



THE
CLASSICAL SCHOOL
OF THE FIRST ACADEMY

The Classical School

Preparing for the Future

**Help for guiding your student
through the high school years
and preparing them for
college.**

The Classical School

Communication

Email—primary mode of communication for things I need to communicate individually to you or your student.

Susan Gentry

susangentry@thefirstacademy.org

407-206-8762

*Office Hours are Monday - Friday

TFA Today - is one method of communication for information needed by most/all of our families.—TFA will email links to all divisions of TCS, TFH, Pre-School, Fine Arts and TFA Athletics.

News to Note - All the information you NEED to know will be communicated this way. These weekly communications will be specific to TCS and highlight what is going on that week and upcoming dates you need to have on your radar.

Social Media—Instagram and Facebook—please follow TCS on Instagram and Facebook—we will be posting items of interest—you don't want to miss it!

RenWeb— You can find everything you want and need to know about your student's academic life at TCS on Renweb: grades, work assignments, calendar, etc. You will also find any forms you will need during the year under school information—resource documents.

Expectations

Because of the nature of TCS, our younger students have the opportunity to see and know our older students. Our High School Students have a unique responsibility to act as role models for the younger students.

- Uniforms— Students must be in TFA uniform apparel from Dennis or the Royal Store for shirts. Although Dennis Uniforms will remain our uniform vendor, students may purchase similar-style shorts/skirts/pants from other vendors to ensure fit follows the 5-inch rule. All skirts/shorts/pants must be plain without extra

- pockets, zippers, chains, or other accessories. Acceptable skirts/shorts/pants colors will now include khaki, navy, light blue, gray, charcoal, and black. Only TFA outerwear is to be worn inside the building.

Lunch—TCS High School students have the privilege of buying lunch from and eating in the cafeteria. Please talk to your student about setting a good example for younger students in the cafeteria by how they talk to each other and how they leave the cafeteria.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must have a Final Cumulative GPA of 2.0 on 4.0 scale, 3 college applications submitted, and at least 1 college acceptance to an accredited university/college.

English – 4 credits

9th English
10th English
11th English
12th English

Math – 4 credits

Algebra I
Geometry
Algebra II
Beyond Algebra II

Science – 3 (or 4) credits*

Biology
Chemistry
Beyond Chemistry

Social Studies – 3 (or 4) credits*

World History
American History
American Gov't &
Economics

Physical Ed (or H.O.P.E) – 1 credit Foreign Language – 2 credits

Personal Fitness (0.5 credits)
Phys Ed elective (0.5 credit)
Team Sports

Christian Studies – 2.5 Credits

Spiritual Formation
Foundation of Theology
World Religion
Worldview
Apologetics

Fine/Practical Arts 1 credit Additional electives – 4.5 credits

Total - 25 credits

*Beginning with the Class of 2021, students must complete a total of 7 credits between the Science and Social Science Departments and 100 service hours.

Graduation Honors:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Summa cum laude | 5.00 and above |
| Maximus cum laude | 4.75-4.99 |
| Magna cum laude | 4.50-4.74 |
| Cum laude | 4.00-4.49 |

TCS Academic Plan

Important Points For Working Through This Process

This is merely an exercise to help you think through your potential path(s). You are required to have 25 credits TOTAL

| | English (4) | Math (4) | Science (3) | Social Studies (3) | P.E. (1) | Foreign Language (2) | Christian Studies (2.5) | Fine/Practical Arts (1) | Electives (4.5) |
|-------------|-------------|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 9th | English 1 | Alg I Geometry Alg II | Biology | US History | Personal Fitness (FLVS or summer at TFA) | Spanish I (TCS)/French I (FLVS) | Apologetics/ Spiritual Formation | TCS Art | |
| 10th | English II | Geo Alg II Pre-Calc Stats/Trig | Chemistry | World History | FLVS | Span II (TCS)/French II (FLVS) | OT Survey/ NT Survey | FLVS electives | SAT Prep/Finance |
| 11th | English III | Alg II Pre-Calc Stats/Trig Calc | Marine Bio or Anatomy | Govt/Economics | | | Bible | | Psychology Tech Design |
| 12th | English IV | Pre-Calc Stats/Trig Math Prep FLVS or DE | If you want a 4th past what is required (FLVS or DE) | If you want a 4th past what is required (FLVS or DE) | | | | | |

*Beginning with the Class of 2021, students must complete a total of 7 credits between the Science and Social Science Departments.

