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NEWS

To Share or Not To Share: Dalton Students on the Privacy of the College Process

JUNE 10, 2025 BY MIKA HIGGINS-WOO

Seniors' last day of classes—and May 1 (the day they have to commit to the college that they will attend next year)—has come and gone. More and more Dalton seniors are sharing their plans for next fall, in informal conversations and on the Dalton Decisions 2026 Instagram page (a popular, student-run account to which students submit where they are committed).

However, throughout the college process this fall and winter, seniors employed varying levels of openness. Some told many classmates and teachers about their college deliberations and decisions from the beginning, others told just close friends, and some told no one at all. The decision is a personal one without a right or wrong answer, as everyone makes their own choice about whether openness will help or hinder the process for them. To better understand the different decisions Dalton students make with regard to sharing information about their college process, *The Daltonian* spoke to several seniors about the topic.

Many Dalton seniors opted for total privacy, choosing not to share their deliberations about which colleges they applied to, their ultimate college lists, or the school they decided to apply to early with anyone in the building other than their college counselor. These students wanted to receive their college decision letters without the additional pressure of friends inquiring about the outcome, and so they kept the moment private for themselves and their families. Some of these students craved this privacy because they wanted to lessen the stakes surrounding the decision, others remained private about their decisions because they didn't want to have to communicate to everyone if they were to not get in, and some a mix of both (the two aren't necessarily mutually exclusive). Leo Rodriguez ('26) spoke on this phenomenon, remarking that "[he] was more reserved, just because [he] wanted decision day to feel more private, if something didn't end up working out." Sophie Garrick ('26) agreed with this sentiment: "I do think I would have felt a little embarrassed if everybody in my grade knew where I was applying early and then I didn't get it. So I think I kept it a secret a bit to avoid that possible embarrassment....I felt like it didn't really make sense to let people know what college I wanted to go to until I knew it was actually a real, plausible future for me."

By contrast, other seniors felt completely at peace with sharing their plans for college from the get-go. Mira Lambroza ('26,) for example, explained that she kept a casual mindset when talking about college, telling anyone who asked or who told her first. She added, "I really couldn't care less about who knows and doesn't, and just sort of follow any given friend's lead

on how they feel about discussing college stuff casually. I trust my friends to communicate about where they're at and what they're comfortable discussing." Rodriguez added to this point, mentioning the pressure to share: "if you did ask someone, there was the expectation that you should be prepared to share, unless otherwise specified." Oriana Hunter ('26) was more open than most about her college process; she told all her friends which school she was applying early to, and "talked to them about the values in other schools that [she] appreciated" as well.

Other students described their process as more of an in-between, neither an open nor fully closed-off situation. Instead, they were intentional about the select few they were telling. Garrick mentioned that up until a month before the decision came out, the only people that she'd told were her friends from outside of Dalton. This was a way of talking to other peers about college without having it spread in her school environment. Ella Glassman '26 took a similar approach, telling a few close friends but avoiding a large body of people knowing. "I shared with a few very close friends where I applied ED [early decision] since I felt like keeping it a complete secret from everyone just added to the tension around it, and I wanted their support. However, I tried to keep it private from the general student body knowing the inappropriate ways that information could be shared." Glassman's goal with telling a few friends was to strike the delicate balance between having the support of close friends while not creating a large show of her decision.

Above, Glassman mentioned the sharing of others' college decisions or plans inappropriately. With this comment, Glassman was referring to a notorious subculture many Dalton students are wary of: sharing other peers' decisions on spreadsheets, group chats, or by word of mouth without the consent of the student in question. Rodriguez remarks that "rumors spread quickly," adding that "some people genuinely keep track on spreadsheets, so it's also a common experience to only tell a few people and suddenly find out that everyone knows a week later."

Whether a senior decides to share their college information with everyone, or waits until the last minute to reveal their future plans, every Dalton student knows which approach to sharing about college decisions works best for them. At the end of the day, the choice is personal and the best decision for one student might be different from another, but still equally effective for them personally.

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