



The End of it All

When will I hear? Rolling admissions colleges let you know as soon as they have evaluated your application. Schools with stated deadlines sometimes let you know “early” (before April 1). Most schools say they will notify candidates by April 1. If decisions are mailed, rather than being available online, you may wait a week to receive it. If you have not heard by April 10, contact the college by e-mail, and also let Mrs. Schweber know.

How do I decide where to go? Once your applications have been submitted, you should be able to arrange your choices in order from first to last. If you haven’t visited yet, consider doing so once you’ve been admitted. But plan quickly; lots of colleges have final exams towards the end of April, and that isn’t a good time to go. Talk with current students (many colleges set up electronic bulletin boards for this purpose). Talk with professors in the department you are thinking of majoring in. Revisit the colleges’ websites. Look at their course offerings and plan your four years; do you like what you see? Talk with your parents and teachers.

When do I have to decide? You must make your decision by May 1 in most cases. Colleges cannot require you to decide before then.

What if I don’t get in anywhere? After about mid-May, college advisors have access to a list of colleges that still have space, housing, and sometimes even financial aid, available. The list is updated throughout the summer. See Mrs. Schweber for more information.

What if I am put on a waiting list? If you would still be interested in an offer of admission, communicate this to the admissions office. Many colleges include in their decision letter instructions for sending additional items in support of your application, as well as a reply form to indicate whether you wish to withdraw your application or to remain on the waitlist. Follow all directions carefully, and observe all deadlines.

What can I send to strengthen my application? Some schools prefer that you send only new information (awards received, new extracurricular activities). If you wish to send other items, contact the admissions office for permission. Some schools encourage you to send additional letters of recommendation, writing samples, portfolio items, etc. Follow whatever instructions are given to you by the college, and do not send items that have not been requested or okayed by the admissions staff. MCDS will send an updated transcript if you request one in writing from Mrs. Stade.

What happens then? There’s not much left to do besides wait patiently. Do not repeatedly contact the admissions office to see how your application is doing, or to see if you’ve moved up the waitlist. If you annoy the very people you want to impress, you are unlikely to be admitted. Most colleges will not even look at their waitlist candidates until after about May 10, when they can tell how many spaces are available. By the end of June, most colleges have filled their classes and close their waitlists. If you haven’t heard

anything by June 30, e-mail the admissions office to find out if your application is still active.

What if I am waitlisted at more than one school? You may choose to stay on more than one waitlist. If you can say with certainty that if admitted from the waitlist you will enroll, then say so unambiguously and in writing. It may help you. But do not do this at more than one school; admissions people do talk and compare notes about candidates.

What if I am waitlisted at my first choice school but accepted to somewhere else? You should accept one offer of admission and make the deposit. If you get a spot in your first-choice school later and decide to go, you must notify the school whose offer you originally accepted. Depending on their policy, you may get your deposit back. Obviously, it is important to be available during the summer in case you are accepted late. Be sure the college has your e-mail and a phone number. If you don't respond quickly to an offer of admission, you may lose the place to someone else.

What if I change my mind and decide to take a year off? Most colleges will let you defer an offer of admission. Some will also let you defer a financial aid offer that is merit based. Need-based awards generally are recalculated for the year you will actually attend. Contact the admissions office for details. Many colleges require a proposal for how you will spend the year before they will grant a deferment. Some require quite detailed proposals (a letter from your employer, or confirmation that you will be attending a program in another country, for example); others just want to know if you will be working, traveling, or studying. It's best to research options for a year off well in advance and with all the attention you would give to applying to college.

When do I have to make the decision to defer? Contact the admissions office as soon as possible. The more notice you can give, the more helpful it is for the college. Some ask you to decide by the middle of May, others will let you wait until registration week.

Please keep Mrs. Schweber informed when you hear from colleges, whether you are accepted or not.