

**Guide  
for the  
Parents  
of  
Collegiate  
High School  
Students**

<http://www.nwcollegiatehigh.org/documents/Parents-College-Bound-Students.pdf>

From the Student Services Department  
Collegiate High School  
NWFS

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## **COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL at NWFSC STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Collegiate High School at NWFSC is to provide academic and technical education for serious high school students who desire to undertake college-level study. The three-year curriculum will enable students to complete a high school diploma and an associate degree, simultaneously, in either academic transfer or technical education options. The high school will be distinguished by an application of varied instructional delivery and learning styles, a culture promoting the joy and value of reading, a technology-across-the-curriculum approach and incorporation of an integrated, academic seminar series at each grade level.

### **Educational Principles**

Five essential educational principles provide the foundation on which the Collegiate High School is based:

- ◆ Students should develop the capacity to think critically, solve problems, and communicate effectively through mastery of academic courses with emphasis on language and mathematics
- ◆ Students should learn about themselves, their heritage, and the interdependent world through academic courses
- ◆ Students should prepare for further education and work through elective academic and technical courses
- ◆ Students should learn to fulfill their civic obligations through school and community service.
- ◆ Students should experience the joy and value of reading to enhance their ability to be independent learners, critical thinkers, lovers of language, and life-long learners.

# **Part I**

## **The Academic Record**

*Part I provides general information and brief explanations of the terms you need to know.*

### **Admissions Criteria**

Universities and colleges will use some, if not all, of the information listed below when determining whether or not to accept an applicant. Individual colleges, however, will differ in how they evaluate this information. For example, one college may place a great deal of importance on test scores; another college may not.

1. Grade point average (GPA)
2. Class rank
3. Strength of courses
4. ACT / SAT scores
5. Senior Project
6. Recommendations
7. Activities / awards
8. Personal essays
9. Interviews

## **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Even though individual colleges use their own criteria when evaluating prospective students, colleges generally consider a student's GPA to be the most important criteria for college admissions.

GPA is simply the average of a student's semester grades, starting with the freshman year (eighth grade courses count if they accrued high school credits). The Collegiate High School uses a 4.00 scale in which an A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1. If a student has all A's, he/she has a 4.00 GPA.

Most college and scholarship applications ask that a student's GPA be included on the application form and/or transcript. Because students generally complete college applications in the summer or fall of their senior year, students' GPAs at the end of their junior year are very important.

Some schools have "weighted grades" for honors, dual enrollment, ACIE and/or AP (advanced placement) courses. If a college weights grades, the grade in a weighted course is worth more than a non-weighted course. For example, an A in an honors course might be worth 5 points instead of the usual 4, a B worth 4 points instead of 3, etc.

There is no uniform system of weighting courses in Florida. Some districts weight some courses and others weight none. Weighting is most useful for determining class rank within a school, but is of little reliability outside the individual school. Colleges, universities and Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program calculates grade point averages according to their own weighting values.

A variety of methods are used to determine GPA. Regardless of the method used, the higher the grades, the higher the GPA, and the higher the GPA, the greater the college and scholarship opportunities.

## **Class Rank**

Students' class rank is based on what their GPA is in relation to the other members of their graduating class. The rank includes all high school and college courses earned while attending high school. The student who has the highest GPA is number one in the class; students with the same GPA will be given the same class rank (all students with 4.00 will be listed as number 1).

Class rank is often presented with the student's place in the class followed by the total number of students in the class (e.g., 53/98). Because many scholarships stipulate that a student must be in the top 10% (or 20%, 25%, etc.) of his/her class, class rank can be very important for students who are applying for scholarships.

At the Collegiate High School and NWFSC we do not rank student for the purpose of graduation honors. Students with a GPA of 4.00 are considered Highest Honor Graduates, 3.8 to 4.00 High Honor Graduates, 3.5 to 3.8 Honors Graduates and those less than 3.5 are considered Graduates.

## Student Transcript

A transcript is a document that details a student's academic achievement in high school. All high school transcripts contain the following information:

1. Courses, grades, and credits for each grade
2. Current cumulative GPA and class rank
3. Test scores for FCAT
4. SAT and ACT if the student directs them to be sent to the high school (101608)

A transcript provides admissions and scholarship committees with important objective data. All colleges, and most scholarship programs, will request that an official transcript be submitted along with the application. To be official, a transcript must have a signature, stamp, or seal verifying its authenticity. In order to have an official high school and college transcript sent to a college or for scholarships, a green transcript request form obtained in CHS student services or the CHS main office, must be completed and turned in to Mr. Schrader or Mrs. Caudill. Both high school and college transcripts will be sent. It may take up to 7 days to be processed and to be mailed, so it is important to request the transcript well in advance of the deadlines. There is no charge to have a transcript sent from the Collegiate High School or Northwest Florida State College. A student may request official copies in "sealed envelopes" by completing a green transcript request form and by writing *official copy in sealed envelope and whom they are for* on the request form on the lines for where they are to be sent.

An unofficial transcript is exactly the same as an official transcript except that there is no signature, stamp or seal. Students and parents can obtain an unofficial transcript for their personal use (e.g., to take with them on a college visit) by requesting them in CHS Student Services, going to FACTS.org or Raider Net. Students should not request transcripts from the NWFSC Registrars Office, but rather from the CHS office.

## **School Profile**

Some high schools have a school profile that they send with every transcript. The Collegiate High School will send a school profile if requested. A school profile is a one to two page document that includes pertinent information on the school and the community. It generally includes information on the size of the school, the percentage of students who go on to college, the average ACT and SAT scores of the previous graduating class, and information on how GPA is calculated.

While the transcript provides colleges and/or scholarship committees with information on the student, the school profile provides information on the high school the student is attending. The collegiate high school web site [www.nwcollegiatehigh.org](http://www.nwcollegiatehigh.org) contains more information about the school under the “documents” link.

