



## Seven Ways To Be An Informed Buyer and Beat The High Cost Of A College Education!

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You want the best for your children. You want them to be happy, successful and productive. You know that a college education can be a key to accomplishing these goals and you're willing to sacrifice financially to help your children obtain one.

*The current average four-year cost for an in-state university is almost \$100,000! Private college? Double it; and that's an average private! With absurdly high and ever-increasing college costs and average graduation rates of almost six years (per child), like most parents, you're probably concerned about paying for college without going broke or taking on significant student loan debt.* Here's a

secret that most families don't know: **When it comes to paying for college, there are two prices – one for the informed and one for the uninformed.** The uninformed buyer of a college education will spend thousands of dollars more than the informed. And, while the uninformed parent may NOT be sending their child to the school of their dreams, but to the one they think is most affordable, the informed parent is often sending their child to the school of their dreams– and paying the same price or even *LESS!*

**Helping you become an informed buyer of a college education - and saving thousands of dollars in the process - is our mission.** College planning is not just saving for college; it's also saving on the cost of college.

*It's all about knowing the ins and outs of a very complex topic and knowing how to apply the secrets of college planning and funding to your circumstances so that you don't pay one dollar more for college than absolutely necessary.*

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## **Here's the good news...**

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***Chrest CPA Tax and Financial PC*** can help you become an informed “buyer” of a college education by helping you make better, smarter and more informed college planning and funding decisions.

With our assistance families discover they can pay less to send their student to the college of choice, not the one they think is the most affordable. The savings then can be used to improve their retirement savings outlook in the process.

### ***We can do the same for YOU!***

We'd like to make you a generous offer: **A one-hour free consultation.** During your consultation, we'll share with you some of the “ins and outs” of this very complex topic and how to apply the secrets of college planning and funding to your circumstances so that you don't pay one dollar more for college than absolutely necessary.

We'll show you how to apply the following ***Seven Ways To Be An Informed Buyer and Beat The High Cost Of A College Education*** to help you pay for college without going broke in the process.

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**Secret # 1****Many Middle Income And Upper-Middle Income Parents Pay Much Less Than The Advertised Cost For Their Children's College Education**

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In many cases, these parents are eligible for some forms of financial aid since the formulas also take into consideration many other variables (the cost of the school, the age of the parents, the number of children in college, etc.) – not just your income level. **Do not assume you won't be eligible.**

*We have shown many middle and upper-middle income families, making in excess of \$150,000/year, strategies to dramatically reduce the cost of their children's college education. Just like two people sitting next to each other on an airplane will pay two very different prices, so can two students sitting next to each other in the classroom at the same school.*

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**Secret # 2****High School Guidance Counselors & Financial Aid Nights Aren't Sufficient**

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Many parents believe that all of their concerns will be addressed by the high school guidance counselor and the annual "Financial Aid Night." This is rarely true.

The fact is that guidance counselors are completely overloaded. During the academic year, they spend, on average, only 35 minutes with a college-bound student. Beyond that, they don't have the expertise to advise families on the complexities of college planning and funding strategies to help them become informed buyers of a college education and reduce their out-of-pocket college costs.

As for Financial Aid Nights, they are primarily focused on how to fill out only one form. They don't address practical strategies that can increase your financial aid eligibility or help you identify schools that are a good fit for your student AND will give you a good financial aid package. And they won't be there to help you negotiate the best possible financial aid package.

***We will!***

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### **Secret # 3**

### **A Private College May Cost You Less Than a Public University**

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Regardless of what school your child applies to, you will have to pay your “Family Contribution,” which is the minimum amount of money you will be expected to pay before you can qualify for any need-based financial aid at the school.

Let's say your child applies to two schools, a private college costing \$55,000 per year and a state university costing \$25,000 per year. Let's also assume your “Family Contribution” is determined to be \$20,000.

Because the private college is much better endowed than the state university and has more money to give out, they offer you financial aid that will cover all expenses above \$20,000 – so all you end up paying for a \$55,000 a year school is \$20,000. Unfortunately, the state school does not have a lot of money to give out, and all they can give you is \$2,500 – so you end up paying \$22,500.

So, it actually ends up being ***cheaper*** to send your child to the private school! This is NOT as uncommon as you might think and ***we've helped many families attend private colleges for out-of-pocket costs comparable to the in-state public university***. By the way, it's *far more likely* for your student to graduate in four years from a private college than a public university. More time in college means more college costs!

