



Libertyville High School ♦ Vernon Hills High School



# Post-High School Planning Guide for The Class of 2012

“The Workbook for Your Future”



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October 2010

Dear Juniors and Parents,

We have compiled this planning guide to help alleviate the anxiety associated with the task of gathering information regarding your options after high school. This information, which is at the core of the decision-making process, can be overwhelming for many students and their parents. The search is understandably confusing and can become quite stressful. Each student's needs and goals are different. Our intended purpose is to help Libertyville and Vernon Hills High School students and parents gain a better understanding of the college admission process and to assist you in finding a successful match with a college or university. This is an exciting time in all your lives, please enjoy it!

Sincerely,

Amy Belstra  
College Counselor  
LHS

Scott Birtman  
College Counselor  
VHHS

# The Five P's

(Person, People, Place, Program, and Price)

An easy and systematic way to start your college search is to understand The 5 P's. Remember, the earlier you start your search, the more prepared you will be in your senior year.

## THE PERSON

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Who is this applicant? What classes has s/he taken in high school? What activities? Having a good sense of self is a great place to start the college selection process!

- How would I observe you learning while in a classroom?
- Do you make yourself known to your teachers?
- What type of college will best fit **YOUR** personality?
- What are **YOUR** goals and expectations for yourself in college?

## THE PEOPLE

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**With whom are you going to learn?** You will spend a great deal of time with these people. They will help you network for success; they will mentor you, and challenge your vision of the world.

### People concerns:

- Cultural and religious diversity
- Religious affiliations and diversity
- Geographic diversity
- Social structures and traditions
- Student/faculty rapport
- Connections and networking

**Based on this developing picture of the people/community at the school you want to attend, you need to look for a school community where you will fit in and will be comfortable. *A campus visit is an important part of researching this piece.***

# THE PLACE

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There are 168 hours in a week. You will spend about 100 hours in class, studying, or sleeping. What are you going to do with the other 68 hours?

## Place concerns:

- Distance/travel options/costs
- Size of campus
- Climate
- Geography
- Physical environment

# THE PROGRAM

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## Career/Major

The *old* question was, "What are you going to be?" because people generally worked at one job until retirement. The *new* question is, "What do you want to be for the *first five* years after college? The *second five* years?" The US Department of Labor says that today's high school students will have **five to eight major job changes** in their lives. Your choice of major should prepare you for your immediate career path as well as prepare you with a broad set of transferable skills that will widen your world vision and help you prepare for an uncertain future. **Beware of rankings!** Your job is to find the school that is best for **YOU**; **YOU** should rank the schools – don't let others choose for you!

## Program Concerns:

- Calendar system (semester, trimester, quarter)
- Type of school (public, private, rural, urban)
- Degree programs
- Clubs/Extra-curricular opportunities
- Major/Minor
- Study abroad opportunities
- Internship opportunities
- Research opportunities

**Undecided?** That's OK! It's the most popular choice, and often the wisest. However, even if you are undecided, you should still investigate options that interest you now. You can continue to re-evaluate them as you learn more.

## THE PRICE

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The cost of a college experience can have a significant effect on which school you choose to attend. Generally, the price of a college education is the second most expensive purchase in your life!

### **Price concerns:**

- State vs. private institutions
- Sticker price vs. actual cost of attendance
  - Merit awards and scholarships available
    - Athletic awards/scholarships
      - Residency
- Average student/parent debt upon graduation
  - Average number of years to graduate

# Options after High School

What path after high school will best meet your needs and help you reach your goals?

Besides a four-year college, the following are other options some students may want to consider:

**Career and Technical Schools:** These types of schools are usually privately owned and the programs they offer vary greatly from several months to two years or more. There is an emphasis on career-related education, technical skills and hands-on training. Some fields in which you can receive training at a vocational school are: medical assistant, automotive technology, air conditioning and refrigeration, travel and tourism, electronics engineering technology, dental assistant, and business data processing. Because these schools advertise extensively in the media, some schools have achieved a high level of name recognition. Programs vary a great deal in quality; thus parents and students should practice good consumer skills when investigating and contracting for vocational education.

When considering a business, technical, or trade school, check carefully into its accreditation, employer recognition, and costs. To help judge the quality of a school, check with the Illinois State Board of Education-Vocational Schools Certification Division, a professional accrediting agency, and with the Better Business Bureau. Also, ask for names of employers of former students, check with these employers to see how they regard the school.

**Art & Design Schools:** Programs offered at fine arts schools vary considerably. Some require exceptional talent and skills and may lead to direct job placement. The programs at art and design schools may include writing, film, dance, music, musical theater, theater, and the visual arts. Majoring in one of the arts will teach students how to pursue with discipline and dedication, an interest or activity s/he enjoys. Again, be sure to thoroughly research the school to be sure you will be getting the experience you expect.

**Military:** Enlistment in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard is at least a two-year commitment. On-the-job training is available in a wide variety of careers, including computer programmers, aircraft mechanics, medical service technicians, etc. In addition, the leadership and management training you receive prepares you for your future career. Financially, the military helps pay for your education in several ways and, in return, you fulfill your obligation. Representatives of the branches visit each high school on a monthly basis during lunch periods. Check the schedule in the CRC for these dates, as well as to obtain brochures on the opportunities available in the different branches of service.

**Apprenticeships:** On-the-job training is provided and you are hired as a trainee to learn a craft or trade from an experienced craftsperson. It is for students whose personal preferences lie in working with both their heads and their hands. You will receive real-world training and experience, as well as entry into difficult-to-break-into trades, such as plumbing or electrical work. In an apprenticeship program, you literally earn while you learn. Sometimes previous training from a trade school or the military may be helpful in becoming a good candidate for an apprenticeship.

**Employment:** Employment is an appropriate option for some high school graduates. Students who choose employment as their post high school option should have a *three to five year plan*. This will help ensure that they do not get trapped in a dead-end job. Students should realize that they can go back to school anytime, even if it is only to take a course or two.

***The College & Career Resource Center is a great place to help you explore and find out more about these options.***

# Community College/CLC

Community colleges are the “open door” to higher education for all of us. The mission of the community college is far different from the traditional four-year college. Community colleges exist to afford *every* high school graduate the opportunity to further his/her education, whether that individual be an 18-year-old grad, a 42-year-old mother returning to the work force, or a veteran re-tooling skills to advance in a career.

The resources of a community college are utilized by many kinds of students. Among those are students who did not perform well in high school, either due to lack of motivation, or behavioral or social difficulties. These students are often not quite sure *if* they want to go on to college, or if they have the *ability* or *motivation* to succeed. They use the community college as a place to “start over,” a place to “try on” college. Students may enter the community college as “undecided” for one semester, take general courses, and *then* decide whether they want to enter either a vocational or transfer program.

Community colleges offer students different types of degrees. The **Certificate Program** is a **one-year** career program designed to prepare students for immediate entry into a specific job. The **Associate of Arts** and **Associate in Science** are **two-year** degrees designed for students who will transfer to a four-year college or university to complete a bachelor degree. The **Associate of Applied Science** degree is awarded upon completion of a **two-year** career program designed to prepare the student for immediate entry into a specific career field.

The **College of Lake County** has transfer agreements with all the Illinois state universities and many other public and private colleges. These transfer agreements allow students admission and junior status upon completion of their associate degree. Many four-year institutions require a minimum of 24 credit hours before a student can transfer.

## Some Advantages to Attending a Community College

- ❖ You receive a good education at a fraction of the cost.
- ❖ The college transfer program allows you to get some of your core requirements out of the way in a less expensive way. It may dramatically decrease the need for student loans.
- ❖ You can establish a college record which will allow you to transfer into a four-year college.
- ❖ You are offered a variety of programs designed to prepare you for immediate job market entry.
- ❖ Classes are small and are taught by faculty who are committed to teaching and preparing you for your next step: going to a four-year college or beginning your career.
- ❖ If your goal is to transfer credits to an out-of-state four-year college, check with an advisor at the community college. S/he will help you design a course schedule geared to the admission requirements of that particular college.

**If you are interested in attending CLC, talk with your College Resource Center. We work very closely with CLC to help high school students apply, register, and transition to CLC.**

# Junior Year Timeline

*This is a suggested time table provided as a method for making the college selection process enjoyable and thorough. Remember, starting early makes for calm, effective college planning.*

## Junior Year

### September through June

- ◆ Attend **NCAA Night** in September, if applicable for you (see page 17).
- ◆ Attend **University of Illinois Parent Meeting Night** offered by the District.
- ◆ Continue to take the strongest curriculum that is appropriate. Utilize resources in the **CRC**. Meet with **college representatives** in the **CRC**.

### October

- ◆ Take the **PSAT/NMSQT**.
- ◆ Attend **College Planning Evening Workshop for Juniors & Parents (LHS)**.
- ◆ Attend the **College Fair** at **College of Lake County**.

### January

- ◆ Take **ACT preparation classes**. Offered at each high school for a nominal cost.
- ◆ Attend **Financial Aid Night (VHHS)**

### February

- ◆ Register for senior year classes; *do not lighten your load*.
- ◆ Attend **College Planning/Junior Parent Information Night** (given at both high schools)

### March

- ◆ Attend **College Fair** at **College of Lake County**. Begin to collect college information.
- ◆ Investigate college requirements regarding **SAT Subject tests** (some selective colleges may require them).
- ◆ **Visit colleges** during spring break if possible.
- ◆ Register for **AP exams**.

### April

- ◆ **Take the PSAE (with ACT)**
- ◆ Attend **Junior/Parent Conference** with your counselor (parents invited, too) to discuss graduation requirements and post-high school plans.

### May

- ◆ Take the **SAT** (if applicable). Take **AP exams**. Register for June **ACT/SAT**
- ◆ Start to **narrow college choices** through research, visits, conversation with your counselor, college counselor, parents, alumni and friends. Contact teachers regarding writing **recommendations** for the fall.

### June

- ◆ Take **ACT/SAT/SAT Subject Tests** – **last chance to take exam(s) in junior year**.

### July - August

- ◆ E-mail, text or write colleges for information. Visit colleges. Work on college essays. Be aware of **reaches**, **probables**, and **foundation schools**. *Continue to refine your college list*.
- ◆ Register to take the **SAT**, **SAT Subject Tests**, and/or **ACT tests** if you need to take or retake them.
- ◆ Look up *Scattergrams* in **Naviance**. College admission data from the **Class of 2011** has been updated.

# Senior Year Timeline

## September

- ◆ Meet with your **counselor**.
- ◆ Attend the **Senior College Planning/Senior Parent Information Night** at the high school.
- ◆ Attend **NCAA Night** if you missed it last year (see page 17).
- ◆ Attend **University of Illinois Parent Meeting Night** offered by the District.
- ◆ Continue your college search, using the **CRC** and visiting with **college counselor** to explore additional choices.
- ◆ Inquire about college applications in the **CRC**, or call/write the colleges and visit college web sites.
- ◆ Start submitting **applications** online or to your counselor.
- ◆ Visit with **college representatives** in the **CRC** throughout the fall.
- ◆ Begin investigating **scholarships** available at your colleges.

