

Foundations of College Planning for High-Income Clients

Session 1: The M.A.G.I.C. Method & Funding Models

October 1, 2025 | 12:00 – 2:30 PM ET



Center for College Solutions

Learning Objectives



Explain why affluent families require a bespoke college strategy



Apply the MAGIC Method™ from 9th through 12th grade



Guide clients along a multi-year runway integrated with their wealth plan



Debunk common myths and coach families toward ROI-based decisions



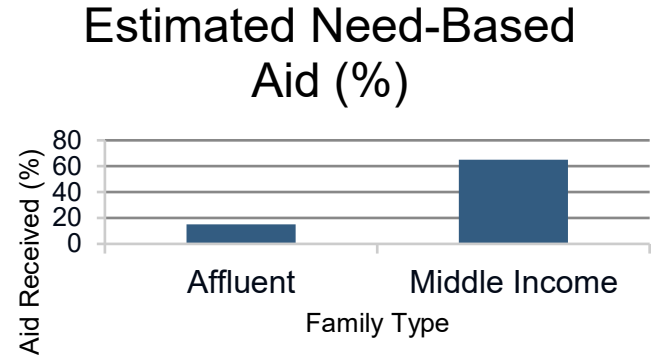
Model cash flow, assets and financing using Cash/Credit/Collateral

Myths Affluent Families Believe

- We won't qualify for aid, so planning is pointless
- Private schools always cost more than public universities
- High grades guarantee full scholarships
- We'll figure it when we get there
- You can't negotiate financial aid offers

Why Tailored Planning?

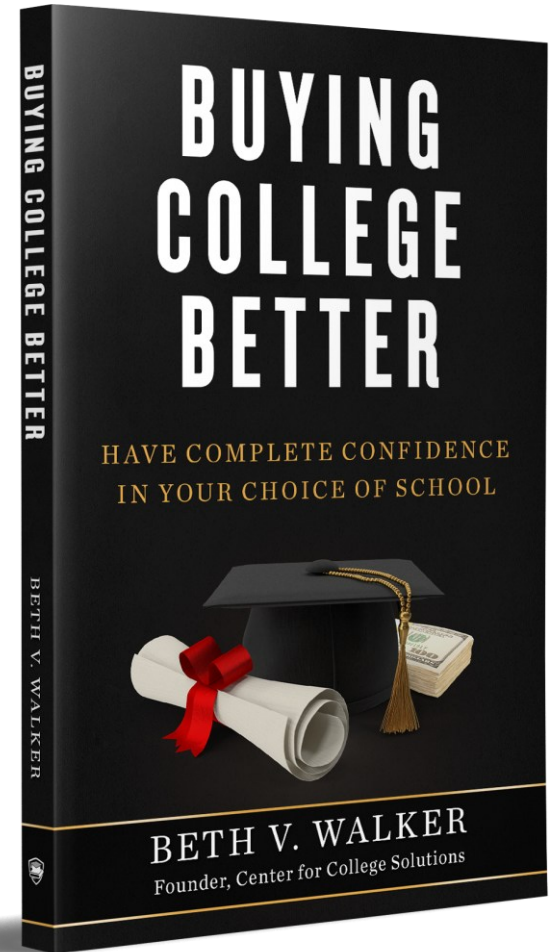
- Rising tuition outpaces inflation and salary growth
- Aid formulas penalize assets and income at higher brackets
- Institutional scholarships are targeted at high-income families
- College selection is a seller's market – competition has intensified



Beth V. Walker

Wealth Advisor for Carson Wealth,
Author of *Never Pay Retail for College*
and *Buying College Better*

Insights Have Been Featured On:



The M.A.G.I.C. Method



Money

Most misunderstood

Define affordability and fund
with Cash, Credit & Collateral



Academics

Most meaningful

Position students where
they'll get in and thrive



Gifts

Most underestimated

Uncover interests & aptitudes
to avoid costly mistakes



Integration

Most influential

Align all parts into a coherent
plan & application profile



Confidence

Most valuable

Shop in the right zip codes &
negotiate with certainty

Money: Pre-Qualification & Funding Model



Income from all sources



Assets: 401(k), IRA, brokerage & savings



Monthly obligations (mortgage, debt, insurance)



