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# Transitions: A Guide to the College Admission Process

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Catlin Gabel

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*This manual is a compilation of information and insights  
drawn from many sources, including college catalogs and guides,  
high school counselors, college admissions officers,  
Catlin Gabel faculty, and – most importantly – our students.*

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# Getting Started

## College Admission Philosophy and Goals

### CHOOSING THE RIGHT SCHOOL

Most students worry about finding, and getting into, the right college. Our philosophy at Catlin Gabel is that choosing a college is a process, and that this process should be geared to the individual. We will help you find a college that will challenge without overwhelming, and that will help you attain your goals throughout the learning process.

The common language of “tiers” and “ranks” employed in some college guidebooks has limited usefulness. Schools vary enormously by a broad range of factors. Some of these are obvious school qualities that allow for blunt categorization: Is the school large, medium, or small? Where is it located? Is it public or private? Does it offer strong programs in the student’s major areas of academic, athletic, or artistic interest? What are our financial parameters?

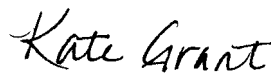
Beyond these questions lies a host of equally important, but far subtler, considerations. What is the political culture of the campus? How economically or ethnically diverse is the student body, or the faculty? How much freedom do the students have in their selection of a course of study? Does the school feel like an ivory tower or is it actively involved in its community? What is the nature of this involvement?

Not all of these questions are meaningful to every student. Each potential applicant comes with his or her own set of needs, concerns, predispositions, passions and attitudes. To get a handle on which school qualities are most essential to you, we have to get to know you. In what kind of environment do you work best? What do you consider the good and bad things about your high school? What inspires you? What do you want to be?

Your responses to our many questions are uniquely yours, and the path you follow as you go through this process is as individual as you are. Along the way we will suggest new places to look, make sure each fork in the road is well marked, and give you the skills and information to help you recognize your choices. Ultimately we believe that, among your options, the final decision of where you attend college should be yours. After all, your level of success there is up to you and you alone. Please pick up the phone or come in and see us.



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# The College Admission Process

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

### YOUR RIGHTS IN THE COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS

#### Before You Apply

You have the right to receive factual and comprehensive information from colleges and universities about their admission, financial costs, aid opportunities, practices and packaging policies, and housing policies. If you consider applying early admission, early action, or early decision, you have a right to complete information from the college about its processes and policies.

#### When You Are Offered Admission

You have the right to wait to respond to an offer of admission and/or financial aid until May 1. Colleges that request commitments to offers of admission prior to May 1 must clearly offer you the opportunity to request (in writing) an extension until May 1. They must grant you this extension and your request may not jeopardize your status for admission and/or financial aid. (This right does not apply to candidates admitted under a binding early decision program.)

#### If You Are Placed on a Wait List or Alternate List

The letter that notifies you of that placement should provide a history that describes the number of students on the wait list, the number offered admission, and the availability of financial aid and housing. Colleges cannot require a deposit or a written commitment as a condition of remaining on a wait list. Colleges are expected to notify you of the resolution of your wait list status by August 1 at the latest.

If you think your rights have been denied, contact the college or university immediately to request additional information or the extension of a reply date. In addition, ask your counselor to notify the president of the state or regional affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling. If you need further assistance, send a copy of any correspondence you have had with the college or university and a copy of your letter of admission to: NACAC, 1631 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2818.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Although the college selection process is a collective effort, in the end it is a choice only you can make. The following responsibilities are yours:

- 1) Meet all deadlines for applications to colleges and test dates.
- 2) Research each college in which you might be interested by reviewing the Web site, videos, view books and catalogs, and interviewing with alumni, current students, or faculty in departments of interest.
- 3) Take an active role in contacting colleges for applications and information.
- 4) Attend POD meetings with your college counselor.
- 5) Attend appropriate college rep meetings at The Catlin Gabel School and in the community.
- 6) Prepare questions for those college reps.
- 7) Keep all test registration tickets.
- 8) Keep your grades up.
- 9) Keep your parents informed throughout the process.
- 10) Read carefully and follow all directions contained in testing, college, and financial aid applications.
- 11) Request recommendations well in advance of required deadlines.

### When Applying To Colleges and Universities

- 12) Review the policies and procedures of each college or university regarding application fees, financial aid, scholarships and housing. You should also review the policies of each school regarding deposits that may be required before you enroll.
- 13) You must be the sole author of your application.
- 14) Arrange, if appropriate, visits to and/or interviews at colleges of your choice.

### After You Receive Your Admission Decisions

- 15) **Notify each college that accepts you of your final decision no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> (postmark date).** This is very important – it allows colleges to release spaces to students on the waiting list!
- 16) Confirm your intention to enroll and, if required, submit a deposit to only one college. The exception to this is if you are placed on a wait list and are later admitted. You may then accept the offer and submit a deposit; as long as you notify the college you previously agreed to attend. If you are accepted as an early decision candidate, you must promptly withdraw applications made to other colleges. If you are seeking financial aid, you do not need to withdraw other applications until you have received notification about your financial aid eligibility.

## Naviance: Family Connection

<http://connection.naviance.com/catlingabel>

### What is it?

Naviance is a web-based system that assists college counselors, students, and parents in the college application process. College counselors are able to track where students apply to school, and students and parents are able to research schools and scholarships of interest. The Naviance Web site for parents and students is called Family Connection.

### What type of information is stored in my profile?

Student profiles store contact information, parent names, and birth dates, and we routinely import test scores from ACT and College Board. By spring of the junior year, students will begin tracking colleges of interests. Student GPA's are imported into the system over the summer before the senior year begins. In the senior year, we track all college applications, transcript releases, and application results with the system.

### What do I need to do?

In the fall, juniors and their parents will receive e-mails with the web link and personal registration codes. If you have not received a password from Robyn, e-mail her at [washburnr@catlin.edu](mailto:washburnr@catlin.edu). She will give you a registration code that will help you log on for the first time. Robyn will visit PODS to show students how to use the site, and parents and students are always welcome to contact Robyn for technical support.

Parents are not required to use the site, but we issue accounts to parents because we think the college and scholarship search features as well as college application tracking tools are helpful.

Students, on the other hand, are expected to use the site often, especially during the fall of their senior year. As a senior, each student will be asked to log into Family to meet with visiting college representatives throughout the fall when we schedule college visits. By signing up for visits, students will receive automated reminders about dates and times. When spring PODS begin, we will help juniors develop "Colleges I'm considering lists" in their profiles, and we will ask them to complete a couple of online surveys. As students visit colleges, we encourage them to create journal entries with details of the visit. Finally, when seniors apply to colleges in the fall, we will ask them to keep their "Colleges to which I am applying lists" up to date and remember to "Request Transcripts" in Naviance.

## You and the Schools

### Choosing Your Environment

#### PREFERENCES

What exactly does “appropriate match” mean? The answer depends upon the individual. You must ask yourself what makes a good learning environment *good for you*.

Since The Catlin Gabel School is the educational environment you are probably most familiar with, begin by considering these questions:

- What do I like and dislike about my school?
- Do I do better in small classes and group discussions, or do I get more out of a large lecture situation?
- Do I work best in a structured, organized environment, or in an open, self-guided environment?
- How will I pay for all this?

