

# Getting Into College Timeline

Prepared by Educational Talent Search of the Southwest Youth Collaborative

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## Freshman Year

- Settle into the routine of high school.
- Strive to improve your study, organization, and time-management skills.
- Begin taking strong academic courses. If possible, take four years each of Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, and English.
- Commit to volunteer activities.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities. Pick one or two you plan to continue for four years. Look for leadership opportunities within those organizations.
- Do self-assessment. Consider what subjects you like, what outside activities give you pleasure, and what areas of study you might like to explore in more depth during high school.
- Begin exploring future options. Talk to people about their careers, why they chose them, the required preparation, and what they would do differently.
- Discuss the college application procedure with seniors; ask them what advice they would give. Talk to your teachers, parents, and friends about your future plans.
- During the summer, consider volunteering in an area of interest, taking academic enrichment courses offered by colleges and universities, or obtaining a job.

## Sophomore Year

- Continue to take academically challenging courses. Take honors and AP courses, if recommended by your teachers.
- Take the PSAT and PLAN standardized tests in October. These will help you assess your aptitudes, skills, talents, interests, and personality. How does each relate to your academic performance? How do they influence your thoughts about future college and career plans?
- Continue your involvement in and commitment to volunteer and extracurricular activities
- Talk to your parents about college and financing a college education
- Maximize your summer by working, volunteering, or taking courses.

## Fall of Junior Year

- Begin to think about what you are looking for in a college, in terms of size, location majors available, etc.
- Remember that colleges look for a high school record that reflects challenging coursework, a strong GPA, involvement in extracurricular activities/community service, and leadership skills in its applicants.
- Go to local College Fairs.
- Attend meetings with college representatives who visit Hubbard High School.
- Attend College Nights.
- Compile a list of 10 schools to research. Send away for catalogues, check the

- internet, and do other research about the colleges.
- Visit colleges (especially during vacations and days off) and research financial aid and scholarship opportunities.
- Discuss your college and career plans with counselor, postsecondary coach, and ETS staff.
- Complete an interest inventory if you are unsure about what careers you might be suited for.
- Take test preparation courses. Inquire with ETS staff about ACT Test Prep courses on Saturdays.

### **Spring of Junior Year**

- Continue to visit college campuses. Set up interviews with college admissions officers and plan to stay overnight at the colleges you are most serious about attending.
- Set up informational interviews with people in careers that interest you. Find out where they went to college, what education and experience they have, how they got the job, and the positive and negative aspects of their work. Consider volunteering or working in a field of interest to you to explore what a career in that area might involve.
- Make plans for a productive summer. That might entail summer school, a job, travel, volunteering, etc.
- Write a resume containing your work experience and extracurricular activities.
- Begin writing your college essays.
- Ask teachers to start preparing your college recommendation letters.
- Take the ACT.
- Register for challenging courses for your senior year.
- Take AP and other exams.

### **Fall of Senior Year**

- Narrow your list of college choices to three to five
- Make sure that you have applications for all the colleges you plan to attend.
- Applications can be downloaded from college web pages, Check to see if the colleges accept the Common Application ... Come to the Postsecondary lab to get applications.
- Finish writing college application essays.
- Ask teachers and counselors to prepare recommendation letters for you. Give them an information sheet about yourself, as well as the names and addresses of the colleges to which you are applying, and the deadlines.
- Meet with college representatives who visit HUBBARD HIGH SCHOOL.
- Continue researching scholarship opportunities for which you might be eligible.
- Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require supplemental financial aid forms or the PROFILE form, and if so, complete and file them.