Credit history & scores

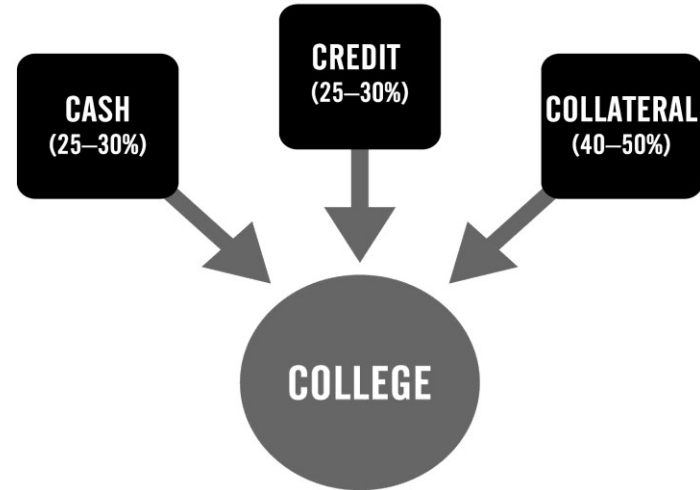


Number of college-bound children



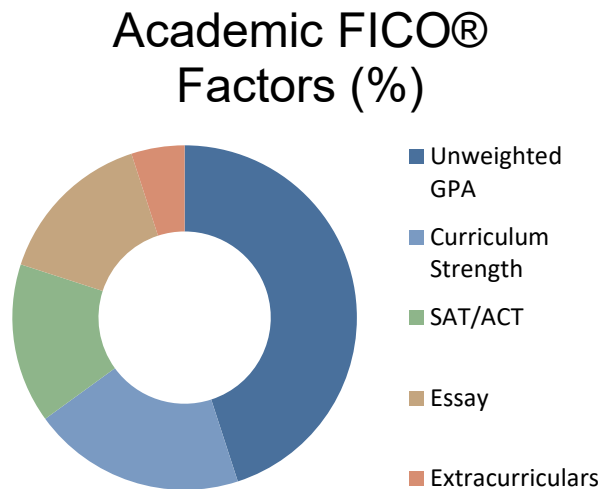
Available financing options

MAGIC Funding Formula



Academics: Navigating a Seller's Market

- College admissions favour the institution – demand exceeds supply
- Understand your student's quantitative and qualitative profile
- Build a list where students are **top-quartile applicants**
- Align academic competitiveness with financial strategy



Gifts: Discovering & Leveraging Strengths



Uncovering student aptitudes

- Invest in assessments (interests, aptitudes, learning styles)
- Recognize unique 'superpowers' and double down on them
- Purpose-driven majors minimize transfers and extra semesters
- Early discovery aligns academics, career and budget

Integration: Bringing It All Together

Integration combines Money, Academics and Gifts into a unified strategy.

Think of it as the 'eHarmony of education' – aligning your student's profile with institutions that will say 'yes'.



Letters of recommendation



Essays & personal statements



Standardized test scores



Demonstrated interest & activities



Financial aid forms (FAFSA/CSS)

Confidence: The Ultimate Outcome

Imagine your student knows there are no bad choices, expects a positive outcome and takes rejection in stride.

This calm, composed certainty is built over months by shopping in the right zip codes, negotiating the best offers, and aligning every college on the list with your family's pre-qualified range.

Stages of College Planning

9th Grade

Assess financial baseline,
explore interests & start
saving

10th Grade

Take aptitude assessments,
visit campuses

11th Grade

Focus on testing strategies,
build resume & budget
projections, create college list

12th Grade

Finalize list, file FAFSA/CSS,
apply & negotiate offers

Create Clients for Life

Help families make
better decisions
regarding the most
emotional purchase
they will ever make!



Money

Most misunderstood

Define affordability and fund
with Cash, Credit & Collateral

Buy College Like You Buy a House



Pre-qualify your spending ceiling

Understand income, assets, obligations & credit

Shop in the right zip codes

Match academic fit with financial reality

Compare offers & negotiate

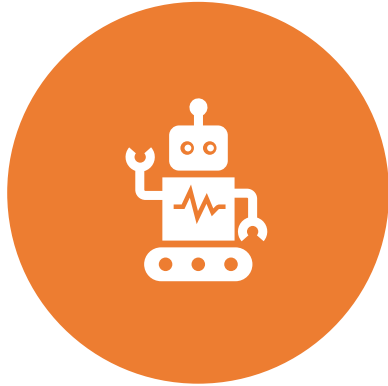
Treat college as an investment, not an impulse buy



Buying a House...

1. Pre-qualify for MAX Purchase Price
2. Must Haves & Nice to Haves
3. Narrow Your Choices (2-3 contenders)
4. Make an Offer
5. Negotiate the Deal Terms
6. Handle All the Administrative Details
7. Close the Purchase
8. Move In

ChatGPT Query:



“AS AN AI LANGUAGE MODEL,



I CANNOT PROVIDE SPECIFIC
FINANCIAL ADVICE OR INFORMATION
ON YOUR PERSONAL FINANCES”



Buying College...