It may take some time for you to find the answers to these questions. Discuss them with your family and with your counselor. Answering them honestly will focus your choices on colleges that best fit your needs.

#### LOCATION

Geography may be an important factor in your choice of college. The cost of traveling back and forth across the country, not to mention shipping boxes here and there, adds up fast.

Universities and colleges come in all kinds of architectural styles, from ivy-covered brick to contemporary designs. Campus size and spaciousness vary from colleges with acres of wooded, rolling grounds to those in modern buildings surrounded by large cities. You should know something of a college’s location and living conditions before you decide whether it’s the place for you. Consider the following questions;

- How will you travel between home and college, and how will you pay for it?
- How will you get around campus? How will you get away from it?
- What’s the weather like? If you like the outdoors, how far away *is* the outdoors and how will you get there?

- Does the campus feel especially separated from, or integrated into, the surrounding community?
- What type of housing is available? Are there co-op opportunities, specialized dormitories or inexpensive options off-campus?
- If you want to live in the dorms, are there enough rooms for all the students who request them?
- What is the campus environment like on the weekends? Do most students leave the dorms for home or elsewhere?

## ACADEMICS

Each college or university has its own approach to education. Where will you do best?

- What are the most popular majors? Do they have a program of study in your area of interest? How many faculty are involved in that program/department?
- Is there an honors program?
- Is there a possibility of independent study?
- Are there study abroad programs available?
- What is the average class size?
- What are the required courses?
- What is the typical freshman schedule?
- How accessible are the professors?
- Are many/any courses taught primarily by graduate students?

## ACTIVITIES

Your activities outside class will greatly affect your education. Consider the following:

- How wide is the range of activities in athletics, politics, performing arts, and other pursuits?
- What cultural opportunities (concerts, exhibits, speakers, etc.) exist on campus or nearby?
- If the college is not coed, what types of social opportunities are available?
- Are fraternities and sororities influential on campus? Are they the only social life on campus? What's their reputation?
- What is the student government on campus like? Are many students involved? How influential is the student voice in important decisions?

- What are the opportunities for participating in inter-collegiate or intramural sports?
- What special interest groups (clubs, publications, teams, political or multicultural organizations) are active on campus?
- Are internship opportunities available in the community? Research both on and off campus opportunities.

## STUDENT SERVICES

Colleges have a number of offices to help students. Consider the following:

- What types of financial aid does the school offer – scholarships, loans, and work-study? Are there special educational opportunities available through focused work-study or paid internships?
- Are there tutorial centers of any kind?
- How accessible are the academic advisors?
- Is help with career planning available?
- What type of service does the college offer to seniors in contacting potential employers and assisting with job placement following graduation?
- How does the college assist seniors who are interested in graduate school?

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Investigate the following now to avoid unpleasant surprises later.

- What is the school's view on equal opportunity for women and minorities in education? How well are those attitudes expressed in the student body and faculty make up?
- What rules govern your choice of residence? What rules govern the various residence halls on campus? What is the procedure for finding a new dormitory room or roommate?
- What rules govern the school as a whole?
- What role does religious observance play in your life? Are the services and resources available on campus or in the nearby community sufficient for you?
- What is the library like? Does it participate in inter-library loans? Will it be open when you need it to be? Is it a place you'll feel comfortable spending hours at a time?
- Where would you eat? What is the meal plan like? Do you have special dietary needs?

- What does the college say about crime on campus? How safe are the school's immediate environs? What do the students say?
- What kinds of computer and internet access are available to students?

## VISITS AND INTERVIEWS

If you are seriously interested in a college, it's a good idea to visit the campus while classes are in session. Once you've determined that a school meets your primary needs (e.g., an outstanding biology department), don't be swayed by any single factor, such as an unusually talented or deficient tour guide. The atmosphere of a school is an intangible thing. Do some people watching over a cup of coffee in the student union. Look at the bulletin boards. Browse through the bookstore. Check out the library. Read the graffiti (if any) on the restroom walls. Read a copy of the student newspaper.

- What is the ratio of resident students to commuting students? How many come from public schools; how many from private or prep schools? Ask to see the freshman profile – a composite view of the freshman class – and compare yourself with it.
- Talk with students, especially freshmen. What were their initial reactions to the college when they started? What are their feelings now? What would they like to change?
- What things seem most important in the lives of students you meet? Grades, career, questions, sports, social life?
- Is the student body unified in attitude, or are there a number of groups with different outlooks and values?
- What sorts of speakers have visited recently? What other events are taking place on campus?

Try to make arrangements to visit some classes at each college. Ask yourself these questions:

- Are most classes large or small – lecture or discussion?
- What seems to be the students' attitude toward their classes – enthusiastic, satisfied, indifferent, or disappointed?

Try to arrange an interview with an admission officer. If you are able to obtain one, be prepared. Remember, the interview is a chance for the admission person to get to know you. Tell them about your interests, your goals, your favorite classes and activities. If you have researched the college well before the interview, you will most likely have a list of questions to ask. This is perfectly acceptable (and generally preferred), as is taking notes on the answers you receive. Read through the school's literature and be ready to discuss your impressions. Dress casually, wear comfortable shoes (you'll do a lot of walking), be relaxed, and don't be afraid to open up. Here is a list of topics to consider when developing your list of interview questions:

## Social Concerns

Describe the student body. How diverse is it? What percent of the students are from outside of the state or region? Are there international students and minorities represented?

What percent of the students live on the campus? Is housing guaranteed for four years? Are single rooms available? Are the dorms coed, single sexes, or combination of both? Are there "theme" houses (i.e., a French language house)?

What about the social life? What might take place on a typical weekend? What types of entertainment and lectures are brought to the campus? If there are "Greeks" (fraternities and sororities) on campus, to what extent do they dominate the social scene? What is the administration's attitude toward "Greeks?" What are the social opportunities if one chooses not to be a "Greek?"

What kind of religious diversity exists on the campus? Are religious facilities available for those students who want them? If the school has a religious affiliation, how much is the religious life emphasized? Are religion courses or attendance at religious services required?

What are the athletic facilities (indoor and outdoor)? What athletic division is the school in and what are the opportunities for varsity, club and intramural sports? If you are interested in a specific sport, ask about it.

## Academic Concerns

What percent of last year's freshman class returned as sophomores? Why did people leave?

What is the most popular major? Which departments are considered to be outstanding; which are mediocre or weak? Are there any academic programs that distinguish this school from others that are similar in size?

How easy is it to change majors? (This is particularly important for students contemplating engineering or other structured majors.) What opportunities exist for independent study or off-campus programs?

How are the library facilities? Describe the computer facilities. How accessible are the computers?

Describe the teaching methods that are used (large lectures, small seminars or discussion groups, for example). Are there any undergraduate classes that are taught by graduate students or teaching assistants? For example, how many courses have enrollment over 50, 100 or 200 students?

If a student is having academic difficulty, what kind of assistance is available to him? Is there a fee for this assistance?

What is the school's policy regarding credit for high school Advanced Placement exam results?

