

Saint John's Catholic Prep

College Planning Handbook

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Words of Wisdom

1. There is more than one good college choice for every student who wants to attend college. The task is to find at least one appropriate match.
2. The college selection process can be an enjoyable one for both the student and the parents. If you aren't having fun, stop what you are doing and try something different.
3. Getting in may be your biggest concern at the moment. Getting out successfully should really be the issue. Select a college that can demonstrate high retention and on-time graduation rates. Failure, at any price, or at the world's best college, is simple too costly to consider. College should not be the best five or six years of your life.
4. The college decision carries a very large price tag. You have the right to be apprehensive. You have an obligation to be discriminating. Take care and time in making the right choice.
5. Picking a college is not a "life decision." Many students attend several colleges before earning a degree.
6. Through the application process, the application should demonstrate to the college that he or she is ready, willing and able to attend the college and that she or he is likely to make a significant, positive contribution to that institution if admitted.
7. College admission personnel are primarily concerned with making the "right" decisions; right for the student and right for the institution they represent. You should expect tactful frankness in all discussions with college personnel.
8. Nobody attends college to study with the Admission Office. In selecting a college, select the college whose faculty and programs best meet your needs, not the colleges with the best admission program.
9. The college decision is, most likely, the last major decision that parents will make jointly with their sons and daughters. It should be a time when parents demonstrate trust in the ability of their sons and daughters to make good decisions. It should be a time for daughters and sons to demonstrate responsibility and common sense.
10. After determining that a college has the "right" faculty and the "right" program, Make sure that it has the "right" feel as a place to live; make sure that you will feel comfortable at that college.
11. The college with the biggest name may not provide the best educational opportunity or experience for you. Carefully assess what you want and what you

need and match it against what colleges have to offer. For some students, the best choice is a less competitive environment; for others the academic pressure cooker.

Richard Whiteside
Dean of Admission and Enrollment Management, Tulane University

April 11, 1997

Career Planning

Are you undecided about whether or not to attend college, what college you should attend, what your major should be, or what your career choice will be?

There are 3 keys steps to keep in mind:

- Know yourself. What are your interests, passions, abilities, and work values?
- Explore your options and choose a career direction based on those answers.
- Make plans and take action to accomplish your goals.

Resources to assist you in your search:

Bureau of Labor and Statistics www.bls.gov/k12

The Career Guide to Industries www.bls.gov/oco/cg/ provides information on the nature of each industry.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm provides information on earnings, education needs, expected job prospects, job responsibilities, training prospects, and working conditions of a wide range of occupations.

Other internet resources for general planning:

ACTs World-of-Work Map www.actstudent.org/wwm/index.html

Adventures in Education www.adventuresineducation.org

America's Career Infonet www.acinet.org

America's Job Bank www.ajb.dni.us

Campus Career Center Worldwide www.campuscareercenter.com

Career Key www.careerkey.org

Career One Stop www.careeronestop.org

Career Web www.employmentguide.com

Experience Network www.experience.com

JobBankUSA www.jobbankusa.com

My Future www.myfuture.com

O*Net OnLine <http://online.onetcenter.org>

Career Voyages www.careervoyages.gov

Specific Careers:

Allied Health Careers www.marylandhealthcareers.org/html/student/allied-health-career.html

Association of American Geographers
www.aag.org/Publications/pubs_cba.html

Association for Career and Technical Education
www.acteonline.org

Culinary Schools
www.petersons.com/culinary

Electrical Alliance
www.electricalalliance.org

Explore Health Careers
www.explorehealthcareers.org/en/index.aspx

Fashion Careers
www.fashion-schools.org/fashion-careers.htm

Maryland Hospitality Education Foundation
www.mhef.org

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
www.specialedcareers.org

Music Career Opportunities:

American Federation of Musicians www.afm.org/public/musicians
This site offers a searchable database of music programs by U.S. state and country. There are links to financial aid and booking agents, as well as articles on music technology, etc.

Music Library Association www.musiclibraryassoc.org
Music librarians are specialized librarians who manage library materials related to music. Website discusses job opportunities, employment settings, and educational requirements.