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**Secret # 4****How To Pick Colleges That Will Give You The Best Financial Aid Packages**

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Some schools are well endowed and have the ability to award significant amounts of money to students. Other schools have very little money to give away.

It's vitally important for you to know this information about the schools you are considering - ***before you ever apply to the school.*** Knowing in advance which schools give the best financial aid packages can put you in a position to obtain the needed resources by applying to the right schools.

You want to invest your valuable time, money and effort applying to and visiting schools you can afford. And, you'll want to choose from a list of candidate schools that will honor your child's hard work with an offer of admission and also generous tuition discounts.

***We'll make sure you do!***

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**Secret # 5****You Must Submit the Complicated Financial Aid Forms Accurately & On-Time – Or The Results Can Be Calamitous**

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According to the Department of Education, *a large percentage of all financial aid forms are submitted with errors and inconsistencies.* Simple mistakes can actually cause your forms to be rejected. If this happens, you'll have to resubmit your forms for reprocessing which means you go to the back of the line.

Although financial aid is not always awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, it's imperative that you get your forms in accurately and on time. If you don't submit them correctly the first time, you're at risk of losing out on aid that may have been available to you otherwise!

***We'll help ensure you are at the front of the line!***

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### **Secret # 6**

## **High Income Families Can Reduce Their Out-Of-Pocket College Costs**

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If you are a high-income earner, every dollar you save on college costs is comparable to a \$2 scholarship or \$2 more that you didn't have to earn (if your **total** tax rate is close to 50%).

The worst thing a high-income earner can do is pay for college with after-tax income! This can double the real cost of college for you! So a \$45,000/year private college bill equates to \$90,000 of income you had to earn. If you are willing to "pay that cost" for college – surely you are willing to invest one hour to learn some ways to avoid doing that!

Although there may be no need-based financial aid opportunities available to the upper-income family, there are a wide variety of little-known college planning and funding strategies that can yield great benefits. Planning for business owners, income planning strategies, asset planning strategies, gifting strategies, tax planning strategies, school-based scholarship strategies, strategies for grandparents and funding strategies are just some of the areas that can yield great benefits.

***The effect of implementing these types of strategies is often more predictable than planning for financial aid and can yield comparable savings on the real cost of college.***

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### **Secret # 7**

## **You Do Not Have To Stop Or Drastically Reduce Your Retirement Savings Contributions In Order To Pay For College**

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Most parents don't think they will be able to fund their retirement savings and put their children through college at the same time. The fact is, in many cases, it is possible not only to maintain your retirement contributions during the college years, but also to actually increase them!

The way to maintain monthly retirement contributions or even increase them is by linking college planning with retirement planning. Knowing and employing the right college planning and funding strategies for your particular situation is crucial to helping you maintain or even increase retirement contributions during the college years. ***It is not unusual for families – with our expert help – to be able to redirect some of the college funding resources (income and assets) back to their retirement savings!***

## **ACT NOW!**

Not knowing and employing the secrets of college planning and funding could literally cost you thousands of dollars on your college bill and ruin your retirement savings.

***Don't let this happen to you!*** Regardless of your particular situation, we can help you achieve a better outcome than you would without our help. ***It's worth investing one hour of time to find out, isn't it?***

At the very least, what you'll learn during our meeting will help you even if you choose to do it yourself. Once you see how we can help you become an informed buyer of a college education and achieve a great outcome in the process, you'll be excited about collaborating with us!

**Call us now** – or you can request an appointment by filling out the online request for consultation form.

***Know that timing is critical for most college planning strategies, so it is imperative that you start your planning immediately. Any delay may end up needlessly costing you thousands of dollars on your college bill.***

You may be wondering, “***Can I really save on my out-of-pocket college costs?***”

The answer is “Yes, you can!” To do so, you need to move beyond simply saving for college (which very few families do) and then when your child is a senior in high school you fill out a bunch of complicated financial aid forms and hope for the best. This is what the vast majority of parents with college bound children do and it is NOT the way to save on your college costs. To save on college costs you need to be more strategic and tactical in your approach. You need to be proactive, not reactive. The real cost of college to you includes many factors such as savings strategies, cash flow strategies, funding strategies, loan strategies, financial aid strategies, education tax credit strategies and much more. It’s all about being empowered so that you can make smart, informed decisions at every step of the way to achieve the best outcome. ***We are going to empower you with actionable information – based on your particular circumstances – that will help you to achieve a best outcome.***

***Act NOW!***

**Procrastination will only increase your college costs.** We will be waiting to hear from you and look forward to helping you.