## Additional Considerations

Ask your interviewer to tell you (1) what he or she would change at the school if he or she could change something overnight (a more diplomatic way of asking what is wrong with the school); and (2) what sort of person will be happy and successful at this school for four years.

When the interview is finished, thank the interviewer and say goodbye with a handshake and a SMILE.

Record your impressions, both positive and negative, in a notebook as soon as possible after finishing the interview and leaving the campus. This becomes especially important if you plan to visit a number of schools before making your final decision. If you rely solely on your memory, you will find that your impressions and knowledge of various schools will not be accurate after a few weeks or months have passed. It is also important to compare similar issues on each campus. Enter your impressions in your Naviance journal.

**IMPORTANT: WRITE YOUR INTERVIEWER A THANK YOU NOTE** when you return home. If your interview has been at home with an alumni representative, write a note to that person as well. In each note, mention something from your interview that you felt was especially important or memorable. A good interview should be an enjoyable conversation, and if you make a positive impression, it can be beneficial to admission to that school.



*“We’ll have to take this one—he invented the software we’re using to make the decisions.”*

## Admission Applications

### What You Submit Is the “You” They See!

#### If you are completing a paper application:

- ✓ Read all directions before you begin. Make a photocopy to use as a rough draft. The application should be typed (if you type well) or in black ink in your best handwriting. If you submit a sloppy application, the committee will assume you do sloppy work.
- ✓ Give a response to each question on the application form. If you have no answer to the questions, type or write “N/A” (meaning *not applicable*).
- ✓ Give us any forms that should be completed by your College Counselor. Six weeks in advance is not too early! Thoroughly complete the top portion of your form, remembering to sign and date it in the appropriate spaces.

#### If you are submitting an online application:

- ✓ Only submit your application after you have completed all of the questions and have carefully proofread your answers. After you submit an online application, it's usually not possible to make a correction. Take your time and carefully read the instructions!
- ✓ Pay attention to any required supplements for your application. Make sure you know whether you can electronically submit your supplement or if you need to mail a copy.
- ✓ Complete your Family Connection waiver, and include your Common App user name and password. This will allow us to submit your College Counselor Recommendation and Transcripts electronically.

**! IMPORTANT PRIVACY NOTICE FOR COMMON APPLICATION**

Common Application recommendation forms may not be submitted online by your school until you answer the questions below. You will not be able to change this information once you have completed the items below.

Under the terms of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) you WILL have access to your Common Application recommendation forms after you matriculate UNLESS at least one of the following is true:

1. The institution does not save recommendations post-matriculation (see list at [www.commonapp.org/FERPA](http://www.commonapp.org/FERPA)).
2. You waive your right to access below:

Yes, I DO waive my right to access, and I understand I will never see this recommendation.

No, I DO NOT waive my right to access and may someday choose to review this recommendation.

I authorize all secondary schools I've attended to release all requested records and authorize review of my application for the admission process indicated on my Common Application recommendation forms.

Please enter your Common Application Online username and password if available. This information will ONLY be used to lookup your account so that your counselor and teachers may submit your recommendation forms online.

Common application username:

Common application password:

Confirm password:

However You Apply, Keep Your Family Connection College List Up-to-Date!

## ADMISSION OPTIONS

Different types of admission may be available at a given school in addition to regular admission. These include:

### Early Decision

Students apply to their first choice school early in the fall of their senior year and are notified of the school's decision in December. The decision may be an acceptance, denial, or deferral, where the application is held for consideration in the regular applicant pool. *The student must attend if accepted* (unless there is a financial need not met by the school). Some colleges offer a second round of Early Decision with a January deadline.

### Early Action

The timing is often the same as Early Decision but a number of colleges offer Early Action, in which they respond to an earlier submission of your application. In this type of program, you are not bound to your acceptance, but still may apply to other colleges and defer your decision until May 1.

### Restrictive Early Action

As of this writing (January 2009), Restrictive Early Action (sometimes known as Single-Choice Early Action) admissions programs are only offered by Stanford University and Yale University. The Single-Choice Early Action program is like other non-binding plan in that candidates who are admitted early need not respond to the offer of admission until May 1, and may apply Regular Decision to other schools. Being admitted early would, for example, still allow you to compare offers of financial aid in the spring. However, if you apply Early Action to Stanford or Yale, you may not simultaneously apply Early Action or Early Decision to any other school. In other words, students who are candidates for another college's Early Action or Early Decision program may not apply for Single-Choice Early Action at Yale or Stanford.

### Rolling Admission

Applications are reviewed as the student's file is completed and the student is notified within a few weeks.

### Deferred Admission

An admitted student may delay or defer enrollment to work, travel, or pursue special programs. Most private institutions willingly grant deferrals; they are happy to accept a more mature and experienced student the following year. Students generally cannot attend another college during this time.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Many college applications will require recommendations from people who know you well. Generally, the colleges are interested in hearing from school personnel – your college counselor and one or two of your teachers. Which teacher do you select? Choose the

teacher who knows you best – he or she should be able to write a thorough recommendation. Talk with us about which teachers or coaches to ask. It is not always best to choose a teacher in whose course you received your highest grade.

Allow at least **six weeks** for the letter to be written in advance of the colleges' deadlines.

- ⇒ Ask the writer if he or she is willing to provide you a positive letter of recommendation. Do not presume; after all, they will be doing you a favor.
- ⇒ Be sure the writer knows the deadline.
- ⇒ Provide each writer with the information s/he needs to submit your recommendation online or through regular mail.
- ⇒ Place all envelopes and forms into a larger manila envelope (available in the College Counseling office) with each college name and application deadline listed on the front of the envelope.
- ⇒ A resume or written statement outlining some of your major extracurricular activities and interests may help a teacher or counselor give a fuller and more specific picture of you. Offer to meet with the teacher to answer any questions he or she may have before writing.

Ideally, the teachers should be ones you have had in the junior or senior years. Typically you will need two recommendations, unless the college stipulates more than that. One should know your writing well and the other should know your work in some other academic area such as math, foreign language or science. Usually an English or history teacher best fits the category of one who knows your writing well.

**Once you have decided whom to ask, remember that you have to ask, not just expect that the teacher will do the letters.** Letters of recommendation are extremely time-consuming. Some teachers have more than their share to do, because they do them very well and teach a higher percentage of juniors and seniors. Teachers often spend significant portions of their Christmas vacation writing those letters. Be appreciative.

## ESSAYS

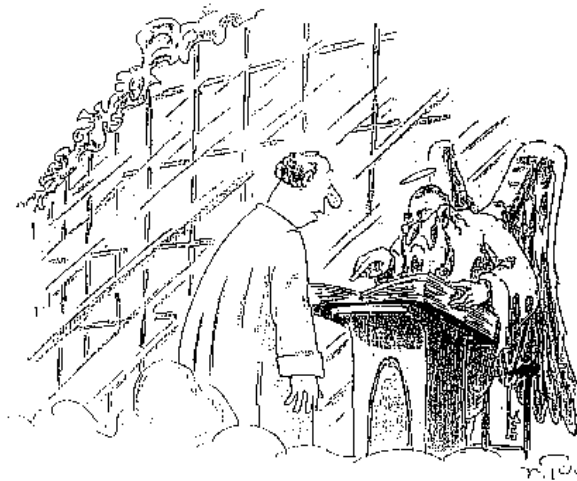
Writing plays an important role in nearly every college application. Each college is looking for an essay that effectively communicates its point, exhibits a degree of creativity and insight, demonstrates some knowledge of grammar and mechanics, and – most of all – provides greater understanding of who you are. It is an opportunity for you to show the readers something about you beyond academics – how you think, what you care about, where you're headed. You will meet with us before beginning your essay and we will continue to work with you while you edit and revise it. Short answer and supplementary questions are also very important and should be answered with care.

