

Options for Life After Ipswich High School

Preparatory Schools

Some students may wish to consider an additional year of secondary school prior to attending college. Typically, students who consider this option do so to improve their study skills or their academic record in a structured environment with small classes in order to increase college options. In addition, preparatory school is sometimes suggested for athletes by college coaches. Often students will consider a PG year at a preparatory school while simultaneously applying to colleges during the fall of the senior year. Decisions and deposits are not required until May 1 in most cases.

An alternative thirteenth year

Many students are not yet ready or prefer not to go directly to college or to some other degree-granting educational programs immediately after completing high school. While some of these students may choose a year at a prep school, join the military, or work full time before enrolling at a college, many others seek some other alternatives for a single transition year, such as a travel adventure or an internship experience.

In a process called deferred admissions, students can apply to college in the fall of the senior year and in the spring ask permission of the college they wish to attend to defer admission for one year. In some cases admission can also be deferred until the following January. In other words, students wanting to pursue this option can maintain acceptance to a college but not begin until a year or six months later. A student and a family who are considering this option should discuss the idea with the student's guidance counselor.

Business, Trade or Technical Programs

These programs are usually available at privately owned schools. Regional vocational technical schools such as Essex Agricultural Regional High School and community colleges such as North Shore CC also offer many such programs. The training provided is practical and prepares students for employment in specific fields. Students can be trained in secretarial skills, computer programming, electronics, auto repair, cosmetology, drafting, health occupations, and travel and tourism. Job placement services are usually available upon completion of a program. The length of a program varies from several weeks to several years. Costs can also vary depending upon the length and quality of training.

Apprenticeship Training

An apprenticeship is a formal way of learning a skill or trade by working with someone who works at that particular job. Apprenticeship programs almost always include class study along with a full-time job. Apprenticeships usually cover periods of time specified by the government or labor unions. Time spent in an apprenticeship depends on the difficulty of the skill to be learned. While most programs are between three and four years, a few can be as short as two years or as long as five or six years. One advantage of an apprenticeship is that rather than paying for the training him/herself, the apprentice is being paid while learning a skill. The number of apprenticeship openings is limited and not all qualified applicants can enter such programs. Tests and personal interviews are often required. Occupations with apprenticeship training include carpentry, plumbing, etc.

Military Training

Branches of the military offer training in almost 1500 different occupations. Many of these are similar to occupations found in civilian life. The training varies a great deal in length of time and may include classroom study, on-the-job training, or both. Enlistees are paid while they receive their training. The military prepares persons for a variety of jobs including aircraft mechanic, heavy equipment operator, computer or electronics technician, meteorologist, fire fighter, and welder.

Correspondence Study

This is a way of continuing education if the student cannot or does not wish to attend formal classes. Many correspondence courses help an individual learn a specialized skill. The student is usually required to pass tests before receiving credit. Cost is not high and students can work full-time while studying in their spare time. Jobs are as

diverse as accountant, radio/TV repairer, locksmith, robotics technician, gem identification, appliance repair, and legal assistant. Working full time a student planning to work might consider the following steps.

- Visit an office of the Department of Employment Training (DET). The primary function of this state agency is to help you find employment.
- Seek out companies and businesses that offer on-the-job training (OJT) programs to new employees. OJT can help a person gain the skills to succeed in certain jobs and also to advance later on.

Working Full Time

The North Shore Career One Stop offices (www.nscareers.org) in Salem, Lynn and Gloucester offer a wide range of no-cost services to meet the employment needs of job seekers.

Additional websites: www.careerbuilder.com, www.futurescan.com, www.stats.bls.gov/oco (Occupational Outlook Handbook)