HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE STEP BY STEP

Meet with your high school guidance counselor as early as 9th grade to discuss college preparation and then continue to meet with him or her regularly.

Take the SAT or ACT and do your best.

Find 2-3 recommendation letters from teachers and school counselors.

Have official copies of your grades and test scores ready to be sent. (If your school’s records are not in English, get certified translations of your diploma and transcript.)

Make sure you know what each college requires to apply and what the deadlines are.

On your application, fill out the required information: name, address, email, citizenship/visa status, family information, optional section asking for ethnic identity, marital status and other personal information that can help you if you are an international student and/or ethnic minority.

Provide information on your high school achievements: academic honors, extracurricular activities, volunteer activities, and unique accomplishments. Write about extra programs or classes you have taken as well as any volunteer work you’ve had to show your dependability and willingness to work hard.

Often colleges will require two essays or “personal statements”—a short one and a longer one. The Common Application requires an essay of 150 words or less on one of your extracurricular or work activities, and one of 250-500 words. The longer essay may ask that you write about a person who has had a significant influence on you: an important person, local, national or global event; or what personal qualities you have that add to the college’s diversity. Practice writing these essays with writing instructors to present yourself in the best light.

A student admissions interview may be required.

Most of all, make sure you stress your bilingualism and the experiences you’ve had that make you stand out.

PAYING FOR YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION

The U.S. Department of Education awards about $150 billion a year in grants, work-study funds, and low-interest loans to more than 15 million students.

Federal and State sources of money are available to eligible students through the federal government. Students/families must complete the FAFSA to show financial need.

Institutional (College) each college has their own scholarship application for money that is awarded through the school. Money may be awarded based on academic achievement, talent, (athletics, music, etc.), unique student characteristics, etc.

Private Scholarships there are thousands of private scholarships nationwide. Scholarships are awarded for a variety of characteristics in addition to need or academic merit. Look for scholarships for international students or students who speak other languages.

The cost of going to college will affect the colleges to which you will apply. Be sure to ask the right questions:

• What will I pay? What is my net price?
• How will I pay? Will my degree provide enough income and career opportunities to pay off my debt?
• Am I eligible to receive scholarships or grants?
• Am I eligible for federal student aid?
• What is the graduation or completion rate for the institution?
• Will I be able to repay my loans?
from your FAFSA to determine your expected family contribution (EFC). You can file the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Common Application:

EOP/HEOP:

PLAN:

College Fair:

Credit Accumulation:

PSAT:

VOCABULARY

SAT:

The FAFSA is a form used to apply for student financial aid to New York State residents attending independent colleges and universities in New York State.

National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test determines how well you qualify for college scholarships.

These are the minimum courses you must currently take in high school to graduate in New York State:

- 3 credits of Math
- 2 in Global History
- 3.5 credits in Elective Courses
- .5 credit of Health
- 1 in Physical Science
- 2 credits of Physical Education
- 3 credits of English
- 1 in World Language
- 1 in Visual/Performing Arts (Dance, Theatre)

The progress you are making toward the number of credits you need to graduate high school.

IN NEW GRADE LEVEL

SOPHOMORE

FIELDS THAT WORKERS

Registered nurse, paramedic, home health aide

Health care professionals

Teller, retail store supervisor, retail store assistant

Transportation and logistics

Customer service

Sales clerk, demonstrators

Translator

In NEW SCHOOL YEAR OF ENROLLMENT

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EXTRACURRICULAR AND WORK

Join school or community-based activities to expand your knowledge and skills.

Start looking for opportunities to take college courses in high school including summer courses (away or at a local college).

Talk to current college students, faculty, and college advisors. Find college programs such as clubs for high school students.

Find out if the PLAN and ACT are offered at your school.

Take opportunities to build on your home language to work towards attaining on-time high school graduation and acceptance into college.

Meet with your school counselor to review your credit accumulation, grades, progress and get the extra help you need (identify a tutor, go to a teacher, tutor, or mentor and put in the extra time you need. Join a new information or vocabulary in English.

Go over your four-year course plan and choose the classes you need to take. Discuss different graduation pathways with your counselor.

Develop and practice good attendance habits.

Work hard to do well in school and on standardized tests. If you need help, or find a tutor, go to a teacher, tutor, or mentor and put in the extra time you need. Join a new information or vocabulary in English.

Apply to colleges.

Send your official test scores to colleges.

Finalize your college list.

Send thank you notes to everyone who helped you (and stay in touch with them).

Make sure you have a productive summer: Work, volunteer, or take a summer course (away or at a local college).

Start your high school resume that lists your awards, honors, paid and volunteer work, and other activities. Activities are available at the school. Ask them how you can continue to improve your English and home language.

Besides building your own skills, having fun, and helping other people, include information about your contributions in your resume.

Participate in summer programs.

Register for your SAT, SAT subject test, ACT exams.

Keep college information together in a file folder.

Find college programs such as clubs for high school students.

Take the SAT or ACT a second time.

Find out about Advanced Placement (AP) classes and make plans to take them if they are offered at your school.

Take the SAT in May or June.

Find and register for an SAT prep course being held in January or February: Plan to prepare for college.

Take the SAT in May or June.

Find out if the PLAN and ACT are offered at your school.

Take the ACT in March or April.

Take the PLAN in March or April.

Discuss different graduation pathways with your counselor.

Take the PSAT in October or November.

Work with your ESOL teachers to refine your college essay. In your essay,

- Work hard to do well in school and on standardized tests. If you need help, or find a tutor, go to a teacher, tutor, or mentor and put in the extra time you need. Join a new information or vocabulary in English.

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