

# Alternatives to a 4 Year School



**COLLEGE & CAREER DAY**

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# What is a 4 Year Degree?



- Also known as a Bachelor's Degree
- You get a Bachelor's Degree from a 4 Year College
  - Typically called a 4 Year College because it usually takes 4 years to complete, though some people will take more than that.
- Why do some people want a 4 Year Degree?
  - Many jobs require a Bachelor's Degree
  - Even if jobs don't require it, a Bachelor's Degree can make it easier to get a job or can help you make more money in a job.

# Why would someone choose another path?



- **Not all jobs require a 4 Year Degree (or Bachelor's Degree)**
- **A student may not be ready to go to a 4 Year College**
  - 4 year schools usually require certain grades and courses from a student. If a student has not done that in high school, they won't be able to attend a 4 year college.
  - For other reasons, a student may feel that they are not ready to begin 4 year college
- **Financial Reasons**
  - Sometimes a 4 year school can be more expensive than a 2 year school.

# What are the other options?



- **Two Year Schools**
  - **Job Training**
  - **Gap Year**
  - **Military**
  - **Work**
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- **Our focus today will be on two year schools and job training programs.**

# What is a 2 Year College?



- **Two Year Colleges offer programs that last up to two years that lead to a certificate or an associate's degree.**
- **Two Year Colleges include:**
  - Career schools
  - Community colleges
  - For-profit colleges

# Associate Degree



- **An Associate Degree is the degree that you typically receive from a two-year school. Schools offer Associate of Arts (AA) vs Associate of Science (AS) degrees.**
- **Benefits of an Associate Degree:**
  - Many jobs require at least an Associate degree.
  - Having an Associate Degree often makes it easier to get a job and get a higher paying job vs. having a high school degree.
  - It can take less time and be less expensive to complete an Associate Degree compared to a Bachelor's Degree (from a four-year school).
  - If your plan is to get a Bachelor's Degree, you can often easily transfer to a four-year school after getting an Associate's and save yourself money.

# Certificate Programs



- **Many two year schools offer certificate programs.**
- **Certificate vs. Associate Degree:**
  - A certificate means that you have received specialized training in a specific job. Certificate programs are usually shorter than degree programs.
  - People may get a certificate instead of a degree. Sometimes people also get a certificate after receiving a degree in order to improve their qualifications to get a job or get more pay.
- **Benefits of a Certificate:**
  - Shorter (and often less expensive) than a degree
  - Provides specific job training

# Certificate Programs



- **Examples of Certificate Programs:**
  - Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate: Provides training to be certified as a substance abuse counselor. (9 courses, 300 hours of field placement)
  - Medical Interpreting Certificate: Provides training on interpretation in a medical setting (7 courses, must be fluent in English AND other language)
  - Web Development Certificate: Provides training on tools necessary to design and develop websites. (9 courses)
  - Many more are available!



# Private Two Year Colleges



- **Also offer Associate Degree programs and certificate programs**
- **Sometimes tuition can be higher than community college**
  - Make sure you do research about tuition and financial aid!
- **Example of private two year colleges:**
  - Dean College (also offers 4-year degrees)
  - Bay State College (also offers 4-year degrees)
  - Benjamin Franklin Institute (also offers 4-year degrees)

# Public Community College



- The most common type of two year college.
- According to College Board, more than 40% of U.S. undergraduate students attend community colleges.
- Offer Associate Degrees as well as certificate programs.
- 15 community colleges in Massachusetts, in 24 locations
- The largest age group is 18-24 at community colleges, but also have a big population of adult learners.

# Benefits of a Community College



- **Increases likelihood of getting a job (over HS degree)**
  - Many jobs require at least Associate Degree
- **Can be very affordable**
  - Bunker Hill - \$486 per class (compared to \$2,443 at Umass Amherst\*)
- **Career preparation**
  - Many programs provide excellent, practical training for jobs that makes students more likely to get a job (over a HS degree)

\*but remember that with financial aid, you probably won't pay that full \$2,443 per class.

# Benefits of a Community College



- **Open Admission (for most schools, not all programs)**
  - Great for students who may not be ready to go away to a four year school
  - Great for students who had a difficult time in high school and their transcript doesn't show their potential
- **Flexible schedule, allows for work**
  - Ex: Bunker Hill offers midnight classes; many colleges offer weekend courses to accommodate people who work full time.
- **You can transfer to a four-year school after starting at a two year school.**

# Transfer to a Four Year School



- Videos with advice on transferring to a four-year school: (optional, only if time allows)
  - [Click for video 1](#)
  - [Click for video 2 \(Scroll to the bottom and choose “What’s the benefit of starting at a 2-year college?”\)](#)

# Commonwealth Commitment



- **The Commonwealth Commitment allows community college students who complete an associate's degree to transfer all credits to a four-year public school in order to earn a Bachelor's degree with another two years of study.**
- **Students in this program can get financial benefits when they transfer to a four year college!**

# Applying to a Community College



- **Check the requirements at each school carefully.**  
**Most schools require that you:**
  - Complete an application
  - Finish high school or high school equivalency
  - SAT, ACT not required
  - Take a placement test (Accuplacer)

# Applying to a Community College



- **Some programs within a community college have more specific requirements:**
  - For example, many health careers programs have more requirements for admission.
- **Some programs within a community college have articulation agreements with CTE programs**
  - If you are in CTE, talk to your teachers about this!



# What is a Job Training Program?



- Sometimes, people know what job they want and they know it doesn't require a college degree.
- These people might seek out job training programs.
- Job Training Programs are sometimes called Career Schools or Vocational Schools/training
- These programs are similar to the CTE program that we have here at SHS.

# What is a Job Training Program?



- Sometimes job training programs happen as part of a job. For example, you might get hired to do a job and you spend the first few weeks/months getting training on how to do that job.
- Sometimes a job training program is a separate school/program and is not connected to a specific company and does not guarantee a job after completing the program.

# Benefits of a Job Training Program



- After completing job training, you will have a skill that makes you more hireable in some areas.
- Students who did NOT participate in a CTE program at SHS but might want to be trained in a skill/trade would benefit from a job training program.
- Students who want to get trained in a job that was not part of our CTE program might want a job training program (i.e. plumbing)

# Apprenticeships



- Apprenticeships could be considered job training programs.
- In an apprenticeship, you learn from an expert in a job area.
- For example, you might train with a master carpenter who will train you in the skills that you need to succeed in carpentry.
- You get paid while you get trained in apprenticeships!
- For more info, visit: <http://www.mass.gov/lwd/>

# Researching Job Training programs



- Think about what job you might want. Talk to a counselor and do some research.
- Look for options for training programs.
- Beware of for-profit programs that are more expensive than you need them to be.
- Look for programs at local community colleges!
- Other programs:
  - YouthBuild
  - Job Corps

# Guest Speakers



- **Alison Handy, Middlesex Community College Admissions**
  - Often, students look to Bunker Hill when looking for a 2 year college. While Bunker Hill offers excellent programs, we think it is important that you know about all of your options. Middlesex is an excellent community college that is not too far away! We're excited to have Alison Handy here to talk to you about Middlesex Community College.

# Guest Speakers



- **Erin Fedas, Job Corps**

- Job Corps is a **free** education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. For eligible young people at least 16 years of age that qualify as low income, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life.

# Questions?



- **Any questions from students and families about Middlesex Community College, Job Corps, or other post secondary paths?**