## October

- ◆ Retake the **ACT** or **SAT** test, if necessary.
- ◆ Watch the **Naviance Scholarship List** at **LHS** and the **Scholarships/Monthly Bulletin List** at **VHHS** for availability and deadlines throughout senior year.
- ◆ Latino students should attend **Latino College Information Night**.
- ◆ Write and continue to rework your **essays**, if required.
- ◆ Revise and begin to **finalize the list of colleges** to which you plan to apply.
- ◆ Early Decision applications are due soon; check deadlines.
- ◆ **KEEP GRADES UP!** Seventh semester grades are important.
- ◆ If required, ask teachers to write recommendations and give them your completed **Teacher recommendation form**.
- ◆ Turn in applications with a **November 1<sup>st</sup>** deadline by **October 15<sup>th</sup>**.

## November

- ◆ Continue application process—watch **deadlines**.
- ◆ Attend **Financial Aid Night** at **LHS**.
- ◆ Follow-up on **teacher/counselor recommendations** to be certain they have been completed.
- ◆ Request **PIN numbers** ([www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)) for you and your parent so you can complete **FAFSA** online.

## December

- ◆ Complete the **"FAFSA ON THE WEB WORKSHEET"** (you may estimate).
- ◆ **All materials for college applications with a January deadline should be given to your counselor by the first week in December in order to allow time for processing, teacher/counselor recommendations and mailing before winter break.**

## January

- ◆ Complete **FAFSA online** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), which is required for anyone applying for financial aid. Must complete **AFTER January 1<sup>st</sup>**.
- ◆ **Parents:** Attend **Financial Aid Workshop** (**VHHS**).
- ◆ Investigate **housing options** at the schools you are considering to attend.

## February

- ◆ **Parents:** Attend **FAFSA Completion Workshop** (**LHS**).

## March

- ◆ Register for **AP exams**.

## April

- ◆ Make your college choice and send a deposit to **one** school. Students should refrain from submitting multiple deposits or commitments as it may jeopardize their acceptance to those institutions.

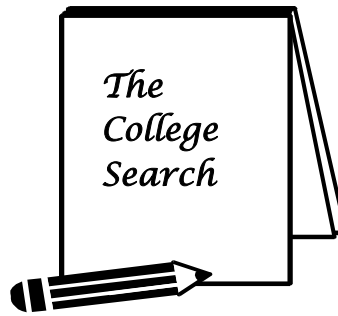
## May

- ◆ Notify the colleges to which you were admitted but do not plan to attend (e-mail, letter, etc.).
- ◆ Take **AP exams**.
- ◆ Request a **final transcript** be sent to the college of your choice.
- ◆ At **LHS**, complete **Naviance Senior Survey** so we can continue to collect application & admission data.

**June . . . . . Graduation!!! CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**



# Getting Started



At first, trying to decide which college is going to fit your needs seems overwhelming. Anyone who picks up one of the college guides for the first time without a clue as to which college to attend usually encounters a great deal of anxiety. However, there is a strategy to reduce the stress. If you start early and don't leave things to the last minute, it can be fun...really!

**Evaluate yourself:** What are your strengths and weaknesses? Look at your transcript; do your grades represent your best effort? What were your favorite courses? What are your interests? Any ideas about what career you might pursue? Use the CRC and career interest surveys to help you focus on your likes and dislikes and to explore career options. Some of the best resources are:

- ***My Personality Type*** on ***Naviance***
- ***College Planning Survey*** on ***Naviance***
- ***Learning Style Inventory*** on ***Naviance***
- ***PLAN Test*** and ***World-of-Work Map***
- ***Match-Maker*** and ***Career Selector*** on ***Career Cruising***

**Take your ACTs and/or SAT:** Use your scores, along with your grades, to help you determine the level of college competitiveness that would be most comfortable for you. Be careful that you don't place too much importance on the test scores. While they are important, what classes you take and how well you do in them, as well as your extracurricular involvement and community service, are considered greater indicators of your potential for success in college.

**Talk to college reps:** Important! They are a good source of information about their schools, both the strengths and weaknesses. They often bring viewbooks and can become your advocate if you decide to apply. See page 13 for questions to ask college reps and the procedure you need to follow to visit with them.

**Talk to parents, other students, counselors, teachers and the college counselor:** It helps you sort through the information, so you can decide what is important to you in college selection.

**Use *Naviance* and *Career Cruising*** to help develop a list of schools that will fit your needs. You begin by identifying criteria that are important to you such as location, size of school, setting, interesting major(s), athletic, or music programs, etc. You can repeat this as often as you wish; it is the very process that helps you begin to make decisions.

# The College Search

(continued)

Remember to do careful research. The issue is not just getting into a “good” college, but receiving a diploma. What is most important is that you find a school which is a **good match** for **you**. There is more than one college at which you can be happy and meet your educational goals.

**Research your college list:** Visit the CRC, use the catalogs, files, and CDs/DVDs to find out more about your colleges. Be sure to check entrance requirements carefully. Talk with people again. Visit with representatives from schools, and ask lots of questions.

**Plan a campus visit:** See pages 14-16 for details for what to get out of a visit. Use page 46 to keep notes on each visit. Some colleges also sponsor local events, in and around Chicago, to market their schools. These are great opportunities to get acquainted with these institutions. This information is posted on the **CRC** web-pages and at **LHS**, it is e-mailed to you via **Naviance**.

**Apply to colleges in the fall of senior year:** If you have done thorough research, you should be able to narrow down your choices to no more than four to six colleges to which you will apply. It is a good idea to apply to schools in the three categories: **foundation schools**, **probables** (pretty sure of admittance), and **reaches** (wishful hope for admittance).

**Seek a college that is an ACADEMIC fit:** You want to be challenged academically but not overwhelmed or in over your head.

## Choosing the “Right” College

The process of choosing the “right” college is often very difficult. What is it that I’m looking for in a school? How many students are on campus? Do I want to stay close to home? Can we afford a private school? And so on... Making a college choice is an important decision that may be a challenge. Until you find a place to begin, or a method to organize your thoughts and ideas into smaller, more manageable pieces, it may seem almost impossible to make *any* decision, let alone a good one. Many students going through this process are under the impression there is only **one** school which will fit their needs. In reality, there are more than 3,000 accredited institutions of higher learning in the U.S. --- and a good many of those would be equally suitable for you. The final selection of a college rightfully belongs to the student, but parents and the counseling staff can provide much insight. Here are a few suggestions you should remember. Always keep in mind, “A *good* school is a school that meets **YOUR** needs.”

1. Discuss your plans with **your counselor**. It is often beneficial to have your **parents** participate in this meeting. College selection is a **team** process.
2. Make an appointment with **Amy Belstra** or **Scott Birtman**, the **College Counselors** at **LHS** and **VHHS** respectively.
3. Talk to parents, teachers, friends, and former **LHS/VHHS graduates** who are currently college students.
4. Become familiar with internet sources for college searching—especially **Naviance!**
5. Attend **college rep visits** in the **CRC**.
6. Attend the **College Fairs** at **College of Lake County**.
7. **Visit colleges**. Call in advance, stay overnight, meet students, attend classes, arrange to meet with admissions staff and/or faculty from a specific area of study in which you are interested.
8. Think about how **you** best learn and feel most comfortable:
  - a. Large or small classes
  - b. Competitive or more relaxed atmosphere/environment
  - c. Diversity of student body
9. Attempt to seek a ‘match’ – a school at which you feel both challenged and comfortable.

# Visiting with College Representatives

Each year about **130 college reps** will visit the high school to talk with prospective students. **Most of them visit during the fall**; a few return in the spring. The representative you see here may well be the person who will read **your application!**

A **schedule of college reps** and when they will visit each week is posted in the *Daily Bulletin*, on the **bulletin board outside the CRC**, on the **TV monitors outside the CRC** -- and the latest, most up-to-the-minute info on ALL upcoming rep visits can be accessed 24/7 via your *Naviance* account at **LHS** and **VHHS** and also on the **CRC website under College Reps at VHHS**. Please obtain a **pass** from the **CRC** and **have it signed by the teacher of the class you will miss at least 24 hours before the visit**. You do not need a pass if you visit during your lunch or study hall periods. Parents are welcome to attend, but should call the day before the scheduled visit to be sure there are not any changes. Keep in mind the following:

- Most reps will stay for one period. If you are unable to attend, leave your name and address (+ e-mail address) in the CRC and we will give it to the rep.
- You are not there to impress the rep, but to gain information.
- Courtesy is an absolute must. Feel free to ask questions – lots of them! – but be aware that other students have questions also.
- Taking notes during a session makes good sense.
- Socializing with a friend, not listening, chewing gum, or other distracting behaviors are clearly inappropriate
- Although a vast majority of this information is available on the college's website or homepage, and prior research is always helpful, following is a list of possible questions for the rep. Also, look over the questions on page 16 – many of those might be helpful to you too.

## Questions to Ask College Representatives

### Admission

What are the admission requirements?

Does the school admit students on GPA? Test scores? Academic units required?

How important are recommendations and personal statements? Is there a counselor print-out page with the application?

### Academics

Does the school offer majors of interest to you?

What opportunities are there for research or study abroad?

Are there internships or co-ops?

### Application

When should I file for admission?

What percentage of applicants are admitted?

### Tests

Does the school accept both the ACT and the SAT as college admissions exams?

What is the average range of test scores for entering college freshmen?

Do I need to take SAT Subject Tests?

### Financial Aid/Cost

What is the estimated annual total cost?

What are the sources of financial aid and scholarships?

### Housing

How difficult is it to get on-campus housing?

How and when do I apply?

What percent of students live on campus?

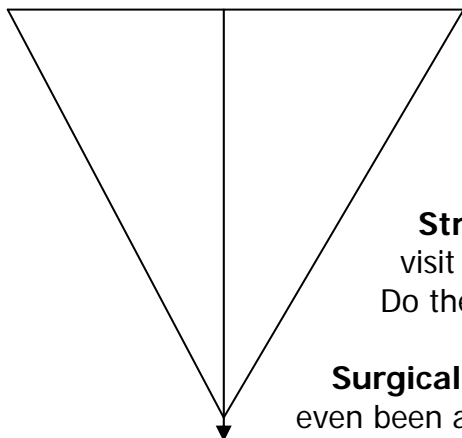
Are there separate residences for freshmen?

# The Campus Visit

There is no better way to learn about a college, its faculty, facilities, academic and social climate, and physical environment than to **VISIT the school**. It is your best resource, and just being on a college campus for a few hours will tell you much about both you and the college. While it's true that the best time to visit a college is when classes are in full session, many families use their summer vacations to explore college choices. You can meet with some students and tour the campus, but keep in mind, there just will not be as much activity during the summer. If possible, you should try to re-visit your top choices in the fall of senior year or after you have been admitted. Regardless of when you visit, general guidelines always apply.

1. Call the admission office at least two weeks in advance. When calling, be sure to request a tour, interview (if possible), class visit, directions to campus and the admission office, and local lodging information. This is also the time for special requests: meeting with a coach, faculty member, financial aid officer; sitting in on a class; or staying overnight in a residence hall. If you have a special need, don't be afraid to ask.
2. Become familiar with the college **before** you visit. Research it online and in the CRC file cabinets.
3. Make a **list of questions** to ask during your visit. Try not to ask questions simple research could have answered (hint # 2 above). See some good sample questions on page 16.
4. Be prepared to share information about yourself such as GPA, current classes, and extracurricular involvement. Request an **unofficial copy of your transcript** from the Registrar/Counselor and take it with you on your visits.
5. Put some thought into where *your parents* stay during your visit. While *you* should stay in the residence hall if at all possible, *they* might consider a B&B rather than a large hotel. Generally, the folks who own B&Bs are locals who know a good deal about the school and community, and much information is shared between all the guests at the breakfast table. Very often these guests are other families who are either looking at the college or who have children attending the school.
6. **Two visits per day**, possibly three, should be the **maximum** if the schools are fairly close to each other. At the end of each visit jot down notes while the impressions are still clear in your mind. (See page 45: *College Comparison Worksheet*)
7. Don't judge a college by one student, one faculty member, or one tour guide. Remember, a single person cannot represent the entire school.
8. After the visit, write a short **thank you note** to any staff member who gave his/her time to you.

