

College Corner

-Freshman Edition

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START PLANNING FOR COLLEGE NOW

Plan your future now by getting a head start. It's not too early to explore careers and think about college. The choices you make and classes you take in school matter now and will help you get acceptance letters from many colleges in senior year. Follow these tips and create your plan for a successful transition to high school and college.



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Did you know . . .

That college graduates earn substantially more money than high school graduates? Here is a breakdown of the average 2007 earnings by college degree:

- \$120,987 Professional Degree
- \$95,695 Doctoral Degree
- \$70,186 Master's Degree
- \$57,181 Bachelor's (4-year) Degree
- \$39,746 Associate's (2-year) Degree
- \$31,286 High School Diploma or GED
- \$21,484 No High School Diploma

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

We're on the Web
www.gchs.info

The Courses You Take in High School Are Important

Whether you plan to attend a 4-year college, technology or community college, take at least five academic classes every semester in high school to develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and reasoning. Colleges are looking for a solid foundation of learning that you can build upon. Keep in mind that even though they may not be required for high school graduation, most colleges prefer the following:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of social studies
- 3 years of math (including Integrated Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra 2/Trigonometry)
- 3 years of laboratory science
- 2-3 years of the same foreign language

What does it all mean?

AP (Advanced Placement) - Courses and exams that enable high school students to earn college credit or advanced standing at colleges and universities.

Associate Degree - The associate degree is awarded to students who complete a minimum of 60 college credits with a 2.0 GPA and are offered at two-year community colleges.

NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) - Division I and II schools offer athletic scholarships and students are required to meet NCAA's academic requirements. Division III schools do not offer athletic scholarships and students are not required to meet NCAA academic requirements.

Bachelor's Degree (also called Baccalaureate Degree) - The bachelor's degree is awarded to students who complete a minimum of 120 college credits and are found at four-year colleges and universities.

Certificate Programs - Certificate programs provide specific job skills, require a minimum of 30 college credits and are generally offered at community colleges.

Citizenship Status - Students with U.S. citizenship or legal residency, who qualify for financial assistance, will be able to receive federal financial aid. Students who do not currently possess U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status are advised to consult their families now to begin the citizenship application process. Pending applications for citizenship do not count.

Class Rank - Many high schools use class rank to show where a student stands academically in relation to other members in his/her graduating class. The student who has the highest GPA is number one in the class. The student with the second highest GPA is number two, etc.

Community College - A community college is also known as a two-year school.

GPA (Grade Point Average) - GPA reflects the average of a student's grades, starting with the freshman year. Our school have "weighted grades" for honors and AP courses. That means a grade in a weighted course is worth more than it is in a non-weighted course. For example, a 100 in an honors course would equal 105, a 100 in a AP course is worth 110. The higher the grades, the higher the GPA, and the higher the GPA, the greater the college and scholarship opportunities.

Major - The primary field of study in which an student wishes to receive a degree.

Minor - A second field of study requiring fewer credit hours than a major.

PSAT (Preliminary SAT Test) - A practice test for the SAT that is also used to determine National Merit finalists. The PSAT is given in October, primarily to sophomore and juniors. It measures critical reading, math problem-solving and writing skills.

Transcript - A document that details a student's academic achievement in high school. Although the appearance of the transcript varies from school to school, all high school transcripts generally contain the following information: Courses, grades, and credits for each grade completed, beginning with grade nine; current cumulative GPA and class rank; anticipated graduation date; PLAN, PSAT, SAT, and/or ACT scores. An unofficial transcript is exactly the same as an official transcript except that there is no signature, stamp, or seal.

Take academics seriously and keep your grades up.