## **College Recommended Courses**

Students need to be academically prepared for admission to a university and to a college program within a university; universities recommend that students complete all prerequisite courses in order to be accepted into the college with their major. Some colleges/programs have requirements beyond core courses that are needed to be accepted. Student Services in C building is where a student goes to get a Program of Study which indicates which courses are required for a major. Students should have a program of study so they know what is required by the university for transfer. It is important to note that competitive schools and/or programs require the student to complete all the prerequisite courses in order to be accepted into their school. For some majors, courses may need to be completed at NWFSC after graduation from high school and before transferring to a university. In the State of Florida if a student earns an AA Degree they are guaranteed admission into a State University in Florida.

## **The Comprehensive Graduation Plan**

The Comprehensive Graduation Plan (CGP) is an overall plan for the high school and college classes the student is to take while at Collegiate High School at NWFSC. It shows the sequence of classes and the semesters they are scheduled to be taken to earn a High School Diploma and the AA or AS degree. The CGP may be revised as academic circumstances change to meet a student's individual unique needs. All students are encouraged to meet with a CHS advisor and build a CGP when they first start school at the Collegiate High School. Any time they make changes to their academic plan, the CGP should be adjusted to show the changes. The College Program of Study developed by the NWFSC advisors and the student/parent is the basis for developing the plan to meet college degree requirements and prerequisites for college admissions.

## **College Majors**

Students who know what they want to major in upon leaving CHS should work with high school and college advisors to choose their courses. Students who do not know what they want to major in should visit the Career Resource Center at NWFSC in C Building. The center can help students recognize what their strengths are and which careers they would be best suited for. Students who attend the Collegiate High School and have not decided on a major should use their junior year to take the core courses that are required for all AA degrees. This gives them time to consider their options and to decide on a major. Students will find that most college majors require some courses which will need to be taken during the senior year.

Students must visit an educational advisor to determine what courses are required for a particular major. Students must get a new Program of Study from a college advisor when deciding to change majors or colleges/universities.

FACTS.org is an excellent web site which can help a student decide on what they would like to major in for college and what colleges and universities offer those majors. Students are encouraged to check the required course work for a major so they know what is expected for a given major. Not all majors are the same, and some require a great deal more prerequisite courses than others.

## College Testing

**PSAT/NMSQT** (*Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test*) – a practice test for the SAT that is also used to determine National Merit Semifinalists. The PSAT/NMSQT is given in October on a Wednesday to juniors at CHS. The Florida Department of Education provides for sophomores to take the PSAT at no cost to the student for experience and as a predictor of future PSAT performance. Sophomore scores do not count toward NMSQT qualification.

**SAT I** (*Scholastic Assessment Test*) – a college entrance examination by the College Board generally taken during the junior and/or fall of the senior year. Students receive a Verbal, Math and Writing score. It is used to qualify for Bright Futures Scholarships. Register on-line at least one month prior to the test date. Students may take the SAT multiple times to attempt to improve their scores.

**ACT** (*American College Test*) - a college entrance examination generally taken during the junior and/or fall of the senior year. Students receive a English, Reading, Math, Science Reasoning, and Writing, as well as a Composite score. It is used to qualify for Bright Futures Scholarships. Register on-line at least one month prior to the test date. Students may take the SAT multiple times to attempt to improve their scores.

**SAT II: Subject Tests** – one-hour tests that measure a student's knowledge in specific subject areas. These tests are required by some colleges and majors. Register on-line at least one month prior to the test date.

*See pages 13-15 for more information.*

## Requirements for Athletes

Colleges belong to leagues that have their own rules, regulations, and eligibility requirements. Basic eligibility guidelines for the NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA leagues are outlined below. For additional information, visit their Web sites.

**NCAA** – (977 member colleges – 318 Division I, 264 Division II, 395 Division III) – Division I and II colleges can offer athletic scholarships; Division III Colleges (mostly smaller, private schools) cannot. Before an athlete can play a sport or receive a scholarship at a Division I or II college, he/she must meet NCAA's academic requirements.

An athlete wanting to go to a Division I college must have a 2.0 GPA in 13 core courses and the required SAT or ACT score. ACT/SAT requirements for Division I eligibility are based on a sliding scale, the higher the core GPA, the lower the test score required.

Athletes should meet with their counselors as early as possible to discuss NCAA requirements and to make sure that they're taking the right courses. In the spring of their junior year, athletes should take the ACT and the SAT. They should also go to the NCAA Clearinghouse Web site [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) and complete a NCAA Clearinghouse Student Release Form at the end of their junior year.

**NAIA** – (over 300 colleges) - NAIA colleges can award full or partial scholarships. To play a sport or receive an athletic scholarship, an athlete must meet 2 of the following 3 NAIA requirements: 1) have an ACT composite score of 18 or an 860 on the SAT, 2) have an overall 2.00 GPA, 3) graduate in the top half of his/her class. More information can be found at [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org).

**NJCAA** – (500 junior colleges) – NJCAA Division I and II colleges can offer scholarships; Division III colleges cannot. There are no academic eligibility requirements for athletes entering junior colleges. More information can be found at [www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org).

CHS students who participate in extracurricular activities at their zoned school must work closely with Collegiate High School Student Services staff for assistance in completing requirements for scholarships and appropriate NCAA, NAIA or NJAA eligibility.

## **Sources of Information**

Student Lead Conferences	Grade Reports
Collegiate High Web-site	Progress Reports
College Web-site	Teacher Ease
Raider-net	Academic Success Center
FACTS.org	Math Lab
College email	Academic Success Keys
Course Syllabus	Open Access Computer Labs
CHIPS	Smart-Thinking
Directors Notes	Ask-a-Librarian
News Letters Home	Ask-a-Tutor

## **Student Led Conferences**

Student led conferences are held every year at the Collegiate High School. Parent attendance is essential, since the students will be discussing their academic progress with parents. The concept behind student led conferences is to encourage students to accept personal responsibility for their academic performance and to reinforce the process of self-evaluation

## **Collegiate High School Participation Agreement**

As an element of the admissions process, each parent and student of the Collegiate High School must sign an agreement committing their adherence to the following principles of participation.

The Collegiate High School at Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) exists for the purpose of educating students in a rigorous academic environment. We are pleased that you have made this academic choice and encourage your participation to the fullest in this educational experience. To assure understanding of policies and procedures regarding conduct, curriculum, and communication you are asked to read the following and indicate your understanding and acceptance.