Acceptable High School Courses

TCS accepts only courses taken at TCS, TFA, dual-enrollment, or Florida Virtual School. High School courses taught by a parent or tutor do not count and no credit is awarded.

Honors Courses

Some of our TCS classes are being taught on the honors level and in those cases your student's transcript will reflect this. In other cases TCS may occasionally allow students to take an honors version of a course. Such courses involve more work and make more demands on the part of parents and students. Honors course GPAs are weighted .5 extra. Approval for honors is at the discretion of the teacher and principal.

AP Courses

TCS does not offer AP courses, but FLVS does and our students wanting to pursue this rigorous option are encouraged to do so. The registration process for the FLVS AP courses is the same as any other FLVS course (please see FLVS instructions).

CLEP

The College Level Examination Program is a set of college-level examinations that students can take. If they pass any, they will receive college credit, and that college course will be waived.

Visit www.collegeboard.org for more information.

TFA Courses

Occasionally, TCS students are allowed to take certain high school courses at The First Academy. There is an additional tuition charge for such courses. Some of these courses may even be scheduled during non-school hours. Requests must be approved by principal.

High School Courses taken prior to 9th grade

The only courses that transfer as high school credits and towards the students GPA are high school foreign language classes and Algebra I and higher.

Florida Virtual School

- Grades K-12. The Academic Advisor handles high-school students taking FLVS courses.
- Over 90 online courses, tuition-free. Accepted by public schools and colleges.
- Can take one-semester courses (18 weeks) or two-semester courses (36 weeks)
- Student works at own pace
- Honors, AP, SAT prep, AP review, even driver's ed. (by the way, if you run across the course M/J Mathematics 3, that's a Pre-Algebra course, typically taken by 8th-graders.)
- If a student takes an AP FLVS course, she/he must take the AP exam
- FLVS automatically e-mails TCS the student's grade, and we add it to his/her transcript.
- FLVS and McKay Scholarships: The First Hope students receiving a McKay Scholarship (mostly The First Hope students) may take no more than two FLVS courses per year.

If TCS students want to take FLVS courses, they must—

- Take only courses for which there are no similar courses offered at TCS (effective 2011-12) that fit the student's schedule
- Still pay full TCS tuition
- Offer a satisfactory purpose for taking the course
- Have a computer and proctor available if course taken at TCS

To sign up for a course

Go to www.flvs.net, explore the website for courses offered, and sign up for them. You will need to set up an account if you have not already done so. If asked, register as a "Private School Student", NOT a "Home School Student" and select "The Classical School of The First Academy" (NOT The First Academy). If asked for a district student ID number, use either 1450 or N/A.

Once you have requested a course, I will be notified for approval—I will approve.

You will receive a confirmation e-mail from FLVS, and the instructor may phone you. If this is your first FLVS course, you may have to complete a brief online orientation.

www.flvs.net
407-513-3587
Help Desk:
1-866-322-8324 x 4
OR
1-800-374-1430

Students may receive 1-to-1 help at an affordable price. FLVS brings the tutors to students on demand. It's live, online, interactive tutoring for math and science 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The best part is, students only pay for the time they need. For more information and to join today, visit www.FLVSonlinetutoring.com

