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College Admissions

Researching Colleges and Building the College List

(Seminar slides are available for printing on the sidebar of mefa.org/events)

Your Presenter Today

Julie Shields-Rutyna

Director of College Planning



Julie joined MEFA in 2007 and has over 30 years of experience helping families plan for higher education.

As Director of College Planning, she manages MEFA's widespread college planning guidance to help make college more affordable and accessible for Massachusetts students and parents.

Stay Organized!

Use a system to keep track of applications and deadlines, such as MEFA's College Application Manager:

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College Application Manager					
School Name	Admissions Deadline*	Send SAT, ACT or Other	Required Financial Aid	Financial Aid Deadline*	Notes
Example University	September 1st	SAT	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> COI form <input type="checkbox"/> Essay	February 1st	* Legal detail with COI form * Strong writing program * At least 3000 words
			<input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> COI form <input type="checkbox"/> Essay		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> COI form <input type="checkbox"/> Essay		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> COI form <input type="checkbox"/> Essay		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> COI form <input type="checkbox"/> Essay		

mefa.org/college-application-manager

MEFA Pathway *Your Plan for the Future*

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FREE college and career planning tool

Resources include:

- Skills and interests assessments
- Career exploration
- College search
- Financial aid and scholarship information
- Personalized digital portfolio
- Visit mefapathway.org to get started



mefa pathway YOUR PLAN FOR THE FUTURE®

Researching Colleges

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Research thoroughly

College Navigator: CollegeNavigator.gov

College search with admissions, academic, & cost info

College Scorecard: CollegeScorecard.ed.gov

College info including average net price, student debt, grad rate, & alumni salary

Big Future: bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search

College search with info on academics, applying, & paying

MEFA Pathway: mefapathway.org

College search and matching tool based on preferences



College Factors to Consider

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- Institution size & location
- Academic fit
- Campus culture
- Activities
- Learning style
- Study abroad programs
- Intended major
- Career & internship services
- Affordability
- Social climate

Assess Prospects for Admission

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Develop a final list with colleges of each type:

Probable

Your chances for admission are strong (Make sure at least one is affordable)

Target

Your chances for admission are 50/50

Reach

Your chances for admission are less than 50%

Net Price Calculators

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- Online tool found on each college's website
- Asks questions about family finances & student academics
- Provides personal, estimated net college price
- Displays federal & institutional financial aid
- Merit-based aid may also be calculated



Informal & Formal Campus Visits

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Informal visits

- Size
- Setting
- Culture



Formal visits

- Academics
- Activities
- Housing
- Q&A



College Fair Tips

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- Check out the college list beforehand
- Have a plan of attack before you arrive
- Head to the info booth first
- Take advantage of information sessions
- Check NACACnet.org and NEACAC.org for fairs

Thank You

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Questions?

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