



College Timeline

Doing the following will help keep you and your college plans “on track.”

9th Grade

- ▶ Work hard to get good grades. Your freshman grades will be used to figure your GPA.
- ▶ Get involved in school activities.

10th Grade

- ▶ Take college prep courses and do your best.
- ▶ Increase your involvement in activities and develop your talents and skills.

11th Grade

- ▶ Start checking out your college options.
- ▶ Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October.
- ▶ Take the ACT and/or SAT in the spring.
- ▶ Meet with your counselor to review your academic record and discuss college plans.
- ▶ Make college visits in the spring and summer.

12th Grade

- ▶ Take the ACT or SAT in the fall, if necessary.
- ▶ Complete college applications.
- ▶ If you need help paying for college, complete a FAFSA. For information, visit fafsa.ed.gov.

Paying for College

College can be expensive; however, there is a great deal of financial aid available. There are also lots of ways to cut college costs.

Financial aid comes in the following forms:

- ▶ **Grant** – money given, usually because of financial need
- ▶ **Scholarship** – money awarded for academic achievement and/or talent
- ▶ **Work Study** – money earned by working at a part-time job
- ▶ **Loan** – money that must be repaid

If you need help paying for college, talk to your counselor or contact the financial aid office at a college you’re considering. They can help you figure out how you can make college affordable.

For additional college information, visit the following websites:

collegeboard.org act.org
educationplanner.org finaid.org

For personal advice regarding your college plans, talk to your high school counselor.



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High School Success

Planning for College



Make High School Great!



Planning for College

A college education will open doors and provide you with a wide range of career choices and opportunities. Going to college, however, takes planning and preparation.

College Prep Courses

If you want to go to college, take the recommended college prep courses and work hard to get good grades.

Most 4-year colleges recommend that students take the following courses in high school:

- ▶ 4 years of English
- ▶ 3 – 4 years of math
- ▶ 3 years of science
- ▶ 2 – 3 years of the same foreign language
- ▶ 3 years of social studies
- ▶ 1 year of fine or performing arts

Choosing the Right College



When choosing a college, consider the following.

Type of College

- ▶ 2-year colleges offer affordable one- and two-year career programs. Students can also start at a community college and transfer to a 4-year college.
- ▶ 4-year colleges offer more courses and activities. A 4-year college education can open doors and prepare students for a wide variety of careers.

Size – Large colleges offer more programs and majors; small colleges are more personal.

Location – Looking for a college close to home? In your home state? In a big city? Close to nature?

Academic Programs – All colleges offer a variety of majors; but if you want to study a specific subject, you need to find a college that offers that major.

Cost – College costs vary greatly. When calculating college costs, include tuition, fees, room and board, books, and personal expenses.

Admissions Requirements – Some colleges accept all high school graduates. Others are very selective. Look for colleges that accept students with academic records similar to yours (GPA, test scores).

Admissions Criteria

Colleges use some, if not all, of the information listed below when determining whether or not to accept an applicant.

GPA (Grade Point Average)

Colleges consider a student's GPA in college prep courses to be the most important admissions criteria. Colleges know that students who do well in high school are more likely to succeed in college.

Strength of Subjects

College admission officers examine high school transcripts carefully to see if students have taken the recommended college prep courses.

Test Scores

Most four-year colleges require that students submit ACT or SAT scores. The more selective the school, the more important these test scores are.

Extracurricular Activities

Colleges are most interested in seeing meaningful involvement, commitment, and evidence of leadership. Quality is more important than quantity.

Recommendations

Colleges often ask for letters of recommendation from counselors and/or teachers.