Dual-Enrollment

Valencia

- Courses are taken at Valencia College—they offer some online classes
- All VCC courses are one semester in duration
- The DE limits are 12 credit hours (4 classes) per semester, so it would be possible to complete up to eight courses per school year.
- VCC allows DE students to take most any VC courses offered (Flex start courses are excluded, along with a few other specific type of courses).
- Many VC courses count as full high school credit, according to Dual-Enrollment Faculty Handbook (p. 27-30) and full college credit. VCC sends TFA an unweighted transcript when course completed. TCS gets grade from TFA, weights its GPA 1.0 extra, and adds it to TCS transcript
- If a student makes a D in a DE course, it is usually considered passing at VCC, and TCS counts it as passing. Some colleges, however; that are then sent that D on the VCC transcript, may not accept it and direct the student to retake the course. Dual-enrolled students may retake a course just one time.
- An articulation agreement between TFA and Valencia is agreed upon on an annual basis. The use of Valencia for DE credits is not guaranteed each year.

Grand Canyon University

- Courses are taken online through Grand Canyon University
- All GCU courses are one semester in duration
- The DE limits are 12 credit hours (4 classes) per semester, so it would be possible to complete up to eight courses per school year.
- Many GCU courses count as full high school credit, according to GCU and full college credit. GCU sends TFA an unweighted transcript when course completed. TCS gets grade from TFA, weights its GPA 1.0 extra, and adds it to TCS transcript
- If a student makes a D in a DE course, it is usually considered passing at GCU, and TCS counts it as passing. Some colleges, however; that are then sent that D on the GCU transcript, may not accept it and direct the student to retake the course. Dual-enrolled students may retake a course just one time.
- Please refer to GCU website for tuition and other fees. www.gcu.edu/individual-courses/dual-enrollment

If TCS students want to dual-enroll at VCC, they must—

- Have permission from TCS (permission form attached)
- Take only courses that do not conflict with TCS graduation credits needed and fit around TCS class schedule
- Be a junior or senior
- Have, and maintain, an unweighted TCS GPA of 3.0. (If drops below, TCS must notify VC)

Have high enough VCC entrance scores:

| | | |
|-----|---------|----------------------------------|
| ACT | Reading | 19 |
| | English | 17 |
| | Math | 21 (19 for Intermediate Algebra) |

or

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| SAT | Verbal/Critical Reading | 440 |
| | Math | 500 (440 for Int. Algebra) |

or

VCC's college entrance exam--the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT)--which is used by most Florida state colleges

| | |
|---------|----------------------------|
| Reading | 106 |
| Writing | 103 |
| Math | 123 (114 for Int. Algebra) |

Valencia Application deadlines: Deadline for Spring 2019 will be in the fall (September 10th – October 8th).

If TCS students want to dual-enroll at GCU, they must—

- Have permission from TCS (permission form attached)
- Take only courses that do not conflict with TCS graduation credits needed and fit around TCS class schedule
- Be a junior or senior
- Have, and maintain, an unweighted TCS GPA of 3.0. (If drops below, TCS must notify GCU)
- All students taking English or math course will be required to take an online placement test

College Admissions

**TFA Seniors are required to apply to at least three colleges.

Early Decision:

Early decision, a plan offered by a select number of colleges and universities, allows a student to apply to only one school for an early admission judgment, usually in October or early November. The student will usually receive the decision of the college by mid-December. This is a binding decision and, if accepted, the student is obligated to attend. The student may submit other applications during this period, but only one can be Early Decision. The student must also withdraw these applications if he or she is accepted to his Early Decision institution. Pros: you are notified of the admissions decision earlier and there is often a higher acceptance rate from the early decision pool. Cons: you cannot change your mind and you cannot compare financial aid packages. **Please check the college website for the exact date the application is due.**

Early Action:

Early Action is a plan offered by schools that invites early application but is non-binding and does not require the student to attend if accepted. The student can file as many Early Action applications as he/she wants. Application deadline is usually October or early November, with decisions announced in mid-December. Pros: you are notified of the admissions decision earlier and there is sometimes a little higher acceptance rate from the early action pool. Cons: None noted.