# The College Visit Continuum



**Convenience Visits:** Freshmen & Sophomores should visit schools as often as they can. Visit nearby schools or plan to visit a school while on vacation. The more schools you visit, the better your sense of fit.

**Strategic Visits:** During your **Junior** and **early Senior** years, visit the schools which meet your criteria. Try to sit in on classes. Do these schools look as good in person as they do on paper/internet?

**Surgical Visits:** During your **Senior** year. . . you have applied, and maybe even been accepted! ***You have until May 1<sup>st</sup> to re-visit, compare, and make a decision as to which school you will attend.***

## Things to Do During a Campus Visit

- \*Take a **tour**
- \***Visit** one or more **classes**
- \*Have an **interview**, if possible
- \***Talk** to as many students as possible
  - ~ Ask them about the **academic** and **social** life on campus
- \***Observe** students as you walk around and see if you can picture yourself as a member of the student body
- \*Stay **overnight** in a residence hall
- \***Eat** in a dining hall
- \*Visit the **neighborhood** in which the college is located
- \*Read the **bulletin boards** and the **college newspaper**
- \*Visit the **library**
- \***Ask Questions!**
- \***Ask Questions!**
- \***Ask Questions!**

## Things to Look For During a Campus Visit

- General **neatness** of the campus (poor maintenance or vandalism reflect college or student attitudes)
- Student **attire** (neat, sloppy, casual, or high style – is it similar to your own?)
- **Friendliness** (eye contact, offers to help, hellos)
- Student **conversations** (tone and topic)
- **Security** (too many pass keys and locks may indicate problems or may simply mean the college is concerned with your safety)
- **Athletic facilities**
- **Library** (not number of volumes, but *your access* to them)
- **Labs** (not necessarily the sophistication of the equipment, but *who* has *access* to it)
- Computers (same as labs)
- **Theater facilities**
- Music and art **studios** (space to practice and work when you wish)
- **Residence halls** (singles, doubles, suites, co-ed, cleanliness)

# Sample Questions to Ask During a College Visit

1. What areas of study are emphasized, and how do they fit your field of interest and ability?
2. What is the amount and kind of study necessary for success?
3. What percentage of first-year students return for the sophomore year?
4. What percentage of students graduate in four years?
5. Are there special academic programs? Study abroad?
6. Is there an advising system? How is it organized and who are the advisors?
7. What types of tutoring programs are available?
8. What is the geographic, ethnic, religious, and racial makeup of the student body?
9. What special interest groups are available?
10. How is admission determined? What is the importance of ACT? SAT? GPA? Class Rank? Extracurricular?
11. What are the hot issues on campus?
12. Is guaranteed housing available? All four years?
13. How are roommates assigned?
14. What percentage of students go home on weekends?
15. What percentage of students are involved in the Greek system? What is the impact of fraternities and sororities on campus? Are Greek parties and events open to all?
16. What percentage of seniors go on to graduate school?
17. Is there a career planning and placement center for students?
18. What is the job placement record for graduates in the field(s) you might study?
19. Are merit scholarships available? What are the criteria for selection?
20. Is this college "need blind" or "need conscious" in the selection process? In other words, does the ability to pay enter into the admission decision?
21. What forms are required to apply for financial aid?

## The College-Bound Student-Athlete

A student interested in participating in athletics at a Division I or II college or university is required to meet academic guidelines as established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization that governs and enforces rules on athletic eligibility, recruiting, and financial aid.

Another governing association is the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). There are more than 300 schools which have membership in the NAIA. These schools tend to have relatively small student enrollments. Most NAIA schools do offer some athletic scholarships. For more information about the NAIA, check out the website at [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org).

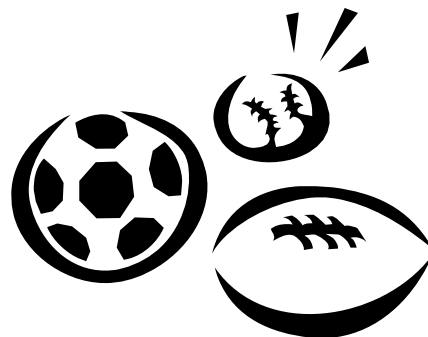
Within the NCAA there are Divisions I, II, and III. Colleges and universities are placed in a division according to size, scope of athletic programs, and availability of funds for scholarships. Division I and II schools offer athletic scholarships, and are mostly large and medium in size. No athletic scholarships are allowed at Division III schools. The only aid that might be given would be through academic awards, merit, or need based financial aid. Many of the specific NCAA requirements for athletes do not apply to Division III schools, as no athletic scholarships are awarded.

A student, who intends to participate in Division I or II athletics as a college freshman, must register and be **certified** by the **NCAA Eligibility Center**. The process for becoming certified should start immediately following the **end of your junior year** by registering with the Eligibility Center. The **application** is available on the **NCAA Eligibility Center website**. Students need to **submit a transcript request form** to have an official transcript sent to the Eligibility Center. Also, **ACT** or **SAT scores** must be sent (via [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or [www.sat.collegeboard.com](http://www.sat.collegeboard.com)) using the “college code” of **9999** for the Eligibility Center.

### NCAA Night

**LHS & VHHS** belong to a consortium of local high schools who take turns hosting the **NCAA Night** for prospective student-athletes. This is a great opportunity for families to gather information from some great speakers. Our speakers are usually local Division I, II, or III coaches who share great insight into the paths that student-athletes have to take. This event usually takes place in **September** or **October** and is best attended by athletes during their **Sophomore** or **Junior** years. Don't miss it!!

Ask your CRC for a copy of our  
*Guide for the College Bound  
Wildcat /Cougar  
Student Athlete!*



## National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility

For students entering a Division I college or university on or after August 1, 2005, your NCAA initial eligibility will be evaluated under the new rules. You must have **16 core courses** to be eligible to practice, play, and receive financial aid at a Division I school. You must:

### For the Class of 2012: Division I – 16 Core Courses

- Satisfy high school graduation requirements;
- Qualify under the Grade-Point Average/Test Score Sliding Scale Index. Be aware: ACT test scores earned on the **PSAE** (Prairie State Achievement Examination) test taken by all Juniors ***are*** accepted by NCAA.

### Complete the following core courses:

- 4 years of English.
- 3 years of mathematics (Algebra 1 or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (one must be a lab science).
- 1 year of additional English, math or science.
- 2 years of social studies.
- 4 years of additional core courses (from any area listed above, or from International language).

For more information regarding NCAA requirements, please refer to the ***Guide for the College Bound Wildcat/Cougar Athlete***, which is available in your College Resource Center or visit [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) for more information. (This NCAA site is posted on our suggested web links).

## CORE GRADE-POINT AVERAGE/TEST-SCORE SLIDING SCALE DIVISION I

Core GPA	SAT	ACT (sum of scores)	Core GPA	SAT	ACT (sum of scores)
3.550 & above	400	37	2.675	740-750	61
3.525	410	38	2.650	760	62
3.500	420	39	2.625	770	63
3.475	430	40	2.600	780	64
3.450	440	41	2.575	790	65
3.425	450	41	2.550	800	66
3.400	460	42	2.525	810	67
3.375	470	42	2.500	820	68
3.350	480	43	2.475	830	69
3.325	490	44	2.450	840-850	70
3.300	500	44	2.425	860	70
3.275	510	45	2.400	860	71
3.250	520	46	2.375	870	72
3.225	530	46	2.350	880	73
3.200	540	47	2.325	890	74
3.175	550	47	2.300	900	75
3.150	560	48	2.275	910	76
3.125	570	49	2.250	920	77
3.100	580	49	2.225	930	78
3.075	590	50	2.200	940	79
3.050	600	50	2.175	950	80
3.025	610	51	2.150	960	80
3.000	620	52	2.125	960	81
2.975	630	52	2.100	970	82
2.950	640	53	2.075	980	83
2.925	650	53	2.050	990	84
2.900	660	54	2.025	1000	85
2.875	670	55	2.000	1010	86
2.850	680	56			
2.825	690	56			
2.800	700	57			
2.775	710	58			
2.750	720	59			
2.725	730	59			
2.700	730	60			



## College-Bound Student in Performing or Visual Arts

### Tips for Performing & Visual Arts Students

(reprinted from the NACAC website, [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org))

Students who wish to study visual or performing arts have some unique challenges and options during their college search. If you are considering a major in music, art, dance, or drama, read on for some advice from the experts.

#### A Difference of Degree

Prospective arts majors have two degree options: a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with a major in the arts and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) for artists/performers or Bachelor of Music (BM) for musicians. The BA degree is the typical liberal arts degree – students who major in English, history, and other humanities majors also earn BA degrees. The BFA or BM degree is more focused and intense. “There is a world of difference between a BA in music and a BM in music,” says Anthony Celentano, school counselor/military advisor at Pope John XXIII High School (NJ), who holds a BM and MM (master of music). “A BA in music will be pretty much like any other BA degree – lots of courses outside your major with approximately 12 or so courses in your major. That’s not a lot of music for the student who is looking for an intense musical experience. A BM in music essentially is a professional degree. Within my 120+ credits for my BM, only 36 were liberal arts courses. The remainder were music or degree-related courses: private lessons, conducting classes, music history, music theory, etc.”

Which degree you choose depends on your college and career goals. If you have a high degree of commitment to your art and desire an intense, often competitive college experience, a BFA or BM might be right for you. If you would rather study a variety of subjects along with your arts major, a BA may be the way to go.

#### Types of Colleges

Visual and performing arts students have several types of colleges to consider. Conservatories and stand-alone arts schools offer an immersion-type experience for students earning BM or BFA degrees. All of the students you meet at this type of school will be artists, and the atmosphere is often highly competitive.

Some larger universities offer BFA/BM degrees as well as BA degrees in the arts. You may find somewhat self-contained music or arts schools within the larger university. In this atmosphere, you could pursue the more specialized degree while still keeping the door open to taking a few liberal arts courses (which would be unavailable at specialized music or arts schools). In addition, a university-based arts program might give you the option of pursuing a double degree, such as a BM in music and a BA in history. (A double degree would require more than four years, however.)

#### The Application Process

In addition to completing a typical college application, students in the visual or performing arts should prepare a portfolio or audition. Each arts program has different requirements, so you should contact the schools as early as possible to obtain their portfolio or audition requirements.

Although your portfolio or audition is an important part of the application, arts programs do consider your academic record and test scores.

“Some [colleges] place greater value on academics, while others lean more toward the student’s portfolio or audition,” according to a workshop on arts programs presented at several NACAC meetings (compiled by Kavin Buck, UCLA; Jane Buckman, Cornish College of the Arts; Ed Schoenberg, Otis College of Art and Design; and Jenny Woo, UCLA). “Most colleges balance the student’s creative talent with their academic achievements.”

## **Assessing Your Abilities**

If you’re interested in pursuing an arts major and career, now is the time to seek objective opinions of your abilities in the field.

