

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CSS Profile – Financial aid form required by some colleges (mostly private), in addition to the FAFSA, to analyze a family's expected contribution toward college expenses.

Candidate Reply Date/National Reply Date – The date (May 1) by which accepted applicants must notify colleges of their intention to enroll by submitting a non-refundable deposit.

Deferral – A college's postponement of a decision on a student's early action or early decision application until it has seen its full applicant pool and received more of the student's grades.

Early Action – A non-binding early admission program available at some colleges. Students apply early (usually in October or November) and receive an early response (usually in December or January).

Early Decision – A binding early admission program available at some colleges. A student may submit an early decision application to only one school. If admitted, he or she must withdraw all other (regular) applications immediately.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – Financial aid application that must be submitted by students who are applying for financial aid from federal or state governments, colleges, and/or other sources. It cannot be filed until October 1st of the student's senior year in high school.

Financial Aid – Any financial award to a student. It may be in the form of a scholarship, grant, loan, and/or work-study job.

Grants – Aid in the form of outright gifts toward college costs; grants do not have to be repaid.

High School Code (or CEEB Code) – An individual code assigned to each high school for identification during the college search process. Mountain Brook High School's code is 010-380. This code is needed for SAT and ACT registration, as well as some applications.

Merit Scholarships – Scholarships based on factors such as academic performance, special talents, leadership ability and/or volunteer activities. Scholarships do not have to be repaid.

Need-Based Financial Aid – Need is determined by examining the total cost of attending a specific college, minus the family's expected contribution. The FAFSA is used to determine the expected contribution.

Rolling Admission – The admission policy of schools that accept students on a continual basis, as applications are received.

Test Optional – an admission policy that allows all or some applicants to decide whether to submit SAT or ACT scores as part of their application. It does not mean that schools are not interested in seeing all applicants' test scores but if a student does not submit their scores it will not be counted against them in the application process.

Wait List – A college's list of applicants who narrowly missed being admitted and who may be offered admission, depending on the actual number of students who accept it offers of admission by May