THE ROAD TO COLLEGE

College Admissions

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How Do You Define College?

Two year

Four year

Ivy League

Historically Black

Urban

Suburban

Specialized:
  - Engineering
  - Culinary
  - Art
  - Medical
  - Fashion
  - Technology
  - International

Coed

Single Sex

Public

Private

Major Athletic Conferences

Religiously affiliated

Undergraduate

Graduate

Division III

Other

From: The College Board College Advising Basics Workbook
Asking the Right Questions

- The right college FIT for your student.

- Gathering information about colleges.

- When you apply to colleges and universities, you have RIGHTS.

- When you apply to colleges and universities, you have RESPONSIBILITIES.

- Admission Options in Higher Education
  - Regular/Rolling/Early Action
  - Early Decision/ Restrictive Early Decision
THE ROAD TO COLLEGE...
IN PERSPECTIVE
Why go to college?

- Greater and more diverse career options
- Personal and educational growth
- It pays off...

Average Monthly Earnings by Educational Level

- Doctoral Degree
- Professional Degree
- Master’s Degree
- Bachelor’s Degree
- Associate’s Degree
- Some College, No Degree
- High School Diploma
- No High School Diploma

$0 $1,000 $2,000 $3,000 $4,000 $5,000 $6,000
TIPS: The student role

1. Crack the books
   - Strong grades and a competitive GPA are habits that must begin in middle school.

2. Set your goals
   - Which colleges interest you?
   - What majors will you consider?
   - Do you have any career objectives in mind?

3. Make a plan
   - How will you reach your goals?
     - What kind of GPA do you need?
     - What classes will you take in high school?
     - What kind of extracurricular activities will you pursue?
4. Do your research
   - Explore possible college and career choices:
     - Online research: www.al.kuder.com (AL Career Planning System)
     - Support at school: counselors, teachers, outreach organizations
     - Advice at home: parents, siblings, extended family

5. Stay motivated
   - It’s never too early to prepare for college. It will keep you motivated!
   - Choose friends that share the same goals.

6. Talk to your parents
   - Discuss your goals and plans with your parents— they can help!
   - Consider possible high school, college, and career choices together.
TIPS: The parent/guardian role

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

FIRST DAY OF COLLEGE
TIPS: The parent/guardian role

1. Prioritize your child’s education
   - Create a family calendar in order to schedule homework, study, extracurricular, and recreational times.
   - Be aware of school deadlines in order to keep your child on track.

2. Celebrate achievements
   - Regularly check report cards and discuss progress with your child’s teachers so you can celebrate good grades and consistent effort.
   - Remember, your child’s motivation is the most important guide on the road to college.

3. Be involved
   - Help choose and plan your child’s extracurricular activities.
   - Be aware of your child’s circle of friends.
TIPS: The parent/guardian role

4. Encourage good habits
   - Calendars, planners, schedules
   - A designated study time…everyday
   - Extracurricular activities

5. Talk
   - NOW is the time for the college talk.
     - Remember, colleges will consider your child’s work from day one of high school to graduation day.
   - Ask questions:
     - What are your child’s career interests? Favorite subjects? Weakest subjects?

Seek resources
   - Look for school and community resources in order to build a support network for your child’s success…
Being a Partner in Your Student’s Successes

- Students should always complete college admissions and scholarship applications.
- Empower your student NOW!
- Help your student manage stress and meltdowns.
- Parents can make mistakes and jeopardize acceptance or scholarship awards.
- Support your student in his or her decision of which college FIT is best!
Building a support network

- The College Team: Who’s in it?
  - The student, of course!
  - Family matters: parents/guardians, siblings, extended family
  - Good friends—with shared goals
  - School staff: teachers, counselors
  - Local organizations..church, civic, community
Seek resources...because we all need a little help

- Encourage your child to join an after school program that supports a college-going culture.
  - Finding a program:
    - School: talk to teachers, counselors, and principals
    - Community organizations– i.e. libraries, recreational centers, religious institutions
    - Research programs and advice online with the After School Alliance: [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org) (Click on “After School in My Community”)

- Seek the services of educational outreach organizations that may be present in your middle schools or high schools.
  - Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, AVID, etc.
DISCLAIMER: The times, they are a-changin’

- The most important tip of all for students and parents:
  - Do your research and remain up-to-date with college requirements.

- Disclaimer: All requirements discussed today, apply only today. It is your responsibility to remain aware.

