

Clayton A. Bouton High School

432 New Salem Road
Voorheesville, NY 12186

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <http://vcasd.neric.org>

Phone (518)765-3314
Fax (518)765-5547

CEEB code: 335-740

Guidance & Counseling Department

Ms. Kristen Heyde -Counselor grades 9-12 *A-K* *Mrs. Cindy Bunk* – Guidance Secretary
kheyde@vcsdk12.org cbunk@vcsdk12.org

Mr. Timothy Kelley -Counselor grades 9-12 *L-Z* *Mrs. Jessica Tabakian* -Guidance Secretary
tkelley@vcsdk12.org tabakian@vcsdk12.org

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1. Assessing Yourself

What do I want to do for a career?

Take some time to think about your interests, abilities and goals. An interest inventory will be given in your junior year to help you define your interests. The PLAN test also gave you results in the World of Work to consider. You can find descriptions and job outlooks for careers on the career websites listed in this booklet.

What kind of training do I need?

Find out about the years of education required for careers that interest you and decide how much time you want to spend in school. Some fields, such as technology, agriculture or health offer specialized training found at two-year colleges or technical institutes. Others require a 4-year or Bachelors Degree, Masters or Doctorate. **Liberal Arts** is a broad study of education in literature, languages, natural and social sciences. Some students study liberal arts for the first two years at a four-year institution and define their major in the junior year of college. Other students identify a major at the beginning of their freshman year. Those who attend a two-year college can study liberal arts for both years and then transfer to a 4-year college. Two-year colleges are often also used to begin training for a career with specialized majors.

2. What Colleges Look for in Prospective Students

A number of factors are considered by admissions officers to make sure you fit the standards that the college sets forth. Each college will weigh these factors in their own unique, often subjective way to arrive at a decision about an applicant. Two-year colleges generally have open admission standards although prerequisites or particular averages may be required in high school for certain programs. Four-year colleges have higher admission standards and vary in difficulty level for admission purposes. The *most* selective colleges turn down as many as 90% of qualified applicants!

GRADES AND COURSES IN HIGH SCHOOL ARE MOST IMPORTANT.

Good grades in all courses show that you are willing to work hard and have a variety of interests. A poor grade or two does not necessarily mean you won't be admitted. If your grades improve, most colleges will notice. Colleges also consider the difficulty level of the courses you've taken. A student planning to apply to any selective college will be best served by choosing a challenging curriculum in grades 9 through 12. This includes Regents level course work, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and advanced levels of math, science and foreign language. The high school transcript is a record kept by the high school guidance office which lists all high school coursework and grades, grade point average (GPA), and limited biographical data (name, address, phone number, date of birth). **Regardless of a college's admissions policy, the transcript is usually the most important factor in the admissions process.**

A student wishing to attend college in the fall following high school graduation will typically apply in the fall of their senior year. This means that colleges will be making decisions based on marks received in grades 9 through 11. Trends shown by the transcript are also important. An improvement from grade 9 to 10 and then from 10 to 11 will be far more attractive than a downward trend. Colleges will also look at courses selected for senior year and grades from the first semester when making their decision.

SCORES ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS (SAT/ACT)

Juniors should take either the SAT I Reasoning Test and/or the ACT, of the American College Testing Program as a part of their application for college. Most colleges, especially 4-year schools, require these tests, but the emphasis placed on them for admission purposes varies for each college.

Some of the more competitive colleges may require either additional SAT II Subject Tests or the ACT test with Writing. The subject tests are one-hour long and are available in Math, Science, History, Foreign Language and Literature. Review the admission requirements of the colleges you are interested in to determine if you need to take these examinations.

ACTIVITIES

Colleges look for students with many interests. It is important to become involved early and develop a typed resume that includes extracurricular activities, athletics, musical performance, achievements, work experience, internships and/or any other unique programs you have experienced. It is better to have a few activities that you are committed to rather than be in every club superficially.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Most four-year colleges require a recommendation from your school counselor and one or two teachers. Sometimes you can include a letter from a principal, employer, coach or clergy. It is important that the person recommending you have insights into your personal strengths as a student and your activities.

ESSAYS

Many colleges require an essay. This can be an intimidating task. View this as an opportunity to express yourself (see tips on essay writing). Admissions officers are not looking for a "correct answer" on the essay. They want to find out what you are like as an individual and how well you can express yourself through writing.

3. Finding a College to Match Your Goals

Although the process of finding out about colleges and applying seems difficult there are some basic steps you can follow to help organize your search.

