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- To provide information, resources, and tools to help you plan and pay for higher education, focusing on these key areas:
 - **Building a List of Schools**
 - **Comparing Offers and Financing Options**

Research Schools From a Financial Aid Perspective

- Schools vary *dramatically* in terms of the types and amount of aid offered
- Types of aid
 - **Merit**-based
 - **Need**-based
- Need-based aid awarded based on:
 - Free Application for Federal Student Aid (**FAFSA**)
 - Used by all schools to award federal and state need-based aid and by many schools to award state and school need-based aid
 - **CSS Profile**
 - Used by some schools to award school need-based aid
 - Both applications become available on **October 1st of senior year**

So, how is financial need calculated?

	Low-Cost School EFC = \$6,000	Mid-Cost School EFC = \$6,000	High-Cost School EFC = \$6,000
Annual Cost of Attendance	\$ 9,600	\$ 23,500	\$ 65,000
- EFC	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
= NEED	\$ 3,600	\$ 17,500	\$ 59,000

- **Focus on Net Price – not sticker price**
 - Net Price is the amount a student pays for a single year **AFTER** subtracting grants and scholarships
- **College Scorecard** (collegescorecard.ed.gov)
 - Search/compare colleges, including fields of study, costs, admissions, earnings, and more.
- Research “**percent of need met**” to find schools that have strong financial aid offers

College Search

Search by college name

Major: Environmental S... X

Location

Admissions

Clear All

606 Colleges Found

Yale University →
New Haven, CT
4-year • Private • Medium • Urban
97% graduation rate
\$18K average per year after aid
SAT 1460–1570

Brown University →
Providence, RI
4-year • Private • Medium • Urban
96% graduation rate

Affordability

Financial Need Met

The higher the percent met by a college, the less you need to pay.

65% or more

75% or more

90% or more

100%

No Preference

Application Fees

Application fee waivers offered

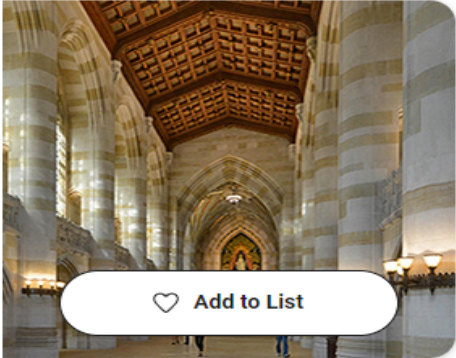
Free to apply

Some colleges don't require an application fee.


Clear All

Show Colleges

Sort by



Add to List



Net Price Calculator (NPC)

- Schools are required to have a NPC on their website (usually in the financial aid section)
- NPCs use **school specific data** to provide estimated net price based on a **student's individual circumstances**
- Let's look at NPC results for two schools using the same information (\$75,000)



Building a List of Schools

School A

School B

Student Information	Academic Scores	Family Information	Parent Finances	Student Finances	Summary
Direct Costs - \$61,813		Estimated Award		Low - High Range	
Cost of Attendance - ? (\$61,813 is listed as COA)					
Merit Scholarship		\$19,000	\$18,000 - \$20,000		
Need-Based Grants		\$8,000	\$7,000 - \$9,000		
Total Scholarships & Grants		\$27,000	\$25,000 - \$29,000		
Your Estimated Net Price		\$34,813	\$32,813 - \$36,813		
Estimated Additional Funds					
Work Study		\$2,000			
Direct Loans ⓘ		\$5,500			
Total Additional Funds		\$7,500			
Your Estimated Remaining Cost		\$27,313			

Your Estimated Financial Aid Award

All numbers are yearly estimates, based on Fall 2021 enrollment.