James Gandre, Dean of Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University (IL), offers this advice to young musicians: “In addition to asking for honest advice and evaluation from high school ensemble and private teachers, students can get outside assessment from musicians at a local symphony, dance company, theatre, etc. Of course, everyone doesn’t live in a big city, so this may require driving one to two hours or more to get this advice, but it’s worth it.”

Visual arts students can receive portfolio evaluations and college information at one of the National Portfolio Days sponsored by an association of art schools and art departments at universities. For more information, talk to your guidance counselor or art teacher, or visit [www.npda.org](http://www.npda.org).

## **Other Considerations**

All students benefit from visiting the colleges which interest them and asking questions about academics, student life, and other facets of college life. As an arts student, you may have different or additional things to consider.

### **➤ Location:**

- The location of your chosen college may be more important to arts students than to students in other majors.
- “There may be many factors to consider when choosing where to study,” note the workshop authors. “For arts students, these should involve access to professional venues such as museums, galleries, theaters, and concerts. Also, do these venues attract regional, national, or international talent to inspire and educate the students? Additionally, the opportunity to perform, exhibit, and have active internships is vital to a young artist’s education.”

### **➤ Facilities:**

- In addition to checking out residence hall rooms, classrooms, and athletic facilities, art students should look at a college’s studio space or practice rooms, performance or exhibit venues on campus, darkroom facilities (for photographers), computer resources, and any other resources specific to your field of study. Ask questions about how accessible these resources are to students: attractive studios are of no help if there aren’t enough to go around.

➤ **Reputation and Philosophy:**

- Talk to your art, music, drama, or dance teachers about the reputations of the colleges you're considering. Ask the colleges about career opportunities for graduates and about what their alumni are doing. The goal here is to get some idea of how the program is perceived by professionals in your career field and what career opportunities you might have when you complete college.
- Also, ask about each college's philosophy. Different fine arts or music programs can have very different emphases. For example, one music program may emphasize classical music, while another specializes in more modern forms, like jazz. Similarly, the intensity of competitiveness, workload, and pressure can vary from school to school. During your visits and talks with students and faculty, try to get an impression of the daily pressures of being a student in that particular program.

➤ **A good fit:**

- Finally, as for any student, visual and performing arts students need to find a college that fits their personality, interests, and goals. Especially for very ambitious students, it's easy to be dazzled by the prestige of a top professional school or arts department and overlook the question of whether the program is right for you.
- "When working as dean of enrollment at New York City's Manhattan School of Music, I would run across the occasional unhappy student who came to New York City because someone else had told them that New York or Manhattan School of Music or a particular teacher was perfect for them. They listened to those mentors instead of their gut and made a wrong choice," says Gandre. "No matter how talented the student and how wonderful the school, fit is always crucial."

*Written by Jennifer Gross*

*Finally, don't forget...*

- **Faculty:** When majoring in the fine arts, the **faculty/student relationship** is especially important. Learn about the professors, their experiences and affiliations, and your chances of studying with them.
- **Performance/Internship opportunities:** Ask the number of performing ensembles at the school. Are opportunities open for all students? Can non-majors participate in ensembles? Does the program offer **internships** as ways to include practical experience in real jobs?

**For further information:**

The **CRC** has several books with information about various college programs and related career opportunities in the performing and visual arts.

**Some helpful websites:**

[www.artschools.com](http://www.artschools.com)

[www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org) (National Assoc. for College Admission Counseling – info on fine arts college fairs)

[www.dance-teacher.com](http://www.dance-teacher.com)

[www.act1books.com](http://www.act1books.com)

# So you want to be a “music” major. Now what?

First things first, you need to talk to people. Anyone who might have some insight into music schools, including your band, choir or orchestra director, your private lesson teacher, your youth orchestra conductor, your peers, and former classmates who are in a music school would be great resources. The music world is a relatively small one yet it is still fairly unknown to you, so gather as much information as possible.

## Performance vs. Education

If you are absolutely sure that you are willing to enter the extremely difficult field of being professional musician, then a performance degree is for you.

If you are like the majority of people who enjoy playing and want to become the best musician they can be, but aren't absolutely sure of what you'll be doing, then an education degree might be a better choice.

## Here are some things to consider:

### 1. **Next!**

In the world of music, you rarely get jobs based on your diploma or your resume. Instead, it is almost always based on an audition, an audition in which anyone, someone with a music degree, or someone with an engineering degree can take and potentially win.

### 2. **You're Certified!**

Most education degrees, on the other hand, also come with certification to teach, usually K-12 music courses. Performance majors, if they decide later that they want to teach, have to go back to school and pay more money to get certified.

### 3. **"I need a job, man!"**

The number of full-time orchestral jobs is very small in comparison to the number of people who audition for those spots. The positions are essentially life-time appointments and therefore do not open up frequently. The vast majority of professional, performing musicians earn their income doing a multitude of things, mainly private teaching, playing with community orchestras, and working part-time, non-performing jobs.

### 4. **"But I don't want to give up my playing."**

Performance-wise, you don't have to give up anything as an education major. You can participate in all of the same ensembles, continue taking lessons and otherwise become as strong a musician as a performance-only major. In fact, many schools will let you complete the requirements and earn both majors. This is something that should be checked into at any school you are considering.

### 5. **"But I couldn't do what my band director does."**

Most high school students have not had the opportunity to lead groups, especially musical ensembles in rehearsal, and most assume that they would not be good at it. This is an unnecessary negative attitude that could potentially cut-off a career. Leading a group is one of the many things you are taught in an education program, and again, you are not required to be a

teacher with an education degree, but it's an available option; an option you wouldn't otherwise have as a performance-only major.

### **Things to consider for a music degree:**

1. **Go to the best school you can get into.** (This also applies to education majors as well but sometimes conservatories do not have strong education programs.) This may seem obvious, but with so many things to consider when choosing a school it can sometimes be forgotten. You have a very limited amount of time to get as good as you can possibly get. You need to be constantly surrounded by other people who are much better musicians than you, whether they are professors, or more importantly, other students. There is no better motivation to practice than to have someone in your same class who is twice as good as you. A list of top music schools is provided at bottom.
2. **Know the faculty.** Who will you study with? Take a lesson with them if possible. This person will be your biggest source of musical knowledge for the next four years; you should make sure that your personalities will work together.
3. **Beyond Music.** Some conservatories have programs with nearby liberal arts universities. For example: Peabody/Johns Hopkins, New England Conservatory/Harvard, Julliard/Columbia, Eastman/University of Rochester. This will allow you to explore other areas of knowledge, **BUT.....**
4. **Beware of the double-degree!** Many schools, in an attempt to lure top students in an increasingly competitive market, have heavily promoted double-degree programs. These are aimed at the highly-accomplished high school students who are talented in different areas of study, say biology and music. In high school, these students are accustomed to moving quickly from one topic to another and doing exceedingly well by high school standards. Please remember that college classes move along at a much faster rate. Also, assuming you went to the best school you could get into, you will find that the one hour of practice per day that made you the top player in high school doesn't quite allow you to keep up with the extremely talented college musicians who practice four hours a day and don't have to worry about a four-hour chemistry lab each week for their other degree.

### **Big vs. Small Schools**

1. **"I'm worried about being lost in the shuffle of a large school."**  
Big schools can be as big or small as you make them. If you are in a music school of a large university, the vast majority of your time is going to be spent around the few hundred students in that school, not in the general university population. However, if you want to meet more people and have a big school experience once you are more comfortable, that option is available to you.
2. **"What about large lecture classes, will I be getting the same education?"**  
As a music or music ed major, your first two years of classes are generally going to be filled with music theory, music history, aural skills, lessons and ensembles. All of those classes, with the exception of music history, will be sizes similar to what you have had in high school. You will also

have some general education required courses to take, for example Psychology 101, and these may be large lectures. But these are general ed classes, not your main focus.

### 3. "Will a small school offer the same opportunities as a large school?"

- There is a lot of variance between schools. Some small colleges have an incredible music school, others may offer a music degree but the ensembles may be no better than your high school ensembles.
- Not all courses that are offered at large schools are offered at smaller schools. For example, a well-rounded program should have a series of music theory courses, a separate class for aural skills, a series music history courses, diction classes for singers, piano skills classes, classes on how to teach general music, choral music, instrumental music, composition. Some also offer classes in music business, music technology, and music therapy. You need to look into a school's course offering regardless of size.

### Below is a list of conservatories and universities with music schools.

- > Please note that virtually every university, regardless of size, offers a music degree but many of these schools are not good options.
- > No one person can vouch for all the universities listed for all potential majors.
- > The small colleges listed are those in the Midwest area.

#### Conservatories

Cincinnati Conservatory of Music  
Cleveland Institute of Music  
Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia)  
Oberlin Conservatory (Ohio)  
Julliard SOM (School of Music)  
Manhattan SOM (New York City)  
New England Conservatory (Boston)  
Eastman SOM (Rochester, NY)  
Peabody U. (Baltimore)  
Mannes College (New York City)  
Berklee College of Music (jazz only)  
Colburn School (Southern California)

#### Larger Schools that have strong Music Performance programs

Northwestern U.  
De Paul U. (Chicago)  
U. of Illinois - Urbana  
Indiana U. (Bloomington)  
U. of Michigan (Ann Arbor)  
Michigan State U. (East Lansing)  
U. of Iowa (Iowa City)  
U. of Wisconsin - Madison  
Boston U.  
Rice U. (Houston)  
Arizona State U. (Tempe)

U. of Colorado - Boulder  
U. of Southern California (Los Angeles)  
U. of Texas – Austin  
Vanderbilt U. (Nashville)  
Florida St.U. (Gainesville)  
U. of Missouri - Kansas City

#### Smaller Music Performance

Augustana College  
Illinois Wesleyan U.  
Lawrence U. (Appleton, WI)  
St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN)  
Butler U. (Indianapolis)  
U of Wisconsin - Milwaukee  
Roosevelt U. (Chicago)  
Simpson College (Indianola, Iowa)  
Luther College (Decorah, Iowa)  
Concordia College (Moorhead, MN)

#### Music Education Schools - String Education

Northwestern U.  
U. of Illinois - Urbana  
U of Wisconsin - Madison  
Ohio State U. (Columbus)  
Florida State U. (Gainesville)  
Eastman SOM (Rochester, NY)  
Hartt College of Music (Hartford, CT)

Oberlin Conservatory  
North Texas U. (Denton)  
Michigan State U. (East Lansing)  
U. of Texas – Austin

**Music Education Schools -  
Vocal Education**

Illinois State U. (Bloomington)  
Millikin U. (Decatur)  
Augustana College (Rock Island)  
U. of Missouri - Columbia  
U. of Oklahoma (Norman)

**Music Education Schools-  
Wind and Percussion Education**

Northwestern U.  
U. of Illinois - Urbana  
U. of Iowa (Iowa City)  
Michigan State U. (East Lansing)  
St. Olaf U. (Northfield, MN)  
North Texas U. (Denton)  
U. of Wisconsin - Madison  
Illinois State U. (Bloomington)  
Augustana College (Rock Island)  
U. of Miami (Florida)  
De Paul U. (Chicago)  
Ohio State U. (Columbus)



# College Entrance/Placement Tests

**College Admission Tests:** Most colleges require an **ACT** or **SAT**. Some of the more highly selective colleges also require the **SAT Subject Tests**. It is **your responsibility** to know which tests each college requires.