NARROW DOWN POSSIBLE MAJORS

- *On the **COLLEGE MAJORS** list highlight the **CATEGORIES** that interest you.
- *Within those categories highlight **MAJORS** that interest you.
- *Find out more about those majors you highlighted in the guidance and counseling office.
- *When choosing a major, give thought to what career that major will lead to and whether or not you will need further education beyond that degree to get a job. Some majors offer a variety of career possibilities.
- *Avoid 'tunnel vision' focusing on only one major-explore related fields.
- *Evaluate your abilities by looking at the courses needed to complete the field of study. Do you believe you are capable of meeting the criteria of the program?
- *Investigate the job placement potential of the career which interests you. This should factor into your decision.

IF YOU'RE UNDECIDED...

Many students can narrow down their list by eliminating what they don't want. Many high school students can't decide because they haven't had enough experience to do so. Very few students get to experience course work in their specialized field of interest until they get to college. College affords you the opportunity to learn about yourself and your interests. At the four-year college level the first two years are often spent in liberal arts giving you the opportunity to explore. Another option is to pursue a two-year liberal arts degree and transfer.

Changing majors is common among college students as they explore different courses. No matter what you choose it doesn't have to be final. Evaluate yourself honestly and openly. You'll come up with an area of study that's right for you.

DO A COMPUTER SEARCH TO FIND COLLEGES

Meet with your counselor to conduct a college search. You should be prepared to enter information into the computer including location of the college, two or four year program, possible majors, size, residence facilities, entrance difficulty, special programs you are interested in, sports you want to play, etc.

SEND FOR INFORMATION

Visit college websites to find out more about a college. Send for printed materials and an application. Check the guidance office to look at catalogs which outline courses of study for your major if you have one.

GO TO THE COLLEGE FAIR

College fairs are held in spring of your junior year and fall of your senior year. Bring your list from your initial search- this is an opportunity to gather a lot of materials at once.

NARROW DOWN YOUR LIST

Continue to think about factors important in your college selection. Majors, size of school, city, suburban or rural location, etc. Start eliminating schools from your list. Find out more by visiting.

About “MyRoad” at www.collegeboard.com

MyRoad is the College Board's new, easy-to-use, interactive website designed to help students explore majors, colleges, and careers. With this unique, personalized tool students can plan for their futures in a productive and engaging way.

Identify Interests

On MyRoad, students have the opportunity to take a research-validated personal assessment survey to learn more about their personality types. Assessment results will include a list of suggested majors and careers with links to more detail about them.

Explore Majors

In MyRoad's Explore Majors area, students will find in-depth articles on 69 academic fields, covering 175 academic programs. Students can learn about the college coursework and specializations involved with each major, as well as, how to prepare for a major while still in high school. The Career Paths section connects majors to the possible careers to which each may lead.

Research Careers

Students will find information on over 450 different occupations in the Research Careers section. Here they will learn about occupations, job responsibilities, educational requirements, future, and compensation for each line of work.

Plan for the Future

My Plan is an online portfolio where students can keep track of their interests, goals, and college application essays. The Resumé Builder allows students to create custom resumé's from their academic records, high school course work, hobbies, and work experience.

Gain Insight

MyRoad's online magazine, *Insights*, offers students another look at college preparation and college life. They may read the journals of high school and college students, interviews with professionals from a variety of careers, and descriptions of groundbreaking college programs. The Resource Library provides additional information on everything from studying to searching for and applying to colleges.

See what MyRoad can offer you, and how to get full access by visiting www.myroad.com.

4. Applying to College

About College Entrance Exams

The **SAT I Reasoning Test**, and the **ACT** - are used by most four-year colleges in the admissions process.

Definitions:

The SAT I is a 3 hour and 45 minute test measuring reading, math and writing skills. The critical reading sections include reading comprehension and sentence completion questions. Math content measures basic Arithmetic, Algebra I & II and Geometry. Calculators are permitted for the math sections of the test although they are not required. There are multiple choice and fill in the grid questions on the math section. The SAT has what's known as a guessing penalty - you lose points for wrong answers. *If you can eliminate some of the choices it is worth an educated guess. If not, it is to your advantage to leave it blank. The fill-in math section is an exception, where you are free to guess without losing points.*

The ACT is a 3 hour test measuring abilities in English, Math, Scientific Reasoning and Reading. The English section measures understanding of the conventions of standard written English and of rhetorical skills. Math measures skills in algebra and geometry with a few trigonometry questions. Calculators are permitted for the ACT exam. The Science section tests interpretation, analysis, evaluation and problem solving skills required in the natural sciences. The Reading section measures reading comprehension skills. *You should answer all questions on the ACT since you do not lose points for questions answered incorrectly. A 30-minute OPTIONAL Writing Test is also available. Students can choose to take the ACT with or without the writing section,*

SAT II Subject Tests-Formerly called Achievement Tests; these one-hour tests measure achievement in specific subjects in Literature, Math, Sciences, Social Studies, and Foreign Languages. Highly selective colleges often require SAT II tests. The SAT II exams are given concurrently with the SAT I. Up to 3 can be taken at one sitting but a student cannot take the SAT I and SAT II on the same day.