National Association for Music Education www.menc.org/careers
Website provides an overview of music careers and education.

National Association of Schools of Music <http://nasm.arts-accredit.org>
Site provides a searchable music school directory and information on accreditation, choosing a school, financial aid, and more.

College Admissions Tests

About the ACT....

The ACT is used by virtually all U.S. colleges as an admissions requirement and is also used to award scholarships. The ACT is approximately 3 hours long (3 ½ hours if you plan to write the optional essay at the end of the exam. The ACT is comprised of four tests: English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. These tests are each scored on a scale of 1-36, and the scores are then averaged to a composite overall score of 1-36.

ACT Exams

Location: Tuscarora High School

Register OnLine at: www.actstudent.org

ACT Fees:

ACT (No Writing) \$32.00

ACT (Plus Writing) \$47.00

Four free score reports sent to college of your choice

Additional score reports \$9.00 each

Late Registration Fee \$21.00

It is highly recommended that you take the Writing portion of the test when taking the ACTs, You do not want your test results to exclude you from applying to specific schools. Taking the writing portion of the test also allows the results to be easily compared to the SATs whose writing section is mandatory.

About the SAT....

The SAT is required for admission by most U.S. colleges and is often used to award scholarships and grants. The SAT is 3 hours and 45 minutes long and is comprised of three content areas: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing. An unscored 25-minute Experimental section is thrown into the mix as well. The individual content areas are scored on a scale of 200-800, with a maximum score of 2400.

SAT Exams

Location: TJ High School

Register OnLine at: www.collegeboard.com

SAT Fees:

Exam \$45.00

Subject Tests Basic Registration \$20.00

Language Tests with Listening add \$20.00 to Basic Registration Fee

All other SAT Subject Tests add \$9.00 to Basic Registration Fee

Additional Fees:

To register by phone (only if you have registered before)	\$12.50
Change Fee (test type, center, or date)	\$22.00
Late Fee	\$23.00
Fees for receiving scores	Free
Fees for receiving scores by phone	\$12.50
Fees for sending your scores	Free
Each additional score report request (beyond 4)	\$9.50

**Traditionally, the SAT has been the dominant college admissions test up and down the Eastern seaboard and on the West Coast. ACT country can be found in the Midwest and South. Nearly all colleges accept either test. Be sure to check at the college to which you are applying.

SAT II (Subject Tests)

SAT Subject Tests are one-hour multiple-choice tests that measure how much you know about a particular academic subject and how well you can apply that knowledge. SAT Subject Tests fall into five subject areas: English, History, Math, Science, Language. The tests help colleges compare the academic achievement of students from different schools where course preparation and academic backgrounds may vary widely. Many colleges recommend or require one or more SAT Subject Test for admission or placement. Even if tests are not required by colleges to which you are applying, your SAT Subject Test results can show more about you as a student and how competent you are in academic areas.

Hints:

- *Plan to take tests such as United States History, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics as soon as possible after you complete the course, while the material is still fresh in your mind.
- *You will do better on other tests like languages after at least 2 years of study.

Other Testing.....

SAT/PSAT/ACT Prep

All students should prepare for college admission tests. This preparation can vary from taking sample tests to a full course. The method a student will use to prepare is a family decision. Please contact the Counseling Office if you have questions about test preparation.

Saint John's Catholic Prep does not endorse any of these college prep programs. We only collect information for the convenience of our families and students.

PSAT

A student's exposure to college-level standardized testing begins in 10th grade with the Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test, or PSAT. The three sections of the PSAT—Critical Reading, Math, and Writing—are exactly the same length and difficulty as the sections on the new SAT I, but they are scored out of 80 point. Simply putting a zero at the end of each section provides an estimated SAT I score. For example, a PSAT Writing score of 62 would equate to an SAT Writing score of 620.

The PSAT is only administered in October. Both the registration and administration are handled by Saint John's. PSAT scores are not considered a part of the college admissions process, but students' PSAT scores often provide a good indication of what future SAT scores will be. Therefore, it is important to have the PSAT included in a smart college admissions strategy.

