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Future editions of the Academic Bulletin will be available on the IUSD website. (Previous editions are also available online.)
http://www.iusd.org/parent_resources/academic.htm



Irvine Unified School District
 5050 Barranca Parkway
 Irvine, CA 92604
 (949) 936-5000

College Touring Tips for Parents



You envision a college degree as part of your child's future. So choosing a college where they're comfortable, happy and can be successful is important. But you're also curious if that school's party reputation is deserved, and if your child really understands what it'll mean to be six states away in a town with no major airport.

As you accompany your teenager on college campus tours, how do you make the most of each visit? And how do you get the information you need without stepping on your teen's toes? Experts say successful college touring begins before you ever step foot on campus.

Let the student take charge

College admissions directors agree that one of the biggest mistakes parents make is helping their students too much. Some colleges are even banning parents from the campus tours in order to give the students more freedom during the visit.

"Let the students set up the visit and take the lead on question asking," says Christopher Tremblay, director of admissions at Gannon University in Erie, Pa. "It's important to let the students sit in the driver's seat."

Ask the right questions

That said, experts recommend working with your student to set clear goals before the visit and helping draft a list of targeted questions to ask during the tour. The college selection criteria a student is using may not mirror that of his/her parents. Before the tour is a good time to talk about some of those differences.

Tremblay recommends the following questions:

- ◆ How does the admissions process work?

- ◆ What forms of financial aid are available, and how do I apply?
- ◆ What academic support systems are offered to students?
- ◆ What activities/events take place on the weekends?
- ◆ What kind of academic advising is found on your campus?
- ◆ What are the benefits of attending your school?
- ◆ What is on-campus living like?

Of course, every family is unique with its own unique concerns. But parents should be mindful of questions that might send their children to the far side of the tour group. For example, experts say safety is a huge issue with parents, but often one that students wish they wouldn't dwell on. To avoid a conflict that could potentially embarrass the student, the experts suggest visiting the college's Web site before or after the tour to get the information the parents need.



Parents are good at spotting red flags based on life experience," Hirsh says. "Parents should form leading questions that they can ask their students after the college visit. This lets the students know how the parent feels about an issue without embarrassing them."

Keep the lines of communication open

"Get used to talking to your student about the different colleges you visit. Compare notes. Learn how to help



your child define what he or she is looking for in a college," says Lou Hirsh, director of admissions at the University of Delaware in Newark, Del. "The kids ultimately need to decide where they are going to be most comfortable."

Some practical tips for the road

Beyond the must-dos, Margy Arthur, owner of College Campus Tours Inc. in Tahoma, Calif., offers up some practical tips for the road.

- ◆ Don't plan to visit more than two colleges a day.
- ◆ Make sure you've got a pen and paper handy to take detailed notes.
- ◆ Get a map of the college and parking information ahead of time.
- ◆ Try to visit schools on good weather days. Dashing from building to building on a rainy day can put a damper on your visit.
- ◆ Visit schools around noon. You will get a better feel for the atmosphere than visiting late in the day when the activity is winding down.
- ◆ Check out the bulletin boards around campus to find out what activities are going on, keeping in mind that summer is not as busy as the fall and spring terms.
- ◆ Don't judge the school based on its tour guide.
- ◆ Do some additional exploring on your own after the tour.
- ◆ Talk to current students about the kinds of activities available on the weekends.
- ◆ Eat a meal on campus. This gives you an opportunity to eavesdrop on what the kids are talking about so you can get an idea of what kinds of students are attending the college.
- ◆ Get the name and title of all staff members that you meet during the tour.

"Some parents put more stock in the name of the school than the interest of the child," Arthur says. "It's important to find a place that meets your student's needs and abilities. Ask the questions that will help you find a good match for your child."

Source...Jennifer LeClaire for Fastweb

PREP FOR THE SAT & ACT

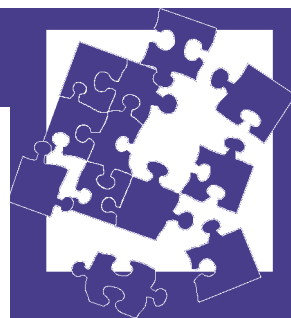
Standardized college admissions tests don't have to be scary. Prepare for them now, and you'll be all set on test day!