Which test should you take?

This can probably be answered by referring to the catalog of the college in which you are interested. Colleges often specify which test they prefer and whether or not SAT II tests are required. If you are uncertain about to which colleges you'll apply, try both the SAT I and ACT by the end of the junior year. If you think you'd like to apply to a selective school, try the SAT II at the end of the school year in a subject you're completing and feel comfortable with.

Will I do better on the SAT I or on the ACT?

Students may believe that one is easier than the other. This is not really the case. They measure achievement differently. A student who struggles in math but scores well in science may be better off taking the ACT because it has less math than the SAT and a science section that the SAT does not have. However, each is measured against itself, not against the other. The two programs have different scales corresponding with national percentiles. So if one is easier for you, chances are it is easier for everyone and your percentile score will be no different from one test to another.

How can I prepare for these tests?

A strong academic course load and supplemental reading helps a student best prepare for the college exams.

The PSAT given in October of the junior year is the best indicator of future performance on the three sections of the SAT. Reviewing your answers on this test will help you determine where to focus your studying. Learning which questions to guess and which to leave blank can help your overall score. To study, purchasing SAT review book is a good start. This will help you become familiar with the structure of the test, types of questions asked, time limits, and rules on guessing. The PLAN test offered in the sophomore year is a practice test for the ACT. These results can also be reviewed prior to taking the ACT. Review books are available for this test as well.

Students may also take SAT classes offered by area high schools, Kaplan educational centers, Princeton Review, selected colleges and private tutors.

Letters of Recommendation

Many colleges require a student to have recommendations written by faculty members and often supply forms for this purpose. Often, colleges will want recommendations from one or two teachers, a guidance counselor, and possibly a personal reference from outside of school.

*Follow these guidelines to get the best possible letters:

*Fill out the top of the forms correctly and neatly with your name and other requested information.

*Ask early. Teachers are very busy during the school year so give them plenty of time. The third or fourth week of school would be an ideal time to ask in most cases as it is well before deadlines and before the onslaught of such requests. Have everything ready to give to the potential reference; form, due date, activity sheet and self-addressed stamped envelope if the teacher requires it. Give the latest copy of your activity resume to your counselor.

*Waive your confidentiality rights. People you are asking should be those you trust to write nice things about you.

*Choose wisely. Do not choose someone with an impressive title who barely knows you. People who can attest to your academic achievements and personal character carry far more weight.

*Ask your references to put a copy of their recommendation in your file in the guidance office. These come in handy for last minute changes and scholarship applications.

*Thank your references and let them know of the results and your plans.

*Keep a record of who and when you asked. Give the person a reasonable deadline and follow-up with that person to make sure the recommendation has been completed.

Activity Resume

Your record of involvement in activities can be a significant supporting credential in determining admission. Mere membership is not the important factor. It is, rather, the level of involvement and accomplishment that is important. It is better to be involved in one or two activities and be a significant contributor to them than to be involved superficially in many organizations. With this in mind, each student will be asked to complete an activities sheet during his or her junior year. The guidance office provides a form on which you may list activities but we do recommend that you type a **resumé**, giving a copy to your counselor. On it, students should list their involvement during high school in work, sports, music, clubs, student government, community service and volunteerism, and special programs, workshops, conferences they have attended as well as any awards won. This form should be kept updated. It is used by counselors and teachers to write recommendations and determine awards. The resume can also be used by the student when filling out college and scholarship applications.

JANE SMITH

SAMPLE RESUME

2 SCHOOL ROAD
 VOORHEESVILLE, NY 12186
 518-765-0000
jsmith@aol.com

| ACHIEVEMENTS | Description | Grade |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| HONOR SOCIETY | ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT | 11, 12 |
| ART PRIZE | 1 ST PLACE -POSTER CONTEST | 10 |
| BIOLOGY | HIGHEST AVERAGE | 9 |

EXTRACURRICULARS

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| KEY CLUB | ORGANIZED SERVICE PROGRAMS | 10,11,12 |
| SCHOOL NEWSPAPER | STAFF WRITER | 12 |
| YEARBOOK | ASSISTANT EDITOR | 11,12 |
| INTERNATIONAL CLUB | TREASURER | 10,11,12 |
| DRAMA CLUB | STAGE DESIGNER | 9, 10 |
| GIUITAR | PRIVATE LESSONS | 9, 10, 11, 12 |

ATHLETICS

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------|
| CROSS COUNTRY | CAPTAIN-SENIOR YR-VARSITY | 11,12 |
| TRACK & FIELD | JV & VARISTY | 10, 11, 12 |
| CHEERLEADER | VARSITY | 12 |
| SOCCER | JV | 9,10 |