1. I understand that as a Collegiate High School at NWFSC Student (Dual Enrollment/Collegiate or Pre-collegiate) I will be enrolled for some or all of my classes in college credit courses and that the depth, breadth, rigor and pace of these courses will be at the college level.
2. I understand that Collegiate High School students in college level courses are subject to the same standards, policies, and responsibilities as other college students unless otherwise restricted by federal, state or local requirements.
3. I understand that curriculum content, evaluation, and selection of appropriate instructional materials are the prerogative of the college instructor and will not differ for dually enrolled Collegiate High School students from that presented for traditional college students.
4. I understand that NWFSC is an open campus and that I will be attending classes with non-high school aged students and that I may encounter students of a variety of ages and backgrounds while on the NWFSC Campus.
5. I understand that the Collegiate High School Director is the first point of contact for parents who wish to discuss academic progress in a course, schedule a conference, or request information about school or classroom activities.

6. I understand that attendance at an orientation session is required for each new student.
7. I understand that attendance at an orientation session is required for the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each new student.
8. I understand that, if selected for admission to the Collegiate High School, I must agree to abide by all Collegiate High School at NWFSC policies and procedures including but not limited to the Student Code of Conduct, Pupil Progression Plan, attendance policies and discipline policies, as well as to applicable college policies.
9. I understand that completion of high school graduation requirements does not guarantee completion of an AA or AS degree. To receive an AA or AS degree, I understand that a student must meet all program requirements identified in the NWFSC College Catalog at the time of the student's initial admission.
10. I understand that I will be expected to sign an agreement outlining my responsibility for all instructional materials, textbooks, and equipment issued to me.
11. I agree to attend school regularly (see that my child attends regularly) and understand that I must be present for at least 1500 minutes of instructional time each week. This requirement will be fulfilled through a combination of instructional activities in college classes, high school classes and the learning labs.
12. I understand that registering my daily attendance at school in accordance with my official Collegiate High School schedule is my responsibility and that I may be counted absent if I fail to register my attendance daily in accordance with the prescribed attendance plan. Official daily attendance is recorded when I swipe my Student ID card upon arriving and leaving campus. If the Student ID card is unavailable attendance must be registered manually through the front office. The ID card must be replaced at my cost within one week after the first failure to use the automated system.

13. I understand participation in an Academic Seminar is required for every student each year and that successful completion of a Capstone Project is the Academic Seminar component required of every senior to meet CHS high school graduation requirements.
  
14. I understand that while the mission and purpose of the Collegiate High School is to provide accelerated instruction and college level curriculum to motivated students, that if my overall grade point average falls below 2.0 or if I fail to make adequate progress on the path to graduating from high school on time, I will be enrolled in courses for high school credit only or college classes to achieve grade forgiveness in order to improve my GPA and my progress toward the high school diploma.

## **Part II**

### **How to Get Good Grades in College**

*Part II will provide you with the information you need to guide and advise your student on what to expect in college and how to make good grades in college.*

### **What to Expect in College**

In most instances, people experience greater success when they know what to expect. In college courses expect the following:

#### **Varying Class Sizes**

Class sizes vary, depending on the course. While most classes have fewer than 30 students, college classes can have anywhere from 15 to 200+ students.

#### **The Need for Critical thinking Skills**

In college, you have a great deal of reading to do, and you are expected to understand and remember what you read. You are also expected to be able to draw conclusions, form opinions, and evaluate the ideas of others.

#### **More Emphasis on Tests and Less Busywork**

While instructors assign work to be done outside of class, home-work grades often account for only a small portion of a student's end of the term grade. In many cases, the midterm and the final exam will make up the majority of a student's grade.

#### **The Need for Personal Responsibility**

In college, you have a tremendous amount of freedom. No one monitors your progress, no one checks to see if you are going to class, and no one knows whether or not you are doing your assignments. You are responsible for your own academic progress.

### Consequences for Low Grades

All colleges have academic standards that students must meet in order to stay enrolled. Students who let their grades fall below a 2.00 will be put on academic probation. The student must then bring their grades up by the end of the following term, or they will be withdrawn from the school.

### Less Time in Class and More Emphasis on Independent Study

You are expected to do most of your learning on your own. For every hour you spend in class, you should plan to spend two hours out of class reading, studying, and completing assignments.

# **Ten Steps to Getting Good Grades in College**

## **1. Attend Every Class**

If you want to get good grades in college, you must attend every class – not almost every class, every class.

## **2. Be Organized**

- a. Use a daily planner or your computer
- b. Use a three-ring binder for notes
- c. Organize and save computer work
- d. Keep returned paper, quizzes, and test
- e. Get contact information for classmates and professors
- f. Maintain a neat and organized study space

## **3. Manage Your Time Well**

- a. Don't overextend yourself
- b. Be organized
- c. Use large wall calendar for major events
- d. Schedule 90-minute study blocks
- e. Make efficient use of your time
- f. Make To Do Lists and prioritize items

## **4. Be Successful in Class**

- a. Learn how to adapt to different instructors
- b. Be prepared for each class
- c. Sit in the front of the class whenever possible
- d. Be a good group member
- e. Be on time for class
- f. Participate in class
- g. Communicate with your instructors

## **5. Take Good Notes**

- a. Be an Active Listener
- b. Take notes to help you pay attention
- c. Recognize important information
- d. Take notes that are easy to read
- e. Go over your notes as soon as possible
- f. Get lecture notes if you miss a class

## **6. Know How to Read a Textbook**

- a. Scan – quick overview of the material that you are going to be reading
- b. Read – Give your reading purpose, ask yourself why are you reading each section, turn the bold faced subtitles into questions
- c. Review – Go back and review what you just read in order to lock the material in to your brain and to check your comprehension