Picture yourself sprawled in a hammock, book in hand. Can you really prepare for the college admission tests like this? Yes! Here are some ways to prepare for the SAT and ACT.

- Pay attention to the words you come across while reading in that hammock that you don't use regularly. Repeat them in your head and guess at their meanings. If you can't tell what the word means by its context, look it up!
- Don't limit the things you read — read fiction, nonfiction, newspapers, magazines, poetry, cereal boxes...
- Have a few literature works in mind that you could talk about in an essay. But don't worry; you won't have to regurgitate (ooh, SAT word!) titles, authors and time periods on demand.
- Thinking about taking any SAT subject tests? Call the colleges you want to apply to, and ask if (and how many) subject tests are required. The SAT subject tests are one-hour exams in different subjects, such as history, math, science and foreign language.
- Taking an SAT subject test in a foreign language? Bring your own CD player and headphones to the listening exam. Test your CD player before you enter the test site, and bring extra batteries.
- Dig around your prospective college's Web site to find out how the college will use your SAT or ACT scores in the admissions process — especially the writing section. In a Kaplan survey, nearly half of the schools surveyed (47 percent) say that the writing section will carry "no weight" when reviewing an application.
- Do pay attention to the essay section of standardized tests. The essay score can help colleges make admission decisions about borderline students.
- Know when to skip a question. You may be better off not answering a question if you're unsure of the answer rather than guessing. A good rule of thumb? If you can make an educated guess — picking between two answers instead of all the choices — guess away. Haven't got a clue? Skip the question and move on.
- Read directions thoroughly on practice tests. That way, you will be familiar with the test before you take the real thing, and you won't have to spend as much time figuring out what to do next.
- Should you take the SAT or ACT? Call the admissions offices of the colleges you want to apply to (or check their Web sites), and ask which exam is recommended. You might want to take both tests—and submit your better score.
- What's the difference between the ACT and the SAT? The ACT is regarded as a curriculum-based test; it tests what you know. The SAT is more a test on how well you can solve problems; it tests your strategies more than your knowledge. Take practice tests for both exams and sign up for the one your college prefers and that you like better.

Source: www.nextstepmag.com

COLLEGE ADMISSION GAME PLAN



Junior



- ◆ Narrow your list of colleges and plan to visit some during spring break. Call the campus and see when they have tours available. Surf the Internet and use the college resources in the guidance office and library.
- ◆ Sign up to take the SAT, SAT subject and/or ACT. Check registration deadlines (in this issue). UC requires two SAT subject tests in 2 different subject areas. Private university requirements vary, but usually require one or two SAT subject tests. Check on the web or with your counselor for specific school requirements.
- ◆ Talk to seniors about their college application experiences.
- ◆ Consult college catalogs in the College/Career Center and/or make an appointment with your school's college/career counselor. There is a wealth of knowledge in that room!!
- ◆ If you have not already begun, make a list of prospective colleges and visit colleges while they're still in session. Now is the time to get to know college policies, procedures for admission, and dates for applications.
- ◆ Make a splash: build a resume and find out what college majors and careers are right for you at MyRoad (free for those that took the 2006 PSAT... log on to www.collegeboard.com/myroad)
- ◆ Register for the May and/or June SAT and Subject Tests.
- ◆ Line up a summer job, internship, or course.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

- Remember to monitor your applications to be sure that all materials are sent and received on time and that they are complete. Stay on top of things and don't procrastinate. You can ruin your chances for admission by missing a deadline.
- If you completed a FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks of submitting the FAFSA. Review the SAR carefully and check for any inaccuracies. If necessary, correct any items on the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor. If you haven't received your SAR after four weeks, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (319) 337-5665.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can!! See "Scholarship" page in this issue....there are a lot that are just for seniors!
- **Visit colleges while they're in session!** You don't buy a house sight unseen; yet many students enroll in a college (a similarly expensive venture) before they have even set foot on the campus. Even a one-day visit can give some indication of what a college is really like. Remember, you're planning the next four years of your life!
- Enjoy the second half of your senior year, but beware of senioritis! You're not done yet!!