## THE ADMISSION DECISION

Although each college is looking for different things in a student, virtually every school you apply to will consider the following:

- Rigor of classes taken, grades, scholastic record, class standing, and the quality of your high school.
- SAT and/or ACT test scores.
- Writing ability – application essay and/or a graded writing sample.
- Recommendations describing your personality, character, ability, academic motivation, maturity, time management, skills and passions.
- Activities (sports, awards, leadership, volunteer work, community service).
- Interview reports by college representative.
- Whether you are a legacy (child of alumnus), have a special talent, or belong to an under-represented ethnic group.
- Overall standing compared to that of other applicants.

Eventually, all applicants will come down to these basic criteria. Be advised, however, that many colleges, especially large public universities with huge numbers of applicants, may consider only course load, GPA, class standing, test scores, and perhaps exceptional athletic ability. In addition, because there are several factors and people involved in each admissions decision, do not believe any coach or other special talent instructor who claims that he or she can “get you into” any institution. Nobody outside of the admissions committee has that power.



*“You’re kidding! You count SAT’s?”*

## Financial Aid and Scholarships

### It's Well Worth the Time

#### COLLEGE COSTS

With the high cost of colleges and universities, many families find it difficult to meet college expenses. It is worth applying even if you think your family's income is too high for you to receive "need-based" financial aid, especially if you already have a brother or sister in college.

Students applying for financial aid need to have their parents complete the CSS Profile (private schools), FAFSA (all schools), and any additional forms the school requires from applicants (and there are plenty). We can assist in completing these forms and the student or parents should speak with us as early as possible with any questions about financial aid.

#### NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID

Many private colleges require the CSS Profile form, especially if you are applying Early Decision or Early Action. The purpose of this form is to provide the schools with a general idea of your financial aid eligibility. This allows them to provide you with an estimated offer of financial aid should you be admitted early. There is a fee for filing this form, so be sure to check with each school where you are applying as to whether or not they require this form. All students who complete the CSS Profile still have to submit the FAFSA form. You may file the CSS Profile online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the form all schools use to determine a family's eligibility for need-based financial aid. Once the family completes the FAFSA form, it is sent to a central processing agency of the federal government, which uses a standardized computation to determine a family's eligibility for aid. The results are sent to colleges you have designated on the form. The FAFSA must be submitted between January 1 and March 1 of the student's senior year to qualify for all state and federal grants. You may file the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). To file the FAFSA online, you will need a personal identification number (PIN), which can be requested online at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).

Need-based financial aid packages typically include three types of funding:

- Grants and scholarships
- Low-interest student loans
- Federal work-study (campus employment)

If circumstances (e.g., supporting a grandparent, divorce, bankruptcy, retirement, unusual medical expenses, etc.) have caused your income to change dramatically, you may be eligible for special consideration and an increase in your need as determined by the FAFSA. This, however, is a decision made by each individual school and will require you to submit documentation of the changes. Contact each college financial aid office directly if you have any questions regarding your eligibility for aid.

## MERIT AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Many schools will offer merit aid to students who meet specific scholarship criteria (i.e., ethnic background, minimum GPA, academic achievements, etc.). In addition to scholarships, most schools have grants available for students with need (as determined by the FAFSA). Check with each individual school to determine institutional scholarship availability and requirements. We will work with interested students in identifying appropriate scholarships.


### Scholarship Search Tips

- Begin your search 12-16 months prior to your date of enrollment; a typical high school student should be eligible to apply for several different scholarships.
- Get a calendar just to keep track of your scholarship application requests and deadlines.
- Request recommendations four to six weeks prior to the scholarship deadline.
- Set up a file for each scholarship you've applied for and keep copies of all correspondence and applications.
- Observe application deadlines and apply early. Late scholarship applications usually end up in the trash.
- Proofread everything before you send it.
- NEVER pay for a guaranteed scholarship; if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

### Family Connection Scholarship Listings

As we receive notices about local and national scholarships, we add them to our scholarship database. We update listings daily, and many of the listings have the application forms available to download.

**The Catlin Gabel School**  
8825 Southwest Barnes Road  
Portland OR 97225  
p: (503) 297-1894

  
**Catlin Gabel**  
forming bold learners

**Family Connection**  
powered by NAVIANCE

**Scholarship Match**

Below are scholarships with requirements that may be a suitable match for you according to the information that your school has entered about each scholarship. If a scholarship is listed as "no restrictions found", this means that your school did not enter any qualifications for the scholarship that would indicate you are ineligible such as gender, ethnicity, minimum gpa, etc. Some scholarships on this list may still have special requirements that are not listed on this site and you should verify your eligibility with the scholarship organization or your counselor if uncertain.

Scholarship	Matching Criteria	Deadline
<a href="#">Lake Forest College Scholarships</a>	minimum SAT	2/15
<a href="#">Boston University Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Competition</a>	minimum SAT	12/1
<a href="#">High Honors Scholarship</a>	minimum SAT	3/15
<a href="#">Mount St. Mary's College</a>	minimum SAT	12/1
<a href="#">Aqnes Scott Merit Scholarships</a>	minimum SAT	-

**Main**  
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 :: my test scores  
 :: my colleges  
 :: my journal  
 :: my documents  
 :: my account  
 :: survey history