## **7. Study Smart**

- a. Find a good place to study
- b. Get started, don't put it off until later
- c. Know your learning style
- d. Organize your study time
- e. Know how to study for tests
  - i. What the test is going to cover
  - ii. Essay tests, understand the big picture
  - iii. Pay close attention the class before a test
  - iv. Know everything on a study guide or build your own study guide if you do not have one
  - v. Have all required reading done ahead of time
  - vi. Do the textbook chapter reviews
  - vii. Know material well enough to teach it
  - viii. Go over old test and quizzes
  - ix. Use index card to study with

- f. Know how to memorize and remember information
  - i. Use flashcards to memorize terms, facts, formulas, and lists
  - ii. Write down what you want to memorize
  - iii. Use as many senses as possible
  - iv. Group or categorize information
  - v. Look over information that you want to remember before you go to sleep
  - vi. Use acronyms
  - vii. Make up silly sentences from the first letters of words to remember
  - viii. Make logical or simple connections
  - ix. Use visual images to help trigger memory
  - x. Understand material to be memorized
  - xi. Review often
- g. Know how to use your computer
- h. Use tricks when making a presentation or speech
  - i. Use props (posters, books, pictures, Power Point, etc.)
  - ii. Pretend you have something really important to say
  - iii. Make eye contact with your audience
- i. Know how to write a paper
  - i. Make sure that your paper fulfills the assignment
  - ii. Strong opening paragraph
  - iii. Clear, concise sentences
  - iv. Strong closing paragraph that restates or summarizes the main idea
  - v. Do not plagiarize
  - vi. Check for spelling and grammatical errors
  - vii. Turn your paper in on time

## 8. Use Test-Taking Strategies

- a. Have the materials you need for the test
- b. Develop a plan
- c. Mark the questions you want to return to
- d. Increase your odds on multiple-choice questions
  - i. Think of an answer before you read the answers
  - ii. Read all choices
  - iii. Cross out choices you know are wrong
  - iv. Two similar or opposites are usually the choice
- e. Know how to approach essay questions
  - i. Read all questions and start with the easiest
  - ii. Brainstorm then write
  - iii. Write legibly, be clear, concise, and use complete sentences; reread your answer
  - iv. If you don't know the answer write down what you do know
- f. Look for key words in true/false questions
  - i. All, always, never, every, none – false
  - ii. Usually, often, sometimes, most, many – true
- g. Be prepared for open book tests
  - i. Use self-stick notes to mark specific information
  - ii. Highlight most important information in notes
  - iii. Write down all important information on one page
- h. Improve your math test scores
  - i. Write down the formulas, equation, etc before starting test
  - ii. Estimate the answer before you start
  - iii. Draw a picture or diagram if you are having trouble with a problem
  - iv. Don't spend too much time on a problem, come back to it later if time permits
  - v. Show all your work

- i. Check your answers
- j. Go over all returned tests

9. **Reduce Test Anxiety**

- a. Start to study early
- b. Mentally practice going through the test confidently
- c. Walk into the test with a positive attitude
- d. Use relaxation techniques before the test
  - i. Take a deep breath, slowly release your breath along with the tension
  - ii. Start at the top of your head, flexing, and then relaxing each part of your body to your toes
  - iii. Close your eyes and visualize warm sunshine melting away the tension and relaxing all your muscles
  - iv. Close your eyes and visualize being in a place where you feel very relaxed and calm

10. **Use Available Services**

- a. Collegiate High School Learning Labs (STAR & RATS)
- b. Tutors
- c. Study Groups
- d. Academic Success Center (ASC)
- e. Math Lab
- f. CHS instructors
- g. NWFSC instructors
- h. Smart Thinking

## **Part III**

### **High School/College – Year by Year**

*Part III will provide you with the information you need to guide and advise your student at each grade level. Whenever you have a question, call your students counselor.*

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

#### **Getting Ready for High School**

As a general rule, the grades received in eighth grade are not used in computing a student's GPA, nor do they appear on a student's high school transcript. Sometimes when an advanced course, like Algebra, Science, Language, is taken in the eighth grade, credit is earned, and the grades for those courses are included in the student's GPA. The eighth grade is nevertheless an important year for the reasons listed below.

1. Even though the grades that are earned in the eighth grade usually do not officially "count," they are often used to determine placement in ninth grade courses.
2. Students who have developed good study skills in middle school are much better prepared for high school. Students need to become engaged and knowledgeable.
3. Eighth grade students generally select their freshman courses in the spring. Since all freshman courses and grades become part of a student's high school record, freshman courses need to be chosen very carefully. Help your student choose appropriate freshman courses. Then help him/her develop a four-year school plan.
4. College and scholarship committees like to see students who are well-rounded and active. See the CHS handbook and college catalog for a list of high school and college activities. With this in mind, help your student identify some specific high school or community based activities that he/she might enjoy.

## **9<sup>th</sup> Grade**

### **How to Guide and Advise Your HS Freshman**

*When a student becomes a freshman, everything starts to “count.” Freshman courses, grades, and credits all become part of a student’s transcript, and freshman grades are used in determining a student’s GPA. Freshman activities, honors, and awards can also be listed on college and scholarship applications.*

#### **1. Monitor academic progress.**

Sit down with your student at the beginning of each grading period and help him/her set realistic academic goals for that term. Throughout the year, make sure that you see all progress reports and report cards. Do not assume that someone will contact you if there is a problem. Provide encouragement and support, and make sure that your student understands that freshman grades are very important.

#### **2. Encourage your student to become involved in a wide variety of activities.**

Most college and scholarship applications ask students to list their high school activities. Many applications also ask for evidence of leadership. Students should be involved in a variety of activities and, whenever possible, they should take a leadership role (e.g., become an officer of a club or a squad leader in the band). Depth of involvement (e.g., being on the debate team or the soccer team for four years) is also important because it shows focus and commitment. Encourage your student to also participate in activities outside of school (e.g., church, scouting), and if possible, to do some volunteer work. Community service is very worthwhile, and it’s impressive on any application. 75 community service hours are required for the Florida Academic Scholars Award (FAS) Bright Futures Scholarship.

