



PLANNING FOR COLLEGE?

1. Relax and have fun with the process!
 - There are many schools and they are not all highly competitive.
 - There will be a good choice for your child and it will all work out in the end.
 - Your child does not have to be perfect to find a college where they will do well.
 - Let your student drive the process.

2. Academics and Selection of Curriculum
 - Enroll in strong academic college prep courses. The UC/CSU a – g courses will also meet the requirements for most colleges. However, some very selective colleges may require more.
 - Colleges want to see that students are willing to challenge themselves. Take advanced math, AP or Honors classes if grades can be maintained at A or B.
 - Continue to take demanding courses throughout high school.
 - Better grades will lead to more college options and more opportunity for merit aid.

3. There is no need to overload on extracurricular activities.
 - Pursue couple of activities throughout all four years of high school.
 - Demonstrate passion and commitment.
 - Take on leadership roles when possible.
 - Options for activities may include sports, performing arts, speech and debate, robotics club, etc.
 - Options for community involvement may include scouts, church activities, volunteer positions, summer jobs, internships.
 - Think about doing something during the summer, especially between junior and senior year. This could be travel, sports or hobby camp, summer job, etc.

4. Encourage your student to develop good habits and pay attention to what works for them.
 - Continuously improve time management, note taking and study skills throughout high school.
 - Read, read, and read some more.
 - What classes do they enjoy and why?
 - In what environment do they seem to learn best?

- If your student has learning issues, make sure he/she understands them, learns to articulate them to others and is able to advocate for his/her needs.
 - Give your student increasingly more responsibility throughout high school.
5. Plan to start the process in earnest by the middle of junior year.
- Record accomplishments and awards throughout high school, so that you don't need to rely on memory when it comes time to complete the college applications.
 - If you haven't already, start setting expectations with your child as to how much you will contribute financially and what, if any, restrictions you will impose as to type of school, location, etc.
 - Take SAT and/or ACT for the first time no later than the spring of junior year.
 - Identify preliminary list of colleges before spring break of junior year.
 - Plan to use junior year spring break to visit colleges.
 - Visit as many colleges on the list as possible while school is in session.
 - Start applications and essays during the summer before senior year.
 - Applications deadlines fall between November and February for the most part.
 - Athletes, performing arts, ROTC will have additional work and may need to start a bit earlier.
6. When the time comes, look beyond the obvious.
- There are many excellent schools that you have never heard of. The goal is to find a good match for your student, not to find a school that will impress others.
 - Small to medium sized private schools are an excellent option for some students and are often less expensive than the sticker price.
 - Gaining acceptance to the UC campuses is increasingly difficult.