



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS NEWS

Several colleges have made announcements over the past few weeks about changes to their admissions policies. Several have added Early Decision rounds (that's where if you apply early and get in, you are required to attend), such as the University of Florida and the University of Southern California. Others have added Early Action rounds (that's where you apply early and hear back early, but you don't have to decide until May), such as WashU, Connecticut College, and Occidental College. Others, such as Tulane and the University of Georgia, have eliminated their supplements; that may seem like good news, but it's really not; application numbers will increase drastically, which will lower their acceptance rates.

We all need to keep an eye on colleges' **financial health**. All colleges, from smaller colleges that especially feel the demographic cliff to larger universities that have seen their international enrollment plummet and have experienced significant research cuts, are under financial pressure. Check out Forbes' College Financial Grades to see how the colleges you're considering are doing.

TERM TO UNDERSTAND: DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

Colleges are caring more than ever about the amount of interest that you show them (typically, the most highly selective colleges don't track interest because they don't need to). Some colleges simply won't admit students who don't show interest (hello, Tulane and Case Western); they want to / need to know that the students they admit will actually attend. The primary way to show interest is to apply through Early Decision. But there are other ways too: visiting, interviewing, attending info sessions at your school or virtually, emailing your admissions rep, following them on social media. And don't forget to open emails they send and peruse the websites; believe it or not, many colleges track your activity online. Check the Common Data Set to see if your colleges consider interest and keep track of the interest you show! And rising seniors: if you are applying to colleges that visit your high school in the fall, you **MUST** go to those sessions. **NOT** going actively shows your disinterest!

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: DICKINSON COLLEGE

- Location: Carlisle, PA
- # of Undergrads: 2,200
- Acceptance Rate: 42%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 9:1
- Returning Freshmen: 89%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 29%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- Founded in 1783 by Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence
- 65% do research before graduation; 8-week paid summer program; students present at major national conferences
- Pre-professional outcomes are exceptional: 96% med school acceptance (vs. 37% national); 96% law school (vs. 75% national)
- Burgess Institute for Global Economy launched fall 2024; brings CEOs to campus; takes students to Google HQ and Wall Street
- One of 8 carbon-neutral colleges; only USDA-certified farm on any college campus worldwide produces 85% of dining hall food
- Greek life present but modest
- Carlisle is walkable with 35+ restaurants and a farmers market; Appalachian Trail nearby
- Career Pathways organizes resources by career interest, not major.

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

- Location: Gettysburg, PA
- # of Undergrads: 2,000
- Acceptance Rate: 39%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 10:1
- Returning Freshmen: 90%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 31%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- 200-acre campus in historic Gettysburg, PA; 97% live on campus all four years with guaranteed parking
- Eisenhower Institute fellowships provide DC housing and stipends; Civil War Institute places students in national park internships
- One in seven students involved in the Sunderman Conservatory of Music — unusually, it includes a marching band
- Strong academic support: mandatory advisor meetings, peer learning associates, and a care report system so faculty can flag students who need help
- 39% involved in Greek life; delayed rush until second semester; fraternities have houses, sororities have 24/7 chapter rooms
- 95% of students participate in athletics at some level; 27 D3 varsity sports with 3 new women's sports just added

THOUGHTS FOR JUNIORS...

You're almost done with Junior year--probably the hardest year of high school! I know it's hard when Seniors are no longer at school or in your classes, but please spend time/effort on your classes these last few weeks of school. I promise it will pay off! A few more things to think about...

With grade inflation and our test optional world, it's looking like **letters of recommendation** are more important than ever. Why? Because they help colleges really understand who you are as a student and as a person. Make sure that you ask two teachers to write letters of recommendation before school lets out (don't just ask them if they can write one; ask them if they can write a great one!). Please do not wait until the fall; many teachers like to get this letter-writing completed during the summer months, and many will agree to write only a set number of letters. Ask teachers--ideally from your junior year and from your core classes (math, English, science, social studies, and language)--who can speak about you as a learner. And be sure to give your teachers a resume or brag sheet so that they fully understand who you are outside of class.

Start doing some soul searching and reflection in preparation for the **essays** you'll be writing later in the summer and in the fall. What are some challenges you've faced and how have you overcome them? Who do you consider to be part of your community? Why do you want to study what you want to study? Being clear on who you are and what you want in college will make your applications authentic and meaningful.

And if you haven't **visited** many colleges yet, there's still time. If you go during the summer, just know that campuses will feel very different from when students are there. But you still can get a sense of the neighboring town, the size of the campus, and the amount that colleges are investing on summertime improvements to the "physical plant." And if you plan to apply Early Decision, PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE be sure to visit! It's a huge decision not to be taken lightly!

THOUGHTS FOR SENIORS...

If you haven't already graduated, you probably will be soon! Congratulations! Here are a few things to remember during this pretty momentous time:

- Take a moment to thank all of the people who supported you through this process: your parents, your teachers, your coaches, your friends. Especially the teachers who wrote you letters of recommendation! Write them a note and express your gratitude. You'll feel good after doing this, and they will appreciate hearing from you!
- Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you really don't deserve to go the college where you're headed. I promise you that **colleges will not admit students who they think will not be able to handle the work** or who won't be able to thrive on campus. Yes, you will have to work hard, and yes, you will face challenges, but you do belong there. Believe it, and face down the imposter syndrome!
- Begin managing your expectations for college. There is no one perfect place for anyone, so expect to be frustrated or disappointed by a few things. You will encounter bumps in the road at some point. Some people hit them early on; some hit them a few months in. Just know that, if you get involved and engaged in your classes AND your life outside of academics, you will get through the low points!

PLEASE FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHER FAMILIES WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM MY APPROACH AND PERSPECTIVE!
(They can subscribe on my website)

I help students and their families navigate the college admissions process while decreasing confusion and stress. I empower students to figure out who they are and where they belong, and I provide structure, insight, and enthusiasm as they apply to colleges that are the best fit academically, socially, and financially. Contact me for a 30 minute complimentary session to learn more!



www.mgsed.com | marisa@mgsed.com
914-217-9984