Test Dates for the 2006/2007 School Year



SAT REASONING & SAT SUBJECT TEST DATES

Log on to www.collegeboard.com to sign up for the SAT & Subject Tests.

Test Date	Registration	Late Reg.
Mar. 10 (SAT ONLY)	Feb. 2	Feb. 14
May 5	March 29	April 11
June 2	April 27	May 9

ACT TEST DATES

Log on to www.act.org to sign up for the ACT.

Test Date	Registration	Late Reg.
Apr. 14	March 9	Mar. 10-23
June 9	May 4	May 5-18

Sophomore

- Sophomores should take the SAT subjects tests in those subjects that they will not be continuing in their junior year or in courses that have brought them to the proper level for tests.
- Sophomores might take the SAT for practice. However, remember that the Educational Testing Service submits all scores to colleges – not just the best scores. Many schools only consider the top scores but it is important to keep this in mind if you do decide to take the SAT as a sophomore.
- In some cases, sophomores may want to apply for scholarships in advance or to apply for special college programs as high school students. The SAT may be required in these instances before the junior year. Also, there is much discussion about the value of taking the SAT several times. As long as scores continue to improve, keep taking the tests, because practice can help raise scores.



MYSPACE... AND COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

You've been working hard trying to get into college—researching schools, refining your essay, collecting glowing recommendations, studying on nights and weekends for the SATs or ACTs, maybe even preparing for a campus interview. Throughout all of this process, you've made a great impression as a serious, promising college student. Wait, though. Before you can relax on the couch to watch "American Idol," there's one more detail to take care of — your online blog.

Blogs, Private or Public Information?

Whether it's through MySpace, Facebook, Xanga, LiveJournal, or Friendster, students are online — online sharing details with friends, online for everyone to see.

These sites help you keep in touch with friends and allow you meet new people. Many students spend hours each day updating their profiles, messaging their friends and clicking through photo albums. It's harmless fun, right?

Now, how would you feel if your teachers saw your site? A college admission officer?

"Well, I would be a little angry because there are things in my profile that I don't want them to see," said Aubrey Fait, a freshman at Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods College (IN). "There is some information that I want to keep private between me and my friends, so I would prefer if my parents and college faculty not look at my Facebook profile."

Other students don't think what they do in their free time influences their school work, so it shouldn't matter what information they have online. They may be right: You can be a great student, regardless what you do outside of school. When the embarrassing details of your social life are online for anyone to look up, though, you might want to re-consider what you post.

You might not like it, but you should know that adults — from your schools, families and even law enforcement — are looking at your pages.

The Consequences: What Has Already Happened to Some Students

Most colleges are not surfing the Web for your profile. However, when other people bring students' blogging to their attention, schools do respond.



- At least one college applicant was denied admission in part because of his blog on LiveJournal. The admission dean said the student's blog, which was brought to his attention, included seemingly hostile comments about certain college officials (Kornblum 2006).
- Swimmers at Louisiana State criticized coaches on Facebook and were kicked off the team (Kornblum and Marklein 2006).
- A high school freshman in Maryland was reportedly suspended because of online photos (Greenfield 2006).
- Police busted an underage drinking party at George Washington University after they found invitations online (Greenfield 2006).

How Your School Might React

Many middle and high schools have banned the use of these social networking Web sites on campus. Some private schools have even banned students from joining these sites altogether.

It's happening all across the country: Students in middle school, high school and college are being suspended and expelled for their online indiscretions. Even if you disagree with these policies, they can affect you. And as much of a cliché as it is, your school officials are just trying to protect you.

The College Admission Effects

With the MySpace bans, students need to be careful of what they post. Some zero-tolerance polices make it fair game to punish someone who is in a photo even holding what appears to be alcoholic drink. Explaining this type of suspension to a college doesn't really make a good bullet-point for your resume.