Every time you take an ACT or SAT, you should take advantage of the “pre-paid” reports (four for ACT, four for SAT) and send your scores to colleges of interest to you. These scores are not part of your high school transcript and will not be sent when you apply to colleges senior year. If a college you apply to does not have a copy of your test scores, you will need to pay **\$10** for **each college** to which you want your **ACT** scores sent. Don't delay!

## **Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT):**

This is a *practice* test of the **Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)** and the first step in qualifying for the National Merit Scholarship Program. It is given to **Juniors** in **October**. **This is not an admission test**, but if you do well on the test, it could help you qualify for scholarships at some schools. Also, it's a good idea to try out both the ACT and the SAT and find out which test you prefer and then put your efforts into preparing for that test.

**ACT:** This is one of two test options which may be used for college admission. All Juniors **MUST** take the ACT in the spring of their junior year as part of the state-mandated Prairie State Examination. The writing component is included with this test date. The test must be taken to qualify for the Illinois Student Assistance Commission's Honorary Illinois Scholar Award. The ACT is given on six Saturdays annually.

**SAT:** This is one of the two test options that may be used for admission. Most schools will accept either the SAT or the ACT for admission. Juniors are encouraged to take the SAT in May or June of their junior year. The SAT now includes a writing section. The SAT is administered on seven Saturdays during the school year.

**SAT Subject Tests:** These tests are given in subjects such as English, foreign languages, science, history and mathematics. Many selective colleges usually require two or three **subject tests** for admission and/or placement. They are given on most of the same dates as the SAT testing.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Tests:** These are offered in **May** in various subject areas. Participants are enrolled in specific AP or honors courses in their high school to prepare for these tests. Students scoring well in these (usually 3, 4 or 5) may receive college credit and/or placement in the corresponding academic discipline. Each test is a three-hour comprehensive examination.

# Schedule of Testing Dates

## College Admission Test Registration

During the 2010 - 2011 school year, students can register for both the ACT and SAT college entrance tests via the internet. Information on utilizing this service may be accessed at their respective websites at: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or [www.collegeboard.com/student](http://www.collegeboard.com/student).

### ACT

#### Test Dates

\*September 11, 2010\*\*  
 \*October 23, 2010  
 December 11, 2010  
 \*February 12, 2011  
 \*April 9, 2011\*\*  
 June 11, 2011  
 September 10, 2011  
 October 22, 2011  
 December 10, 2011  
 February 11, 2012  
 April 14, 2012  
 June 9, 2012

#### Regular Registration Deadlines

August 6, 2010  
 September 17, 2010  
 November 5, 2010  
 January 7, 2011  
 March 4, 2011  
 May 6, 2011

#### Late Fee Deadlines

August 20, 2010  
 October 1, 2010  
 November 19, 2010  
 January 21, 2011  
 March 18, 2011  
 May 20, 2011

Registration and Late Fee Deadlines are not yet available for these test dates.

As of September 2010:

Fee for ACT is \$33 (No Writing), or \$48 (Plus Writing), paid directly to ACT. Late Registration Fee is Basic Fee plus \$21. Stand-by Late Registration Fee is Basic Fee plus \$41. For more detailed information, check out [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

\*Test offered at LHS

\*\*Test offered at VHHS

**Special Note:** As part of the State of Illinois Prairie State Testing, every junior will take the ACT exam on April 27, 2011. The test is given free of charge. Information will be mailed home.

### SAT

#### Test Dates

\*October 19, 2010  
 November 6, 2010  
 December 4, 2010  
 January 22, 2011  
 March 12, 2011\*\*\*  
 May 7, 2011  
 June 4, 2011

#### Regular Registration Deadlines

September 10, 2010  
 October 8, 2010  
 November 5, 2010  
 December 23, 2010  
 February 11, 2011  
 April 8, 2011  
 May 6, 2011

#### Late Fee Deadlines

September 24, 2010  
 October 22, 2010  
 November 19, 2010  
 January 7, 2011  
 February 25, 2011  
 April 22, 2011  
 May 20, 2011

**Fall 2011 test dates are not yet available for the SAT. Check the CRC website and we will post them as the dates become available. Also, check the SAT site, [www.collegeboard.com/student](http://www.collegeboard.com/student) later in the year.**

Fee for SAT is \$47, paid directly to the College Board. Late registration fee is Basic Fee plus \$24.00

Fees for SAT Subject Tests are: \$2 Base Fee, plus \$21 additional for language with listening test; \$10.00 additional for all other subject tests. Standby fee is Basic Fee plus \$41. For detailed information, refer to

<http://sat.collegeboard.com/register/sat-fees>.

\*Test offered at LHS (The SAT is not offered at VHHS)

\*\*\*SAT only - no subject tests offered

### Standardized Testing Clarifications

The ACT and SAT/SAT Subject Tests are developed and administered by private test companies. The District 128 high schools do not control test administration, content, or registration procedures. District 128 merely provides these corporations the usage of its facilities as a convenience for our students. Supplementary information and practice questions are available for each test. Please ask in the CRC for additional information.

# Admission Categories

## General Guidelines

Please note, this is a subjective analysis of categories based on data used by college guidebooks. Remember colleges and universities use many different factors to determine admission eligibility. These may include any or all of the following factors:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Pattern of high school course work</b></li> <li>* <b>Overall grades in academic courses</b></li> <li>* <b>Athletic ability</b></li> <li>* <b>Evidence of exceptional motivation</b></li> <li>* <b>Leadership roles</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Test scores</b></li> <li>* <b>Chosen College major</b></li> <li>* <b>Special talents</b></li> <li>* <b>Community involvement</b></li> <li>* <b>Letters of recommendation</b></li> </ul> |
|---|---|

<b>Admission Competition Categories</b>	<b>SAT/ACT Scores</b>	<b>Recommended High School Academic Subjects</b>
<p><b><u>Most Competitive:</u></b> (Selective, Difficult)</p> <p>May only admit under 20 % of applicants</p>	<p>1300 - 1600 29 – 36</p>	<p>4 Years English 4 years advanced math 3 years lab science 4 years international language 3 years social studies Honors and AP course work recommended</p>
<p><b><u>Highly Competitive:</u></b> (Selective, Difficult)</p> <p>May only admit 20 – 30 % of applicants</p>	<p>1220 – 1300 27 – 29</p>	<p>4 years English 4 years advanced math 3 years lab science 3 years international language 3 years social studies</p>
<p><b><u>Very Competitive:</u></b> (Selective, Difficult)</p> <p>May only admit 33% of applicants</p>	<p>1140 – 1220 25 – 27</p>	<p>Same as above with possibly one year less in math and international language</p>
<p><b><u>Moderately Competitive:</u></b> (Selective, Difficult)</p> <p>May only admit 40 – 60% of applicants</p>	<p>950 – 1140 20 – 25</p>	<p>4 years English 3+ years advanced math 2+ years lab science 2+ years social studies</p>
<p><b><u>Competitive:</u></b> (Selective, Difficult)</p> <p>Admits most applicants under 20</p>	<p>910 or less 17 – 19</p>	<p>Same as above</p>
<p><b><u>Open Admission:</u></b></p>	<p>Not required</p>	<p>General College Prep Curriculum</p>
<p><b><u>Specialized:</u></b> Admission criteria and competition varies</p>	<p>Not available</p>	<p>Vocational Students: Diploma/ Specialty requirements plus courses in the area of interest or career</p>

## Check List for the Application Process

- ✓ Applications can be submitted online or downloaded from the college website. The CRC also has some applications on file.
- ✓ Be sure to fill out your application carefully and completely. Don't forget to sign your application. Some applications require a parent/guardian signature also.
- ✓ Make copies of any applications, essays and correspondence sent for your own files.
- ✓ Obtain and fill out a **transcript release form** from **your counselor** at **LHS** / the **CRC** at **VHHS**.
- ✓ Bring completed application (if not done online), application fee if required, and transcript release form to your counselor. If the application requires a counselor and/or teacher recommendation, ask them personally, providing them with the necessary information. At **LHS**, you must supply teachers with all necessary paperwork and a stamped envelope addressed to the Admissions Office of each school for which you wish them to write a recommendation. Be sure to check the address! The teachers will mail the recommendations separately. At **VHHS**, teachers will give their letter of recommendation to the CRC. It will be sent with your transcript.
- ✓ The counselor checks the application, writes a recommendation, if required, and signs the transcript release form. At LHS it is then given to the Registrar. At VHHS it is given to the CRC before going to the Registrar.
- ✓ The Registrar generates the official transcript with the school seal, GPA, and senior year courses to include with application.
- ✓ The Registrar mails completed application, transcript, counselor recommendation, and high school profile.
- ✓ You must have your test scores sent to the schools by one of the following methods:
  - ❖ By having scores sent when you initially register for the test
  - ❖ By submitting an additional score report online
    - [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)
    - [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

## Counselor/Teacher Recommendations

Colleges seeking information on your motivation, abilities, creativity and academic strengths *may* request up to two teacher recommendations. Choose teachers to write who know you well, preferably 11th and 12th grade teachers. Some colleges will require recommendations from teachers as well as counselors. Most public universities do not require recommendations except for special circumstances. If you are foreign born, have been ill or had other events in your life which may have affected your academic record, it could be to your advantage to share this information with the Admissions Office. **A recommendation will have more credibility if you have signed the waiver of your right to see your recommendations.**

1. Ask the teacher for a recommendation in person at least **three weeks** before the date you wish to have it sent. This rule applies to counselors as well, if the recommendation requires more than just filling in some spaces on the application. The **teacher's** recommendation is intended to write about you **in the context of his/her classroom**. The **counselor's** recommendation is to provide an **overall perspective of you as a student in the high school**.

2. At **LHS**, supply the teacher and counselor with information about yourself. Both **Teacher and Counselor Recommendation Forms** can be found on **Naviance**, in a column on the left side of the page under the **"About Me"** tab. Type in your answers and print out the form for your teachers. It is especially important to include a list of your accomplishments within that teacher's classroom to remind him/her of your strong points. You need not print out the counselor form for your counselor, as s/he may access it online. Just be sure to let him/her know it's there! At **VHHS**, supply the teacher with information about yourself by filling out a **Teacher Recommendation Sheet**. These forms are available in the **VHHS CRC** and on the **VHHS CRC website** under **"forms."**

3. A resume of activities inside and outside of school, leadership positions, interests, talent, and special class projects would also be helpful for both teachers and counselors. The more information you provide, the more likely you are to receive a meaningful, substantive recommendation. At **LHS**, both **Naviance** and **Career Cruising** have "résumé builders" which may be helpful to you in formatting this information. Generally, put the activities/awards/interests that are most important to you higher on the list, and for every activity indicate *how* you were involved and for how long. Be sure to briefly describe clubs or organizations so that their purpose is clear. Admissions officers can't be expected to keep track of the hundreds of organizations that exist in each high school and community across the country.

4. Teachers at LHS mail their recommendations directly to the college. At VHHS, teachers give their recommendations to the CRC. Remember, at LHS you must supply the teacher with a stamped envelope addressed to the college's Admissions Office. Follow specific instructions from each college regarding this process, as some will have specific teacher forms as well.

5. Check with your teachers at LHS / the CRC at VHHS, two to three weeks after requesting the recommendation to see if it has been sent to the college (LHS) or delivered to the CRC (VHHS). If not, gently remind the teacher/counselor of the deadline date.

6. Be sure to follow up with a **thank you** note to the teacher/counselor.

# The Essay

The importance of the college essay varies from college to college. Many private and some highly competitive state universities require an essay. Typically, the more selective the school the more important the essay. Colleges ask for an essay for two reasons: They want to see how well you write and communicate, and more importantly, they want to see you as an individual. Think of the essay as a "story" which elicits an emotion from the reader.