*While the PSAT is not a required admissions test, students who achieve the highest scores in the country are named National Merit Scholarship Commended Scholars, Semifinalists, and ultimately, Finalists. National Merit is an outstanding honor and may result in scholarship opportunities during the college application process. Each year, the cutoff score is based on national averages; therefore the minimum score to qualify for Merit Scholarships varies from year to year.

To learn more about the scholarship, requirements, and how to participate, check out the National Merit Scholarship Corporation's Website at: www.nationalmerit.org.

Honor Classes and Advanced Placement

Colleges and universities are looking for students to have a high school career full of challenging coursework. Most schools are looking for the following on your transcripts:

- four years of English
- four years of Math
- four years of Science (3 years at a minimum)
- four years of Social Science Studies
- 3 years+ of a single Foreign Language
- two years of Fine Arts or Performing Arts
- one or more years of Computers

Most competitive schools want students who not only do well, but also do well in challenging classes. With the help of your parents and school counselor, consider:

- taking honors or Advanced Placement (AP) instead of regular classes
- taking four years of a single foreign language
- taking science classes that involve lab work

Honors and AP classes are harder than regular classes. High scores in AP classes demonstrate mastery of college-level material, so admissions officers attach a lot of weight to AP coursework and exams. The College Board is responsible for administering exams that correspond with AP classes. AP classes are typically taken in your junior and senior years.

The Pros and Cons of taking AP courses:

Pros-

- you get a head start on what college work is like, developing rigorous study habits
- your AP course grade is weighted to become a higher grade on your transcript—a great boost to your GPA!
- you are saying on your college application , “I can handle college-level work.”
- you may save both time and money by earning college credit--90% of colleges accept AP test scores
- It is more likely that you will become a college graduate in 4 years or less

Cons-

- AP classes take a lot more time and work than some students are willing to devote
- Some colleges recognize exam scores of 3 or higher; selective schools may accept only a score of 5
- some colleges don't take note of Honors classes

Nonstandard Testing Information

Nonstandard tests are special testing arrangements for the student with disabilities. These special arrangements are designed to minimize the effects of a student's disability on her test performance.

If you have questions concerning the nonstandard tests, please do not hesitate to contact the Counseling Office.

ACT

Students must submit all professional documentation to ACT for evaluation. ACT will notify the school and student if the request for special accommodations is granted.

Notification usually takes 8 weeks. Students with current professional documentation may request one of the following testing options.

- **National Test Center:** Extended time (up to 5 hours total) at a National Test Center is more than time-and-one-half compared to standard time. Students approved for this must pace themselves through each test in order to complete all four tests within the time allowed.
- **Non-National Testing Option:** This is available to students with a professionally diagnosed and documented disability requiring:
 - more than time-and-one-half testing time or
 - testing over more than one day or
 - other test formats such as Braille, audiocassette, or reader.

SAT

In order to qualify for the nonstandard testing, a student must have on file in the Counseling Office full documentation signed by a qualified professional stating the nature of the student's disability, the test used in the diagnosis, and the need for special arrangements for college admissions testing. It is suggested that this documentation be from a physician, psychologist/psychiatrist, child-study teams or a learning-disabilities specialist. The testing should have been conducted within the past three years. The student must have been using the same accommodations in his/her regular school setting for four months prior to the test date.

Two testing sites for nonstandard testing are offered for those who qualify.

- **Center Testing** is available for students who can use regular test materials and who use no more than 50% extended time on school based tests. Center Testing is provided at national test centers for each of the regular testing dates. With this testing, students are allowed an additional hour and a half (3 hours plus 1 ½ hours for a maximum of 4 ½ hours) to complete the test. Testing dates and deadlines can be found on the appropriate testing registration form.
- **School Testing** provides special accommodations such as Braille, cassette, large type, extended time and special answer sheets. The designated test coordinator at the student's school administers this plan. A student who qualifies for this testing should contact the Counseling Office. St. John's designates one test day for both fall and spring which is determined by the Test Coordinator.