Even if your school doesn't have these rules, your postings could affect your college admission. Most colleges do not look up students on these sites, but when other people draw attention to these possibly offensive blogs, then schools often take action.

"We have just started letting students know that employers, college admission personnel, and others may be checking their postings... Our students seemed very surprised by this," said Julie Davis, Thomas Worthington High School (OH).

"In terms of college admission, I talk with the students about the importance of projecting a professional impression through voice mail messages, e-mail account titles and MySpace postings. I tell them a story once told to me by an admission counselor who said a student gave her e-mail address as partygirl@hotmail.com. She didn't get accepted to that college," said Margi Wieber, college counselor, Providence Academy (MN).

Some college admission officers make themselves available for students on these sites as a convenient forum for Q & A.

"I have accounts on Friendster, Facebook, LiveJournal, Xanga, and MySpace. I do interact with a variety of

students via these communities, however, it's our strict policy that the Internet should only help applicants, not hurt them... I, personally, don't think it's fair for college officials to take advantage of [these online interactions] — the one exception being a student's safety," noted Ben Jones, communications manager for the MIT Office of Admissions.

"I don't 'research' applicants online using their pages in these communities — although other schools do, from what I read in the news. My interactions with applicants and current MIT students are initiated by them—not by me."

Jeannine Lalonde, assistant dean of admission at the University of Virginia, also talks to students online who contact her. "After seeing current UVA students answer questions on MySpace, I decided to step in and offer some advice to the high school students who were posting. I knew it would open the door, but I also knew that seeing an admission officer on MySpace might:

1. Make a few kids stop and think before posting info about questionable behavior on their sites; and
2. Make some students realize that admission officers aren't as scary as they might have thought."

Sometimes students include Web-based communications such as blogs in their college application. Daniel Creasy, from Johns Hopkins University (MD), explains his experiences with student blogs as part of the application: "Many times, the work the students have done adds substance to their file and truly helps, but there have been occasions where this information raises questions and concerns."

Creasy also cautions that when students contact admission officers through the school's message boards and blogs, the information becomes part of the formal correspondence and can be factored in to the admission decision.

Basically, the point is that whatever you post, it never goes away. Once your information is online—even if you take it down—it becomes public information, as your page can be saved on anyone's computer.

What You Can Do

- First, be safe! Never post personal information such as your address, daily schedule, phone number, etc. Check out these safety guidelines from the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use and Wired Safety.
- Make your profile private so that strangers can't look at your information, and be cautious about adding new friends who you do not personally know.
- Take down any questionable photos or exchanges between you and your friends. Give it the "Grandma Test." If you wouldn't want your grandmother to see it, then you don't want other adults to either. Remember, pictures and references of you on your friends' pages can be damaging too. You can ask them to take down this kind of information.
- Don't get a false sense of security on sites like Facebook, where you need an academic address, to view pages. It's easy for faculty, alumni and random people to get on and look at your wall and photos.

People Can See Everything

Although blogs can be fun, remember that what you post is for public view, like broadcasting it on the six o'clock news. So when it's time to apply for college, give your blog a second look to make sure you feel comfortable sharing everything you have posted with an admission officer and, later, with potential employers because your site becomes permanent, public information about you.

Source: Nicole Verardi for NACAC

California Scholastic Federation



Now that the first semester is completed, students may once again apply for membership, if they qualify, to join CSF... a statewide organization honoring outstanding student academic achievement.

To be eligible, students must earn a minimum of 10 academic points. Points are awarded for A or B grades in designated academic subjects. Eligibility is not based on GPA. Applications for membership will be available in the counseling or college/career center office.

Life members (sealbearers) must reapply each semester. To be a sealbearer, the student must be a member of CSF for 4 semesters, starting in the 10th grade and having at least one semester in 12th grade.

DON'T MISS.....

**Orange County
National College Fair**

Anaheim Convention Center

Sunday, April 22, 2007

1:30pm - 4:30pm



SCHOLARSHIPS

Sun Trust Off to College Scholarship Sweepstakes

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Seniors. *Not* based on GPA or financial need.