## OTHER INTERNET RESOURCES

<b>American Indian Education Programs</b>	<a href="http://www.oiep.bia.edu">www.oiep.bia.edu</a>
<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<a href="http://www.americorps.org">www.americorps.org</a>
<b>National Collegiate Athletic Association Athletic Scholarships</b>	<a href="http://www.ncaa.org">www.ncaa.org</a>
<b>College Board Scholarship Search</b>	<a href="http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp">http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp</a>
<b>Cooperative Education</b>	<a href="http://www.co-op.edu">www.co-op.edu</a>
<b>FastAid Scholarship Search</b>	<a href="http://www.fastaid.com">www.fastaid.com</a>
<b>FastWEB</b>	<a href="http://www.fastweb.com">www.fastweb.com</a>
<b>Federal Financial Aid</b>	<a href="http://www.studentaid.ed.gov">www.studentaid.ed.gov</a>
<b>FinAid</b>	<a href="http://www.finaid.com">www.finaid.com</a>
<b>Financial Aid for Health Professions</b>	<a href="http://www.bhpr.hrsa.gov">www.bhpr.hrsa.gov</a>
<b>Gates Millennium Scholarships</b>	<a href="http://www.gmsp.org">www.gmsp.org</a>
<b>Hispanic Scholarship Fund</b>	<a href="http://www.hsf.net">www.hsf.net</a>
<b>Job Search</b>	<a href="http://www.studentjobs.gov">www.studentjobs.gov</a> <a href="http://www.coolworks.com">www.coolworks.com</a> <a href="http://www.idealists.org">www.idealists.org</a>
<b>Military Scholarships</b>	<a href="http://www.myfuture.com">www.myfuture.com</a> <a href="http://www.afrotc.com">www.afrotc.com</a> <a href="http://www.nrotc.navy.mil">www.nrotc.navy.mil</a>  <a href="http://www.goarmy.com">www.goarmy.com</a> <a href="http://www.navy.mil">www.navy.mil</a> <a href="http://www.uscg.mil">www.uscg.mil</a>
<b>Peace Corps</b>	<a href="http://www.peacecorps.gov">www.peacecorps.gov</a>
<b>Peterson's College Quest</b>	<a href="http://www.collegequest.com">www.collegequest.com</a>
<b>Scholarship Scams</b>	<a href="http://www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams">www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams</a> <a href="http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lsa/scams">www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lsa/scams</a>
<b>Students.gov</b>	<a href="http://www.students.gov">www.students.gov</a>

## Standardized Testing

### PSAT, SAT, AP, ACT, TOEFL

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLEGE BOARD

The College Board is a membership organization whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 4,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves over three and a half million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT® and the Advanced Placement Program® (AP). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns. Go to the College Board Web site at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for a wide range of information about test registration and preparation.

#### PSAT

The PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test) is designed as a practice test for the SAT. This test is also used to determine which students will be considered for National Merit Scholarships and several other special and minority scholarships. The PSAT is given in October each year at Catlin Gabel. No special registration is required. All students take the test as part of their regular school schedule. Students receive a booklet with practice questions prior to taking the test. Juniors are expected to take the PSAT; sophomores may also take the test if they wish. After the test is scored, students receive their test booklet, answers and correct answers. Reviewing this information is beneficial to determining what academic areas need improvement prior to taking the SAT.

#### SAT

##### Test Preparation

The best preparation for the SAT is the sort of long-term preparation that your courses in math and English represent. A strong reading habit from an early age is a real asset as well. If you want to prepare specifically for the SATs, you can use materials the College Board gives to you through our counseling office or College Board books that are available in bookstores.

If you want to take a class, there are several possibilities in Portland: **Kaplan Educational Services** (503-222-5556) and the **Saturday Academy** (503-725-2341) are two local options. We do not specifically endorse any particular test preparation course. Some classes are quite expensive. A student should not subtract time from his/her regular high school work to take such a course. How well a student does in class continues to be more important than test scores. If a student has high financial need, you should know that most testing companies have scholarships for their courses. There are several private tutors available in the Portland area and private tutoring is available in the Learning Center as well.

## SAT

The SAT is a three-hour test that measures verbal, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills students have developed over time and skills they need to be successful in college. Many colleges and universities use the SAT as one indicator among others – class rank, high school GPA, extracurricular activities, personal essay, and teacher recommendations – of a student's readiness to do college-level work. SAT scores are compared with the scores of other applicants and the accepted scores at an institution, and can be used as a basis for awarding merit-based financial aid.

Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800. High school juniors and seniors typically take the SAT. It is administered seven times a year at area high schools (not Catlin Gabel). You may take the test more than once if you feel you could improve your first test scores.

## SAT: Subject Tests

Subject tests are one hour, mostly multiple-choice tests that measure how much students know about a particular academic subject and how well they can apply that knowledge. The 20 subject tests include:

Physics	German
Literature	German with Listening
U.S. History	Spanish
World History	Spanish with Listening
Math Level 1	Modern Hebrew
Math Level 2	Italian
Biology E/M	Latin
Chemistry	Japanese with Listening
French	Korean with Listening
French with Listening	Chinese with Listening

Many colleges require or recommend one or more of the Subject Tests for admission or placement. Used in combination with other background information (your high school record, scores from other tests like the SAT Reasoning Test, teacher recommendations, etc.), they provide a dependable measure of your academic achievement and are a good predictor of future performance.

## Please Note:

- ✓ Students with learning disabilities as determined by an outside agency may qualify for **extended time tests**. Students who qualify for extended time tests should apply to [www.CollegeBoard.com](http://www.CollegeBoard.com) for registration approval by October of their junior year to

insure extended time for SAT tests. **See Kathy Qualman or Ann Fyfield in the Learning Center with specific questions.**

## Taking the Test

- 1) Check your ticket for the test center location.
- 2) If you lose your ticket, take photo I.D. to the test center for which you were scheduled; your name will be on the list.
- 3) **Keep the booklet that came with the test registration information.** It contains answers to many questions you may have regarding registration, lost tickets, change of test date, and score reports.
- 4) Be prepared. Bring the following items with you to the test:
  - Photo I.D.
  - Several sharpened #2 pencils
  - Your test admission ticket
  - A watch (optional)
  - A calculator for math
  - Your social security number (SSN)

## Score Choice

Beginning in March 2009, College Board will offer Score Choice giving students the opportunity to select which scores they send to colleges by test date for the SAT® and by individual test for SAT Subject Tests™—in accordance with a college or university's score-use practice.

Each college, university and scholarship program has different score-use practices. To help students understand how institutions use scores, the College Board has developed a system that will display the score-use practices of participating institutions to students when they register for the test on collegeboard.com or when they order additional score reports. Colleges and universities will only receive the scores that students choose to send them, and scores will not be released against students' wishes. Students who have not reported scores to any institutions will receive special e-mail reminders when traditional score-submission deadlines approach.

Score Choice is optional, and if a student does not actively decide to use it, all his or her scores will be sent automatically. For students who are unsure of which scores to send, College Board recommends that they send all their scores.

To help students and parents understand the new system, College Board has added an FAQ to their Score Choice Web page, and they offer an online tutorial. Students may call 1-888-SAT-HELP if they have questions about using Score Choice.

## Proposed 2009-10 SAT Test Dates

October 18  
 November 7  
 December 5  
 January 23  
 March 13 (SAT Reasoning Test Only)  
 May 1  
 June 5

## Fees

Test	Fees
SAT	\$45.00
Subject Tests	
Basic registration fee	\$20.00
Language Tests with Listening	add \$20.00
All other Subject Tests	add \$9.00
<b>Registration Services</b> (add to total test fees)	
Late registration fee	\$23.00
Registration by telephone	\$12.50
International processing fee (for students testing in countries other than the United States, U.S. territories, and Puerto Rico)	\$26.00 add \$23
Security surcharge to test in India and Pakistan	Add \$22.00
Standby testing fee	\$38.00
Change test, test date, or test center fee	\$22.00
<b>Receiving Scores</b>	
Scores received online	FREE
Scores received by phone (per call)	\$12.50
Scores received by mail	FREE
<b>Sending Scores</b>	
Score report requests at registration	Four included at no charge
Additional score report requests:	
Score report fee (per report)	\$9.50
Request by phone (per order)	Add \$10.00
Request to rush (per order)	Add \$27
Request for old reports (per order; additional fees may apply)	Add \$21
<b>Additional Fees</b>	
Multiple-choice Hand Score Verification	\$50.00