Regular Decision:

The deadline for regular decision will vary from school to school but usually falls between December 15th and January 15th. All supporting information should be sent to the admissions office by the given deadline. Generally, admissions decisions are mailed from mid-March to the National Notification Date of April 1.

Rolling Admissions:

The college accepts students on a continuous basis--there are no application deadlines. The college notifies the student of its decision as soon as the application is processed.

Open Admissions:

Admissions decisions made without regard to applicant's academic performance--usually community colleges

Waitlists:

This is a decision by a college where a student is neither rejected nor accepted. The college waits to see the yield from the accepted students to begin taking students off of the waitlist. Please work closely with the Guidance Office if you are placed on a waitlist.

College admissions tidbits:

- TCS sends letters of recommendation to the college, not the student
- Parents should not complete student applications. Let the student himself do that. Colleges want to see what the student can do on his own.
- Parents, however, may have to complete any scholarship applications, since the student may not have all the information needed
- Many colleges will accept the Common Application (www.commonapp.org)
- Many colleges require applicants to submit an essay. Take these seriously. Make yours interesting. We recommend having an English teacher and/or Academic Advisor proof before submitting.
- When you schedule college visits, please see Mrs. Gentry for some useful information (tips, possible interview questions, etc).

Finding a College

- Be wary of any guide that claims to rank colleges and universities. Your educational experience will depend more on how well the college meets your needs and goals than on any criteria a guide might use to rank colleges.
- Request information from colleges - look into particular majors, sports, or activities that you might be interested in.
- As you are learning about various colleges, ask yourself these questions:
 1. Does the college have the major or program I want?
 2. Does the college have the activities and/or sports I want?
 3. Do I meet the college's admission requirements?
 4. Will the college help me achieve my educational and personal goals?
 5. Does the college provide the environment I am looking for?

The Student Athlete

If you want to participate in athletics on the college level, you must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse, which determines athletic eligibility. If you think there is even a remote possibility that you might play in college, register with the Clearinghouse. The best way to do this is online: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

The best time to register is at the end of your junior year. Only Division I and Division II colleges can offer athletic scholarships. The NCAA Clearinghouse needs to have all college-entrance exam scores for students on file. It will save you time and money to code them in when you register to take each exam. It is best to have scores sent to the Clearinghouse directly from the testing center. The Clearinghouse code is 9999.

Transcript Request Protocol

All transcript request grades 9-12 go to the Academic Advisor. Please send an email to Mrs. Gentry (susangentry@thefirstacademy.org) and include the college **and** address.

Transcripts being sent to parents:

An unofficial, unsealed copy will be mailed or made available for pick up. (no electronic copies)

Transcripts to schools/colleges:

An official hard copy with raised seal, signature/date will be mailed to the school requested.

Standardized Testing

PSAT/NMSQT—Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test—given to 10th and 11th grade students.—This is a practice for the SAT and also a qualifying test for national scholarships, and is usually given in October. Ninth grade students will take the PSAT 8/9.

College Testing

Colleges all require student applicants to take a college test. Most will accept either the ACT or the SAT.

(check with the colleges you are applying to)

Students should begin taking the ACT/SAT during their Junior year (can start late in Sophomore year if desired and should plan to take it 2-3 times.

ACT—is more of an achievement test. It is 4 hours in duration and test in the areas of English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. ACT also offers an optional writing test. The Math section is demanding, and it includes up through trig. The Science Reasoning section is basically logic and reading graphs.

ACT tips—guess if you don't know an answer. Scores range from 1 to 36. The composite score is the average of the four test scores, rounded to the nearest whole number.

Students taking the ACT should use the school code **102556**, even if the proctor announces another number for homeschool students. **Go to [ACT.org](https://act.org) to register.**

The best colleges require ACT scores of 30; the avg composite score for the FL university system is 27.