15 chances to win – one winner every two weeks from Oct – May

Website:

www.suntruseducation.com/sweeps/default.asp

Patrick Kerr Skateboard Scholarship

Award: \$1,000 - \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior with a 2.5 or higher GPA planning on attending a 2- or 4-year college. Must be a skateboarder.

Website:

www.skateboardscholarship.com

Deadline: April 20, 2007

University of Michigan - Engineering Department

Award: \$20,000 annually

Eligibility: Students must be admitted to the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan.

Website: www.engin.umich.edu/students/current/scholarships/New_Student_s.html

Deadline: Varies - see website

Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Award: varies

Eligibility: Students of hispanic heritage, U.S. citizen or legal resident, 3.0 GPA or higher, apply for FAFSA.

Many various scholarships available.

Check out the website!!

Website:

www.hsf.net/scholarships.php

A. Bannister Scholarship

Award: \$1,200

Eligibility: Seniors planning on majoring in arts, business, pre-law or law.

Essay of 500 words or less on why you think you are deserving of the scholarship.

Website:

www.surrey-lawyers.com/philanthropy.htm

Deadline: June 15, 2007

Orange County Community Foundation

Award: Varies

Eligibility: Many various scholarships open to students throughout Orange County of varying academic backgrounds and financial situation.

Website:

www.oc-cf.org (click on scholarships)

Deadline: varied through March 2007

Mary C. & William G. Drake Scholarship

Award: Full 4 yr. tuition in the mechanical engineering dept. at UC Berkeley

Eligibility: Seniors planning to attend UC Berkeley Dept. of Mechanical Engineering. Outstanding achievements in academic studies and extracurricular activities.

Website:

www.me.berkeley.edu/new/undergrad/Drake/announcement06.pdf

Deadline: March 31, 2007

Yoshiyama Award for Exemplary Service to the Community

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: Seniors in the United States and its territories. Demonstrate self-motivation, leadership, creativity, dedication and a commitment to pursuing community service. Based primarily on the impact of your community service activities, and you must be nominated by someone familiar with your service (excluding family members). GPA, SAT scores and school club memberships are not considered in the selection process.

Website:

www.hitachifoundation.org

Deadline: April 1, 2007

Legacy Park Foundation Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school seniors planning to attend college in the Fall. Min. 3.0 GPA, demonstrate financial need, extracurricular and community participation, and two letters of recommendation (one from a school official and one from a community member).

Website:

www.legacyparkfoundation.org

Deadline: March 31, 2007

Leonardo Da Vinci Scholarship

Award: \$1,500

Eligibility: Students between the ages of 16 and 25. 500 word essay that answers the following question: Of the countless accomplishments that Leonardo Da Vinci has made in the field of art, science, mathematics, etc., what do you believe is his most significant accomplishment?

Website:

www.leonardo-davinci.org/leonardo-davinci-scholarship.php

Deadline: July 15, 2007

Patriotic Art Scholarship - Ladies Auxiliary VFW

Award: \$2,500 - \$10,000

Eligibility: Students in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. Submit a work of patriotic art on paper or canvas using water color, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen-and-ink, or oil. Digital art on paper will also be accepted. In order to submit your artwork, you must be sponsored by your state's ladies Auxiliary VFW.

Website:

www.ladiesauxvfw.org

Deadline: March 31, 2007

Holocaust Remembrance Project Essay Contest

Award: \$2,500 - \$10,000

Eligibility: High school students in the United States and Mexico who are 19 years of age or younger. 1,200 word essay. See website for details.

Website:

<http://holocaust.hklaw.com>

Deadline: May 1, 2007

Irvine Valley College Scholarship

Award: see website

Eligibility: Seniors with financial need planning to attend Irvine Valley College.