## Fee Waivers

The College Board fee-waiver service assists students for whom payment of fees for the SAT Reasoning Test or Subject Tests might be a barrier to college entrance. College Counselors may award fee waivers to students who meet College Board's eligibility guidelines. College Board's primary source for determining student eligibility is the USDA income chart for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program/National School Lunch Program as your primary source in determining student eligibility. Many students who receive financial aid to attend Catlin Gabel would also qualify for the free lunch program. **If you think you might qualify, you**

**need to talk to your College Counselor this spring -- before you register to take the SAT's!**

Students who register with fee waivers will receive:

- Free testing for up to 2 SAT test and 2 SAT Subject test dates during the student's junior and senior year in high school
- Score reporting to up to 4 colleges
- Up to four application fee waivers at many colleges
- CSS Profile Registration Fee and reporting to up to 6 colleges or programs

## AP EXAMS

AP exams (Advanced Placement) are sponsored by the College Board. The AP tests give high school students the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement while still in high school. This may enable students to gain advanced standing, placement, or credit at the college they choose to attend. Quick facts about AP exams:

- The exams are given at Catlin Gabel in May of each year.
- Students may take any number of AP exams.
- Scores on AP exams do not have to be entered on your transcript or sent to colleges.
- Scores of three or better generally are put on transcripts.
- Scores range from one to five.
- Individual departments within individual colleges decide whether they will give placement or credit for particular scores.
- Information about signing up for AP exams is available during winter term.

## AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT)

The ACT (American College Testing) is a national college entrance-testing program that focuses on four areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Certain colleges require the ACT; some will accept either the SAT I or ACT scores. As you make up the list of colleges that interest you, be sure to note those that require or prefer the ACT. The ACT is generally described as being a more "achievement" oriented test than the SAT I. The ACT is administered at high schools in the Portland area.

### **2009-10 ACT Test Dates**

February 7, 2009  
April 4, 2009  
June 13, 2009  
September 12, 2009  
October 24, 2009  
December 12, 2009  
February 6, 2010  
April 10, 2010  
June 12, 2010

ACT Fees	
Basic registration: Includes reports for you, your high school, and up to four colleges requested at registration. (No Writing)	\$31.00
Basic registration: Includes reports for you, your high school, and up to four colleges requested at registration. (Plus Writing)	\$46.00
Each 5th and 6th college choices	\$9.00 each
Optional Writing Test refundable if you are absent on test day or you remove the Writing Test option before you begin testing.	\$14.50
Late fee	\$19.00
Test date change: For different date if absent on original date. If you request a test date change after the regular deadline for the new date, a late fee also applies.	\$20.00
Test center change	\$20.00
Standby testing on test day	\$40.00
Telephone registration for repeat test takers	\$12.00
Viewing scores online	FREE
Test information release service On selected national test dates; refundable if not available.	\$17.00

### Standby Testing

- Testing as a standby costs \$40.00 **in addition** to the basic fee for your test option.
- You won't be able to register online: you'll need to ask your college counselor for a registration packet.
- You are **not** guaranteed a seat or test booklet.
- Test centers admit standbys on a first-come, first-served basis and **only** if there are enough seats, materials, and staff remaining after admission of all registered students.
- Do **not** try to make arrangements with a test center supervisor or contact ACT to find out if a particular test center will have room on test day. The supervisor will not know if any standbys can be admitted until all registered examinees have been seated on test day. You may be turned away.

### Accommodations

If you currently receive accommodations in school due to a professionally diagnosed and documented disability, you may provide documentation to support a request for one of the following:

**Center Testing #1:** Standard Time National Testing with Accommodations

**Center Testing #2:** Extended Time National Testing (50% more time). If approved, you will be allowed up to 5 hours total to work on the multiple-choice tests at your own pace, including breaks between the tests. If you are taking the Writing Test, you will be allowed up to 5 hours and 45 minutes total; however, you must complete the multiple-choice tests within 5 hours.

**Special Testing:** At specially arranged times with extended time and alternate formats available—*not* as part of national testing

## TOEFL

If you are a foreign-born (non-native English speaking student who has been living in the United States less than four years or a student in whose home a language other than English is the primary language), you are eligible to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). This exam establishes your proficiency in English. You may sign up for the test in September of your senior year. Taking the TOEFL in addition to the SAT I or ACT will satisfy almost every college requirement for standardized testing. For more information about the TOEFL, visit [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org).

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## For Students and Parents

- Application Checklist – a handy worksheet for students to use when filling out your college applications
- Getting started with campus visits
- What's a parent to do? Advice to help you navigate the college search and application process
- Recommended Resources
- Junior Parent Questionnaire

## Application Checklist

Make a copy for each college to which you are applying. Not all items apply to all applicants or application forms. Keep the checklist in a notebook with all of your information about that college or university.

---

Name of College/University

---

Admission contact person

Email

Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ College added to your "Colleges to which I'm applying" list in Family Connection. Transcripts have been requested. Privacy Notice has been submitted.

\_\_\_\_\_ Request teacher recommendations six weeks ahead of the deadline. Provide them with stamped Catlin Gabel envelopes, addressed to the colleges.

Teacher or recommender's name: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE form and envelope given to teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher or recommender's name: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE form and envelope given to teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date application is due: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Requires supplement to the Common Application.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tests required; which, if any:    \_\_\_ ACT    \_\_\_ SAT Reasoning    \_\_\_ SAT Subject(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ For any school you are applying to that does not accept online applications through Common App, you've given all counselor recommendation forms to Nancy or Kate. If the school does not have a form for the counselor, check with Nancy or Kate about proper procedure. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Write a check for the application fee.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check for proper postage on the application envelope and be certain to print your return address on the envelope.

\_\_\_\_\_ Submit your application so it arrives before the deadline.    Date sent: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Request CollegeBoard or ACT to send your test scores to colleges.    Date Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ CSS Profile submitted (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID form filed (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Institutional financial aid application sent (if applicable). Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Visited campus, created a journal entry in Family Connection about the visit.    Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Interview Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Thank-you note sent.    Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer (name and title): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Alumnus/Alumna Interview: Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_    Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer (name): \_\_\_\_\_    Thank-you note sent.    Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ By May 1: Pay a reservation deposit at the college you plan to attend; send a letter declining offer of admission to all others.    Date mailed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Getting Started with Campus Visits

As you begin the college search, it is important to investigate schools of various types so that you can see how you feel about some basic factors such as size, location, and campus life. It isn't necessary to visit every campus you might want to apply to - remember that colleges of similar types can serve as "templates" for others in different parts of the country. So for example, The University of Oregon, Portland State University, and the University of Washington can give you a good sense of what life is like at large public universities, so they are reasonable templates for, say, the universities of Colorado, Michigan, or Massachusetts. Similarly, Reed, Lewis & Clark, and Linfield or Pacific can be good templates for smaller liberal arts and sciences colleges like Occidental, Denison, or Wesleyan. You can find out a lot about your preferences by making a few local visits first, then using the information you gather to fine tune an itinerary in another part of the country.