COMMUNITY SERVICE

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| HELDEBERG WORKSHOP | CIT in Children's Education | 11, 12 summers |
| CHRISTMAS IN APRIL | Home repairs for the elderly | 11, 12 |
| DIABETES WALK-A-THON | Fundraising for cause | 10, 11, 12 |

WORK EXPERIENCE

| | | |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| INDIAN LADDER FARMS | HARVEST | SEASONAL |
| NICHOLS MARKET | CASHIER | October 2005-Present |
| THACHER PARK | CONCESSION STAND | Summer 2005 |

Writing the College Essay

For some colleges, the essay is second only to grades in importance when screening potential freshmen. It is especially influential when several applicants have similar qualifications. Generally speaking, the admissions staff will evaluate essays on three levels:

Level 1: Your ability to use standard written English that is correctly written, punctuated, and contains proper grammar, usage, and syntax.

Level 2: Content, substance, and depth of insight, reflecting your ability to think and convey your true feelings or opinions about a topic.

Level 3: Creativity and originality.

Essay Writing DO's

***If optional; write it!*

****Read question carefully and be sure to answer what is asked. Feel free, however, to interpret in your own way.**

****Keep your audience in mind. Essays read by college admissions staff, not your roommate, not psychologists. Realize also that they will read dozens each day.**

****Type your essay unless otherwise instructed.**

****Stick to the recommended length. If not specified, about one page, single spaced.**

****If you need to, set aside a block of time (at least an hour) to see what happens on a blank page. Sitting at a desk will produce better results than running around panicking about what and when you'll write.**

****Write about YOU, not your team or family and about YOUR experience, NOT the experience itself.**

****Show, don't tell. Sell yourself without bragging.**

****Write a rough draft and then let it sit for a few hours without looking at it. When you return, read it and remove any cliches, vagueness, dullness or errors.**

****Read it aloud to check for awkward phrasing, unnecessary words, inaccurate usage.**

****Consider adding detail, cutting away repetition, or combining sentences for a smoother flow of ideas.**

****Look up any words that look strange for both spelling and definition.**

****Have a strong first paragraph, one that will grab the reader's attention. If this does not come to you immediately, write the rest of the essay first.**

****Ask someone whose opinion you respect to read and critique. Ask for specifics; "Tell me what you think I am trying to say", "How do I come across as a person?" "What parts are confusing?", "Where are more details needed?", "What parts bore you?"**

****Write it, rewrite it and then write it again.**

Essay writing Don'ts

DO NOT do any of the following...

****Make any spelling or grammatical errors.**

****Repeat information from other parts of the application.**

****Do a rush job.**

****Overuse adjectives, adverbs, exclamation points.**

****Abuse the thesaurus; don't try to impress by using only big words.**

****Use generalities**

****Try to write what you think they want to hear. Readers are not looking for anything in particular except more about you. There is no answer more correct than another.**

****Use the essay as a place to make excuses about low scores.**

****Psychoanalyze yourself.**

****Use humor unless you are very confident in it. Nothing is less funny than comedy that falls flat.**

****Give Miss America type responses of wishing to make the world a better place, etc.**

****Use any of the following topics:**

-Your relationship with boy/girlfriend.

-Religious or political views.

-Drugs, sex, alcohol.

-Your trip to Europe.

-'Hot' current topics that everyone else is writing about.

-The importance of a college education.

-Anything that mirrors the college brochure.

College Visits and Interviews

-THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SEEING A COLLEGE YOURSELF

There are lots of ways to find out about a college, from brochures to videos to college fairs. Nothing beats the experience of going to a college and seeing it for yourself.

-CALL BEFORE YOU GO

Call to tell them the date you would like to visit, find out about open houses, or inquire about visiting classes or staying overnight in a residence hall. You can also schedule an interview if they offer them and you feel this would help your application for admission. Most of the time an interview is not required but if you need one here are some tips.

-PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

- *Arrive on time. This means 10 minutes early.
- *Dress appropriately. Jeans and T-shirts are inappropriate, as are suits in most cases.
- *Bring your transcript and be familiar with your scores.
- *Review the catalog. Avoid questions easily answered in it. Know about admissions requirements, tuition, and programs of study. Show that you are serious about their school.
- *It may be O.K. for parents to be there but the student should do the bulk of the talking.
- *Give the interviewer a firm handshake and address him/her by name.
- *Write down a list of questions and bring them with you. You will not remember them otherwise.

-QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED

- *Tell me about yourself.
- *What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- *How have you served your school, community?
- *What are your most satisfying extracurricular experiences?
- *What 3 words best describe you?
- *How would a friend or a teacher describe you?
- *What would you change about yourself?
- *What would you change about your school?
- *Why are you applying to our school?
- *Why this major?
- *To what other schools have you applied?
- *What do you want to be doing in 10 years?
- *What are your favorite authors, TV shows, and movies?
- *Favorite/least favorite subjects and why?

