FINANCIAL AID: Excerpt continued from College Admission: Application to Acceptance, Step-by-Step, written by Robin Mamlet and Christine Vandevelde.

The following is written to the student…


6. Not knowing which colleges guarantee to meet 100 percent of demonstrated financial need—and what it means when they don’t. …not all schools have the same conception of ‘demonstrated need’: some might take into account (some or all of) the equity in your house as a possible resource, some might expect more or less work contribution from you, and, most important, some might include the dreaded loans as part of the package (others might give mostly gift aid, with some small amount of work requirement, especially if the school is well capitalized, that is, has lots of money). Use the net price calculator at each college to see how they might be constructing an offer.

Be on the lookout for the phrase ‘loan-free.’ That means the school will meet whatever percent of demonstrated financial need (100 percent in the best case) without including any loans in the package. Wouldn’t it be great to walk away from college without the $30,000 of debt that the average student in this country has?

Just because some college doesn’t guarantee to meet 100 percent of need doesn’t mean that they won’t, especially if you’re a desirable applicant to them…If you are in the top 20 percent of the admissions profile, you’re likely to get 100 percent of need (though at some especially choosy schools the odds are less).

For a list of colleges that guarantee to meet 100 percent of need…
Be sure to verify that any colleges you’re applying to still meet 100 percent of the need, as some colleges might have changed their policy.

7. **Not applying to enough schools.** If financial aid is an important consideration in your choice of colleges, you should be sure to apply to enough colleges. Financial aid offers can vary widely, even among schools of the same type—a recent comparison we did using the net price calculators of seven schools that we thought would be similarly priced netted prices from $8,000 to $33,000 a year (an astounding range). In order to be safe, apply for more, rather than few, schools (ten to fifteen wouldn’t be too many). Then, compare what comes out the other end.

8. **Not applying for outside scholarships.** Many students think that the college admissions and financial office is the only possible source of funds. But, in truth, college-provided aid can be supplemented by grants from church groups, civic organizations, and even businesses at which your parents work. Your high school college counselor might be getting hundreds of such announcements each year; be sure to check with him or her to see if you qualify for any.”

A website that is getting a lot of attention these days is [https://www.raise.me/join/bishop-garcia-diego-high-school](https://www.raise.me/join/bishop-garcia-diego-high-school)

This website offers students and parents the chance to research colleges, while simultaneously earning micro-scholarships that could be used upon admission to certain schools. For example, Syracuse University encourages the use of [raise.me](https://www.raise.me) for this purpose on their website: [https://www.syracuse.edu/admissions/cost-and-aid/types-of-aid/special-programs/#s:raiseme](https://www.syracuse.edu/admissions/cost-and-aid/types-of-aid/special-programs/#s:raiseme).

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