

College Planning

Here are some things that students in grades 9-12 need to do:

- Choose your classes, being sure to meet all graduation requirements. Your school counselor can help you with this. Also, look at which high school courses colleges you are interested in require for admittance. BCCA's requirements probably meet the college's requirements, but do not just assume that.
- Take the most challenging courses available, that you can handle.
- Work hard to maintain good grades throughout high school.
- Start both an electronic folder for college planning and a folder or binder for paper materials about colleges. You can also collect information here detailing your service to others, and awards you have earned over your high school career.
- Participate in extracurricular activities. Keep a list of what you are involved in. Put this list in the college planning folder mentioned below. Take on leadership roles where possible. It is better to be very involved in a few things, rather than minimally involved in a lot of things.
- Begin to visit colleges as your family travels near them or make special trips. These trips can be fun for students and give parents a chance to spend time with the young adults while sharing valuable information from their own experiences. Find (your BCCA counselor has one), or create, a standard form to fill out during the visits so you will have the same information to compare for all of the schools. Pick up brochures about the school and scholarships while you are there. Put all the materials you gather into your college planning folder/notebook.
- Get ready for the SAT/ACT. BCCA encourages students to take these tests in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. Taking them near the end of your 3 course math series that includes algebra I, II and geometry is advised, as these are the math subjects covered heavily on the tests. Following are some suggestions to help with the test process and preparation:
 - Be sure to create a log in with the college board (collegeboard.org/). You will need a log in to be able to see your PSAT scores, sign up for SATs and see those scores. You can complete practice SATs at this site. You can link your scores to Khan Academy and they will develop a personalized study plan for you. You can also have your scores sent to colleges from the college board site. Keep your log in info. in your electronic folder or binder so you will have it when you need it.
 - If you are going to take the ACT, the website is ACT.org/. You will need a log in and they will have you do an interest inventory and upload a photo.
 - Get the SAT question of the day app., which can be found on the college board's website.
 - Take practice tests at the college board website, Khan Academy, or elsewhere; and go over any missed questions until you understand them.
 - You can Sign up for a formal SAT prep. class, if that is desirable.
 - Read good literature, and not just what is assigned at school. This will improve your reading and writing scores on most standardized tests.
- Talk to your parents about paying for college.
 - Use the FAFSA4caster to get an idea of how much you may be expected to pay for college.
 - Begin, or increase your savings for your post-secondary education. Do you need a job?
 - Research scholarship opportunities (see college resource list) and find a few that you want to pursue. Look at the requirements for the scholarship(s) and work on becoming the person described. Do they require leadership, service, excellent grades and SAT scores?