

4-Year Guide for College Preparation

Throughout high school:

- Seek summer and out-of-school activities that enrich and educate. Create your own!
- These activities, along with volunteer service, will also help broaden your view of a variety of careers.
- Work on your **personal statement** throughout high school.

YEAR 1 - FRESHMAN

- Develop a 4+4 Plan with your counselor and your parents. Remember that excelling in “core courses” increases your chances of scoring well on college entrance exams.
- Begin an electronic portfolio by completing the AZCIS Interest Profiler or Choices Planner Interest Inventory. This will help you focus on the classes you should take to honor your career and educational choices.
- Participate in school activities and events, sports, and summer programs that will enrich your experiences. Seek leadership and creative opportunities.
- Begin to use the Internet to research colleges and areas of interest. Develop a professional e-mail address. Maintain your MySpace, Facebook, etc. accounts as if college and scholarship decision-makers and future employers will see them and judge you by their contents!
- Use your 4+4 Folder to keep copies of your report cards, test scores, honors and awards, and a list of your activities.
- Start your Personal Information Sheet and keep that in your 4+4 Folder.
- Maintain a strong grade point average. Develop good study habits and a study group of friends who have the same goals for success.
- Beware of anything that costs you money, whether it is a way to pay for college or a recognition book.
- Develop a plan to pay for college with your parents.

YEAR 2 - SOPHOMORE

- Review your new schedule with your counselor to make sure you are taking the right courses. Remember to plan for making up any “F” or “Incomplete” courses.
- Concentrate on courses that prepare you for your field of interest and maintain a strong grade point average.
- Take the PSAT in October. Take the PLAN if your school offers it.
- Use the AZCIS Occupation Sort or Choices Planner Career Finder to review and update your career inventory. Explore careers that are related to the one(s) you have chosen and are related to your personal goals.

- Seek leadership opportunities in your extracurricular activities.
- Discuss with your counselor summer enrichment programs at the various colleges and/or other productive activities for your summer months.
- Continue to update your Folder or portfolio. Include thoughts about leadership skills, recommendations you may have received, lists of activities and accomplishments.

YEAR 3 - JUNIOR

- Review your schedule and GPA with your counselor at the beginning of the school year to keep yourself on track.
- Take the PSAT in October to prepare for taking the ACT or SAT at the end of the junior year or beginning of the senior year.
- Update your Folder or portfolio about colleges that appeal to you, using AZCIS, Choices, or the ACT/SAT websites.
- Explore majors, so that you apply to the proper school! Not all colleges offer all majors, so it is important to use the College Board College Match, AZCIS Undergraduate School Sort or Choices Planner School Finder.
- Visit as many colleges as possible and write in your Folder/portfolio how you can learn your chosen career.
- Attend college fairs and presentations by representatives of colleges. Listen to and look for announcements regarding these events.
- Attend the National College Fair at the Phoenix Convention Center on September 27, 2009.
- Read all college-related literature mailed to you. **beware** of anything that costs you money!
- Maintain a strong grade point average in college-prep classes.
- Sign up to take the SAT or ACT in May or June; registration forms are in the counseling office, or you may register online.
- Talk with adults who work in your areas of interest. Find out where they attended college and pick their brains!
- Start collecting recommendations for your folder.

The College Application Process

YEAR 4 - Senior Year Checklist

Follow these guidelines to graduate on time and attend College in the fall of 2010.

Keep a notebook or series of folders for each month to keep organized.

Time of Year	Activity	Date to Remember
July/August	Review your senior year classes with your counselor. Earn the best grades you can! Unweighted GPA _____; Class rank _____/_____; Percentile _____%; # of credits _____ Classes I need to make up _____ Update your Personal Information Sheet	_____
August	Register early to take the SAT or ACT. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay by credit card if you register online. • There are practice questions at both sites. • Ask about paper registrations in the counseling office. • You may get a fee waiver if you qualify. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCUPLACER is the test you will need to take for _____ community college placement. 	_____ (date mailed/e-mailed) _____ (2nd registration)
August	Apply to the colleges you wish to attend. (application, official transcript, fee, test scores)	_____
September	Attend Arizona College Day on your campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also attend the national college fair at Phoenix Convention Center. • Sign up to see representatives when they are on campus. 	September 27, 2009
September	Write your Scholarship Resumé. Write or re-write your personal statement.	_____
September	Seek letters of recommendation. Note on your College Checklist.	_____
Throughout the year	Apply for scholarships you seek. Note on your College Checklist. Use the AZCIS Financial Aid Sort or the Choices Planner Scholarship Finder.	_____
January	Obtain the FAFSA from the counseling office.	_____
January/February	Financial Aid Night for Parents. Complete FAFSA with parents.	_____
January/February	Respond to mail from colleges. Apply for housing. Confirm attendance.	_____
February/March	Respond to SAR as soon as received.	_____
March/April	Seek advisement and register for classes. Send immunization records.	_____
Spring	Respond to Financial Aid Letter from college. Pay fees and register for classes.	_____
May	Ask the credentials specialist to send final transcript. Responsibly enjoy graduation. You have earned it!	_____