

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS:

1. Think about college as an important part of your future. Discuss your thoughts with family and friends.
2. Consider your middle school coursework. The following classes taken in 6th-8th grades earn high school credits*:

* During the time students are enrolled in designated high school courses, they are considered to be Grade 9 students for those class periods. **A student's high school GPA and rank will be impacted by grades earned in these classes.**

A student may earn up to 6 high school credits.

Algebra I Honors[^]

Geometry Honors[^]

Physical Science Honors (formerly known as Earth/Space Science)^{^L}

Biology 1 Honors^{^L}

Computer Programming 1 & Above

Foreign Language 1 & Above

Spanish for Spanish Speakers 1 and Above

Haitian Creole for Haitian Creole Speakers 1 and Above

Language & Literature for International Studies 1, 2, 3, & 4 (French, German, and Spanish)

[^] Credit is awarded upon meeting End of Course assessment requirements.

^{^L} Lab requirement must be met. Many courses may also be taken via Florida Virtual School

3. If offered the opportunity (based upon previous grades in classes and/or test results), **take challenging classes (AP, Dual Enrollment, Honors) while in high school.**
4. Read, read and read some more. Complete your "summer reading" for school, but also read magazines, books and newspapers that appeal to your interests. Reading builds vocabulary and strengthens writing skills.
5. Develop strong study and time management habits.
6. Do your best when preparing for and taking standardized tests. Get help from teachers or tutors, if necessary.
7. Become involved in school and community activities – explore your interests and learn new things. Begin to volunteer if you haven't already. **The summer prior to 9th grade is the summer that community service counts for high school transcripts and college admission.**
8. Summers should be filled with exploration. Don't sit and stare at the TV or play video games or shop 'til you drop. Do something meaningful and educational.

9. Keep your social media pages clean. If you won't let your parents see it – then you need to clean-it-up.
10. Begin to compile data for your high school resume – include any community service performed during the summer prior to 9th grade as well as summer employment, internships, and/or pre-college programs.
11. If you plan to take an AP class, be sure to prepare in the summer months. Purchase an AP guidebook on the subject and review it before class begins in the fall. Once you have committed to take an AP class – you cannot back out. Understand how AP classes correlate with SAT Subject Tests.

PARENTS:

1. Continue saving for your student's college education: tuition, fees, room, board, travel and miscellaneous expenses. **Even if you have Florida Prepaid and the Bright Futures Scholarship – you will be out-of-pocket!**
2. Speak to your student about his/her interests and help your student match those interests with what will be an eventual college major and possible career.
3. Help your student develop good study and time management habits.
4. Stay in contact with your student's teachers and counselor; keep an eye on their grades and find tutoring services, if necessary.
5. It's not too soon to begin traveling to visit colleges. If you're taking a trip to Universal/Disney in Orlando – take an extra day or two to visit UCF (located in Orlando), UF (located 2 hours north in Gainesville), FSU (located 4 hours north in Tallahassee), USF (located 1-1/2 southwest in Tampa) and/or Florida Gulf Coast Univ. (located 3-1/2 hours southwest in Ft. Myers). Any family vacation can become a trip to visit colleges.
6. Summers should be used wisely. Aside from traveling there are many pre-college and enrichment programs available for high school students.
7. Monitor your student's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and any other social media accounts that they may have. If they won't let you see it – then assume there is a problem. (No RED SOLO cups!)
8. Begin to research test preparation companies for upcoming PSAT, ACT Aspire, AP, SAT, ACT and SAT Subject exams.
9. Purchase college guidebooks (Fiske, Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report, etc.) as well as AP and Subject Test guidebooks (College Board, ACT.org, Princeton Review, Barron's, Kaplan, etc.).
10. Encourage your students to become involved in high school extra-curriculars: Student Government, special interest clubs, honor societies, athletics, the arts, service clubs, student publications, etc.

TESTING:

1. Students will begin to take tests as early as 9th grade that will be counted toward admission to college. For instance, if a student is enrolled in AP World History in 9th grade – they will not only take an AP exam for that class in May of their 9th grade year, but they will also be eligible to take the SAT Subject Test in World History. Many selective colleges/universities require SAT Subject Tests as part of the admission process.
2. Taking a test preparation course is an important component of the college admission process. You may choose a company that teaches in a classroom-style setting or use a tutor who provides individual instruction. Courses are also given online. Be sure to budget now for these upcoming courses – they are expensive!
3. Taking the PSAT in 11th grade provides first-hand practice for the SAT, but also allows the student to compete in the NMSQT - National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (a program sponsored by the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation). A scholarship may be won based upon test results. Students, though, should plan to take the PSAT in 9th and 10th grades as well.
4. The ACT Aspire (sponsored by ACT.org) is similar to the PSAT in that it helps a student to build a solid foundation for future academic success. The ACT Aspire is a computer-based assessment test that will predict college readiness.