Tracking

- ▶ Create a list of desired qualities. Try to determine which are most important and weight these factors. This is your initial (perhaps overly long) list!
- ▶ Determine your student's match to the schools on their list. Use ACT/SAT scores, along with GPA, course load, etc. to help determine which are "likely," "match" and "reach" schools. Use Naviance to assist.
- ▶ Initial visits: See a range of types of schools* (small, medium, large; urban and rural) to begin honing desired qualities. This is especially helpful if student has no idea where to start.
- ▶ As student identifies possible colleges, conduct further research on interests, extracurriculars, costs, etc. and track on a spreadsheet.** Add information about scholarships, links to majors, honors programs, etc.
- ▶ Select a mix of schools: Likely(1-2), Match (3-7), and Reach (1-3).
- ▶ If possible, visit these schools! (See slides on College Visits!). Visits will help narrow even further.

*See CCRC website for Junior Programs/Junior Planner/College Research Protocol for nearby colleges.

**See the Academic Boosters website for a sample Spreadsheet.

Parent to Parent Tips

- ▶ Encourage and let students drive the process of creating the list.
- ▶ Don't jump in too quickly with your judgments. Let your student speak first, listen, ask thought-provoking questions without your opinions at onset.
- ▶ If student is not interested in beginning this process, they might not be ready to go away. Try some initial "no obligation" visits to spark interest.
- ▶ If your student isn't coming up with a good mix of schools, or if he/she is overly focused on one or two, reach out to the CCRC for more ideas. Continue to have focused conversations at home, and perhaps, visit some additional schools.
- ▶ Make sure the student has schools on their list in each category (likely, match, and reach) that he/she would be excited about attending.