*TIP: During your student’s freshman year, start keeping a record of his/her “Activities and Awards.” Include information on all school and community activities, honors, leadership positions, employment, and volunteer work. Community service forms can be found on the Collegiate High School Web site. Be sure to update this file. (This information will be very helpful later when your student is required to list activities and honors on college and scholarship applications.)*

**3. Select appropriate 10<sup>th</sup> grade courses.**

In the spring, review your students four-year high school plan, and meet with a Collegiate High School counselor to register for the fall courses to be taken during his/her sophomore year.

**4. Help your student plan meaningful summer activities.**

A number of colleges have excellent summer programs for high school students. Many of the more traditional summer activities can also be very worthwhile. Your student could, join an athletic team, take a course, perfect a skill, develop a hobby, read, and/or do volunteer work at a hospital, nursing home, homeless shelter, blood bank, etc.

**5. If you haven't done so yet, start a college savings account.**

## **10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

### **How to Guide and Advise Your HS Sophomore**

*The sophomore year should be a year of personal growth. In addition to working hard in school and being involved in a variety of activities, sophomores need to try to identify their personal abilities, aptitudes, and interests. They should also be looking for ways to further develop their knowledge, talents and skills.*

*The sophomore year at the Collegiate High School is a very intense, focused experience designed to prepare students for college. Students should be prepared to work very hard during this first year at the Collegiate High School.*

- 1. Sign Participation Agreement.**
- 2. Continue to monitor academic progress.**
- 3. “Homework” is very important to success in school both for earning points, practice and understanding.**
- 4. Continue to encourage your student to be involved in activities and to develop leadership skills.**
- 5. Have your student take the PSAT/NMSQT.**

The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test that’s administered by high schools in October. Although the PSAT/NMSQT is a test primarily for juniors, many sophomores take it for practice. This test is free for sophomores in Florida.

- 6. Start to explore and discuss college options.**

Gather information, go to college fairs, and make informal visits to colleges. Discuss your student’s aptitudes, interests, and abilities with them, and begin to view these in terms of possible college majors and/or career options. Have your student go to the NWFSC Student Services and design a program of study (POS) for the college and major they are interested in. It is best if the parent goes with the student to this meeting.

- 7. Develop a Comprehensive Graduation Plan (CGP).**

Develop a four-year high school and college AA plan with an advisor, and make sure that he/she selects the most appropriate courses using the POS. The CGP will be used during registration to select courses for the fall of the junior year.

**8. Plan summer activities.**

Help your student choose meaningful activities for the summer months. If possible, look for activities that relate to a career or career field he/she is considering.

- 9. At the end of the year, update the “Activities and Awards” file you have started in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.**
- 10. Continue to put money into your college savings account.**

## **11<sup>th</sup> Grade High School – Freshman in College**

### **How to Guide and Advise Your**

### **HS Junior/College Freshman**

*The junior/freshman year is when students should seriously begin examining their post-secondary options. Juniors should also take college tests, make college visits, and start searching for scholarships.*

#### **1. Sign Participation Agreement.**

#### **2. Continue to monitor academic progress.**

Since most college applications are completed in the summer and fall of a student's senior year, the last grades on a student's transcript are usually during the spring semester of the junior/freshman year. Junior/freshman year grades are, therefore, very important; they count on the high school transcript as well as the college transcript. Make sure your student understands the importance of earning good grades in his/her junior/freshman year. Encourage your student to talk to their instructors. It is important for the instructor to know who they are.

#### **3. Continue to encourage your student to be involved in activities and to develop leadership skills.**

#### **4. Make sure that your student registers for the PSAT/NMSQT in August.**

The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test that's administered by high schools in October. The PSAT/NMSQT is divided into five sections (two Verbal, two Math, and one Writing). College bound juniors should take the PSAT/NMSQT for the following reasons: 1) It's a good practice test for the SAT and helps them become familiar with what to expect when they take the SAT later. 2) Students can see how their academic skills compare to those of college bound students across the country. 3) Students whose scores are exceptionally high are recognized by the National Merit Foundation. This recognition can lead to scholarships.

When a student registers for the PSAT/NMSQT, he/she is given a "Student Bulletin." This publication contains valuable test-taking tips and a practice test. Students who read the bulletin and take the practice test are better prepared for the PSAT, and they get higher scores.

The results of the PSAT are available in mid-to-late December. Students receive a Verbal, a Math, and a Writing score, with each score ranging between 20 and 80. (The average score for each section is approximately 49) For National Merit purposes, the three scores are added together to determine the Selection Index. Juniors with Selection Index scores in the top five percent are recognized by the National Merit; juniors who have Selection Index scores in the upper one half of one percent become National Merit Semi-Finalists. (NMSQT scores above 210 are usually very good)

*TIP: The PSAT/NMSQT penalizes students for guessing by subtracting a fraction of a point for every incorrect response. If a student has no idea of what the correct response is, he/she should leave the answer blank. If a student can eliminate one or more answer choices, he/she should make an "educated guess."*

## **5. Talk about college options.**

Early in the selection process, determine what is important to you and to your son or daughter. Are you looking for a college close to home? Do you want a small college or a large college? Things to consider when looking for a college: Location, Size, Cost, Facilities, Available majors, Reputation, Competitiveness, Community.

Once you've determined what you're looking for in a college, you can begin to search for the colleges that meet your criteria. FACTS.org is an excellent Web site designed to help students find information about colleges in Florida. All colleges have their own Web sites which can provide a wealth of information about what they have to offer.

*TIP: Early in the college selection process, have a frank discussion with your student with regards to the amount of money you are able and/or willing to contribute to his/her education.*

*TIP: Once you have identified a college that you would like to investigate further, call the admissions office and ask to be placed on their mailing list. You will receive information on visitation days and upcoming events.*

## 6. Have your student register for the ACT and/or the SAT early in the spring

Almost all four-year colleges require scores for either the ACT or the SATI. Colleges generally accept scores from either test; however, to determine if a college prefers the ACT or the SAT, check the college's catalog or Web site. Students who apply to a competitive program should take both tests. Students who are applying for scholarships should also take both tests.

The ACT or the SATI are required in order to qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. To qualify for the Florida Academic Scholars Award a student must score a 28 (Composite) or more on the ACT or 1270 (Reading and Math combined) or more on the SATI. Florida Medallion Scholars Award requires a minimum score of 20 (Composite) on the ACT or 970 (Reading and Math combined) on the SATI.

