

# College Admissions and Financial Aid Help: Important Terms

- **Admissions Decisions**
  - **Admit:** You're in
  - **Deny:** You are not in
  - **Wait List:** You are not in yet but have been placed on a waiting list in case openings become available. Some schools may wait for your "seventh semester" grades to make a decision. You must request that this be sent from Ms. Stephan (guidance office registrar).
- **Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA):** Students must commit to their school of choice by May 1.
- **Deferred Entrance:** An admissions plan that allows accepted students to postpone their college entrance for one to three years with a guarantee of enrollment at the time they choose.
- **Early Action:** A student applies to a school early in the senior year and requests an early application review and notification of admission. If accepted, the student is not obligated to attend that institution and can still apply to other colleges during the regular admissions cycle.
- **Early Decision:** Allows students to apply to an institution early in the senior year and request an early notification of admission. If accepted, the student is obligated to attend that institution.
- **Expected Family Contribution:** The amount of financial support a family is expected to contribute toward a child's college education, which is part of the formula used by the federal government to determine financial aid eligibility using the FAFSA form.
- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** This is the federal government's instrument for calculating need-based aid and should be completed as soon as possible after January 1.
- **Grant:** "Free" money that does not have to be paid back.
- **Loan:** Money that does need to be paid back, but generally not until after a student is finished with school.
- **Merit-Based Scholarship/Award:** "Free" money awarded based on excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, or other areas determined by the granting organization.
- **Need-Based Scholarship/Award:** "Free" money awarded based on a student's determined financial need.
- **Open Admissions:** A policy of admission that does not subject applicants to a review of their academic qualifications (often used by community colleges).
- **Rolling Admissions:** The school will notify the student as soon as the application has been processed. This is often used by four-year colleges and universities. Although there may not be a set deadline for applying, beware that spots do fill up, so applying late in the school year is not recommended.
- **Student Aid Report (SAR):** Report of the government's review of a student's FAFSA. The SAR is sent to the student and released electronically to the schools that the student listed.