

EducationQuest Foundation

College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

April 2018

Seniors...It's decision time!

Here's how to make your final college decision.

Compare your college acceptance letters, financial aid award notifications, and campus visit notes. List the pros and cons of each school using the following criteria:

Location – Is the college too close? If you come home every weekend, you won't experience true campus life. Is the college too far away? If so, you may not make it home as often as you'd like.

Cost – Can your family afford the school? What can you expect for financial aid beyond your freshman year? Did you receive renewable scholarships? How much in [student and parent loans](#) will you need to borrow to cover expenses?

Academic program – Which college offers the degree program that best fits your career interests? What happens if you change majors? Does the college offer other degree programs that interest you?

Student life – Does the school offer activities you will enjoy? Do you like the living arrangements provided by the school? Will you have an opportunity to work on or near campus?

Make your final decision by **May 1** and then notify the colleges you're rejecting so they can offer your spot, and financial aid, to another student.

Juniors... these questions will help you narrow your college choices

By narrowing your college choices now, you'll be better prepared to apply for financial aid and college admission early next fall. Start by answering these questions.

What do you want to study?

Explore your [career interests](#) and then research colleges that offer programs in areas you may want to pursue. Use college selection tools like [College Profiles](#) at **EducationQuest.org**.

What kind of school do you want to attend?

Do you prefer a large university or a small college? Are you interested in a community college? What kind of student/teacher ratio do you want?

Where do you want to go to college?

Do you want to live close to home or far away? Do you want to be in a major city or a small town? How big of a factor is out-of-state or private school tuition? If you want to go out of state, investigate programs like the [Midwest Student Exchange Program](#) which may provide discounted tuition.

What can you afford?

Consider overall costs: tuition, room and board, books, transportation, and personal expenses. (See “[About Nebraska Colleges](#)” for costs.) Determine what you and your parents can afford to pay out-of-pocket and plan to apply for financial aid to help make up the difference. Calculate [the loan debt](#) you and your parents may need to incur to pay for your college education.

For more details, see [Selecting a College](#) at [EducationQuest.org](#).

College fairs coming up in South Sioux City, Lincoln, and Omaha

Talk to representatives from colleges across the state, region, and nation during upcoming college fairs.

[Tri-State Area College Fair](#) (South Sioux City) – Sunday, April 15, 1-3 p.m., Delta Hotel Center (formerly Marina Center)

[Lincoln Area College Fair](#) – Sunday, April 22, 1-3 p.m., Southeast Community College

[Omaha Area College Fair](#) – Sunday, April 29, 1-3 p.m., University of Nebraska Omaha Sapp Fieldhouse

Before you attend, get a barcode at [NebraskaCollegeFairs.org](#). Print the barcode (or download it to your smartphone) and take it to the fair so college reps can scan it.

April “To Do” List

Seniors

- ___ Continue applying for [scholarships](#).
- ___ Make your final college decision.
- ___ Start purchasing dorm essentials.
- ___ Start looking for a summer job.

Juniors

- ___ Attend a [college fair](#) in your area.
 - ___ Schedule [campus visits](#) while colleges are still in session.
 - ___ [Register](#) by April 6 for the May 5 SAT.
 - ___ [Register](#) by May 4 for the June 9 ACT.
 - ___ Start looking for [scholarships](#).
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For free help with college planning, contact EducationQuest Foundation:

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