

# College, Scholarship, and Career Update

## Financial Aid Award Letters

Colleges send out financial aid award letters in the spring. Seniors and their parents/guardians are urged to compare awards carefully; what matters most is the “bottom line” - the net cost to attend each college. The College Board provides a “Compare Aid Awards” tool online at [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com) in the Students Pay for College section.

A financial package will often consist of grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships. Consider the awards very carefully and remember: grants, scholarships, and work-study do **not** have to be repaid, while all loans must be repaid. Finally, if a change in family financial circumstances has occurred since the financial aid application was submitted, the student or parent may appeal the award offered by the college or colleges.

## Chaparral High School

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## Students – Visit a College Campus This Summer

Summer is a perfect time to plan for a College Campus visit. Begin researching colleges and universities by visiting their websites. When a potential list of colleges is determined, plan your summer campus visit. Schedule a campus tour with the admissions or recruitment office. Try to do so when summer classes are in session. This way, you can get a “true” experience with students, professors, and classes being held on campus.

You may want to ask if it is possible to attend a lecture, stay in the dorms, visit an athletic practice, or meet with a financial aid administrator. Consider those characteristics of a college that are most important to you, take good notes, and bring a camera. A Checklist for a Campus Visit is available in the *CCSD College Planning and Scholarship Handbook*. Students and parents may download this document at [ccsd.net](http://ccsd.net) in the Students section.

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## Students: Service Academies and the Nomination Process

Service Academies include the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Each Academy requires a congressional nomination that begins by writing a letter to the local office of your Senator and your Congressional Representative. (The Coast Guard Academy does not require Congressional nomination.) In the letter, you must state that you would like to attend a Service Academy and would like to be considered for a nomination. Most interested students begin by sending letters in the spring of their junior year.

Students may apply to more than one Academy. Each congressional office will send a packet of information to interested candidates. A completed application packet includes: the application form, official high school transcripts, SAT/ACT scores, and three letters of recommendation. *Please note: ACT/SAT scores are weighted highly when Service Academy appointments are determined.* The completed application deadline is November 1<sup>st</sup> each year. For more information, contact your local Senator or Congressional Representative's office .

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