You are given a chance to sell yourself during an interview. Be sure to point out what is special about you while minimizing the rough edges. Without bragging, in a matter-of-fact way tell about how you are the captain of the soccer team, class president, and volunteer at a hospital on weekends. Do not be overly critical of yourself or of your school. Let the interviewer know that you have given serious thought in deciding on their college and your major by giving informed answers when asked about such things. The interview can also be an appropriate forum for explaining unique circumstances that may have been challenging for you. Most importantly, be honest. Finally, the last question posed to you will likely be:

- *Do you have any questions? **Yes you do.**

-QUESTIONS TO ASK IN AN INTERVIEW

- *What are your strongest majors?
- *How active is your career planning office?
- *How many freshmen return for second year?
- *% of graduates who go to grad school
- *% of students on financial aid and average awards?
- *Colleges rapport with local community?
- *Required courses for graduation?
- *Expected cost increase, aid decrease next 4 years?
- *Class sizes for intro classes?
- *Non-academic and academic support services?
- *What type of internship or coop experience can I expect?
- *How are roommates selected?
- *How many from freshman class graduate?
- *% of grads who gain employment in their field?
- *Housing, auto restrictions?
- *Weekend and year-long entertainment opportunities?
- *Any classes taught by grad students
- *Describe your average accepted applicant.
- *How accessible are advisors?

Try to ask informed questions based on your knowledge of the college. Be sure to ask for clarification if necessary. Take notes. Remember you are also interviewing them.

WEBSITES

APPLY TO COLLEGE

COMMONAPP.ORG
SUNY.EDU

CAREERS

NYCAREERZONE.ORG
MONSTER.COM
PLANSTUDENT.ORG
CAREERS.ORG
ACINET.ORG
ONLINE.ONETCENTER.ORG

FINANCIAL AID

WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV
WWW.PIN.ED.GOV
COLLEGEBOARD.COM (For Profile)

COLLEGEBOARD.COM

Register/Prepare for
SAT exams, College & Scholarship
search engine.

ACTSTUDENT.ORG

Register for exams,
college search,
career information

NY STATE HIGHER ED SERVICES

HESC.ORG

ATHLETICS

NCAA.ORG
NCAACLEARINGHOUSE.NET
(For Future Div. I & Div. II Athletes)

SCHOLARSHIPS

FASTWEB.COM
FINAID.ORG
COLLEGEANSWER.COM

MILITARY

USARMY.MIL
USNAVY.MIL
MARINES.MIL
ROTC.COM
AF.MIL - Airforce
USCG.MIL - Coastguard

CHOOSING A MAJOR

CSC.VSC.EDU/MAJORS/DEFAULT.HTML
MYROAD AT WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.COM

Senior Year-Options

How to Apply to Four-Year Colleges & Universities

1. Type a **resume** for the guidance office including activities/ arts /music /athletics /community service and work experiences. This is to be kept in the guidance office. ~ *September*
2. **Ask two teachers to write letters of recommendation for you** ~ *September*
3. **Early Decision/Early Action-** see your counselor if you are considering applying under these programs. ~ *September*
4. **SUNY schools...**log on to www.suny.edu and complete Part 1 of the application, **print a list of schools you applied to and bring that in to your counselors.** Then click on supplemental applications and see if the campuses you are applying to require a Part II ~ *October*
5. **PRIVATE schools...**log on to www.commonapp.org over 300 schools use this application. Begin by entering basic information. Print out the two forms that you must give to each teacher. **The Secondary School Report Form and the Mid Year Report form will be completed by your counselor. Click 'school forms' and put your counselors email address in your application so he or she can fill out reports.**
6. **WEB/PAPER applications...**some colleges ask you to apply online at their own website and may waive the application fee. Other schools still use their own paper applications. **Check the college websites** to see the best way to apply.
7. **Complete your SUNY application by December. Complete your common Application by the deadlines indicated, preferably before December.** Have your essay reviewed by your teacher. Submit a copy of your essay to your counselor. **Give your counselor a COMPLETE LIST of schools you are applying to.**
8. **SAT/ACT-** have your scores sent to your colleges directly from the testing agency. (www.CollegeBoard.com or www.ACTStudent.org)Check the requirements of your school; some competitive colleges require SAT II Subject Tests as well.
9. **Athletics-** If you plan to play a Div I or II sport, you must complete NCAA paperwork at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Speak with your coach about athletic opportunities, meeting college recruiters and putting together tapes and athletic resumés.
10. **Art/Music Majors...**plan to prepare a portfolio or schedule musical auditions.
11. If you are of a limited income or participate in the free or reduced lunch program see your counselor about fee waivers for applications and college examination fees.