There is no formula, no format for a perfect essay, but it can be one of the most carefully considered and influential parts of your application. Yours will be read; write it well - it is a significant way to help you in the evaluation process. It is your chance to show the real you and another way to make your application come alive.

## Essay Topics

For the most part, essays will fall into three categories: the "You" question, the "Why Us" question, and the "Creative" question. The goal of all three types of questions is the same; to gather more personal and revealing insights into you as an individual for the admissions committee to consider.

### Tell us about yourself - the "You" question

This open-ended question requires that you write about your best subject, YOU! Think about your personality and accomplishments and what best illustrates your strong points: who are you, what do you think and do, and what are your goals? Strive to show how your experiences have shaped you as an individual. If you write about adversity, like an illness or a death, accent the positive and emphasize what you've learned from the experience (how it affected you personally). Use details, not generalities.

### Tell us why you want to come here - the "Why Us" question

Respond to this question by considering why you want a higher education and what you hope to accomplish with a college degree. Tell why you think that particular school is the right place for you, and what you personally will bring to the campus. Use examples after you've read about the college, hopefully visited, and talked with students on campus. Be as specific as possible in your examples.

### The Creative Questions

Here you may be asked to respond to works of a particular author, a quotation, an important issue, how someone or something has influenced your life, or a humorous incident. Be sure to illustrate with examples how a book, quotation, or idea you discuss reflects your outlook and aspirations.

## Essay Tips

Answer the question.	Stick to the length that is requested.
Write several drafts.	Ask others to read your essay and offer their opinions.
Write about something you care about; your passions.	Don't use the essay to justify weaknesses in grades or test scores. Special pleading should be done in a separate letter.
Use vigorous language—strong verbs and precise nouns.	Don't wait until the last minute. Get started during the summer after junior year.
Write in your own "voice" and "style". Be yourself.	Follow the five C's of essay writing: CONCISENESS, CLARITY, CANDOR, COMPLETENESS AND CONTRIBUTION.
If humor is part of your style, feel free to use it.	Check and re-check for correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.
Make sure you have one GREAT idea. Use specific details to make your writing come alive.	Keep your audience in mind.
Make sure the essay represents your own work. The idea should be yours.	Be honest.

### Sample Essay Questions

1. Please use the space on this page to let us know something about you that we might not learn from the rest of your application. There is no "correct" way to respond to this essay request. In writing about yourself, you will convey to us a sense of yourself. (Yale University)
2. What has influenced you the most to apply to Emory?
3. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence. (Common application question)
4. Explain how a particular literary work has influenced you. (Johns Hopkins University)
5. Describe the most humorous moment of your life. Please use detail. (DePauw University)
6. Ask and answer the one important question that you wish we had asked. (Carleton College)
7. Please relate your interest in studying at Georgetown to your future goals. How do these thoughts relate to your choice of major? (Georgetown University)

# The College Interview

Few colleges actually *require* a college interview. It is used to make personal contact with an admissions counselor to put a face with your application. So take the interview seriously, but do not over rate its importance. Here are some suggestions for the college

1. Know yourself. How do you learn best? What are your interests and goals? Is there any special area you'd like to explore? What are your strengths and weaknesses?
2. Be prepared. Be ready to ask questions as well as to answer them. Do your research; know the college. Don't ask a lot of questions about things that can easily be found in any college guidebook. But do ask at least one good question. If you do not, you may give the impression that you are unprepared or not really interested.
3. Dress neatly (a shirt and tie, or a dress is still an important means of impressing an interviewer).
4. Meet your interviewer with a firm handshake and maintain eye contact as you talk and listen.
5. Be prepared to talk about yourself: your academic record, career interests, extracurricular activities, and your interest in *this* college.
6. Be yourself – do not pretend to be something or someone you are not.
7. Above all, RELAX! Interviews are meant to be informative to *both* parties.
8. Write thank you notes after interviews.

## Questions you might anticipate in an interview

1. How did you hear about us?
2. Why are you interested in us?
3. What other colleges are you looking at?
4. What is/are your favorite subjects and activities?
5. What are your strengths/weaknesses?
6. Do you have a specific major in mind? ("Undecided" is okay, just talk about one of your favorite courses or activities.)
7. Tell us about your high school.
8. Tell us a little bit about yourself.
9. What books have you read recently outside of required school reading?
10. What do you think you will contribute to our school?

# Making the Final Decision

After a year or more of working and worrying, it's done: you've received word from all the colleges to which you applied. All that remains in your college quest is making the final decision. Which college will you attend?

This decision may be easy for students who were accepted to their first-choice college. But for the majority of students—those whose first choice denied their application or those who never had a clear first choice—that final decision can be difficult. If you're agonizing between two or more colleges, read on for help in making that big decision with confidence.

## Back to Basics

Before you look at the colleges themselves, go back to where you started—**yourself**. Think about what you want out of college. Have your priorities changed since you began the college search? Some students find that their preferences and goals change somewhat over the course of their college search, as they learn more about college and about themselves.

Take a few minutes to jot down the top five (or more) things you want out of your college experience. If you're feeling more ambitious, write a description of your ideal college. What do the classes look like? What kind of things do you envision yourself doing on the weekends? What interests do you plan on pursuing (academic or otherwise) while at college? The more details you can think of, the better.

Then sit back and look at what you've written. Do one or more of the colleges you're considering match your description? Is there one college that has most of the characteristics that interest you?

## Dare to Compare

Every college has different strengths and weaknesses. One college might have a better reputation in your preferred major—but not the extracurricular activities you want. Another may have a strong program in your favorite extracurricular activity—but also a higher price tag. A third may seem like it has everything, except for the fact that it is much farther away from home than you're really comfortable with.

It's easy to start thinking in circles when you try to compare two or more colleges that you genuinely like. Here's one way to help get your thoughts in order.

"Spread out all the acceptance letters and financial aid offers out on the dining room table," Laurice Sommers, coordinator for college partnerships and curricular enrichment for the Los Angeles Unified School District, said. On one blank sheet of paper for each college, make two columns—"like" and "dislike" (or "pro" and "con"). Then list the positive and negative aspects of each college.

"This exercise helps students to look at the colleges objectively and provides a starting place for the family conversation," Sommers said.

## On the Road

One of the **best** ways to clarify your choices is to **visit the colleges**, *even if you've been there before*.

During these visits, spend as much time as possible talking to **people**—current students, faculty members, coaches, and others. Many colleges allow prospective students to **stay overnight** in a residence hall to get a taste of student life. Read the student newspaper, **attend a class** or two, work out in the gym. Stand in the middle of campus, look around, and try to imagine yourself spending the next few years here.

"A visit can go a long way toward helping a student feel that the fit is right," Dave Fletcher, associate director of admission at Barry University (FL), said.

## **Financial Check**

If you need financial aid to afford college, cost may become the deciding factor.

Compare financial aid offers carefully. If you'd be paying about the same at each college, look at what kind of aid each college offers. Colleges can vary widely in how much of their packages are grants (free money) versus loans (that you pay back).

Also, discuss with your parents the real cost of attending each college. Two colleges may have similar costs, but you may end up spending more to travel to a distant college versus one nearer home; or you may spend more at an urban campus, since living in a city is usually a bit more expensive. Also, look at the colleges' graduation rates. If a substantial number of students are spending five years to graduate from a less expensive school as compared to four years at one that is a bit more expensive, the one that seems the most expensive initially may wind up being a reasonable, if you can graduate on time!

But don't feel obligated to go to the least expensive school just because it is the least expensive. It may be worth it to you and your family to pay a bit more if the college is a better match for your needs.

## **Consult with Others—but Make Your Own Decision**

Talk about your options with your family, friends, high school counselor, and teachers. Often, just discussing your choices and your thoughts about them can help you make up your mind.

But don't let others make up your mind for you. What's right for your friends or impressive to your teachers is not necessarily right for you.

"Although [others] shouldn't tell you where to attend, they can often offer insight you haven't thought about," Shere said.

## **The Gut Factor**

When it comes down to that final decision, many experts advise students to go with their gut feeling—that indefinable confidence that a particular college just "feels right." After all, you've done the research, you've put in the work of applying, and several admission offices have given you their vote of confidence. So go with the college that you feel comfortable with, the one that you're excited about—the one that makes you think, "**This is THE college!**"

## **Don't Stress**

You may feel that there's only one "right" choice, and that choosing "wrong" dooms you to four years of misery. In reality, you chose the colleges you applied to very carefully—and you'd probably be happy at any of them. Remember, too, that your choice is not necessarily final: a good number of students transfer every year. Of course, many more students don't transfer—which is a good sign that the majority of college students are happy with their choice.

*Jennifer Gross, National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)*

# Technology and the College Process

The Internet contains a staggering amount of information related to the college selection process. There is just as much information out there on choosing careers, majors and finding financial aid. There are so many web sites out there and some are better than others. How does one choose the best sites? We have lots of information here to answer the most frequently asked questions.

We recommend you use our web site. We are continually researching web sites and we believe we have selected proven sites which will meet all of your needs. In addition, by using the sites we have selected, we will have a common platform on which to discuss. Families should definitely become familiar with *Naviance*, our premiere college search tool, and *Career Cruising*, our career search tool.

To see our suggested web links please visit our respective **CRC Web Sites**. Go to the appropriate school's web page below and surf to the **CRC**.

<http://www.lhswildcats.org>

<http://www.vhhscougars.org>

## Bookmark the CRC!

The **CRC WEBSITES** contain information about:

- Testing
- Application Process
  - CRC Programs
- Suggested Weblinks
  - Class Timelines

# NAVIANCE

**Naviance** is a powerful, secure, web-based college research tool that will help you:

- **PLAN:** **Naviance** helps the **CRC** lead students in creating their post-high school plans. Students can look at their personality types and think about how their strengths and weaknesses and personality characteristics can be applied to planning their futures.
- **COMMUNICATE:** **Naviance** helps the **CRC** alert you to college rep visits and new opportunities. We send individual or group e-mails via **Naviance** about upcoming events, available scholarships, and more!
- **RESEARCH:** **Naviance** provides families with the ability to search for the most current information under various criteria: type of school, size, location, majors, sports, and more!
- **ANALYZE:** In the past, when families analyzed the GPAs and test scores needed to be accepted by a school, they were looking at *national* averages. These national averages may not have been a good comparison for **LHS** or **VHHS** students. Now, with **Naviance**, we collect application data from **seniors** at both **LHS** and **VHHS** separately so that you can see how colleges are admitting (or denying) students from **just LHS** or **just VHHS!** Families can access this information at home in **Naviance** by looking up the *Scattergrams* of any school. And this is just the beginning of how you can dissect college admission trends!

*Naviance provides useful, valuable information at your finger tips!*

## **CHECK-OUT YOUR NAVIANCE ACCOUNT TODAY!**

All **Freshmen** activated their accounts in *Skills for Success*, the Freshman lunch/study hall program. As **Juniors**, they received additional training in their first semester English classes. Consequently, all **Juniors** and **Seniors** should have been trained in the program and have active accounts. Come to the **CRC** if you need a refresher, or if you are having problems logging in.