Here are some suggestions for West Coast schools of various types and sizes that you may want to visit. Mix things up a bit and keep an open mind as you plan an itinerary -you may surprise yourself and find a great match at a school you haven't really considered before. Schools listed below are roughly divided by size; those labeled "special interest" have distinctive approaches to undergraduate education or specialize in particular academic areas. If you would like sample itineraries for other parts of the country, just drop us an email - we'll be happy to offer suggestions.

### **Washington:**

**Small:** Whitman, University of Puget Sound, Seattle University

**Medium:** Gonzaga University, Western Washington University

**Large:** University of Washington

**Special interest:** Evergreen State University, Cornish School of the Arts, Digipen Institute of Technology

### **Oregon:**

**Small:** Reed College, Lewis & Clark, Linfield, Pacific University, Willamette

**Medium:** University of Portland, Southern Oregon University, Oregon State University

**Large:** University of Oregon, Portland State University

**Special interest:** Pacific Northwest College of Art, Oregon Institute of Technology

### **Northern California:**

**Small:** Mills College, University of the Pacific, University of San Francisco, Dominican University

**Medium:** Stanford, Sonoma State University, Santa Clara University, UC Santa Cruz

**Large:** UC Berkeley, UC Davis, Sacramento State University

**Special interest:** California College of the Arts

### **Southern CA:**

**Small:** Occidental, Whittier, Claremont Colleges, University of Redlands

**Medium:** USC, University of San Diego

**Large:** UCLA, San Diego State, Cal State Long Beach Special interest: Cal Tech, California Institute of the Arts

## What's a Parent to Do?

### **September, October, November: College Reps at School**

*This might be the time to find out you have a normal child. One evening, in a very off-hand way, your daughter allows that she met with the Princeton representative who was visiting her school. At this news, your instrument panel snaps onto full alert. "Yes," you think, "at last!" Then she says, dipping her fingers in her cran-raz juice and drawing sticky designs all over the kitchen counter, "It really sucked!" You're stunned. Over the past year you've had random thoughts about places like Princeton, but "really sucks" wasn't one of them. Naturally, you ask what, in this particular instance, the phrase might mean. So she says that by the time she got to the meeting, all the industrial strength pre-med weenies in the world were there, the "4.3 people," squeezed into the front with their notebooks gaping (these are her words). And of course they knew everything and had all sorts of questions about whether it was possible to do a bio-engineering-classical languages-eco-ethics triple major at Princeton. On top of this, she said, there were the "people who know people" – lanky field-hockey players with year-round tans whose fathers and grandfathers had gone there. "And there wasn't anybody normal in the room," she cries out. Now she's twisting her hair into little braids, which the cran-raz juice is making stick straight out of her head like Pippi-Longstocking's. That's when you begin thinking this college admissions business is going to be a little bit complicated after all. But that's also when you should know you have a normal daughter. God love her.*

This selection from Bill Mayher's The College Admissions Mystique introduces the outward signs we see of the inward experience of anxiety and vulnerability our adolescents endure, however cool, competent, or unconcerned they may appear at other times.

**What's a parent to do?** "How can we help without interfering?" We strongly urge you to become as well informed as you can about the experience of the college admissions process ahead. With your child, it may be enough to ask questions a little, respectfully, and listen a lot. If you want to read, we recommend as the best currently available guide the book just quoted (Bill Mayher's The College Admissions Mystique, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998). Don't miss his section on "clownage" about the goofy behaviors you may expect to see at home, part of the natural dress rehearsal for leaving home, along with tendency to "museumize" childhood. Leaving home is the difficult and underlying greater agenda, which parents do well to keep in view through the entire process of college admissions.

There are numerous additional resources available if you wish to learn more (see Appendix for a listing of some). There is a knack to taking the lead, gently, to help overcome inertia and natural reserve in the face of what is, for most, utterly frightening...and then, gradually, dropping alongside, then a few paces behind, always supporting. Your son or daughter may be a go-getter right from the start, but it's safe to say there are misgivings and fears not far beneath the surface. Be patient, and a good listener.

The changing relationship between parents and college-bound juniors and seniors is challenging. Even the well-organized student can suffer an overload of anxiety. It is enough for a parent to listen and understand, without giving advice. Overcome the protective urge. Inquire, be interested, and send a message of trust in your child's ability to navigate independently and make sensible plans. The early notions and choices you hear may contain some surprises. Help your child come around to a place of clarity and balance. Part of arriving there is testing, trying out, eliminating – independently, so the

choice is authentically one's own – but you can and should certainly take an active role as a supporting partner.

The first few months may ring with uncertainty; or false certainty, depending on disposition; a few tactical nudges, some leading questions and suggestions of ideas that might not otherwise occur are helpful. The further into the journey, the more the decisions properly belong to the student who will, in a short time, be living and choosing independently all the days and nights of that first year away at college.

“Please don't admit me to your college. I'm only applying because my parents made me.”  
(It happens...)

**Become informed.** Start exploring a few colleges in the directories. What tests are required by each? Which criteria does this one weigh more heavily than another? Are alumni interviews available? Recommended? Required? What makes a successful campus visit? Is an overnight stay in a dorm offered (some colleges do, some don't.) What information is available in the college guidebooks and directories? What are some of the essay questions for applications? How are professors evaluated; what emphasis is placed on instruction rather than research? How are academics valued by students? What values are most apparent in student life outside of the classroom?

**Know the timeline** sections of this handbook. Shortly after College Night in junior year, you might suggest a few campus visits here in Oregon: UP, UO, OSU, PSU, Reed, Lewis & Clark, and community colleges, depending on your goals and preferences.

**Don't wait! Purchase one or two directories.** Top-rated among the many available is The Fiske Guide to Colleges, Random House, for about \$20.00 (be sure to get the most current edition.) You may also wish to purchase Colleges That Change Lives by Loren Pope. Leave these out where your college-bound junior can thumb through them.

**Note SAT test dates and registration deadlines on your calendar** (and ACT if you wish). Yours is the support role. Being informed is enough, with the well-timed question offered as a backstop. “Have you registered?”

**A college tour**, often done in pieces between winter of junior year and winter of senior year, can help solidify answers to questions about how colleges differ in offering an education, both in and out of the classroom. Beyond getting a read on each particular college, what this is really all about is beginning to picture oneself living and getting along independently (and happily) in a setting which brings out and enhances all that has been planted at home, school and community. Gradually your daughter or son takes over the process, assumes the lead. Be patient. If you cannot afford to travel to a distant campus, call to get the names of current students who are from your area. Use the internet, directories, viewbooks, and, especially, the course catalogue, a boring-looking but critically informative summary of courses, graduation requirements, and program of study.

**Go for balance.** Beware inflated expectations. The bad-risk “balloon” list consists of many **Reach** (“dream shot”) schools plus one **Likely** (“safety”) choice; it's a formula for disappointment! At the most selective institutions an astonishing number of eminently qualified, admissible candidates must be turned away each year simply due to lack of space. Where admit rates are below 40%, it is prudent to anticipate the likelihood, however unwelcome, of not being admitted. Thus, any list should include one or more **Appropriate** (“mid-range”) choices. As with the back-up school, these should be as carefully researched as the Reach schools. Please pick up the phone or come in and see us when concerns arise.