SAT—is considered more of an intelligence test. The new SAT using a 1600-point score scale and has three sections: Reading, Writing & Language, and Math. The optional SAT essay is scored separately (some colleges require it). SAT also offers 20 Subject tests in five general subject areas: English, history, languages, mathematics and science. You may take up to 3 subject tests at a time, and you can't take the SAT and subject tests on the same day. Each subtest score range is from 200 to 800. The SAT now includes Trig in the Math section. **Go to collegeboard.org to register.** Students taking the SAT should use school code **102556**.

SAT tips—On the new SAT, students no longer lose points for a wrong answer - there is no advantage to leaving a question blank. Students earn points for the questions answered correctly.

Some colleges “super score” (as does Bright Futures) - they pull your highest scores from each subject area and put them together if you take the ACT/SAT multiple times.

Testing Accommodations

Students with DIAGNOSED learning disabilities may be eligible for extended-time testing on the ACT and SAT. The documentation must be on file at the school, must be recent (three years is the longest it may be used without needing a re-evaluation), and the school must be making similar modifications for you in order to qualify. It is very difficult to receive non-standard administration of the tests for a newly diagnosed learning disability.

ACT/SAT Test Preparation

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--|--------------|
| Natalie Holter at TFA natalieholter@thefirstacademy.org SAT (PSAT) Test Prep | 407-206-8817 | Wise Owl Tutoring www.wiseowltutoring.net SAT, ACT, PSAT, etc. | 407-678-4945 |
| C2 Education www.c2orlando.com SAT, ACT, PSAT, etc. | 407-447-7770 | A+ Tutoring of Central Florida www.aplustutoring.net SAT and ACT | 407-678-8847 |
| Advanced Learning Centers, Inc. www.thinkALC.com SAT and ACT | 407-645-2111 | CORE Test Preparation www.coretutors.com PSAT and SAT | 407-494-2673 |
| Elite Tutoring http://r_fikar.home.mpinet.net SAT, ACT, and AP | 407-851-5073 | Huntington Exam Prep Center www.huntingtonlearning.com SAT and ACT | 407-644-0456 |
| Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions (Various locations) www.kaptest.com PSAT, SAT, ACT, and AP | | Master Scholars www.masterscholars.com Tutoring and SAT Test Prep | 352-895-8092 |
| Princeton Review (Various locations) www.princetonreview.com PSAT, SAT, and ACT | | Sylvan Learning www.sylvanlearning.com PSAT, SAT, and ACT | |
| UCF Test Prep www.testprep.ucf.edu SAT and ACT | 407-882-8378 | | |

Online Resources

1. Free ACT & SAT prep

<http://www.number2.com/index.cfm?s=0>

<http://www.4tests.com/exams/examdetail.asp?eid=13>

<http://www.4tests.com/exams/examdetail.asp?eid=6>

http://www.testprepreview.com/act_practice.htm

http://www.testprepreview.com/sat_practice.htm

2. SAT resource

http://www.saab.org/saab_org.cgi

3. SAT and ACT prep

www.studyworks.com

4. SAT prep

www.khanacademy.org

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Bright Futures program allows Florida high school seniors with academic merit the chance to earn a scholarship to any public or private college in the state. Does NOT apply to colleges outside of Florida.

Merit-based

Florida's largest aid program; funded by lottery

Almost all of UF and FSU students are recipients

Formerly Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Fund

To apply for BF scholarship:

- Seniors submit, online, the Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA), starting Dec. 1 of senior year. The FFAA provides the Florida Dept of Ed authorization to evaluate a student's transcript.

www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org

Applicant then receives an e-mail with a User Name and PIN

- High school student's transcript online

Transcripts are submitted by a high school three times/year for 9-12th grades: beginning of school year, beginning of 2nd semester, end of school year. A high school may wait until senior year before submitting transcripts

- Students submit SAT or ACT scores by either of the following:

A) Request scores sent to one of Florida state universities when registering

B) Mail in official copy (no photocopies) of SAT or ACT scores

- Document community service hours, if applicable

August—BF winners announced—for award amounts and requirements please see

www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org

**Students submit their community-service hours to the Office of the Academic Advisor, using the community service form found online. Please print the PDF version and submit to the Academic Advisor. Do NOT submit the online form as this will go to TFA Upper School (and not to TCS).