For both testing options with the SAT, students must submit the completed SSD Student Eligibility Form to the Counseling Office. The Counseling Office will verify accommodations requested and send the SSD form to the College Board. This form is required only once as long as the student's accommodations do not change. Form must be submitted to the Counseling Office 7 weeks in advance of the test date requested.

College Planning

Application Process

Applying to Open Access Colleges

Open access colleges, including most community colleges, are typically two-year programs that are supported by local taxes. They have a public mandate to provide educational opportunities for all qualified students in a particular region or state. The admission policies are straightforward—applicants who meet the basic requirements (e.g. grades, test scores, etc.) are admitted.

Make sure your application shows that you have met all entrance requirements. If any requirements have not been met, contact the college and talk to the admissions counselors.

Applying to Traditional Colleges

Many traditional 4-year colleges make admission decisions based on a specific dimension of success, such as test scores and grades. Other colleges create a blueprint of the incoming class as a whole, expressed in terms of academic qualifications, personal characteristics, geographic, and/or ethnic diversity. Applicants are evaluated against the blueprint to determine what each can contribute to the big picture.

You need to closely follow all application instructions and present a complete picture of your skills in all areas. The essay is such an important piece of the application process.

Take advantage of the Common Application

More than 300 colleges and universities accept the common application.

The Common Application has been developed by a group of colleges and universities that belong to the Common Application group. They accept this application in place of their own without any penalty. You fill it out once (on the computer is the easiest way) and then mail copies of the same application to any school that participates. Some of the participating colleges accept the application online and some have a supplement that must be submitted in addition. The Common Application and all information pertaining to it is available at www.commonapp.org. This is a great time saver—but remember to do a good job and proofread no matter what application format you use.

Early decision and early action plans can be beneficial to students—but only to those who have thought through their college options carefully and have a clear preference for one institution.

Early decision versus early action

Early decision plans are binding—a student who is accepted as an ED applicant must attend the college. Early action plans are nonbinding—students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date of May 1. Remember... binding is binding.

About 400 colleges have early decision or early action plans, and some have both. Some colleges offer a nonbinding option called **single-choice early action**, under which applicants may not apply ED or EA to any other college.

ED applicants

- Apply early (usually in November) to first-choice college
- Receive an admission decision from the college well in advance of the usual notification date (usually by December)
- Agree to attend the college if accepted and offered a financial aid package that is considered adequate by the family
- May only apply to one college for early decision
- May apply to other colleges under regular admission
- Must withdraw all other applications when accepted by ED
- Usually must give a nonrefundable deposit well in advance of May 1

EA applicants

- Apply early
- Receive an admission decision early in the admission cycle (usually in January or February)
- Do not have to commit to an EA college
- May apply to other colleges under regular admission plans
- Must give the college a decision no later than the May 1 national response date

Who should apply early?

Applying to an ED or EA plan is most appropriate for a student who:

- Has researched colleges extensively
- Is absolutely sure that the college she is applying to early is a first choice
- Has found a school that is a strong match academically, socially, geographically, and so forth
- Meets or exceeds the admission profile for the school for SAT scores, GPA, and class rank
- Has an academic record that has been consistently solid over time

Applying to an ED or EA plan is not appropriate for a student who:

- Has not thoroughly researched and visited colleges
- Is applying early just to avoid stress and paperwork
- Is not fully committed to attending the schools to which she is applying
- Is applying early only because friends are
- Needs a strong senior fall semester to bring her grades up

The benefits of applying early

For a student who has a definite first-choice school, applying early has many benefits besides possibly increasing her chance of getting in. Applying early:

- Reduces stress by cutting the time a student spends waiting for a decision
- Saves students the time and expense of submitting multiple applications
- Gives students more time, once accepted, to look for housing and otherwise prepare for college
- If student is not accepted, having this information gives that student time to reassess options and apply elsewhere

The drawbacks of applying early

Pressure to decide: Committing to one college puts pressure on students to make serious decisions before they've explored all their options.