Students may retake the ACT and SAT as many times as they want. For admissions and scholarship purposes, colleges will generally use a student's highest score. ACT reports that 80% of the students who retake the ACT score the same or higher. It is important for students to take the ACT and/or SATI by the spring of the junior year so that they will have time to retake them during the senior year if necessary.

### a. How do you sign up for the ACT and the SAT?

Students can register for the ACT at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) and the SATI at [www.collegeboard.com/sat-register](http://www.collegeboard.com/sat-register). Since registration deadlines are four to five weeks prior to each test date, students should register a couple of months before they plan to take the test.

To register a student will need to know the high school **CEEB code: 101608** for the Collegiate High School.

**b. How is the ACT scored?**

The ACT (No Writing) consists of four multiple-choice tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The ACT Plus Writing includes the four multiple-choice tests and a [Writing Test](#). Your Composite score and each test score (English, Mathematics, Reading, Science) range from 1 (low) to 36 (high). The Composite Score is the average of your four test scores, rounded to the nearest whole number. Fractions less than one-half are rounded down; fractions one-half or more are rounded up. The national average Composite score is 21. Since there is no penalty for guessing, students should answer every question.

**c. How is the SAT scored?**

SAT scores are reported on a scale from 200-800, with additional sub-scores reported for the essay (ranging from 2-12) and for multiple-choice writing questions (on a 20-80 scale). Your scores tell college admissions staff how you did compared with other students who took the test. For example, if you scored close to the mean or average—about 500 on SAT critical reading and 500 on SAT mathematics—admissions staff would know that you scored as well as about half of the students who took the test nationally. Since there is a penalty for guessing, if a student has no idea what the answer is, he/she should leave it blank. If one or more of the answer choices can be eliminated, the student should make an “educated” guess.

**d. Why take the SATII?**

The SATII: Subject Tests are one-hour tests that measure knowledge in a specific subject area (biology, French, world history, etc.). Some selective colleges require or recommend that applicants take one or more of these tests for admission and/or placement. (These colleges will list the SATII as a requirement for admissions.)

## **7. Make college visits.**

*Students are encouraged to make visits at times that they will not miss college class.*

The junior year is an excellent time to make college visits. It is important that students get a real feel of the campus before they decide to go there. To plan a college visit, call the admissions office several weeks ahead of time. Explain that you are the parent of a high school junior and that you are interested in setting up a college visit. You might first ask if they have any “visitation days”, “preview days”, or “open houses” scheduled. These programs are designed specifically for prospective students and their parents. They generally include tours and information sessions on a variety of topics (financial aid, admissions, honors programs, etc.)

## **8. How to make the most of your college visit.**

- a. Prepare for your visit by learning as much as you can about the college. Read their catalog, visit their Web site.
- b. Take a tour, noting the cleanliness, atmosphere, and size of the campus. Also note how the students look and act.
- c. Many colleges now offer group information sessions for parents and students. Attend one of these sessions if possible.
- d. Talk to someone in the department your child’s major is in. Be sure to check out labs and other facilities for that major. Also ask what types of jobs their graduates get and their average starting salaries.
- e. Check to see if the university has an Honors program.
- f. Visit a dorm, and if possible, eat in one of the student cafeterias. Check out which dorms the freshman will be assigned so you know which one to request.
- g. Inquire about any special programs or activities in which you student may be interested (band, co-op, intramural sports, etc.).
- h. Visit the student union and talk to students. Ask them what they think of the school, what they like about it, what they dislike, what they do on weekends, etc.
- i. If you are concerned that your student may have difficulty being accepted, or if there are aspects of his/her academic record that you would like to explain, make an

appointment with an admissions counselor. Take an unofficial transcript with you.

- j. If you are interested in financial assistance, make an appointment with a counselor in the financial aid and /or scholarship office.
- k. Many parents have concerns that relate to 1) the safety of the campus, 2) the ability of students to schedule the classes they need in order to graduate on time. Admissions representatives and tour guides should be able to address these concerns.
- l. Ask what the average GPA and ACT/SAT scores are for their incoming freshmen to see how your student compares academically.
- m. Find out what percentage of their students return after their first year and what percent of the students graduate.
- n. Pick up a campus newspaper.

*TIP: Have your student write a thank you note if he/she had a personal interview or conference.*

*TIP: Start a filing system including notes on contacts made, including names, dates, etc.*

**9. Encourage your student to look for scholarships.**

Although students complete the majority of their scholarship applications during the first half of their senior year, they should start looking at scholarship possibilities during their junior year.

**10. Make sure your student takes Academic Seminar seriously.**

The college research and application assignments required in Academic Seminar class help them prepared for the application process which begins in the summer before their senior year.

**11. Update the “Activities and Awards” file.**

## **12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

### **How to Guide and Advise for Your HS Senior/College Sophomore**

*The senior/sophomore year is when everything comes together. It is also the year in which students see the rewards of the hard work and planning.*

**1. Sign Participation Agreement.**

**2. Continue to monitor academic progress.**

Students may think that their senior grades are not important. They need to realize that they are taking college classes and that these grades will be a part of their college transcript. At the end of the year a final high school and college transcript is sent to the school the student will be attending after graduation; it is important that the students finish with the best grades they are capable of earning.

**3. Help your student set up a calendar for the year.**

Use this calendar to record test dates, application deadlines, college visitation days, etc.

**4. Have your student sign up for the first ACT or SATI if necessary.**

Take a look at your student's previous test scores and determine if he/she needs to retake the ACT or SATI. If students do not do well on the ACT and/or SATI, this does not mean that they will not be accepted into the college of their choice or that they will not do well in college. Check Bright Futures Scholarship requirements to see if the student should take the test and earn a higher score and consequently a higher award.

## 5. Complete college application in August.

Apply electronically on the college Web site or create an account on [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org). FACTS allows students to apply for more than one school and helps fill in information which alleviates the repetitive process of filling out the same information over and over again for each new application. All applications require a high school and college transcript. The student should fill out a transcript request form (green and found in the Collegiate High School Student Services Office) for every college that they apply to.