## Advice to Parents

- Keep an open mind. There are many colleges at which your child can be happy and successful as a student
- Be honest with yourself in evaluating your child and his or her chances for admission at considered colleges.
- Be frank and objective about finances. Keep in mind college loans, scholarships, and the family budget.
- If visits to college campuses are to be made, plan to go when classes are in session. Make appointments with admission offices for tours, information sessions, and interviews.
- Though it is great to help your child choose a college, it is unhelpful to voice personal grudges with certain schools, or only to encourage certain schools for their reputation.
- You should not dictate the final choice. A student cannot work well if he or she is unhappily attending a college chosen by someone else. Ideally, students and parents should be communicating well enough and early enough to make the final choice a joint decision.

## Recommended Reading: College Guidebooks

**The College Admissions Mystique**, Bill Mayher. ISBN 0-374-52513-7. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998. This guide deals with the whole process in a very sound, straightforward way.

**The College Handbook**, College Board Publications, Box 886, NY, NY 10101-0886. Annual. One of the most comprehensive college guidebooks for the facts.

**Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools You Should Know About Even If You're Not a Straight-A Student**, Loren Pope. Penguin USA (paper).

**The Fiske Guide to Getting into the Right College**, Random House, NY, NY. One of the very best narrative guidebooks to the top 300 colleges in the country. Annual.

**High School Planning for College-Bound Athletes**, published by the National Association of College Admission Counselors, 1631 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. This is a very useful twenty-page pamphlet for parents, student athletes and counselors.

**Rugg's Recommendations On the Colleges**, Frederick E. Rugg, annual. Copies may be ordered from 7120 Serena Ct., Atascadero, CA 93422 or at bookstores.

# Parent Questionnaire

Beginning February 1<sup>st</sup>, we would like junior parents to log onto Naviance and complete our Junior Parent Questionnaire. We would like your responses by May 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have troubles logging on, contact Robyn. If you would prefer a paper copy of the survey, we have copies in the Upper School Office. You are always welcome to schedule an appointment with Nancy or Kate to talk about college and your child.

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## Family Connection

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## Junior Parent Questionnaire

We'd like to know what type of college you think would best suit your child. Please take a moment to fill out our survey by May 1st! If you would like to meet with John or Kate, appointments are available in the fall and spring terms. Please call for an appointment.

**\* = required question**

**Please save your answers periodically if you need longer than one hour to complete this form. Your session will expire after one hour if you have not changed the page.**

1. When thinking about a college that would best suit the needs of your son or daughter, what size and location do you envision?

2. Do you think your son or daughter would do better at a school that is located in or near a city, or do you think s/he would do better in a rural setting?

## Class of 2010 Spring Calendar

Juniors – it's time to put the college search process in gear. Beginning with PODs and the junior class trip at the end of February, Nancy and Blythe will work with you to reflect a bit on who you are, what your strengths are, and what you might want to look for in a college. Next, we'll help you explore a range of colleges using a variety of resources, so that you can find the colleges that are the best matches for you. We'll also talk with you about standardized testing (what to take and when), and what to look for when you visit college campuses. The calendar below gives you an outline of what lies ahead.

### January

- You may want to consider taking the ACT in the spring. Many colleges accept the ACT (American College Test) or the SAT, and there are several good reasons to put the ACT on your testing schedule. Check out the ACT website at: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) for more information.
- Kate and Nancy have made counseling assignments for you – while we work together as a team throughout the college process, we assign each student a “primary counselor” who will work most closely with you throughout the coming months. This may or may not be the person leading your POD (See below). Your Naviance profile shows your counselor assignment. (If you need help logging in, please contact Robyn Washburn.) Remember that Kate is on leave until May 15 – students assigned to her will meet with Blythe Butler until her return.

### February

- We recommend that everyone register to take the March 14 SAT (registration deadline is February 10). If this date isn't convenient for you, plan to take the SAT in May or June.
- The junior class trip is set for February 25 and 26 at Camp McGruder. We'll use part of this time to get you started on the college counseling process. Please be sure to bring your laptop along with you – we will ask you to do some writing for us during the trip.
- We'll have our first PODs meetings this month, to get you launched on the college search process. PODs are small group meetings held monthly in the spring. Stay tuned for details of date and time. We would also like to meet individually with each junior to talk more about your plans for “life after Catlin.” Please get in touch with Nancy or Blythe to set up a meeting. All PODs will meet in Dant 9 in the spring.
- Parents: Please complete the parent questionnaire that we will email to you, and return this to us as soon as possible. We generally prefer to meet with a student before we meet with his or her parents, and it's helpful to us if we have your questionnaire in hand before we meet.
- After our meetings, we will prepare a short list of college suggestions for each student to research. We will discuss and refine this list of colleges in

other individual meetings throughout the spring, and into the fall of senior year.

- Now is the time to begin your college research. Use guidebooks and the Internet to investigate the colleges on your list. Explore college websites to see what you can learn about the schools that interest you.
- If you plan to visit colleges during the March break, please phone ahead and make an appointment for your visit. At some college admission offices, you may have to make a reservation for a group information session or a campus tour. Spring is a popular time to check out campuses – you can expect crowds of visitors at many schools, even if the college is on break when you're there.
- If you have decided to take the ACT on April 4, you should register before February 27. You may register online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

### March

- Individual college counseling meetings continue.
- PODs will meet again this month – stay tuned for details of date, place, and time.
- If you plan to take the SAT or the SAT Subject Tests on May 2, you must register by March 31. You may take up to three Subject Tests on one day, but you may not take the SAT and the Subject Tests on the same day. Please note that not all SAT Subject Tests are given on every test date. Check the calendar carefully to determine when the Subject Tests you want are offered.
- You may check the testing calendar and register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Wondering if you should take a Subject Test this spring? Please talk this over with Nancy or Blythe – we'll be happy to help you figure this out.
- Continue your college research by using a variety of print and electronic resources. Don't rely on just one guidebook or just one college search site to gather all your information. Your goal is to create as clear and complete a picture of each college as you can, and you'll benefit by using multiple sources.

### April

- Individual college counseling meetings will continue through this month.
- We'll have another PODS meeting this month – details of date, place and time will be forthcoming.
- If you wish to register for the June 6 SAT and/or the June SAT Subject Tests, you must do so by May 5. Not all SAT Subject Tests are given on every test date. Check the calendar carefully to determine when the Subject Tests you want are offered. You may check the testing calendar and register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).
- Look into summer jobs (paid or volunteer) or apply for special summer academic or enrichment programs. Summer opportunities can enhance your overall college application – and give you interesting material to write about in the application essays. You can search our database by logging onto Family Connection. (Go to the "Enrichment Programs" link listed under "About College.")

### May and June

- Continue to evaluate your list of colleges and universities. Eliminate colleges from the original list that no longer interest you and add others as appropriate.
- Please schedule an appointment with your college counselor for May or June so that we can go over your list of colleges and make sure you have a plan of action set up for the summer.