Reduced financial aid opportunities: Students who apply under ED plans receive offers of admission and financial aid simultaneously and so will not be able to compare financial aid offers from other colleges. For students who absolutely need financial aid, applying early may be a risky option.

Time crunch for other applications: Most colleges do not notify ED/EA applicants of admission until December 15. Because of the usual deadlines for college applications, this means that if a student is rejected by her early-decision college, she will have only two weeks to send in other applications. For those of you who are applying early, plan to prepare other applications as you wait to hear about admission.

Senioritis: Applicants who learn early that they have been accepted into a college may feel that, their goal accomplished, they have no reason to work hard for the rest of the year. Early-applying students should know that colleges may rescind offers of admission should their senior-year grades drop.

Does applying early increase the chance of acceptance?

Many students believe applying early means competing with fewer applicants and increasing their chances for acceptance. This is not always true. Schools vary in the proportion of the class admitted early and in the percentage of early applicants they admit.

Higher admission rates for ED applicants may correlate to stronger profiles among candidates choosing ED. Students should ask the admissions office whether their institution's admissions standards differ between ED and regular applicants, and then assess whether applying early makes sense given their own profile.

The ethics of applying early decision

The Common Application and some colleges' application forms require the student applying under early decision, as well as her parent and counselor, to sign an ED Agreement form spelling out the plan's conditions.

Keep in mind

- EA/ED program specifics vary, so students should get information as soon as possible directly from their first-choice college admissions staff.
- EA/ED applicants must take the October SAT and/or SAT Subject Tests in order for these scores to make it to the college in time.

***Avoid Mistakes on Your College Application**

-Never lie on an application. This includes overstating grades, exaggerating about participation in activities, or plagiarizing an essay.

-Address academic "red flags". If you have an issue that might need explaining, such as a poor grade in class, time missed from school, etc., it's best to briefly and honestly address it on the application. Don't ignore it, or the admissions committee will draw its own conclusion.

-Get the details correct! You don't want to sing the praises of one college on another college's application. Since you may use some of the same essays and responses for more than one school, go over each draft carefully, making sure to insert the correct names and details.

College Degrees & College Majors and Minors

Associate's Degree

This degree is awarded after the completion of at least 60 semester hours of credit or approximately 2 years of full-time study. The degree requires satisfactory completion of course and program requirements established by the college or university. The most common associate degrees are:

AA-Associate of Arts
AAS-Associate of Applied Science
AFA-Associate of Fine Arts
AS-Associate of Science

Bachelor's Degree

This degree is awarded after the completion of at least 120 semester hours or approximately 4 years of full-time study. The degree requires the satisfactory completion of course and program requirements established the college or university. Examples of bachelor degrees are:

BA-Bachelor of Arts
BS-Bachelor of Science
BFA-Bachelor of Fine Arts

Combined Degree

This involves earning an undergraduate and graduate degree at one time. Many schools have 5 year (or more) programs. Accounting, architecture, business, engineering, law, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and physical therapy tend to have the most common combined degrees. Obtaining a combined degree can save lots of time and money.

Master's Degree

This degree is awarded after the completion of an organized field of study or at least 30 semester hours (often more) or approximately 1-2 years of full-time study. Entrance to a Master's program typically requires the completion of a Bachelor's degree and may include other requirements such as a certain grade point average or the passing of an entrance exam. The most common master's degrees are:

MA-Master of Arts
MBA-Master of Business Administration
MEd-Master of Education
MEng-Master of Engineering
MLS-Master of Library Science
MPA-Master of Public Administration
MS-Master of Science

Doctoral Degree

This degree is an academic degree of the highest level. Traditionally, the award of a doctorate implies recognition of the candidate as an equal by the university faculty under which he/she studied. The title of Doctor is used both by those holding research doctorates or some professional (usually medical) degrees. Some of the most common doctoral degrees are:

DDS-Doctor of Dental Science

Ed.D-Doctor of Education

JD-Juris Doctor

MD-Doctor of Medicine

PharmD-Doctor of Pharmacy

PhD-Doctorate of Philosophy

DVM-Doctor of Veterinary Medicine

A **major** is a concentration of courses that give a student a basic knowledge of a field of study. A major prepares you to go on for graduate work in the same field or for particular types of professions.