Direct Costs - \$58,954

Costs \$62,784

Show Breakdown

Gift Aid

1 Simmons Merit Scholarship \$20,000

2 Simmons Need Awards \$21,338

Total Gift Aid \$41,338

Other Aid Estimated Net Price - \$17,616

3 Estimated Work Study \$2,500

4 Federal Direct Student Loans \$5,500

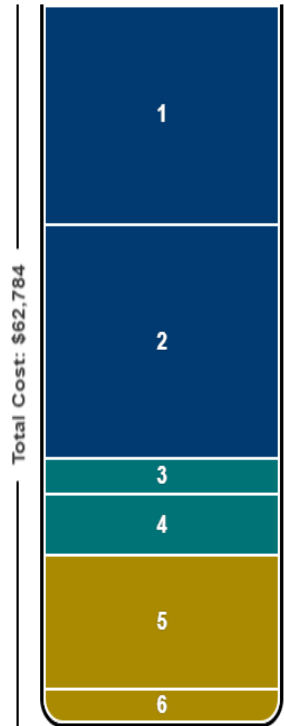
Total Other Aid \$8,000

Your Bottom Line

5 Remaining Due to University \$12,116

6 Remaining Indirect Expenses \$1,330

Total Remaining Cost \$13,446



- Don't make the final decision based on NPC
- **Merit aid** can have a significant impact
 - Many of the **“most selective” schools don't offer merit aid**
 - **“Very selective” and “selective”** schools are often a **good source of merit aid** – worth considering for good students with limited financial need
 - If the estimated award isn't sufficient, the student may want to consider adding additional schools to the list

- Encourage students to **apply to multiple schools** (four to six?)
- Families should try very hard to not to get their heart set on one specific school early in the process
- Important to have a **financial aid “safety school”** on the list

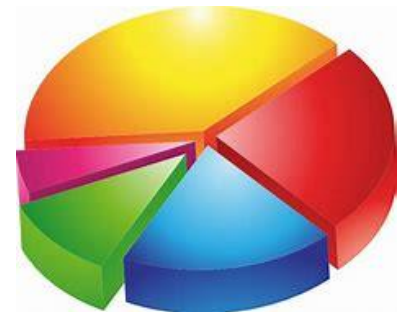
Comparing Offers and Financing Options

- Families need to do an “**apples to apples**” comparison of aid offers
 - Focus on **direct costs after grants and scholarships**
 - If borrowing is needed, subtract Federal Direct Loans
- Don't forget to apply for scholarships
 - **Use FAME's Maine Scholarship Search Tool**

When the Offer Isn't Enough...

- **Reduce College-Related Expenses** - enrollment charges, housing, transportation, books
- **Savings** - work and save during the summer
- **Tuition Payment Plan** - monthly payments to the college
- **Private Loans** - credit based, require co-signer
- **Federal Parent PLUS Loan** - credit based, fixed interest rate

The **piecemeal approach** works best!



Don't Forget About Education Tax Credits & Deductions (see IRS Publication 970)

- American Opportunity Tax Credit
- Lifetime Learning Tax Credit
- Student Loan Interest Deduction
- Opportunity Maine Tax Credit - **reimburses student loan payments for college graduates who live and work in Maine.**

Comparing Offers and Financing Options

- Consider the **Return on Investment (ROI)** – especially if loans are needed
- What are the **future job** openings in the student's desired field?
- What are the **potential earnings** and benefits?

- **As early as possible:**
 - Focus on your finances and **have family conversations** about money and prioritize **saving** (check out Part One of this workshop series)
 - Talk about the future – goals and expectations
 - Think of paying for college as a **“piecemeal approach”**
- **Sophomore and junior year:**
 - **Big Future** (bigfuture.collegeboard.org)
 - College Search
 - EFC Calculator
 - **Net Price Calculator**
 - **College Score Card** (CollegeScorecard.ed.gov)

■ Senior Year:

- Financial Aid Process Completion
- Comparing Financial Aid Offers
- Student Loan/Salary Calculator

■ FAME Resources:

- **Resources, Tools & Calculators** - <https://www.famemaine.com/affording-education/pay-for-school/resources-tools/>
- **Filing the FAFSA** - [FAMEmaine.com/FAFSA](https://www.famemaine.com/FAFSA)
- **Informational Videos** - <https://www.famemaine.com/affording-education/pay-for-school/resources-tools/videos/>
- **Financial Aid Information Sessions** - www.famemaine.com/events/

- Create scenarios where you have as **many options** as possible
- Often there are **multiple pathways** and schools where students can achieve their goals
- Remember that your financing plan must cover multiple years and in some cases, multiple children



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and appreciated!



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