1. Pre-qualify for College Costs
(all kids, all years)
2. Must Haves & Nice to Haves
3. Narrow Your Choices
(2-3 contenders)
4. **Get an Offer**
5. Negotiate the Deal Terms
6. Handle All the Administrative Details
7. Close the Purchase
8. Move In
9. **Costs Increase Each Year**

Current Scenario																		
	<u>Savings/529</u>	<u>Teenager Tax</u>	<u>Student Loans</u>	<u>Employment Income</u>	<u>Tax Scholarship</u>	<u>Roth IRA Contribution</u>	<u>Spending Ceiling</u>	<u>Cost of Attendance- Gross</u>	<u>Discount (Merit-Based Aid)</u>	<u>Cost of Attendance- Net</u>	<u>50% Support Threshold- Based on Net Cost of Attendance</u>	<u>Surplus/Deficit</u>	<u>Loan/Line of Credit Balance IF Needed</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Loan Period</u>	<u>Monthly Minimum</u>	<u>Yearly Payment</u>	
Freshman Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 5,500.00			\$ 5,750.00	\$ 27,750.00	\$ 75,000.00				\$ 47,250.00	\$ 47,250.00	9%	10 Years	\$354	\$4,253	
Sophomore Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 6,500.00			\$ 5,750.00	\$ 28,750.00	\$ 78,750.00				\$ 50,000.00	\$ 97,250.00	9%	10 Years	\$729	\$8,753	
Junior Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 7,500.00			\$ 5,750.00	\$ 29,750.00	\$ 82,687.50				\$ 52,937.50	\$ 150,187.50	9%	10 Years	\$1,126.40	\$13,516.80	
Senior Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 7,500.00			\$ 5,750.00	\$ 29,750.00	\$ 86,821.88				\$ 57,071.88	\$ 207,259.38	9%	10 Years	\$1,554.44	\$18,653.28	
Total	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 27,000.00			\$ 23,000.00	\$ 116,000.00	\$ 323,259.38				\$ (207,259.38)						
Recommended Scenario																		
	<u>Savings/529</u>	<u>Teenager Tax</u>	<u>Student Loans</u>	<u>Employment Income</u>	<u>Tax Scholarship</u>	<u>Roth IRA Contribution</u>	<u>Spending Ceiling</u>	<u>Cost of Attendance- Gross</u>	<u>Discount (Merit-Based Aid)</u>	<u>Cost of Attendance- Net</u>	<u>50% Support Threshold- Based on Net Cost of Attendance</u>	<u>Surplus/Deficit</u>	<u>Loan/Line of Credit Balance IF Needed</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Loan Period</u>	<u>Monthly Minimum</u>	<u>Yearly Payment</u>	
Freshman Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 5,500.00			\$5,750	\$ 27,750.00	\$ 45,000.00				\$ 17,250.00	\$ 17,250.00	9%	10 Years	\$129	\$1,553	
Sophomore Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 6,500.00			\$5,750	\$ 28,750.00	\$ 47,250.00				\$ 18,500.00	\$ 35,750.00	9%	10 Years	\$268	\$3,218	
Junior Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 7,500.00			\$5,750	\$ 29,750.00	\$ 49,612.50				\$ 19,862.50	\$ 55,612.50	9%	10 Years	\$417.09	\$5,005.08	
Senior Year	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 7,500.00			\$5,750	\$ 29,750.00	\$ 52,093.13				\$ 22,343.13	\$ 77,955.63	9%	10 Years	\$584.66	\$7,015.92	
Total	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 27,000.00			\$23,000	\$ 116,000.00	\$ 193,955.63				\$ (77,955.63)						

Project Planning Mindset

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
■ Define spending ceiling ■ Create cash flow plan ■ Encourage exploration	■ Benchmark academic profile ■ Visit campuses ■ Refine budget & list	■ Take standardized tests ■ Improve scores ■ Model multi-child costs	■ Apply for admission ■ Apply for financial aid ■ Compare offers & negotiate

Key Takeaways

- Pre-qualify clients just as mortgage lenders do – **know the spending ceiling**
- Use the MAGIC Method to “solve” Money, Academics, Gifts, Integration & Confidence
- Coach families away from myths & toward data-driven decisions
- Assemble a cross-disciplinary team (FA, IEC, Career & Majors Caching, FAFSA filing, etc.)
- Treat college planning as a multi-year project with measurable ROI

Questions?

beth@centerforcollegesolutions.com