Completion of a **double major** requires that a student complete the requirements of both majors. Policies guiding the completion of double majors vary by school. When the majors occur within the same college, the two majors may have many requirements in common, greatly easing the completion of both.

A **joint major** combines courses from two disciplines in such a way that the student doesn't take a complete major in either discipline but takes enough courses to qualify for a major. Policies guiding the completion of joint majors vary by school.

A **minor** is a set of courses that are sufficient to establish proficiency in a discipline without having to take all of the courses that a major would take. Many students consider minors because they know that their major is in a field that is not occupationally oriented, so a minor gives them greater marketability after graduation.

College Visits and Interviews

College visits and interviews are an integral part of the college selection process and should be carefully planned. The first step is to call ahead to arrange a time to visit. The ideal time for this preliminary visit is during the spring of your junior year or early fall of your senior year. Don't try to visit more than three colleges per day because most tours and interviews take an hour each. College visits and interviews are both mentally and physically draining so plan to visit each school for about three hours. After you have visited several colleges, you should begin to develop a better understanding of the type of college you would like to attend.

Tip for planning a college visit:

- ✓ **Schedule an Interview with a College Representative**
- ✓ **Take a campus tour/Attend Open Houses**
- ✓ **Talk to students/Spend an overnight with a student**
- ✓ **Visit classes and talk to professors if possible**
- ✓ **Visit places where students congregate (cafeteria, café, snack bar, library)**
- ✓ **Read the campus newspaper**
- ✓ **Take good notes**
- ✓ **Take pictures. It is hard to remember numerous colleges, but a picture can jog your memory.**
- ✓ **Ask questions!**
- ✓ **Trust your instincts!!**

Visits to St. John's by College Representative

Numerous college representatives visit St. John's each fall. Dates and times of these visits are posted and will be in the morning announcements. Students are NOT allowed to miss class to see a college representative unless they have obtained a request form from the Counseling Office. Ultimately, teachers have the discretion to keep students in class.

Strategies for a successful college interview

A personal interview must be scheduled with the admissions office and may require several weeks notice. The format for a personal interview can vary greatly, but most often it is a conversation between the student and the college representative. The weight of the interview will vary from college to college, so it is important to make a good impression at every interview. You should consider ANY interaction between you and a college representative an interview. Admission representatives have been known to take notes on students at a college fair. So, never forget to make the best possible impression.

All interviews should also be viewed as a time for you to gather information. To help you plan your interview and tour more effectively, you should:

- ✓ **Be prepared:** read about the school.
- ✓ **Arrive on Time:** Arrive 15 minutes before.
- ✓ **Be ready to talk:** Remember this is a conversation - you need to hold up your end of the conversation.

- ✓ **Have some intelligent questions prepared:** You can count on the rep asking you “Do you have any questions?” If you do not have questions, it may appear you are not interested or are unprepared.
- ✓ **Know what you want to achieve during your interview:** Do you want to learn about a specific program/scholarship or do you wish to explain your academic record?
- ✓ **Relax:** Be positive about yourself and emphasize your strengths. You have a lot to offer!

After an interview **you should write a thank you note** expressing your appreciation for the interview. For more information about how to prepare for an interview, see your school counselor.

Sample Questions for a College Interview:

Tell me about yourself.

Why are you interested in _____ College?

Are you interested in a specific area of study?

Who is your favorite teacher? Why.

What is your least favorite subject? Why.

What do you do in your spare time?

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Do you feel your GPA reflects your abilities?

What have you heard about our school?

If you were in charge of a group project, how would you organize and delegate responsibilities?

Describe your leadership abilities and experience?

Describe a difficult situation you have faced. How did you overcome?

Who is your favorite author and why? / What is the most recent book you've read?

How would a friend or teacher describe you?

If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?

Questions for you to ask:

Approximately how many students go home on the weekends?

How accessible is the faculty for individual help?

