

College Planning Timeline

Freshman Year

Welcome to high school! Starting this year, grades appear on official transcripts, so if you haven't already started doing so, it's time to take stock. If you have strong academic interests, encourage them, but don't lose focus on strengthening areas of weakness in core subject areas, such as English or Algebra. You should also start exploring career goals so that courses can be chosen that will complement those goals.

It's important to explore and get involved in clubs, sports, community activities, volunteer opportunities or employment. Doing this will allow you to gain insight into your likes and dislikes and help you identify your strengths.

- During the month of October, a counselor will meet with 9th grade students individually to learn their strengths, interests and career aspirations
- In December, students will create their Naviance accounts and complete the Strengths Explorer Assessment
 - Naviance is a secure web-based college and career research tool. It's features include: college search engines, career exploration tools, scholarship list and resume building
- In April, counselors will meet individually to assist students with course selection that supports their academic ability and career aspirations
- During the summer students can research and/or visit colleges, participate in a summer opportunity through a college, build their activity resume, volunteer or work

Sophomore Year

For this year, you will want to stay on track with your high school classes and activities and begin to narrow down the plan for your future. The classes you take this year might determine the courses you are qualified to take in 11th and 12th grades. Some of our courses require prerequisites so make sure to check our curriculum guide.

- In October, sophomores will have the opportunity, and are encouraged to take, the preACT, a practice for the ACT. The preACT includes a career interest inventory and its testing sections include English, Reading, Math and Science Reasoning.
 - Counselors will meet with students to go over their scores and discuss career interests

- In April, counselors will meet individually to assist students with course selection that supports their academic ability and career aspirations
- Highly motivated and/or accelerated students may want to sign up to take one or more of the SAT Subject Test in June
- Students may want to sign up to take the PSAT
- During the summer students can research and/or visit colleges, participate in a summer opportunity through a college, build their activity resume, volunteer or work

Junior Year

This year the college search process really gets going. The combined exploration of the past two years combined with your testing should guide the list of colleges you are looking into.

- During the fall, College Admission Counselors visit the Counseling Office. Juniors are welcome to attend these visits
- In October, juniors will have the opportunity to take the PSAT, a practice for the SAT
 - Counselors will meet with students to go over their scores, discuss career and post high school options
- In November, students and parents should attend Financial Aid Night and Junior Night
- In November, students may want to create a College Board account
- In January, students will complete the Career Interest Profiler in Naviance to identify potential career matches
- In March, counselors will have a junior conference with each student and their family. During this conference, the college process will be discussed in detail in addition to course selection
- In May students have the opportunity to attend a college fair at HVCC
- December-June: Students take the SAT, SAT Subject Tests (if required) and/or ACT
- By the end of Junior year, students interested in playing Division I or II sports should register with the NCAA clearinghouse
- It is recommended that students and their parents make college visits during their Junior year. Students can also take advantage of virtual tours and videos featured on colleges' websites or on YouTube.
- During the summer students can research and/or visit colleges, participate in a summer opportunity through a college, build their activity resume, volunteer or work

Senior Year

Senior year is often an extremely busy time with schoolwork and various activities. Be sure to stay on track with the college admissions process. Get organized, be aware of deadlines, and don't procrastinate.

- In September, students and parents should attend Senior Night. Seniors will also have an individual conference with their counselor to review graduation requirements and the timeline for the student's college applications
- During the fall, students should request their letters of recommendation, prepare their college essay, finalize their activity resume, retake any standardized tests if necessary and have test score sent to the colleges they plan on applying to
- Students should meet with College Admission Counselors in the Counseling Office or attend local college fairs
- In October, students and parents can begin filling out their FAFSA. Make sure to check if colleges require any additional financial aid forms like the CSS profile
- In November, students and parents should attend Financial Aid Night
- Make sure to complete and submit applications before the specified deadline (Early Action and Early Decision are typically November 1st or November 15th)
- Students should continuously check Naviance and other sites like Fastweb and CollegeXpress for scholarship opportunities
- Once the student has decided on a college, make sure to submit a deposit before the deadline. Students should also submit AP scores and/or a transcript from SCCC if applicable

High School Test Prep Tips

- Helpful tips for SAT prep:
- It should be noted that although we do not host either test at our school, the SAT is offered 7 times a year and the ACT is offered 6 times a year.
 - Students can get a jump start on SAT prep by downloading the Daily Practice SAT app, a free app will let you answer a practice question per day
 - College Board currently has 8 free practice SAT tests [Full Length Practice Tests](#)
 - Students can also access free personalized SAT prep through Khan Academy (features include: interactive problems, video lessons, full-length practice tests, personalized study plan and instant SAT essay feedback)
- Helpful tips for ACT prep:
 - Students can access free ACT practice questions and sign up for ACT's Question of the Day [on their site](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page)
 - The Princeton Review offers free online and paper ACT tests [Free Practice Tests and Events](#)