- Let’s learn about some colleges...
THE SYSTEMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ALABAMA AND THEIR REQUIREMENTS
Requirements: A cheat sheet for college acronyms

- GPA- Grade Point Average
  - Colleges will ask for either the student’s weighted (extra points for honors/AP courses) or unweighted GPA

- AP- Advanced Placement
  - Optional courses in high school that offer college credit, if students pass a final examination

- Core Curriculum
  - Core Curriculum courses are approved general education courses that must be completed in high school for college entrance (ex.--Algebra II w/Trig, Foreign Language I/II, and Computer Science).

- Standardized Tests:
  - SAT- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT Reasoning Exam)
  - ACT- American College Test
    - Most universities require scores from either the SAT or ACT
    - What’s the difference?
  - SAT Subject
    - Subject-specific exams that some private universities may require or recommend (i.e. Spanish, US History, Literature, etc.)
Public 4-Year Colleges and Universities in Alabama

- Each have admissions and scholarship deadlines which vary
- Most have common degree programs; however, each specialize in one or more fields
- Admissions can be competitive, scholarships even more competitive
Alabama Community Colleges

Stats:
- 26 community colleges, some have multiple campuses
- Transfer, Associate’s Degree, career/technical, and certificate programs available
- Approximately $5,000 per year for total tuition and fees

Basic admission requirements:
- High school diploma or GED
- Dual Enrollment/Accelerated Enrollment in Academic and Technical Areas

Scholarship Deadline:
- March 1
Private Colleges

- Stats:
  - Many schools, multiple campuses (Samford University, Birmingham Southern College, Faulkner University, Huntingdon College)
  - Campus settings/focuses vary widely
  - Costs vary widely

- Basic admission requirements:
  - Vary, but generally accept courses covered by the core curriculum.
  - GPA varies, but generally selective
  - Testing requirements vary, but generally require SAT or ACT
  - (SAT Subject exams may be required or recommended, depending on campus and major)
  - Transfer requirements and programs vary
  - Generally practice Holistic Review
  - Extracurricular activities, leadership roles, and community service considered
Career/Technical Institutions

- Stats:
  - Many campuses, depending on field of study (i.e. Art Institute of San Diego, FIDM, Paul Mitchell School, Universal Technical Institute, Concorde Career Institute)
  - Degrees and/or certificates available
  - Costs vary widely

- Basic admission requirements:
  - Admission requirements vary widely. Research application procedures at each program of interest.
  - Many technical programs are available at community colleges for a much lesser cost.
CHOOSING A COLLEGE THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU...
A few, basic factors to consider when researching college campuses…

- Institution type (public, private, vocational)
- Majors/minors offered
- Campus/enrollment size (large vs. small classes)
- Campus reputation
- Geography (urban/rural; in-state/out-of-state)
- Distance from home
- Housing (available/guaranteed?)
- Campus resources (libraries, computers)
- Costs (tuition, books, room and board)
- Financial aid offered
Make-or-break criteria

- Some more factors to consider...
  - Religious affiliation
  - Gender-specific vs. co-ed
  - Student body diversity
  - Extracurricular activities offered
  - Social life (sororities, fraternities, clubs)

- Tips for successful research:
  - Begin to visit campuses as early as possible.
  - Do not rely on name recognition/hype. Find your best fit!
  - Do not pick campuses just because your friends are applying. Make your own decisions!
  - Do not rule out colleges because of cost. Financial aid is available.

- Online research: Alabama Career Planning System, College Board, Big Future, etc.
  [www.al.kuder.com](http://www.al.kuder.com)
  [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
How to Choose

- Dream
- Target
- Safety
MAKING MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL COUNT:
PREPARING EARLY FOR COLLEGE
Prepare for College: Action Plan
Mailing Application Materials

- Print and keep copy of EVERYTHING!
- Keep records - one file for each school
- Certificate of Mailing ONLY!
- Never use a mailing that requires a signature.
Sending Test Scores

- Most colleges and universities require test scores to be sent from the testing agency.
- ACT/SAT/AP Exam scores are no longer included on the student’s transcript.
THE WONDERFUL TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL
PLANNING YOUR NEXT FOUR YEARS
The road to college…
starts here, today

- When you need directions, contact your school counselors:
  - Sean J. Stevens and Melissa Morris—SHS Counselors
  - Wendy Arnold—NLMS Counselors