Do graduate assistants teach freshman/introductory courses?

What factors do you consider in the admission process and of those, which do you consider most strongly?

How would you describe the personality of the college?

What are you most proud of about your school?

What would you like to see improved?

What are the qualities you are looking for in candidates?

What are the most active clubs or student organizations on campus?

What campus publications are available?

At what point do you start to consider students for scholarship?

What financial aid forms are required?

College Athletics

Division I & II

There are contest and participant minimums for each division and each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. Athletic scholarships are only awarded to those playing in one of these two divisions.

Prospective student-athletes who wish to play a sport for a **Division I or II** school must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. You can register on-line at:

<https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>

Prospects will be able to view their eligibility information on-line and will not have to continually call the clearinghouse for updates.

Check out this site:

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?key=/ncaa/ncaa/ncaa+news/ncaa+home+pages>

What Do I Need To Do?

- **Grade 9**
 - Verify with your high school counselor and the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track.
- **Grade 10**
 - Verify with your high school counselor and the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track.
- **Grade 11**
 - Register with the eligibility center.
 - Make sure you are still on course to meet core-course requirements (verify you have the correct number of core courses and that the core courses are on your high school's 48-H with the eligibility center).
 - After your junior year, have your high school counselor send a copy of your transcript. If you have attended any other high schools, make sure a transcript is sent to the eligibility center from each high school.
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").
 - Begin your amateurism questionnaire.
- **Grade 12**
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").
 - Complete amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature online on or after April 1 if you are expecting to enroll in college in the fall semester. (If you are expecting to enroll for spring semester, sign the final authorization signature on or after October 1 of the year prior to enrollment.)
 - Have your high school counselor send a final transcript with proof of graduation to the eligibility center.

Additional Tips for High School Athletes in their Junior Year

- Take the SAT or ACT by the end of the spring semester
- Create a resume that includes your accomplishments (accomplishments in your sport and in the classroom)
- Contact college coaches by mail or email to request information about programs of interest
- Make unofficial visits to colleges. Make as many unofficial visits as you like but know that you will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred

Additional Tips for High School Athletes in their Senior Year

- Weekly phone calls from coaches and in-person contacts are allowed after July 1 (prior to the start of senior year)
- You can make up to five official visits during your senior year, so choose carefully.

Hot Topics

- Test score rule: Test scores must be reported to the eligibility center directly from ACT or SAT.
- High school core-course list: Is yours up to date? Verify the classes you are taking and/or scheduled to take appear on your high school's approved core-course list.
- Amateurism questionnaire and final authorization signature: Remember to log back in to your account and finalize your amateurism questionnaire before you enroll in college. If you are beginning school in the fall semester (August), you will need to complete the amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature on or after April 1 prior to enrollment. If you are beginning school in the spring semester (January), you will need to complete the amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature on or after October 1 of the year prior to enrollment.

Division III

Student-athletes who are interested in pursuing their athletic interests at a **Division III** school will find a new website to be full of pertinent information. Match Me provides a free service for student-athletes to post their academic, their athletic, and extracurricular profiles for colleges to see. Each subscribing college and university can then scour this student database to find the perfect fit for their sports program. Find out more at: <http://www.collegestudentathletes.com/matchme.cfm>

Also....check out <http://www.collegestudentathletes.com/index.cfm>

Contact with College Coaches

- College coaches can contact students after the completion of their junior year. A “contact” is any face-to-face meeting.
- Students can receive letters from any college personnel after September 1 of their junior year.
- College coaches can contact students at home or at school but under the guidelines of the NCAA.
- Students may not receive T-shirts, college mementos, or financial inducements to sign with a particular college.

Visits

- NCAA allows prospective students one expense-paid visit to five different colleges.
- Students may not accept an expense-paid visit until they provide official high school transcripts and standardized test scores.
- Each expense-paid visit may not be more than 48 hours.
- Students may visit any campus beyond the five expense-paid visits as long as the student pays all expenses.

Student-athletes should discuss their options with their coach(es). Coaches can be very helpful in the college selection process and deciding on a college.