Your high school grades are important and the difficulty of your courses may be a factor in a college's decision to offer you admission. College admission officers will pay close attention to your grade point average (GPA), class rank, Advanced Placement (AP), and other honors-level courses, as well as your scores on standardized tests and state exams such as the Regents in New York State. Regents' scores are reflected on your transcript and will be viewed by colleges. So, challenge yourself by taking tougher courses AND maintaining good grades. Not only will this help prepare you for standardized tests (such as the PSAT, SAT and ACT) but it will also determine your eligibility for some colleges. Many high school seniors realize their grade point average is too low for the colleges they wish to attend simply because of the grades they earned in the 9th and 10th grades. Don't let this happen to you! **All grades count from 9th to 12th.**



In school activities or community service. Find something you like and stick to it! Colleges pay attention to your life outside of the classroom and value these types of experiences. Begin getting involved now. Be sure to keep (and update regularly) a list of your activities, awards, honors, jobs, and offices you have held in organizations. Colleges want to see passion and commitment, and the key is not to be involved in every club but to select a few that really appeal to you.

It is not the quantity but the quality and longevity of involvement in activities or organizations that matters. For example, if, as a 9th grader, you join the school newspaper and are a club reporter and then in 10th grade become a sports' reporter, in 11th, a sports' editor and in 12th, the editor-in-chief, it demonstrates growth in leadership. In community service, the same applies. It is not a sign of commitment if you simply do a March of Dimes Walk once a year for four years. Rather, you should find something in which you have an avid interest. Whether it is an animal shelter, a nursing home, or a soup kitchen, the idea is that you stay and put in significant time.

Research job trends

Find out more about the careers that interest you. What level of education is required? What is the average salary? What are the expected job prospects? The U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/>)



offers answers to these questions and provides information about occupational projections by state, as well as career exploration information. **Interested in working in New York State or City only visit www.nycareerzone.org to explore careers related to your strengths, skills and talents.

Grover Cleveland will be hosting a College Fair October 11, 2011. Come and explore the different colleges and opportunities available to students.

Grover Cleveland High Schools College Night

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

6:00-8:30pm

Schools Cafeteria

Freshman College Quiz:

Are you ready to go to college?



Lets be honest– getting into the college of your dreams takes hard work and self-discipline. Do you think you know how to get there? Test your knowledge by taking this college prep quiz.

1. **True or False:** Anyone can get into a public university, but it’s hard to get into a private college?
2. **True or False:** High school dropouts are four times more likely than college graduates to be unemployed.
3. **True or False:** Colleges want to help students get financial aid.
4. **True or False:** I will have a better chance of getting into law or med school if you go to a university that offers those graduate programs.
5. **True or False:** My high school grades are more important than my standardized test (PSAT, ACT, &SAT) scores.
6. **True or False:** The best time to visit colleges is before I have been admitted.
7. **True or False:** Colleges require you to take tow or more years of natural science classes (earth science, biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)
8. **True or False:** I’m not a straight “A” student, so I won’t get aid.
9. **True or False:** If my parents saved for college, we can still qualify for aid.
10. **True or False:** It’s better to take challenging courses than get good grades.

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1. False: Some public universities are among the most competitive to get into, while other public universities are required to take nearly all applicants. It’s true that some private colleges are very selective, but others take students who wouldn’t even be admitted to a home state public university.
 2. True: the gap between people with and without high school and college degrees continues to widen.
 3. True: The job of a college’s financial aid officer is to make it possible for all admitted students to attend their college while staying within the federal guidelines.
 4. False: Very few universities give their students special preference for graduate study, and those that do reserve it for only the very best students.
 5. True: Colleges know that your performance in high school is a better predictor of college success than the standardized tests. That does not mean that most colleges will ignore your test scores.
 6. True: Many students find that none of the colleges to which they were admitted felt right when they visited. If possible, visit before you apply and again after you have been admitted.
 7. True: All colleges require two or more years of natural science classes. That said, you should try to take more science classes in high school if you’re thinking about majoring in a related field.
 8. It’s true that many scholarships reward merit, but the vast majority of federal aid is based on financial need and does not even consider grades.
 9. True: Savings for college is almost always a good idea. Since a lot of financial aid comes in the form of loans, the aid you are likely to receive will need to be repaid.
 10. True: When you have even some success in advanced or accelerated courses, it indicates to a college that you can handle challenging courses like those you will find in college.