

William Cullen Bryant High School

“The Relentless Quest for Excellence”

Namita Dwarka, Principal

Class of 2020

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

College Office Edition

1. What if I haven't heard back from a college yet?

There are a multitude of reasons why a student has not heard back from a college yet. The first step would be to check the college's portal to see what, if anything, is missing. For CUNY you can log into CUNYfirst (software system that manages students' education and records). If you have never done this before simply click 'New User' at the bottom of the page. If you are referring to a SUNY/Private/Out of State Colleges please visit the portal which can often be found in a previously sent email from the college. Reasons for not receiving a decision yet can be because a student failed to send in SAT/ACT scores, they might have a transcript from another country that needs analyzing, or they are missing a teacher letter of recommendation. If you have not heard back from a college yet you can contact your college's admissions office by 'googling' their contact information. If you have not heard back from a college by Friday, April 24, you should reach out to your college counselor by phone. Mrs. Sibelman can be reached at (203) 542-9011 and Ms. Lloyd can be reached at 929-260-0759. Please also click here (https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/cis/cuny-login-faq/CUNYLogin_ActivateMyAccount.pdf) for CUNYfirst Account Setup Instructions.

2. What happens if I don't hear back from a college before May 1?

The College Office suggests that if you have not heard back from a college yet as of May 1 you should commit to your "next best fit" college in the meantime. It is okay as if you hear back from your first-choice college after May 1 you can commit to that one as well and email your back-up school stating that you have kindly changed your decision. The one catch or caveat is that you will lose any deposit money that you had put down at the previous college. If your commitment deposit was waived at your back-up school then you do not lose any money.

3. What does it mean to "commit" to a college?

Committing to a college means that you are "saving your seat" and that you are moving forward with attending this college in the fall. Oftentimes when you commit to a college you are asked to pay a commitment deposit fee, which the amount varied by college. No need to worry as this commitment fee is often applied to your first-semester tuition charges, reserves your seat, and enables you to register for classes. Please check your portals to also see if your commitment deposit is "waived" as sometimes this fee often is. Please feel free to contact the college's financial aid office if you want to see if you are eligible for this to be waived.

4. Can I commit to more than one college?

It is not suggested that you commit to more than one college. In other words, the ideal scenario is that each student commits to **ONE** college. On the other hand, we understand that there are not all perfect scenarios. For instance, you might be completely between two different schools and are debating which is a better fit for you. We would normally not suggest this but in this case, you MIGHT want to buy time. If this is the scenario that you are in you COULD commit to both schools, pay the commitment deposit fees if there are any to both, and then you can decide within the next few weeks. The downside to this is you eventually have to tell the other college (we suggest notifying them sooner rather than later) that you decided to go a different route. You would also lose any deposit money originally put down at the college you decided not to attend anymore.

5. How do I commit to a college?

You can commit to a college by either logging into your CUNYfirst account or by viewing the college's original acceptance email or letter as it is often stated in there. Most colleges can be "committed" to by logging into the school's portal. Please feel free to reach out to your college counselor/adviser with additional questions. You can also always contact the college's admissions office by phone, email, or visiting their website.

6. When do I need to commit to a college by?

In the past the Decision Deadline has always been May 1. Many colleges have changed deposit dates to be more flexible due to the current COVID-19 situation. Visit the school's website or click on the links below for College Commitment Deposit Deadlines –

- CUNY Deposit Deadlines: <https://tinyurl.com/cunydeadlines>
- SUNY Deposit Deadlines: <https://tinyurl.com/sunydeadlines>
- Private/Out of State Deposit Deadlines: <https://tinyurl.com/nacacdeadlines>

7. What is a financial aid package?

Your *financial aid package* is the amount of federal aid, state aid and college aid that the colleges and universities who've accepted you are willing to offer you toward your college degree. When you're accepted at a school, you'll receive an acceptance letter as well as a financial aid award letter that lists the amount of aid you're being offered toward the first year of your college education. Please click below for a ...

- Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIsmbFAS5v0&list=PLj-gLanxmiJsa4Mi8JQw0iR9IL36Zd7Go&index=3&t=0s>
- Step by step guide - <https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/cis/cunyfirst/training/students/View-Financial-Aid.pdf>
on how to view your financial aid packages through CUNYfirst. You can schedule a meeting to discuss and analyze the different financial aid packages with your counselor/adviser by visiting www.tinyurl.com/meetmrssibelman or www.tinyurl.com/meetmslloyd.