Other Internet Resources

Varsityedge provides information for parents, student-athletes, & coaches on the college recruiting process and what it takes to play at the next level. Here you will find information on athletic scholarships, recruiting, financial aid, recruiting rules, college applications, visiting schools, life as a college athlete, coaches/player interviews, NCAA rules, and much more.

<http://www.varsityedge.com/>

National Recruiting Network has assisted hundreds of college-bound student-athletes gain exposure to college coaches and information on the recruiting process through our "GAME PLAN" Recruiting Program.

<http://www.nationalrecruits.com/>

National Scouting Report is the world's leading NCAA college athletic scholarship recruiting service.

<http://www.nsr-inc.com/>

Information and instructions for student-athletes seeking *college athletic scholarships* and opportunities to compete in *college athletics*.

<http://www.college-athletic-scholarships.com/>

Common College-Planning Terms

OPEN ADMISSION – Typically Junior colleges offer admission to almost everyone who applies. Normally, the application deadline is two weeks before the start of classes.

REGULAR ADMISSION – This requires applicants to submit all application material before a specific deadline, usually between January and March. All information (coursework, grades, test scores, etc.) through the first semester will be considered. Decisions are announced by early April and the applicant must submit her deposit to hold a position in the freshman class by May 1.

ROLLING ADMISSION – Under this plan applicants who are qualified are accepted on a first come basis. The college notifies the applicant of a decision within six weeks (often less) after the application file is complete. The applicant has until May 1 to make a commitment. Applicants applying to colleges with a rolling admission policy need to understand that applications submitted early have a greater chance of being accepted.

Admission Terms:

AP (Advanced Placement) – These are tests offered to students who take the AP course. AP courses are college-level courses offered to students in a Secondary school. Usually colleges will give students college credit, if the students scores a 4 or better.

COMMON APPLICATION – The Common Application is a generic application that certain colleges will accept. Students can complete the application once, photocopy it and send it to any college who accepts the application. The application can be completed manually or on-line. Only private schools can accept the Common Application. For a complete listing, please go to commonapp.org.

CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE – PROFILE is a program of the College Board. Many schools and scholarship programs use the information collected on the PROFILE to help them award nonfederal student aid funds. Students should only register for a PROFILE application if a school or scholarship requires.

DEFERRED ADMISSION – If a student cannot attend her college of choice the semester following her senior year, colleges will allow her to postpone her enrollment for one year. Students must contact the college to learn the rules to defer admission and what will happen with her financial aid/scholarship.

EARLY ADMISSION – This should not be confused with Early Decision or Early Action. This plan is for a student who wishes to enter college early, for example in her senior year of high school. Early Admission is reserved for students with an exceptional academic and personal record.

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) – To apply for

federal student financial aid, and to apply for many state student aid programs, students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The information you provide on your FAFSA determines if you are eligible for financial aid.

NATIONAL REPLY DATE – May 1 is the nationally accepted day to require students to reply to the college's offer of admission. However, this date is not for students who apply under the Early Decision plan.

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE – the certification form for all students who wish to play Division I or II sports in college.

NEED-BLIND – Under need-blind admissions, the school decides whether to make an offer of admission to a student without considering the student's financial situation. Most schools use a need-blind admissions process. A few schools will use financial need to decide whether to include marginal students in the wait list.

NEED SENSITIVE – Under need-sensitive admissions, the school does take the student's financial situation into account when deciding whether to admit him or her. Some schools use need-sensitive admissions when deciding to accept a borderline student or to pull a student off of the waiting list.

TUITION DEPOSIT/ADMISSION DEPOSIT – This is the payment to secure a spot at the college of choice. This deposit is normally credited to the student's account and is applied to her tuition. A student should send her deposit as soon as she decides on a school. Double Deposit is a term, which applies to a student who places a deposit at two schools. This is not allowed.

WAIT LIST – This is a process colleges use for students who are admissible, but the college does not have space to accommodate the student. Colleges will offer a student a place on their wait list and if a space becomes available the college will extend an offer of admission. This usually happens after May 15 and as late as August.