

9th—10th Grade College Planning and Resources

9th Grade

In ninth grade accountability is emphasized. What AP courses will you take?

Build a Strong Academic Base

Continue to improve your academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses. Study hard. Increase your reading; reading widely will improve verbal skills and vocabulary that will enhance standardized tests scores. Read different types of literature, science fiction, biography, newspaper, and scientific articles.

Get Involved in Activities

Explore clubs and sports at your school and community service opportunities. Find a couple of activities that interest you and get involved. Opportunities to travel and explore other cultures are invaluable. For future reference, begin a “resume” of the things you have done including notable accomplishments prior to 9th grade. Add job experience, community service, awards, etc. throughout high school.

Manage Your Time

Some activities, such as sports teams and volunteering may require up to ten or more hours a week. Others, such as academic clubs or different volunteer activities, may require only a couple of hours a week. Manage your time so that you achieve a balance between academics and other commitments.

10th Grade

Build a Strong Academic Base

Continue to improve your academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses. Study hard. Increase your reading; reading widely will improve verbal skills and vocabulary that will enhance standardized tests scores. Read different types of literature, science fiction, biography, newspaper, and scientific articles.

Stay Involved in Activities

Stay involved in activities that interest you. Keep exploring until you find something you like. Remember that your level of involvement and accomplishment is important to your personal development. Try being in a lead position in a sport or other activity. Update your résumé as you go.

Start Researching Colleges

College representative visit the ICS library at lunch to present their programs. Attend at least six. Try to attend college fairs in the area. For more information and schedules on the major fairs, see www.nacac.com/fairs.html. Watch the school web site and calendar for events. You can also call the admissions offices of local colleges about upcoming events.

Take PSAT for Practice

Take the PSAT for practice in October. The PSAT is a preliminary test that will prepare you for the SAT I. You will take it “for real” in October of eleventh grade. You will register in advance for the PSAT. Sign up at lunch when it is available at the end of September or early October.

Think about the SAT or ACT

Look for books and other materials on preparing and practicing for the SAT or ACT. You no longer have the choice of selecting which score to submit with your college applications; all scores are submitted by the College Board.

11th Grade

Build a Strong Academic Base

Continue to improve your academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses. Study hard. Increase your reading; reading widely will improve verbal skills and vocabulary that will enhance standardized tests scores. Read different types of literature, science fiction, biography, newspaper, and scientific articles.

September-October

Take the PSAT in October. Register in advance for the PSAT. Sign up at lunch when it is available at the end of September or early October. Continue to attend the college visitation in the library at lunch.

January

Consult Mrs. Comeau for results of the PSAT. Read the materials sent with your score report. Register for the spring SAT or ACT.

April

Consider which subject matter tests to take (SAT II, AP). If you expect to apply to more selective colleges, you'll need to take SAT II and/or Advanced Placement tests. The best time to take these is at the end of the school year in which you're taking the corresponding class. Prior to April, register for the June SAT II subject tests; early registration is recommended for the best selection of testing sites. SAT IIs are one-hour exams testing you on academic subjects that you will have completed. Many colleges require three SAT II subject tests. Typically, one of these is required to be the writing test; usually, the other two can be of your choosing, although some colleges recommend or require Math IC or Math IIC. Not all SAT II tests are given on every test date. Check the calendar to determine when the tests you want are offered. Talk to Mrs. Comeau.

May

Plan your summer wisely. Consider taking a summer course or participating in a program (e.g., for prospective engineers, journalists, or artists) at a local college. Consider working or volunteering.

June

Take the SAT II subject test(s) for which you registered, although you can generally choose to take a different SAT II subject test than registered. "Score choice" is no longer available for SAT II subject tests. All of your SAT I and SAT II tests will be submitted to your colleges.

July-August

Continue reading a wide variety. Volunteer. Finalize your resume. Work on college essays. Decide whether you will retake the SAT I or II. If so, sign up for first test session. Finalize the list of colleges to which you will apply. Make a list of the deadlines that you will need to track. Make a folder for each college labeling the front with the deadlines.

12th Grade

Build a Strong Academic Base

Continue to improve your academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses. Study hard. Increase your reading; reading widely will improve verbal skills and vocabulary that will enhance standardized tests scores. Read different types of literature, science fiction, biography, newspaper, and scientific articles.

September—October

Make an appointment with Mrs. Comeau to complete your BB

Start Your College Applications/Work on Essays

Use your resume of extracurricular activities, community service, work experience, and special interests to reference as you write your essays. Get feedback from your peers on your essays. You may want to solicit feedback from other adults and/or teachers.

Arrange College Interviews

Interviews are often required and highly recommended. See the section on interviewing in the Contacting Colleges section of this notebook.

Ask for Letters of Recommendation

If your applications require them, ask for letters of recommendation from your teachers, counselor, employers, and others. These letters should show your interests and skills. Always thank them for their efforts. Give each adult at least one month to complete their letter.

Request Transcripts and Complete Online Applications

Use Lili's sign-up notepad to request printed transcripts. Use the Common Application computer system to invite Mrs. Comeau and other adults who are recommending you to submit their letters electronically.

Search and Apply for Scholarships

November—January

November 16, 2011 is the final day to ask for letters of recommendation from ICS staff.

Submit Applications

Submit each application two weeks before its deadline. Make a copy of everything you send.

Complete FAFSA

Confirm with each college that *all* applications pieces have been received.

March—April

Wait for college offers

Offers usually arrive by early April. Find out if you can visit the colleges that accepted you. They will often encourage overnight dorm stays for accepted students. In some cases they have funds to assist with transportation.

Review Financial Aid Packages

FA offers arrive soon after the acceptance letters. Compare and contrast the offers and determine the actual costs of attending each college. If you have questions, call the college's FA office. Sometimes colleges can adjust the amount of aid.

May

Make Your College Decision

By May 1 notify the colleges of your decision to accept or reject their offers. You cannot accept more than one offer.

“Wait Listed?”

If you are placed on the wait list of a school that you prefer, you may accept at another college and remain on your preferred school's wait list. The college will notify you during the summer of your status. Then you must decide which school to accept. Being on a college's wait list does not obligate you to attend if they decide to admit you.

June

Enjoy Graduation