Parents should do the following:

- a. Make sure the student's portion of the application is completed thoroughly and accurately. Before your student sends the application, be sure to make a copy as a rough draft. Double-check the rough draft to make sure that the information is complete and accurate and that his/her essays are well written. (English instructors are often willing to provide feedback.) Also make sure that all achievements, activities and awards have been included. Make copies of the completed application, date it and save in your files.
- b. Transcript request forms (green) need to be sent at least seven days before the deadline. Forms can be obtained in Collegiate High School Student Services or the front office.
- c. If a recommendation is required, the person being asked to write the recommendation would appreciate a copy of the student's resume. It should indicate your student's interests, talents, leadership skills, activities, awards, and educational plans.

*TIP: Make sure the application is sent well before the deadline.*

*TIP: It is important that your student apply to at least one "safe" college. This is a college to which he/she is sure to be accepted, and one that you can definitely afford.*

*TIP: Students that are absolutely certain of where they want to go to college may want to consider early decision admission. Early decision students agree to enroll if they are accepted, and the colleges they apply to make an early decision on their acceptance.*

*TIP: Many colleges will send an email or postcard to let you know that they have received your student's application. If you do not hear from a college, you may want to call to make sure that they've received the application and that they have all the information they need.*

**6. Complete financial aid and scholarship application forms.**

If you are applying for financial aid, complete the FAFSA and submit it as soon after January 1 as possible. See page 18.

**7. Make the decision.**

At some point in the spring, you and your student must make a choice. Do not choose a college before making a college visit. Once the choice is made, complete the necessary forms and, as a courtesy, notify the other colleges. If your student is planning to live on campus, be sure to send in the required housing deposit before the deadline.

## **Part IV**

### **Money for College**

As a general rule, public colleges are larger and less expensive than private colleges. A student attending a public college or university in a different state, however, will have to pay the out-of-state tuition, which is frequently higher than in-state tuition.

### **Financial Aid Overview**

Financial aid is money that is given, earned, or lent to help students pay for their education. Financial aid often makes it possible for students to attend colleges that would otherwise be too expensive. Students and parents should, therefore, never assume that they cannot afford a particular college or university.

The four categories of financial aid are grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study. Grants and scholarships are considered “free money,” loans and work-study are considered “self help” programs.

1. Grant – money that is given to a student, usually because of financial need
2. Scholarship – money that is awarded because of exceptional academic achievement, an outstanding talent or skill, and/or financial need
3. Work-Study – money a student earns by working at a campus job, usually 10-15 hours a week
4. Loan – borrowed money that must be repaid

Financial aid is most often awarded in the form of a “package.” Packages, consisting of grants, scholarships, loans, and/or work-study, are put together by the college’s financial aid office.

Except for merit-based scholarships, financial aid is generally awarded on the basis of need. Financial need is the difference between the cost of the college and the amount a family can afford to pay.

## **Completing the Necessary Forms**

To receive need-based financial aid, you must complete and submit the necessary form. If you are eligible for aid, the college's financial aid office will help you put together a financial aid package.

*The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) –*  
[www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)

Because financial aid is based on need, it is necessary to have an objective way to determine how much a family can afford to pay; the FAFSA is the federal form that's used to determine this amount. The FAFSA asks for information on income, assets, etc. This information is then applied to a formula, and the amount a family should be able to afford (their Estimated Family Contribution or EFC) is electronically calculated.

In December of your student's senior year, go to the FAFSA Web site ([www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)). Complete it, and send it in as soon after January 1 as possible. (Financial Aid is generally awarded on a "first come, first serve" basis, so submit your FAFSA form early, preferably January.) Double-check your responses and make a copy of your completed FAFSA and your tax forms before you send them in. Colleges will use the information from this report to make up your aid package.

When you fill out the FAFSA, you automatically apply for a Pell Grant. (Pell Grant is a federally funded grant that provides money for lower income families.) If you qualify, the federal government will help you pay for your child's college education.

*The College's Financial Application Form* – Some colleges have their own financial aid application form that you must complete. This form is generally included in their application. You will also need to complete the FAFSA.

*State Grant* – All states have financial aid programs that award grants to students who live and go to college in their home state. The State of Florida program is Bright Futures. More information about Bright Futures can be found at [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org). Please encourage your child to complete the application online in AITP class; this will occur in December or January.

Loans – Families often decide to take out a loan when they need additional funds to cover the cost of college. Students with financial need are usually offered Subsidized Stafford Loans as part of their financial aid packages. Students without financial need can get Unsubsidized Stafford Loans from lending institutions. (A subsidized Stafford loan is more desirable because the interest is paid by the government.) Repayment for Stafford loans don't begin until after the student is out of college. Applications for Unsubsidized Stafford Loans can be obtained from lending institutions.

## **Applying for Scholarships**

You have probably heard that “millions of scholarship dollars go unclaimed each year.” You have probably also heard stories about outstanding students who couldn't get scholarships. The fact is, there are thousands of scholarships available. Most scholarships, however, have very specific eligibility criteria (a student must go to ABC college, have an ACT score of 28+, and be in the top 1% of his/her class, or the student must belong to a particular ethnic group, race or religion, have leadership ability, a specific major, etc.)

When it comes to academic scholarships, students generally must have an outstanding GPA, high ACT/SATI and excellent recommendations. For most scholarships, applicants are also expected to be involved in extracurricular and/or community activities.

Even though it is not easy to obtain an academic or talent scholarship, students and parents who are willing to invest the time and energy sometimes find that their efforts pay off handsomely. When looking for scholarships, keep the following in mind.

1. Start early. Begin looking into scholarship possibilities during your student's junior year, and encourage your student to locate and complete applications in the fall of his/her senior year.
2. Finding and applying for scholarships takes time and energy.
3. While groups and organizations offer numerous scholarships, most of the large scholarships are awarded by individual colleges. Contact the financial aid office of the colleges you are considering and ask them for information on the scholarships they offer.
4. Private colleges are often more generous when awarding scholarships, thus making them competitive in price with public colleges. Don't rule out private colleges until you've seen their aid package. (How much it will cost you.)

