



HIGH SCHOOL Sophomores

FRESHMEN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Your Action Plan

Some of you have been thinking about college since the sixth grade. Others have barely let college blip across your radar. Guess what? No matter what your style, 10th grade is the perfect time to lay some groundwork, so your senior year isn't a panic!

Here is a handy checklist to use to begin your college planning:

1. Double check your transcript for its "college prep" or rigorous content. Are you on schedule to rack up the necessary credits before high school graduation? Colleges and universities typically like to see **four years of English, four years of math, four years of science, three years of social sciences along with government & economics** and at least **two years of a foreign language**. If you are missing any critical courses, squeeze them in now!
2. Bump it up a notch. Admissions officers love to see challenging classes on a transcript...If you've never tackled AP class or Honors and you're up for the challenge, go for it. What about taking a dual credit course? Medina Valley/SWTJC offers juniors the basic courses for almost every college degree plan: English 1301 & 1302, US History 1301 & 1302, College Algebra, & Statistics. **[You must meet the college testing requirements to be eligible for the courses]**
(Bonus: Hit the books hard for the next two years. Colleges tend to look favorably on grades that go "up" over time, not down)
3. Take the PSAT test Known officially as the Preliminary SAT®/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, the PSAT is a great way to gauge how you do *testing wise*, while also providing great test-taking experience. The PSAT is offered in October at Medina Valley High School. The date is established by College Board.
(Bonus: If you do really well, you might qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program when you take the test as a junior.)
4. Collect opinions about college and universities. Ask family members, friends, teachers and your college & career advisor to share thoughts about their favorite schools. Then check out the web sites for additional scoop. (Hint: Don't scratch private schools from your list just because they *appear* to cost more. Many private colleges and universities offer generous scholarships and financial aid to help students afford it.)
5. Start developing *your list*. Ask yourself the following questions:
 - How far do I want to live from home?
 - Do I want to be in a city, suburban neighborhood, small town or the country?
 - Do I want to attend a school with a religious point of view?
 - Do I want to specialize in a subject like engineering?
 - What might my top three majors be?
 - What extra curricular activities are must haves?
6. Take the ACT and SAT with writing exams. By taking your admission exams early, you give yourself time to study, take a prep class and retake for better scores. www.number2.com is a great free website that not only provides practice questions but does tutoring too.
(Bonus: ACT & SAT can be used to determine eligibility for dual credit courses)
7. This spring and summer visit your top three schools. Everybody's web site looks great. So the only way to know whether the school fits is to see for yourself. Many schools have special days on Saturdays to showcase their programs; this is great way for sophomores to get started on college investigation. You will be allowed to take 2 college visits as a junior without it counting in your attendance.
(Bonus: Every time you book a tour, sign up for emails, or contact a campus in an official capacity it is recorded and can be of a benefit is you are in review process for admissions. The record will show your interest!)