

COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE -- Grades 9-12

Key Admission Factors:	MINIMUM SUGGESTED COLLEGE PREP SUBJECTS		
<u>Academic</u>	“Core” Subject	English	4 credits (English, language arts)
* GPA	“Core” Subject	Math	4 credits (alg.1, geom., alg.2, one senior year)
* ACT/SAT	“Core” Subject	Foreign Language	2 credits (one language)
* Rigor	“Core” Subject	Science	3 credits (biol., chem. or phys., one addnl.credit)
<u>Nonacademic</u>	“Core” Subject	Social Studies	3 credits (<u>govt/econ., geog/US and world history</u>)
* Activities/leadership (resume)		Perform/Fine Arts	1 credit
* Interest in the college		On-line Learning	1 experience
* Special talent		Phys.Educ/Health	1 credit
* Diversity		Electives	See your counselor

RIGOR OF CLASSES: Selective colleges expect you to take the most advanced classes offered by your high school, in one or more of the five “core” subjects listed above. The number expected depends on how selective the college is.

EARNING COLLEGE CREDITS IN HIGH SCHOOL: Can reduce college costs & college class loads.

AP (Advanced Placement). www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html

CLEP (College-Level Exam Program). www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.html

Dual-enrollment class taken at a college. This is a semester class taken in any subject, with high school’s approval.

SAT II subject exams are generally not for college credit or admission, but for scheduling classes at selective colleges.

“GAP YEAR”. Deferring college entry for a year to develop greater focus, maturity and self-confidence. Paid or voluntary.

ABNORMAL TEST ANXIETY. www.ets.org/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/01361anxiety.pdf. Diagnostic and treatment plans.

9th Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Participate in a variety of activities.*

- ___ Complete step one of “The Six Steps of College Planning”.
- ___ Begin your **Student Resume**. Complete the Student Information Profile.
- ___ Take the EXPLORE (“freshman ACT”) or PLAN (“sophomore ACT”).
- ___ Develop a four-year plan for classes.
- ___ Develop good study habits, never get behind, and earn good grades throughout high school. Try your best.
- ___ Activities -- Go wide! Sample a variety of school-based and community-based activities.
- ___ **Parents**. Study “How to Survive the High Cost of College”, and the financial planning process.
<http://tuitionfundingsolutions.com/College-153-Strategies.pdf> and www.finaid.org/sitemap/

10th Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Narrow your activities to those you like the most and could lead.*

- ___ Repeat step one and complete step two of “The Six Steps of College Planning”.
- ___ Update your **Student Resume** and Student Information Profile.
- ___ Take the PLAN (“sophomore ACT”), or a practice ACT test, and PSAT if available to sophomores.
- ___ Continue to develop good study habits and earn good grades. Try your best.
- ___ Activities – Begin to narrow your activities to those you like the most and have leadership opportunities.

11th Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Standardized tests. Develop leadership skills. Visit colleges.*

- ___ Repeat steps one and two, and complete step three of “The Six Steps of College Planning”.
- ___ Update your **Student Resume**, Student Information Profile and College Matching Questionnaire.
- ___ Activities -- Build depth! Narrow your activities to things you like, will excel in, and will be a leader in.
- ___ Get help matching your personality and interests, with potential careers, colleges and costs.
- ___ Know how admissions works, and develop strategies for public and private colleges.
- ___ **Visit** 4 or more colleges (public and private). Ask carefully prepared questions.
- ___ Search for college-based Merit/Talent scholarships and private donor scholarships. Junior & senior years.
- ___ Take the practice and “real” ACT, SAT, and PSAT. Take SAT II’s if necessary.
- ___ Carefully identify people to write college letters of recommendation for you.

12th Grade. *Goals: Maintain your GPA. Apply to colleges. Scholarship search. Strengthen your leadership skills. Select a college. Parents – submit financial aid application(s).*

- ___ Repeat steps 1, 2 and 3, and complete steps 4, 5 and 6 of “The Six Steps of College Planning”.
- ___ Update your **Student Resume** and Student Information Profile.
- ___ Activities -- Continue to build depth! Colleges like commitment, excellence and leadership in activities.
- ___ Don’t get *senioritis*. Your senior courses and grades do make a difference.
- ___ Pay strict attention to application deadlines for admissions, recommendations and financial aid.
- ___ Apply, preferably on-line, to your top 2-4 college choices (public and private) before **October 15**.

Note: the Common Application is required by some colleges. See www.commonapp.org

- ___ **Parents:** Financial aid applications: 1/1 to 3/1 -- submit FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov). After 10/1--submit CSS Profile (<https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>) if required. Use estimated figures initially for both.
- ___ Make your college decision by **May 1**.