Website:

www.ivc.edu/finaid

Deadline: When filing your application to attend



Stanley Behrens Foundation Scholarship

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: Orange County high school senior planning on attending UCI in Fall 2007, 3.5 GPA or higher, U.S. Citizen, highly motivated to succeed and involved in charity or community affairs

Website:

www.ofas.uci.edu/content/pdf/0708/ScholarshipApp0708_StanleyBehrens_Freshmen.doc

Deadline: April 4, 2007

Signet Classic School Essay Contest

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school juniors & seniors with recommendation by their English teacher. Essay required based on the book "Gulliver's Travels" by Jonathan Swift. See website for details.

Website:

<http://us.penguin.com/static/html/services-academic/essayhome.html>

Deadline: April 16, 2007

American Legion Oratorical Contest

Award: \$600 - \$18,000

Eligibility: Student under the age of 20, U.S. citizen or lawful resident. See website for details & topics. Contact the local American Legion Post for local deadlines. National contest in April.

Website:

www.legion.org

Deadline: Contact local American Legion Post



Five Scholarship Myths



I'm about to dispel five widespread myths about winning college scholarships. Myths that have, unfortunately, prevented many deserving students from winning money for college. By learning the truth behind these myths, you'll gain a better understanding of the essential "rules" of the college scholarships game.

MYTH #1:

"Only students with high academic achievement win merit scholarships."

The Real Story: Scholarships are awarded to students with all sorts of talents and interests. In fact, many of the best scholarship programs are designed for students who devote time and energy to such diverse fields as music and the arts, foreign languages, community service, science, leadership, writing and oratory, to name just a few. Typically, these programs are entirely "grade blind" — meaning that grades are not used as a judging criteria.

Furthermore, many scholarships that do take into account grade point averages (GPAs) only use such quantitative measures as preliminary cutoff points. For instance, some scholarship contests specify that applicants have a minimum 2.0 GPA. Once you've cleared this minimum bar, grades don't impact your chances of winning.

Finally, even when GPA is used as an evaluation factor, it's only one aspect of your application. Scholarship programs aren't myopic: They want to recognize students with all sorts of achievements and backgrounds. They realize that applicants have much more to offer than simply the grades that appear on their transcripts.

MYTH #2:

"Scholarship applicants should seek to compile the longest list of extracurricular activities."

The Real Story: As is the case in many other aspects of life, winning scholarships is about quality, not quantity. Some people think that to win these awards you must devote your entire high school career to participating in extracurricular activities. On the contrary, most scholarship winners distinguish themselves by the devotion they have demonstrated to a particular activity or activities, rather than by the sheer quantity of their involvement. Winning scholarships isn't about having the longest list of extracurriculars. It's about communicating who you are and what you care about through the activities you participate in and enjoy.

MYTH #3:

"Scholarship contests are conducted on a level playing field."

The Real Story: Each scholarship contest has its own biases. This is not to say that scholarship judging is unfair. Rather, it's just that each scholarship program is looking for students with particular qualities. The subjective process of valuing certain qualities over other ones tilts the playing field far from level. In this way, the ideal application you submit for one scholarship contest may, in fact, place you out of the money when submitted to another. Because of these biases, it's essential to define each scholarship's "ideal applicant" and to emphasize personal attributes consistent with this definition.

MYTH #4:

"Applying for scholarships is just like applying to college."

The Real Story: Actually, scholarship contests demand a modified approach from the college admissions process because scholarship contests are characterized by substantially more head-to-head competition. While college admissions officers compare students primarily to a standard, scholarship contests directly compare students to one another. Because of this more competitive environment, students who devise creative techniques to stand out from the crowd have a distinct advantage. In this way, a good scholarship application (which distinguishes you from everyone else) will likely be a good college application—but the reverse is not necessarily true.

MYTH #5:

"The track record you've already accumulated determines whether you'll win scholarships."

The Real Story: What you do after you decide to apply for scholarships is just as important as the record you have already accumulated. This holds true regardless of how much time you have until a particular scholarship application is due. Content strategies, for instance, increase your chances of winning by adding depth and breadth to your existing record. Likewise, packaging strategies help make your application stand out from the crowd by creating a cohesive message that highlights talents, communicates passions, and emphasizes potential. So don't fall into the trap of thinking that your die has already been cast. What you do now will make all the difference in the world.