

PATHWAY *to* COLLEGE

Why College?

College is education after high school where students gain knowledge and skills to prepare for specific careers or further professional education. College graduates tend to be healthier, have wider employment opportunities and have higher earning potential and job satisfaction.



Elementary School: 1st – 6th Grades

In the elementary school years, students build strong foundations in academic skills and good behavior habits that will ensure success in middle school and high school.

Students:

- Read! Becoming a strong reader is the most important tool for success in school.
- Do math! Learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide and play games with numbers.
- Explore the world and the people around you in science and social studies classes.
- Focus on being a good listener and being organized in your school work.
- Ask for help when you need it!

Parents:

- Begin to introduce words like *college* and *career* at home.
- Encourage your student to ask adults about their careers or where they went to college.

Elementary School: Preschool & Kindergarten

Preschool and kindergarten is the time to develop basic, but important skills. Parents can work on these skills with their students:

- Naming all the letters, in upper and lower case
- Learning new words
- Writing their name
- Counting to 20
- Naming different shapes
- Learning to listen, follow directions, share and cooperate

Local resources:

211 is a great local resource: you can dial 2-1-1 or go to www.211wc.org for help with meeting your family's needs and challenges, including food, housing, health care, transportation, child care, mental health care, addiction assistance, employment services, recreation opportunities, legal aid and more.

We want to hear from you!

This poster is part of the College Tee Project's goal to make it possible for every student to graduate from college. This poster is a work in progress, and we need your input – please call or email us if you have questions or suggestions. Thank you!



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Middle School: 7th – 8th Grade

In middle school, students complete longer and more complicated projects. They have several different teachers and are given more independence, so good study and reading habits are key.

Students:

- Make sure you're preparing for A-G classes.*
- Remember, it is important that you do your best in middle school. Even though these grades will not be part of your college applications, they help decide what high school classes you will be placed in.

Parents:

- Keep your student motivated and busy; encourage them to join a club, sports team or to volunteer.

A-G Course Requirements

A – G courses ensure that students will be academically **ready** and **eligible** to apply to college. A-G requirements **must** be satisfied in order to be eligible to apply to schools in the California State University and University of California systems. Some high schools offer non-college prep courses – talk to your counselor or vice principal to make sure these classes will satisfy the requirements.

The required A-G courses are: two years of History/Social Science, two years of Lab Sciences, four

years of English, three years of Math, one year of a Visual or Performance Art, and one year of a college-prep elective.

Students: Make sure your teachers, counselors and administrators know you want to be prepared for college admission. Make a course-plan before high school starts that ensures you finish your A-G courses. Check in with your counselor each year to make sure you're on track!

Parents: Monitor your student's progress through the A-G courses.



High School: 9th – 10th Grade

The types and level of classes taken and grades earned in high school are some of the most important factors in college admission decisions.

Students:

- Do your best in each class! Don't be discouraged by a bad test or a bad grade; talk to your teachers about how to learn from your mistakes.
- Look up information about college and career opportunities.
- Sign up for and take the PSAT. Take a practice test before test day.
- If you are having trouble with your schoolwork, ask for help.
- Get involved in activities like clubs, sports, the arts, or community service.

Parents:

- Spend time talking with your student about her/his interests and college and career options.
- Research funding sources for college and start talking about a plan to pay for college.



High School: 11th Grade

Junior year is very important for college admission and preparation. Students should work hard to get the best grades and test scores they can.

Students:

- Check test schedules for PSAT, SAT or ACT, and use the preparation resources on CollegeBoard.com. Take a test preparation course if possible. Try to take each test this year!
- Get to know your teachers. Remember that you will need to ask two teachers to write you letters of recommendation next year!
- Attend a college fair and research schools online; make and keep a list your favorite colleges!
- Look for summer opportunities that give you a taste of the college experience.

Parents:

- Make sure your student has taken the SAT and ACT.
- Encourage your student to begin looking at colleges and request information from the ones s/he most likes. Attend a college and career fair with your student. If you live near a college, take a tour with your student.



High School: 12th Grade

This is the home stretch! Senior year is busy with classes, college applications and planning for how to pay for college. Stay focused!

Students:

- Create a "College" binder with your college research, admission applications, test score reports, financial aid information and applications, notes for your application essay, a record of your volunteer work, and a list of the teachers you asked for recommendations.
- Make a college application "To Do" List with tasks and deadlines, and check off the tasks as you complete them.

Parents:

- If you have the resources, visit colleges that interest your student.
- Discuss and review your student's College binder and To Do list. Check in with your student regularly to see that s/he is making progress with the application process.
- Help your student select the colleges s/he will apply to and assist with the applications.
- Organize your financial records to help with financial aid applications and college finance planning.



Parent involvement is crucial for student success. Here are some tips to help your student:

- ✔ Help your child follow rules at school by creating structure at home; set consistent times for meals, study, reading, bathing and bedtimes.
- ✔ Eat dinner as a family and talk about each of your days and the news. Talk to your student about school. Ask your student specific questions about how school is going, like, "who is your favorite teacher?" or "did you ask any questions today?" or "what did you learn today?"
- ✔ Students who eat healthy food, spend regular time outdoors and get physical activity learn better!
- ✔ Encourage students to keep their school bag and materials organized.
- ✔ Review your student's homework and report cards with them. If there are parts of assignments you do not understand – you can look it up together!
- ✔ Get to know your student's teachers, coaches, counselors and school principals. Let them know you want your student to be prepared for college and don't be shy about asking how your student is behaving or for advice on how best to support your student.
- ✔ Attend parent-teacher conferences. Join the school parent group and ask questions.
- ✔ Good readers are good students. Encourage your student to read and make sure s/he has lots of options – including books, magazines and newspapers. Visit your local library and check out lots of new and different books (for free!). Set a good example by being a reader yourself and letting your student see you read!
- ✔ Don't be afraid to reach out to your school administration for referrals to community services to support your student's physical and mental health.

OPPORTUNITY *for* EVERY CHILD!