The NAPLA Law School Locator is an extension of the Rochester Locator developed by Professor Arthur S. Goldberg. Its purpose is to help applicants quickly assess the LSAT and GPA expectations of different law schools and identify schools from across the country that they may wish to research further as they choose the schools to which they will apply.

While LSAT and GPA are only two of the many criteria that law schools consider in admitting students, they are perhaps the most basic. The Locator matrix groups schools according to the median LSAT and GPA of their entering classes. If you locate the cell in which your own GPA and LSAT scores fall, you can identify those schools at which you are "competitive" (a fifty-fifty chance or better) for admission based on numbers alone. It is at this set of schools that your personal statement, letters of reference, and other qualitative credentials play the greatest role in determining whether you will be admitted and the schools in this cell and the immediately adjoining cells should make up the bulk of your applications. If you find schools here about which you know little you may want to discuss them with your pre-law advisor and do more research on them in the schools' catalog or web page, in the LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools on the official LSAC.org website, or at the Law School Forum nearest you. It is important to note that the Locator is meant to help you find new schools for consideration and not to exclude any schools from your list.

In addition to several competitive schools, each applicant should apply to one or more "safe" schools where your quantitative credentials make it very likely that you would be admitted. The cells containing such "safe" schools are located to the left and below your "competitive" cell.

A good application strategy will also include some "reach" schools where numbers alone suggest that you will not be admitted. Such schools are located above and to the right of your "competitive" cell. All law schools admit a few applicants with unusual experience or characteristics even if they do not meet the usual LSAT and GPA expectations. In choosing "reach" schools for application therefore you should consider the kinds of experience or achievements you have that match the interests, goals or special programs at a particular law school. In your application, personal statement, and letters of reference you should emphasize why you think these make you especially qualified for admission to that school. In this way, you will give yourself the best chance for admission to a school that typically looks for higher numbers.

A reasonable application strategy therefore will include schools from at least three and probably more different cells. It is important to note that LSAT and GPA expectations are not in any way indicative of the educational experience at a law school or the suitability of that school for any individual. The Locator cannot rank the quality of law schools, nor can it tell you which is the best school for you. It simply provides a rough indicator of the competitiveness for admission at different schools, only one of many criteria you should consider in selecting the schools to which you apply. (A good discussion of the variety of criteria to be considered is included in the section on Choosing A Law School at http://lsac.org/jd/choosing-a-law-school/evaluating-law-schools on the LSAC.org website.)

The LSAT and GPA medians used in the Locator are drawn from the ABA Standard 509 Information Reports in the Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools at LSAC.org and reflect admissions to full-time programs for Fall 2013. The information was compiled by the Boston College Career Center staff. An on-line version of the Locator based on 25th percentile LSAT and GPA scores is on the BC Career Center website at: http://www.bc.edu/lawlocator.