### **Directions to get started at LHS:**

1. If you are a **new student**, stop in the **CRC** to get your **Naviance** account set up.
2. Go to the **LHS CRC Home Page**, and click on **Naviance**.
  - Your **Username** is your **firstname.lastname** (ex: john.doe – all lower case)
  - Your **Password** is **L followed by your student ID** (site is case sensitive – use a capital L)

### **Directions to get started at VHHS:**

1. If you are a **new student**, stop in the **CRC** to get your **Naviance** account set up.
2. Go to the **VHHS CRC** website and click on **Naviance**.

Your **Username** is your **e-mail address**

Your **Password** is your **student ID**

Check-out the list of things you can do in **Naviance!** Spend some time navigating through your account pages and you'll find more help and information than you can imagine. First, look down the left side of the screen on your Naviance homepage and you'll see links to many helpful websites. Then, look across the top of the screen and you'll see three 'file tabs': "**colleges**"; "**careers**"; and "**about me.**" Click on the "**colleges**" tab and under the subheading "**my colleges**" click on "**colleges I'm thinking about**" where you can add and delete schools as you learn more about them. This list enables you to receive e-mails when we get info about rep visits, scholarships, or programs from schools that are on your list. Also, in the "**my colleges**" section, you'll find the most complete, up-to-date **list of college rep visits** (click on the link: **view all upcoming college visits**). Still under the "**colleges**" tab, in the next section down, titled "**college research**" you'll find a wonderful "**college search**" tool as well as "**college match**" (where have other **LHS** or **VHHS grads** with **your profile** been accepted?) and, of course, the very popular "**scattergrams**". On the left side, be sure to check out the link to **test preparation** where you can take **two** complete **ACT** and/or **two** full **SAT** tests, as well as take shorter 'target tests' that have brief **lessons** associated with them. The amount of information

and help available here will astonish you, and will help you organize your energies and efforts so the process does not become overwhelming and you can make an informed decision!

## What is *CAREER CRUISING*?

*Career Cruising* is your tool for **career exploration** with information about **occupations**, **educational requirements**, including specific **scholarships**.

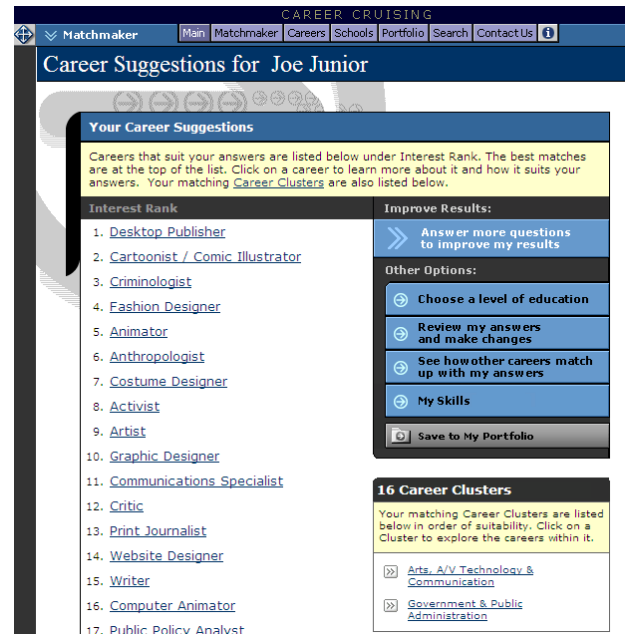
Link to *Career Cruising* from the **CRC web-site!**

Click on: **LHS**  
 User Name: **Student libertyville**  
 Enter password: **wildcat**

Click on: **VHHS**  
 User Name: **Student vernon hills**

What should I do on *Career Cruising*?

- Career Selector
- Matchmaker
- Explore Careers
- Education & Training
- Create a Portfolio



**CareerCruising**



# Steps to Financial Aid

Be sure to work very closely with the College Financial Aid Officers. Make sure **your parents** read this sheet with you because much of the information will involve them, too. Start early and note important deadlines.

## In your Junior year:

1. Contact colleges that interest you to obtain admissions and financial aid information.
2. Parents, review your family financial situation with your student and develop some realistic parameters.
3. Frequently review the *Scholarship List* provided by the **CRC**, on *Naviance* at **LHS**, and under *Scholarships/Monthly Bulletin* at **VHHS**, to become familiar with local scholarships and their usual deadline dates.
4. Do your own research into private sources of funds. Become familiar with the financial aid web links provided on the **CRC** homepage and **Naviance**. Create an account with *FastWeb* to begin searching for scholarships on a national database

## In your Senior year:

1. Determine college costs. Don't eliminate any college because of high costs at this point . . . look carefully at financial aid and average number of years to graduate.
2. **Apply** for admission. Many colleges require both an application for admission and financial aid before they can determine a student's chances for aid.
3. Investigate all possible sources of aid. The major sources of aid are grants, scholarships, loans and work. Use resources available at LHS/VHHS which announce local scholarships available to our students. At **LHS**, go to the **Naviance Scholarship List**, and at **VHHS**, to the **Scholarships tab** on the **CRC** webpage.
4. November - both the student and parent should apply for a FAFSA PIN # (www.pin.ed.gov). Attend the *Financial Aid Workshop* sponsored by the CRC for an overview of financial aid.
5. December – pick up the *FAFSA on the Web Worksheet* form in the **CRC**. Some private colleges also require the **CSS profile**. Find out **now** what **YOUR** schools need!
6. Attend the *FAFSA Completion Workshop* in January or February to help you understand and prepare for the process.

Three good, general rules that apply to all financial aid application situations are:

**Plan Ahead**

**Ask Questions**

**Be Aware of Deadline Dates**

# Steps to Financial Aid

*(Continued)*

A statement designed to drive parents and students crazy is: "Hundreds of millions of dollars in scholarship money go unclaimed each year." The truth is, most of what goes unused is really employee tuition remission benefits, not miscellaneous scholarships for which students have not applied.

## In your senior year (cont.)

7. January – Submit application for Financial Aid. Submit the **FAFSA** on-line after January 1. If you have not received your W2 forms, you may estimate your income and then send in official copies at a later date. Watch for a **FAFSA Completion Workshop** at your school. These workshops will help you complete this process.
8. In about one week, you will receive the **Student Aid Report (SAR)**, which will identify the student's **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**. Verify that your SAR is correct; then sign Part II.
9. Mail the entire **SAR** to the Financial Aid Office(s) of the school(s) you plan to attend.
10. The financial aid administrator of the college develops a financial aid package, which is a mix of aid from various programs. It may include a grant, low interest loan, scholarship and work-study plan.
11. The Financial Aid Office sends an award letter to the student.
12. The student must accept or decline the offer, sign the award letter and return it to the Financial Aid Office.
13. The college/university will either credit the student's account or issue checks directly to the student to pay the cost of education.

A mistake some families make is not applying for financial aid.

It can never really be predicted whether or not you will qualify, and many schools require the FAFSA in order to

Be aware of SCHOLARSHIP SCAMS! Scholarship and financial aid offers that show up in the mail and on the Web may be the tools of con artists designed to bilk parents and students eager to find ways to pay college expenses. Beware of the following phrases: "you've been scheduled to participate" or "chosen" or "specially selected," and/or the scholarship or service is "guaranteed or your money back," "you can't get this information anywhere else," "May I have your credit card or bank account number to register you or hold this scholarship?" Or, "This scholarship will cost some money." Be

## Steps to Financial Aid

*(Continued)*

One of the most frequently asked questions by students and parents during the college search is, "Where can we get information about financial aid and/or scholarships?" Fortunately, there are many resources available to research. The following scholarship sources are available for students and parents to explore.

### Resources for Financial Aid

**Colleges/Universities:** Most colleges offer **scholarships** and are the **best sources** for possible academic, athletic and special talent scholarships. Many of the scholarships can be found in the college files in the **CRC**.

**Scholarship Information:** At **LHS**, frequently check your **Naviance** account. Under the "colleges" tab, find the subheading "**scholarships & money**" and use the "**scholarship match**" link as well as reading through the "**scholarship list**" to find local and other scholarships that are sent directly to the high school. The list includes scholarships such as those offered by Rotary, MacLean Fogg, and the Lions Club. At **VHHS**, this same information is found on the **CRC website** under **Scholarships/Monthly Bulletin**.

**Books:** There are a multitude of books available in the **CRC** as well as in your local library.

**Organizations:** Companies/businesses often offer scholarships for employees or children of employees. Some churches offer scholarships for persons of that faith.

**Financial Aid Websites:** Look on your **Naviance** home page and check your **CRC's** suggested web links on financial aid.

Go to [lhwildcats.org](http://lhwildcats.org) or [vhscougars.org](http://vhscougars.org)

The search for scholarships can be extremely time consuming.  
The summer between junior and senior year is a great  
time to begin this demanding process.

## **MORE HELP WITH FINANCIAL AID...**

**Two important questions to ask college reps/admissions:**

- 1. How much of a student's demonstrated need does your school meet?**
- 2. What is your school's endowment?** This can indicate a college's financial health.

My family and I have discussed the cost of my education: \_\_\_\_\_

On my list of schools I have:

Private \_\_\_\_\_

Public In-State \_\_\_\_\_

Public Out-of-state \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial aid is available through many sources:**

***U.S. Department of Education (ED)*** is a federal agency, which provides college funding in the form of **grants, scholarships and educational loans.**

***Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)*** is the state agency that administers state and federal scholarships and grants, college savings and prepaid tuition programs, and educational loans.

**The four types of financial assistance are:**

<b>Scholarships</b>	<b>Grants</b>
<b>Work-Study</b>	<b>Loans</b>

These funds may be merit-based or need-based.

**Forms** to be aware of:

**FAFSA** (available in December)

**CSS Profile** (available in September)

**INSTITUTIONAL FORM** (available from the institution)

**SCHOLARSHIP NOTIFICATIONS** at LHS and VHHS:

**CRC Web Page**

**Bulletin Boards (Guidance Office, Halls, Internet)**

**College Career Resource Center**

**Teachers' Rooms**

**Books**

***Naviance*** will also have local scholarships

**FREE SCHOLARSHIP SEARCHES:** [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

**BEWARE OF SCAMS:** Check them out on: [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or [scholarships.com](http://scholarships.com)

Although you may still have questions and concerns about financing your education, do not let the cost of school keep you from applying. Investigate all school opportunities and complete the necessary financial aid forms before making your final decision.