Senior Year-Options

How to Apply to Four-Year Colleges & Universities

12. **POSTAGE**- School and student materials are sent to each college inside a school profile wrapper and large envelope. Students are instructed to pay \$1.00 for each application sent.
13. **Financial Aid**....After October 1, students applying Early Decision and those who want to get an early start on the Financial Aid process can complete a form required by some of the private schools called **PROFILE**. Log on to www.collegeboard.com to enter this information if required.
14. **Financial Aid**....After January 1, all students applying for aid and loans must complete the **FAFSA** at www.fafsa.ed.gov . FAFSA worksheets are available on the website. It is recommended that students file before February 1. First a PIN must be obtained by the student and also the parent/guardian at www.pin.ed.gov .

Senior Year- Options

Applying to Technical Schools and Colleges

Offering Two-Year, Associates Degrees or a One Year Certificate

Applying to

HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND SCHENECTADY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE is easy!

1. Fill out your application in the guidance office during a study hall in October. These colleges will schedule an “Instant Admission Day” where they will meet you at school to discuss your program.

When starting at a two year college:

2. Review the list of majors for each area college. Each college offers different opportunities for a career.
3. Update your activities/athletics list in guidance.
4. Take the ACT or SAT if your college requires it.

Getting Apprenticeship Training, Adult Training at the Career and Technical Center, or a Attending a Trade School

~ there are many ways to prepare for a career...see your counselor for information. Examples are Hospital LPN programs, Beauty School, Welding School, Electrician’s Internships, Civil Service Exams, New School of Radio and TV, Diesel Mechanics, Culinary Institutes, etc.

Joining the Military ~ thinking of the Coast Guard, Marines, Air Force, ROTC, Army or Navy as a career or a next step? See your counselor or local recruiter for more information.

6. Applying for Financial Aid

To receive aid each year and/or be eligible for low-interest loans you must file the **FAFSA form** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) in January of senior year. You can apply for federal aid online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Some colleges require the **PROFILE** form as well. By registering with PROFILE you will receive additional financial aid forms required by specific colleges. Online registration is available at www.collegeboard.com.

TAP- Tuition Assistance Program *for NY state residents attending schools in NY State*. This is now processed through the FAFSA form. NY state residents will receive additional information about TAP if eligible after completing the FAFSA.

INSTITUTIONAL FORMS -Sometimes colleges and universities require additional financial aid forms supplied by the school.

Read each college brochure carefully to find out which forms to submit and their deadlines for applying. Make a copy of your financial aid form before you send it out.

Do not delay in filing the financial aid forms until your tax forms are submitted! You can estimate your income. Waiting could lessen your financial aid package. You may need to provide a copy of your federal income tax form at a later date and if there are any significant differences your financial aid package may change.

Financial aid forms should be submitted online by February 1st. A help line is available at 1-800-4-fed-aid.

After your forms are processed you will receive an **SAR (Student Aid Report)**, which will contain the information you indicated on your FAFSA. Follow the instructions on the form, check for errors, and review your **EFC number** on the upper right hand corner of the first page. That is your **Expected Family Contribution** toward college expenses. Colleges use that figure to create financial aid packages for you. The **Financial Aid Package** is a term used to describe the total amount of aid a student receives. A package will generally consist of several parts: *grants, loans, scholarships and work-study*. **Scholarships or grants** consist of money given to a student with no stipulation of repayment. **Loans** require repayment with interest to the source of the loan. After the college determines you are eligible for a loan, then you will be able to choose a lender. **Work-study** is on or off-campus employment for hourly wages during the academic year that pays for part of the cost of your education. Your selection of a college may, in the end, depend on who gives you the best package and what **kind** of aid is in that package.

AID PROGRAMS

Scholarships- Merit, Need-based, Athletic or Special Talent scholarships may be offered by the college you are applying to. Using the computer or scholarship books you may find scholarships to apply for relating to your major, personal profile, etc. A scholarship bulletin is produced several times during the school year to make students aware of local scholarships. The recommended scholarship search engine is www.fastweb.com. The student should set time aside to research these possibilities. In the junior year students may apply for ROTC scholarships through military service. The National Guard and branches of the military also offer help with tuition for those who enlist.

Grant- An award of money given in a financial aid package that does not require repayment.

Federal Pell Grant Program. A federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Maximum award is \$5350 depending on need, cost of the school, and number of credits you are pursuing.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG) - gift aid for undergraduates with exceptional need. Pell Grant recipients with the lowest EFC's will be the first to receive this award. You can get between \$100-\$4000 a year, depending on when you apply for aid, need and the funding from the school you plan to attend.

Federal Work-Study Program- provides part-time jobs for students who have financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses.

Federal Perkins Loan Program. A federally funded program based on need, administered by colleges, that provides low-interest loans (5%) each year during undergraduate study and up to \$5,500 each year. Your school is your lender and the loan is made with government funds. Repayment need not begin until 9 months after you leave school or attend less than half time.