8. What happens if I have not received a financial aid package as of yet?

In this case the questions to ask yourself would be as follows: a) Did I submit my FAFSA? b) Did I submit by TAP? 3) Was I selected for verification? If you submitted both the federal (FAFSA) and NYS (TAP) financial aid applications and you have **NOT** been selected for verification then you should contact the college's financial aid office by visiting the school's website or googling their phone number / email address. A lot of colleges are able to be accessed by live chat or by email. This information can once again be found by visiting the college's website. Advocate for yourself!

9. What does it mean to be selected for Financial Aid Verification?

This is a completely random process and it means that you have to do a few more steps in order to receive your financial aid package from the college. Please check your email to see if you have been selected for verification. CUNY schools are being more lenient with the due dates for this. Please make an appointment with the College Office if you have any questions. You can now upload your documents for Financial Aid Verification through CUNYfirst and you can view detailed instructions for this by clicking here (<https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/cis/cunyfirst/training/students/Upload-Student-Documents.pdf>).

10. What is the Excelsior Scholarship?

The *Excelsior Scholarship* is another financial aid application that students can complete in addition to the FAFSA and TAP. Excelsior is meant for middle income families and only students with an EFC larger than 0 should complete it. The Excelsior Scholarship Application is expected to become available in the beginning of May. You can sign up to receive an email alert when it becomes available by clicking here (<https://www.hesc.ny.gov/pay-for-college/financial-aid/types-of-financial-aid/nys-grants-scholarships-awards/the-excelsior-scholarship.html>). The Excelsior Scholarship, if eligible, pays for whatever financial aid is not covered by FAFSA and TAP. It is also only applicable to public NYS colleges, CUNY and/or SUNY. In other words, the Excelsior Scholarship, in combination with other student financial aid programs, allows students to attend a SUNY or CUNY college tuition-free. Again, the Excelsior Scholarship, also only covers tuition. The catch often with the Excelsior Scholarship is that the student has to be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen, has to have lives in NYS for at least one year, has to be enrolled in college as a full-time student, and has to live/work in NYS for the duration that they take out the loan.

For example, if you take out the scholarship for 3 years then you have to live/work in NYS for three years after you graduate high school.

11. What are the next steps in enrolling for college?

The next steps for enrolling in a college can also be referred to as "matriculation" steps. This information can be found in the school's New Admit Checklist. You can simply view this checklist by typing in the "(College Name) New Admit Checklist" into Google or by visiting this link - <https://www.newvisions.org/pages/college-check-list>. Next steps often include committing to the college (ie. Accepting the offer), taking a placement examination,

submitting immunization forms, and registering for your classes/meeting with a college adviser. Any questions about your next steps can be answered by your college coach, whom will be available to you from April – August. They can help you with all the steps required to matriculate (enter) to college!

12. What is a college coach?

A college coach is a high school alumnus (graduate) who is currently in college, typically a CUNY college. They are trained, current college students who support graduating high school students during their senior year and the summer before they matriculate into college. They can help you with the following items which they call **The Lucky 7**: comparing and reviewing admissions offers, completing enrollment paperwork, updating and verifying financial aid, talking about what to expect in college, helping you enroll in CUNY special programs / navigating CUNY testing, helping students complete last-minute applications or solidifying a plan, still in need of applying or a plan, and helping students register for classes. College coaches start on Monday, April 27. We will be sharing their contact information with you shortly. Take the time to get to know them as they will be invaluable to you!

Do you have more questions about your College Process?

Contact the College Office:

Mrs. Sibelman (A-L)

Call/Text: 203-542-9011

Email: dsibelman@schools.nyc.gov

Make an appointment: tinyurl.com/meetmrssibelman

Ms. Lloyd (M-Z)

Call/Text: 929-260-0759

Email: dlloyd@wcbryanthhs.org

Make an appointment: tinyurl.com/meetmslloyd

View the CUNY Future Student Guide: <https://www.cuny.edu/admissions/future-student-guide/>

This is an excellent guide just released by CUNY that has contact information for each college admissions department, FAQ about financial aid, and much more! We suggest that you read this website in detail.