**Questions to consider when deciding on a culinary school:**

* What is the ultimate goal? What are the skills necessary for your ultimate goal?
  + To work in a restaurant or own a restaurant?
  + Are business skills needed?
* Are your strengths in academics or hands on? If you're not the academic type are you willing to endure it to get a degree?
  + **C:\Users\Jonathan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9K2ANS6P\MC900272314[1].wmf**What classes do you struggle with?
  + What classes do you like the most?
  + What comes easily to you?
* Are you planning on working immediately or continue schooling for a few years?
  + Working & school can happen simultaneously
  + There is something to getting college over with while high school is still fresh
* What is your back up plan in case culinary doesn't work out for you the way you imagine?
  + Sometimes life happens -everything from injuries that won't permit long periods of standing to income constraints, to figuring out you're not a big shot culinary star, to romantic notions brought to the reality of how much hard work this industry can be, to the characters you tend to have to work with in this industry, etc.
* How much can you afford?
  + A school with a four year degree attached will cost more than a two-year program from your local community college.
* Is the school well known in the location you plan on working?
  + Some schools are known around the locale of that school but others are known internationally. Depending on the ultimate goal students should chose a school that will "set them up" to work in the restaurant they desire. It is often smart to call and ask a restaurant what there requirements are for chefs they hire.
* Have you given your dream a test drive?
  + I have had several students go to culinary school and drop out the second year because they didn't want to work in that industry any more. Always, always do an internship or job shadow of your dream career before spending money on the dream. Students need to make sure they know what they are getting into both the positives and negatives of their future occupation. Can I live with the negatives of the occupation?
* What does the school offer in terms of internships and job placements?
  + How successful is the school in placing students in jobs after they graduate?
* What does the school offer you?
  + Take a tour of the perspective schools (preferably more than one) so you have something to compare.
  + What are the classrooms/labs like? Are they up to date? Do they have enough equipment? Do they have the best technology?
  + What kinds of professors/teachers does the school employ? What is their experience?
* Where is the school located?
  + The middle of no-where might not be ideal if you're looking for an internship or job. Are there plenty of restaurants in the area?
  + Is it close to home? Living at home can save money but it is a tradeoff.
* What is the school's reputation?
  + Here is a test call some restaurants where you would like to work someday and ask them if they hire people from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(the name of the culinary school). If they say no, ask why, did they have a bad experience? If they say they have never heard of it ask them if they would be willing to hire someone from that program anyway or if there were something else that they might have to demonstrate to get hired.