Federal Family Education Loans and Federal Stafford Loans- **For all loans you must fill out the FAFSA!**

If you have need remaining after your EFC, campus-based aid programs, or other sources you can borrow a FFEL or FSL to cover some of the remaining need. You will either receive a subsidized loan in which the government pays the interest on the loan until 6 months after you leave school or an unsubsidized loan in which you are responsible for the interest immediately. For dependent undergraduate students, you can borrow up to \$3500 the first year, \$4500 the second year and \$5500 in subsequent years. Independent undergraduates may borrow greater amounts. The interest rate is fixed at 5.6%.

PLUS loans-Parent Loans

Plus loans allow parents to borrow the remaining amount of money needed to finance your education. This would be the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid you receive. The interest rate is fixed at 8.5% and repayment begins 60 days after the final loan disbursement for the year.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Most scholarships and grants that students receive are a part of the financial aid package that the individual college offers. In our periodic scholarship bulletin, we announce local and national scholarships that are sent directly to the guidance and counseling office. Students make seek additional scholarship opportunities by using online search engines or using scholarship books available in the guidance office.

Two or Four Year Colleges

With costs of a college education skyrocketing, many students and their parents are considering community colleges for the first 2 years as a money saving measure. For those students who plan to pursue a Bachelors Degree consider the following advantages/disadvantages. If the decision is made to attend a two-year college first, be sure to follow a strong academic program and keep your grades high.

Advantages of 2 year

- Cost: Community and Jr. Colleges often much less expensive.
- Transferability: Most liberal arts academic coursework for a 2-year program can transfer to a 4-year school if the GPA is acceptable.
- Many close by, within driving distance of home
 - More cost saving
 - Makes transition to college easier/less homesickness
- Open admissions at many versus selectivity at most 4 years.
- Career Oriented programs.
- Often easier to get into 4 year as a Jr. than as a freshmen.

Disadvantages of a 2-year

- Less rigorous in many cases.
- Transferring to 4 year may be a shock for even the most studious.
- Some courses may not transfer, check in advance.
- Check transfer rate prior to enrolling in a 2 year if 4 year is in your future.
- Program difference; juniors from a 2 year school will have different preparatory experience than students in their 3rd year of a 4 year program.

Admissions Procedures

Early Decision- A formal understanding between the student and college that, if admitted, the student plans to enroll. Only those students who have a clear first choice school and who can afford expected tuition costs should apply under this plan. Furthermore, upon acceptance, the student agrees to withdraw applications to any other college.

Early Action- permits a student to apply to college and receive a decision well before the regular admission deadline. Usually non-binding, in other words, you are allowed to decide on another school.

Rolling Admission. An admissions procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as school record and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

Deferred Acceptance: the practice of some colleges allowing an accepted student to postpone enrollment for one year.

Early Entrance/Admission. The practice of some colleges of admitting certain students who have not completed high school--usually students of exceptional ability who have completed their junior year. These students are enrolled full-time in college. Students should investigate if the colleges of interest have this program and if they would qualify for financial aid.

SAT & ACT TEST SCHEDULE

USE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL CODE WHEN REGISTERING:
335740

2010-2011 TEST SCHEDULE

COLLEGE BOARDS (SAT I AND SAT II)

REGISTER AT WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.COM

SAT I & SAT II TEST

May 1, 2010
June 5, 2010

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

March 25, 2010
April 29, 2010

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM (ACT)

REGISTER AT WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG

ACT TEST

April 10, 2010
June 12, 2010

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

March 5, 2010
May 7, 2010

****LATE REGISTRATION AND WALK IN INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FOR THE ABOVE TESTS ON THE WEB SITE OR FROM YOUR GUIDANCE OFFICE. ****

SAT AND ACT EXAMINATIONS ARE ADMINISTERED AT THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS

| <u>SCHOOL</u> | <u>TEST</u> | <u>TEST CENTER NUMBER</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Albany Academy | SAT | 330035 |
| Albany High School | SAT | 330041 |
| Bethlehem Central H.S. | SAT | 331595 |
| Guilderland Central High School | SAT | 332210 |

****CHECK REGISTRATION BULLETIN FOR APPROPRIATE DATE AND TEST CENTER. TESTS ARE NOT GIVEN AT EVERY TEST CENTER ON EVERY DATE.**