5. Apply for local scholarships. These come primarily in the spring and are listed on the Collegiate High School Web site <http://www.nwfcolligatehigh.org> under Student, Scholarship Opportunities. While these are generally for smaller amounts, they are usually easier to obtain.
6. Be aware of deadlines. Scholarship applications become available throughout a student's senior year, and sometimes they are due only weeks after being posted on the Web site.
7. Network. Tell everyone that you are looking for scholarships. Check for scholarship opportunities with your place of employment, with your church, and with organizations to which you belong. Also look for scholarship opportunities in your local newspapers.
8. The Internet can provide students and parents with a great deal of information on a wide variety of scholarships.
9. Make sure that professors and administrators are given plenty of time to write recommendations and to prepare transcripts. (7 days for transcripts) Be aware of deadlines.
10. Remember that most financial aid is not awarded in the form of a scholarship. Pursue all financial aid opportunities.
11. Your student will have a better chance of receiving a scholarship at a college where he/she is in the top 25% of the applicants.
12. Always check to see if financial aid and scholarship awards are renewable.
13. Scholarship searches that charge fees are very seldom worth the money, and many are scams.
14. Local scholarships add up, so apply for all the scholarships that are available.
15. Some people pay someone else to help them look for scholarships since hunting for scholarships takes time. Rarely does a student earn enough money to make the cost of the service worth it.

## **Part V** **Additional Resources**

### **College Information**

#### **State Universities**

- [Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University \(Tallahassee\)](#)
- [Florida Atlantic University \(Boca Raton\)](#)
- [Florida Gulf Coast University \(Ft. Myers\)](#)
- [Florida International University \(Miami\)](#)
- [Florida State University \(Tallahassee\)](#)
- [New College of Florida \(Sarasota\)](#)
- [University of Central Florida \(Orlando\)](#)
- [University of Florida \(Gainesville\)](#)
- [University of North Florida \(Jacksonville\)](#)
- [University of South Florida \(Tampa\)](#)
- [University of West Florida \(Pensacola\)](#)

#### **Religiously Affiliated Institutions**

- [Ave Maria University \(Ave Maria\)](#)
- [Baptist College of Florida \(Graceville\)](#)
- [Barry University \(Miami Shores\)](#)
- [Clearwater Christian College \(Clearwater\)](#)
- [Eckerd College \(St. Petersburg, Florida\)](#)
- [Florida Christian College \(Kissimmee\)](#)
- [Florida College \(Temple Terrace\)](#)
- [Florida Memorial University \(Miami\)](#)
- [Florida Southern College \(Lakeland\)](#)

- [Hobe Sound Bible College \(Hobe Sound\)](#)
- [Hindu University of America \(Orlando\)](#)
- [Miami Christian University \(Miami\)](#)
- [Palm Beach Atlantic University \(West Palm Beach\)](#)
- [Pensacola Christian College \(Pensacola\)](#)
- [Reformed Theological Seminary \(Orlando\)](#)
- [Saint John Vianney College Seminary \(Miami\)](#)
- [Saint Leo University \(St. Leo\)](#)
- [St. Thomas University \(Miami Gardens\)](#)
- [South Florida Bible College and Theological Seminary \(Deerfield Beach\)](#)
- [Southeastern University of the Assemblies of God \(Lakeland\)](#)
- [Trinity College \(Temple Terrace\)](#)
- [Warner Southern College \(Lake Wales\)](#)

### **Private Institutions**

- [Beacon College \(Leesburg\)](#)
- [Bethune-Cookman University \(Daytona Beach\)](#)
- [Carlos Albizu University \(Miami\)](#)
- [DeVry University \(Orlando\)](#)
- [Edward Waters College \(Jacksonville\)](#)
- [Flagler College \(St. Augustine\)](#)
- [International Fine Arts College \(Miami\)](#)
- [Jacksonville University \(Jacksonville\)](#)
- [Jones College \(Jacksonville\)](#)
- [Lynn University \(Boca Raton\)](#)
- [Nova Southeastern University \(Davie\)](#)
- [Rasmussen College \(Holiday\)](#)
- [Rollins College \(Winter Park\)](#)
- [Schiller International University \(Largo\)](#)

- [Stetson University \(Deland\)](#)
- [University of Miami \(Coral Gables\)](#)
- [University of Phoenix](#) (No primary Florida campus)
- [University of Tampa \(Tampa\)](#)
- [Virginia College \(Jacksonville, Florida\)](#)

*The books and Web sites listed below are just a few of the many excellent resources that are available.*

## **Preparation Guides**

### **FCPT**

First Guide for The College Placement Test / Rachel Goldberg

### **SAT and ACT**

The Official SAT Guide – Collegeboard

The Red ACT – Thomson/Peterson's

## **Financial Aid and Scholarship Information**

Don't Miss Out / Octameron

Paying for College / Princeton Review

The Scholarship Book / Prentice Hall

College Cost & Financial Aid Handbook / The College Board

Kaplan Scholarships / Simon & Schuster

College Money Handbook / Peterson's

Scholarships, Grants and Prizes / Peterson's

## **Web Sites**

A number of Web sites provide excellent college and financial aid information. Below are some of the most visited.

### **College Information**

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

[www.collegenet.ccom](http://www.collegenet.ccom)

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

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

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

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

### **Testing Tips and Information**

[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

[www.review.com/college](http://www.review.com/college)

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

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

### **Financial Aid Information and Scholarship Searches**

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

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

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

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

[www.ne-epc.com/aid.asp](http://www.ne-epc.com/aid.asp)

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

[www.ed.gov/inits/hope](http://www.ed.gov/inits/hope)

## **Contact Information**

### **Collegiate High School**

Student Services

Bob Schrader - 729-4947

[Schrader@nwfsc.edu](mailto:Schrader@nwfsc.edu)

Patricia Belote – 729-4186

[Belotep@nwfsc.edu](mailto:Belotep@nwfsc.edu)

Office – 729-4949

### **Northwest Florida State College**

Student Services – 729-5371

Testing Services – 729-6016