## **Ten Survival Skills for College Admission**

1. **Read the directions** on all applications and other materials and follow them **“to the T.”**
2. **Know tests (ACT, SAT, SAT Subject tests)** and **courses** required for admission to each college.
3. **Observe all deadlines.** When you receive applications, make a list of all deadlines.
4. **Be organized!** Applications tell the colleges about you. Take care with your applications and present yourself well.
5. **Stay focused** on what you need to do.
6. **Be considerate** of your counselor and the Registrar by observing deadlines, giving sufficient time to process your applications to colleges.
7. **Avoid “senioritis.”** Your senior grades may be crucial to your chances of admission.
8. **Check with your counselor or college counselor** if you hear something you aren't sure is true. **There are many false rumors out there.**
9. **Memorize CEEB/ACT High School Code.**  

<b>LHS</b>	<b>142-620</b>
<b>VHHS</b>	<b>144-214</b>
10. **Relax and have fun!** The College Admission process is not a life-threatening experience. **Remember, there is more than one school which can meet your needs.**

# College Comparison Worksheet

The criteria to be used when making college comparisons will vary according to student need. Add other criteria as appropriate before comparing colleges.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ACT/SAT \_\_\_\_\_ GPA \_\_\_\_\_

Comparative Criteria	College A	College B	College C	College D
Enrollment-Undergraduate				
Location				
Campus setting: urban/ rural, residential				
Cost-tuition, room & board				
Admission requirements/ ACT/SAT, class rank				
Freshman average class size				
Application procedure deadline				
Application fee				
Academic atmosphere (competitiveness)				
Academic Program (major)				
Activities or special interests				
Percent returning freshmen				
Athletic programs				
Type of housing available				
Percentage of students receiving financial aid				
Financial aid form required/preferred				
Personal Impressions (distinctive characteristics)				
Parent Opinion				
Your order of preference				
Your chances of admission				



# Glossary

**ACT** – Examination used for admission to and/or placement in college.

## Admissions Policies

1. **Regular Admissions** – Specific deadline for applying; student usually notified by April 15<sup>th</sup> and must notify school by May 1<sup>st</sup> if he/she plans to attend.
2. **Rolling Admissions** – School continuously processes applications; student receives reply four to six weeks after application submitted. This is the most popular admissions policy today.
3. **Early Plans** – There are three general early admission policies today:
  - a. **Early Decision** – ONLY for the student who knows “the” school he/she wants to attend. This is a binding agreement and he/she *must enroll* unless the financial aid award is inadequate. He/she should rank in the top 10-20 % of the class and have a strong grade point average and test scores. Usually must apply by early November to that school. Student forfeits right to wait until May 1<sup>st</sup> to reply to offer of admission.
  - b. **Early Action/Notification** – Usually, a student applies by early November and is notified of admission much earlier than April. You may wait until May 1<sup>st</sup> to respond to an offer of admission. As a rule of thumb, do not apply to an Early program until you:
    - i. Clearly understand all the requirements and consequences of such a program (usually spelled out in the application)
    - ii. Talk over the decision to apply with your counselor and your parents.
  - c. **Restrictive Early Action** - Allows applicants to apply to as many colleges as they want under a Regular admission time frame but does **not** allow a candidate to apply to other schools under any type of early action, early decision or early notification program. Students are asked to sign statements indicating the applicant is aware of the terms of Single-Choice Early Action. This program differs from Early Decision in that students have the right to wait until May 1<sup>st</sup> to reply to an offer of admission.

**Admit/Accept** – A college has officially notified you of your acceptance. You have until May 1<sup>st</sup> to formally commit to attending.

**Application Fee** – A non-refundable fee usually charged for making application to a college.

**Bachelor’s Degree** – See “Degree” below.

**College Fair** – Program which brings representatives from a large number of colleges and universities into a single, concentrated environment (i.e. College of Lake County in October and March).

**College Representative** – An admissions counselor or representative from the Office of Admissions at a particular school.

**College/University** – These two words both refer to the same thing: a place where you can continue your education beyond high school. A **college** typically refers to a small (50-3,500 students

usually) school awarding undergraduate degrees; different fields of study are separated by a department structure.

A **university** typically refers to a larger (2,000+ students) school awarding both undergraduate and graduate degrees(beyond the bachelor degree); different fields of study are separated by a college structure. (For example, the *University* of Illinois has several different *colleges*: Liberal Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, Engineering and Fine/Applied Arts.)

**Community College** – A college that offers two-year programs rather than four-year. Students can earn the Associate of Arts degree and complete general education requirements for a Bachelor’s degree.

**Deferred** – The college has decided not to make an application decision at this time. They will make a decision to admit or deny you by April. You should have enough time to make *your* decision by the May 1<sup>st</sup> Universal Reply Date.

**Degree** – After attending *four years of college*, or completing from 120-128 semester hours of coursework, you receive a **Bachelor’s degree**. There are various Bachelor degrees, depending upon your major:

- B.A. - Bachelor of Arts (most majors in liberal arts areas-English, language, education, etc.)
- B.S. - Bachelor of Science (includes engineering, business)
- B.B.A. - Bachelor of Business Administration (only at some schools)
- B.M. - Bachelor of Music
- B.F.A. - Bachelor of Fine Arts

After you successfully complete the course requirements at a *community college*, usually from 60-62 hours of coursework, you receive an **Associate’s degree**. The two most common Associate degrees are:

- A.A. - Associate of Arts
- A.A.S. - Associate of Applied Science

**Deny/Reject** – College admissions office notice of non-acceptance to their school.

**FAFSA** – Free **A**pplication for **F**ederal **S**tudent **A**ssistance. This federal form must be completed to receive financial aid from a college. It must be completed after January 1<sup>st</sup> of a student’s senior year in high school. An **EFC** (**E**xpected **F**amily **C**ontribution) is determined by FAFSA, and the student and college is notified of that amount

**Financial Aid** – Monetary support to defray the costs of a college education. This could include Federal aid, state aid, university awards/scholarships, athletic scholarships, and several forms of need-based aid. In order to receive financial aid, you must complete the FAFSA (and/or CSS, if your school requires it).

**Graduate Assistant/Teacher Assistant (GA or TA)** – An assistant to the professor in a college course. Typically, a graduate student completing work in a specific area related to the course with which s/he is assisting.

**Grant** – Money that does not have to be paid back and is awarded to an incoming student.

**Honors Program** – A program designed to encourage superior students to engage in a more challenging program than is commonly required in their area of concentration. Students completing the stringent requirements are usually granted ‘honors’ degrees.

**Hours** – In college, credits are awarded on the basis of semester or quarter hours of class attendance, instead of units. Most schools require 120 to 128 hours for graduation. Most classes meet three hours per week, and most students take five classes. 5 classes x 3 hours = 15 hours of credit that would be awarded each semester. (Remember, for every hour of class time, you are generally expected to spend from one to two hours on outside preparation, or 15-30 hours per week of study *minimally* ...)

**Housing Deposit** – Refundable OR non-refundable deposit made with a college to confirm and guarantee student residence.

**Letter of Intent** – Formal and binding arrangement between a DI-II student-athlete and a college, mutually agreeing on the student’s intention to enroll at the school and participate in the recruited sport.

**Liberal Arts** – Refers to the study of general knowledge in the humanities including sciences. Liberal arts majors include literature, the arts, the social sciences, and education. Also refers to college curriculum (plan of study), which requires you to take one or more courses in each of the humanities as well as science and math; provides a broad base of knowledge before you specialize in one area. If you are undecided about a major, a liberal arts college or major is an excellent choice!

**Major/Minor** – A *major* is a concentration of related courses in a field of study, generally consisting of 24 to 50 semester hours. A *minor* is a concentration of courses in an area consisting of 12 to 18 semester hours; some majors may require a minor concentration.

**MAP Award** – Monetary Award Program. This program is administered through the State of Illinois.

**Matriculation** – Formal enrollment in a college or university.

**Merit Award** – Scholarship or grant awarded by the college to reward superior students. The awards are usually renewable through the college, if the student maintains a certain GPA.

**NAIA** – National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. Intercollegiate association regulating college athletics. See pages 17 - 18.

**NCAA** – National Collegiate Athletic Association. Intercollegiate association regulating college athletics. See page 17.

**Private college/university** – An educational institution which is not supported by public taxes. These schools may either have a religious affiliation or be independent.

**Quarter System** – Division of the academic year into *four* sections: fall, winter, spring, and summer quarters; each quarter is ten to eleven weeks in duration.

**Registration** – The process, prior to the beginning of each semester/trimester/quarter whereby students select courses, pay fees, and develop their class schedules for the term.

**Rights & Responsibilities** – See inside back cover of this workbook.

**ROTC** – Reserve Officer's Training Corps. Many colleges have units which offer two and four year programs of military training culminating in an officer's commission.

**Rush Week** – A period set aside, with the approval of the college, for fraternities and sororities to issue invitations to prospective members. 'Delayed rush' indicates that this is held just prior to, or at the beginning of, the second semester.

**SAT** – Examination used for admission to and/or placement within a college.

**SAT Subject Tests** – Tests administered through the College Board. Topic areas are: English, history, mathematics, science, and language.

**Scholarships** – Financial support provided by either a private or public source. Funds are generally awarded either through a competitive process or are need-based.

**Semester** – A division of the academic calendar into *two* separate units of equal duration.

**Transcript** – An official record of a student's academic performance from the time of entrance to the last semester. Test scores are not included on this official document.

**Trimester** – Academic calendar divided into *three* separate units of equal duration.

**Tuition** – The charge for instruction. Generally designated for either a year or a semester for a full-time student; part-time students are designated by the credit hours of the courses in which they are enrolled.

**Wait Listed** – The college admissions office has placed your name on a list. You have neither been accepted or denied. If you continue to have interest in the school, you need to notify them of your interest. Wait listing can be compared to an "admissions limbo." Often, selective schools have more qualified students than they have places for in their admitting pool, so they create a wait list. Typically, students are admitted from a wait list by the end of June, after the May 1<sup>st</sup> Universal Reply Date. Students who are waitlisted should contact their counselor immediately to determine action to be taken.



# Class of 2012



- Throughout Junior Year ~ Meet with college reps in the CRC; Attend CRC evening programs; Complete College Planning Survey in Family Connections
- Spring 2011 ~ Attend Junior/Parent Conferences
- Junior Year & Summer 2011 ~ Visit colleges
- August-September 2011 ~ Begin submitting college applications
- November-December 2011 ~ Finish all college applications
- December 2011 ~ Get FAFSA PIN # and start/continue scholarship applications
- January 2012 ~ Complete FAFSA
- January – April 2012 ~ Letters of acceptance received
- May 1, 2012 ~ Decision Time! Deposit due at college
- June 2012 ~ High School Graduation! Congratulations!
- Summer 2012 ~ College orientation
- August 2012 ~ Attend college!



## Students' Rights & Responsibilities in the Application Process

Your **RIGHTS** entitle you to:

Receive full information from colleges and universities about their admission, financial aid, scholarship, and housing policies. If you consider completing an early decision application, you should obtain complete information from the college regarding its process and policy.

Wait to respond to an offer of admission and/or financial aid until you have heard from all colleges and universities to which you have applied or until **May 1**, whichever comes earlier.

If you think your rights as a student have been infringed upon or denied, see **Amy Belstra** at **LHS** or **Scott Birtman** at **VHHS** first, then contact the college or university immediately to request additional information or the extension of a reply date.

Your **RESPONSIBILITIES** are:

Notify each college or university which accepts you whether you are accepting or rejecting its offer of admission. You should make these notifications as soon as you have heard from all the colleges to which you have applied or by **May 1**, whichever is earlier. Also, if you are accepted under an early decision plan which requires you to attend that institution, **you must withdraw** applications submitted to other colleges or universities at the time of that acceptance and make no additional applications. If you are an early decision candidate and are seeking financial aid, the previously mentioned withdrawal of other applications presumes you have received notification about financial aid.\*

Confirm your intention to enroll and submit a deposit to **only one college** or university by its required notification date, **May 1**. If you are put on a Wait List by a school and are later admitted by that institution, you may choose to accept the offer and send a deposit. However, you must *immediately* notify any other school to which you had previously indicated your intention to enroll.

**Letters to withdraw your application from a college** should include your address, the date, your signature (with your name printed clearly underneath), your social security number, the fact that you wish to withdraw your application, and (optionally) the name of the school you plan to attend. This information can be placed on a postcard and mailed as soon as you are sure which college you will attend. This is a courtesy to fellow students on housing and wait lists, as well as to the school.

*\*Any violation of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Statement of Students' Rights & Responsibilities will be reported by District 128 to all concerned colleges and universities.*