JUNIOR YEAR PLANNING CALENDAR

| SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p>*Start thinking about the future. Spend some time in the guidance office learning about careers that interest you.</p> <p>*Join a club or sport or get a job or volunteer.</p> | <p>* Register for the PSAT in the guidance office.</p> <p>*Read the bulletin and answer the practice questions before you take the test.</p> <p>*Take the PSAT this month.</p> | <p>*Think about increasing your involvement in activities. This can be an important factor when applying to college.</p> | <p>*Review your PSAT scores.</p> <p>*Discuss which tests will be most appropriate for your goals.</p> | <p>*This month you will take an occupational interest inventory. Use the results to help you in your career search.</p> |
| FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
| <p>*Prepare a list of factors important to you in choosing a college (size, location, majors, athletics, etc.) to help you do a college search.</p> <p>*Sign up for challenging courses for next year that are consistent with your goals.</p> | <p>*Register for the SAT & ACT tests.</p> <p>*A meeting will be held with you, your parents and your counselor to review your future plans.</p> <p>*The application process for the military academies begins</p> | <p>*Begin to send for information from colleges on your search list.</p> <p>*Register for the SAT II if needed.</p> <p>*Visit a college or two during break week.</p> <p>* Take ACT</p> | <p>*Take the SAT</p> <p>*Update your activity resume.</p> <p>*Go to the College Fair to gather brochures and applications.</p> | <p>*Take the ACT</p> <p>*Take the SAT II if needed.</p> <p>*Plan a schedule for college visits in summer and fall.</p> <p>* Make plans for the summer (classes at college, volunteer programs, workshops, specialized camps- see what's available in guidance.</p> |

SENIOR YEAR PLANNING CALENDAR

| SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>* A meeting will be scheduled for you to meet with your counselor to continue your college research and begin to prepare your applications. *Provide your e-mail address for senior updates. * Ask teachers for letters of recommendation. Students using www.commonapp.org must enter their counselors & teacher recommendation e-mails. *Register for SAT and the ACT if necessary. www.commonapp.org or the college website. HVCC/SCCC – sign up for instant admission days in the guidance office.</p> | <p>*Visit with college representatives in the guidance office *Register for SAT's and ACT if necessary. *Register with NCAA if you plan to play Division I or II college sports. * PROFILE registration opens on collegeboard.com for financial aid at most private colleges.</p> | <p>*Work on your college essays *Attend open houses, plan college visits, or arrange interviews if needed. *Make sure your teachers have any additional forms required for recommendations. *SUNY applicants - recommended submission deadline of Part I is December 1. *Go to the College Fair if you are still searching. *SUNY Supplemental Applications are available on the SUNY website. Make sure you complete this section of the application.</p> | <p>*Submit completed transcript requests to the guidance office including \$1.00 for postage for each one. Applications should be handed in as soon as possible but at least 2 weeks before the deadline indicated by the college. *Print FAFSA form on the web worksheet from www.fafsa.ed.gov * Attend financial aid night.</p> | <p>*Financial Aid Month- prepare your financial aid application. *Inform your counselor if you would like midyear grades sent to colleges. Bring any forms that your college requires.</p> |
| FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
| <p>*Continue college visits to help you with final decisions.</p> | <p>*Inform your counselor of college decisions. Discuss your final plans for next year. If you have concerns about your financial aid package speak with the financial aid office of the college or your counselor.</p> | <p>*Send your deposit and dorm registration to your final college selection. <u>Don't miss the deadline.</u></p> | <p>*Notify the colleges you will not be attending by mail. This may help others who are on a waiting list. *Complete the senior survey distributed by the guidance office.</p> | <p>*Congratulations Graduate! Best of luck in the future.</p> |

Top 50 Fastest-Growing Occupations America's Career InfoNet

These are the occupations that are projected to grow the fastest during the 2008-2018 time period.

1. Biomedical Engineers
2. Network systems and data communications analysts
3. Home health aides
4. Personal and home care aides
5. Financial examiners
6. Medical scientists, except epidemiologists
7. Physician assistants
8. Skin care specialists
9. Biochemists and biophysicists
10. Athletic trainers
11. Physical therapist aides
12. Dental hygienists
13. Veterinary technologists and technicians
14. Dental assistants
15. Computer software engineers, applications
16. Medical assistants
17. Physical therapist assistants
18. Veterinarians
19. Self-enrichment education teachers
20. Compliance officers, except agriculture, and construction, health and safety transportation
21. Occupational therapist aides
22. Environmental engineers
23. Pharmacy technicians
24. Computer software engineers, systems software
25. Survey researchers
26. Physical therapists
27. Personal financial advisors
28. Environmental engineering technicians
29. Occupational therapist assistants
30. Fitness trainers and aerobics instructors
31. Environmental science and protection technicians, including health
32. Heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers
33. Anthropologists and archeologists
34. Paralegals and legal assistants
35. Market research analysts
36. Employment, recruitment, and placement specialists
37. Environmental scientists and specialists, including health
38. Prosthodontists
39. Medical equipment repairers
40. Radiation therapists
41. Cartographers and photogrammetrists
42. Medical secretaries
43. Tree trimmers and pruners
44. Industrial-organizational psychologists
45. Funeral attendants
46. Geographers
47. Helpers-Pipe layers, plumbers, pipe fitters, and steamfitters
48. Occupational therapists
49. Museum Technicians and Conservators
50. Cost estimators