<http://thefirstacademy.org/academics/guidance/upper-school/community-service-hours-form/>

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| BF Requirements: | Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) - | SAT 1290/ACT 29 100 Service hours |
| | Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) - | SAT 1170/ACT 26 75 Service hours |

Funding College

Parents: please read this section carefully. Visit the various websites and pursue possible funding leads. Even though some grants and scholarships are quite selective, or perhaps apply to only a specific segment of the high-school population, they are worth at least checking into. It is the responsibility of parents and students to do the groundwork in this area, although our office is available to advise when needed.

Types of funding:

Grants--do not have to repay; usually need-based

Scholarships--do not have to repay; usually non-need-based

Employment--student offered job

Federal aid:

Free Application For Financial Student Aid (a.k.a. FAFSA On The Web)

(A) www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov

Complete the FAFSA On The Web Worksheet before completing the FAFSA On The Web

(in January of senior year)

Estimates your eligibility for federal student aid

Provides an estimated Expected Family Contribution (EFC) figure

Much of the information you enter on the FAFSA On The Web worksheet can be transferred to the FAFSA On The Web

(B) www.fafsa.ed.gov

Complete the FAFSA On The Web (in October of senior year)

This form is the official application for need-based aid

Free, so don't use a private site that charges a fee (such as fafsa.com)

Applicant is sent a Student Aid Report (SAR) that indicates any eligibility for federal funding

An ISIR report is sent to colleges, which they use to formulate an aid offer (usually a combination of some grants, some employment, and some loans)

Title IV Aid Programs (of the Higher Education Act of 1965)

Federal Pell Grant--largest federal need-based grant

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant

Federal Work Study--need based

Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)--for those in 1st /2nd yr of college; as

completing FAFSA on the web; it will indicate if you are eligible for ACG

National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (SMART)--for those in 3rd/4th year of college

Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher

Education Grant (TEACH)--for those in graduate school; upon graduation must teach in a high-risk school

Academic Competitiveness Grants--need, not merit, based

Federal loans: These loans are less expensive than private loans. These are overseen by the Federal Family

Education Loan Program (FFELP)--

1-800-366-3475:

Federal Perkins Loan

Federal PLUS Loan

Federal Stafford Loan (subsidized or unsubsidized)

Federal Consolidation Loan

William D. Ford Direct Loan Program

William D. Ford Direct Student Loan Program

Federal college employment aid:

Federal Work-Study Program

To access all federal student aid programs:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/portalswebapp/students/english/index.isp>

State aid:

William L. Boyd Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG)

FL resident students attending a Florida private, non-profit college.

<http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/factsheets/FRAG.htm>

In order to complete the FRAG, you need to also complete the FAFSA (a federal form explained above)

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

Top five seniors in state

Florida Student Assistance Grant

Largest need-based grant in Florida

Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant

Need-based

For students enrolled in a community college or vocational tech

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship

Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement

Critical Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness Program

Access to Better Learning and Education Grant

For Florida private colleges

In order to complete the ABLEG, you need to also complete the FAFSA (a federal form explained above)

First Generation Matching Grant

Need-based

Florida Work Experience Program

Need-based; provides work to complement career goals

Jose Marti Scholarship Challenge Grant

Need and merit-based; for Hispanic students

529 Plans (pre-paid college)--www.florida529plans.com

(A) The Florida Prepaid College Plan

The better one

Parent pays current college costs (college costs are rising much faster than income levels)

Best to start when child in elementary school

(B) The Florida College Investment Plan

Note: the college itself is the best source of funding. Some is need based while some is merit-based. Every college is different, so be sure to investigate.

To find financial aid (Florida and federal):

www.studentaid.ed.gov

www.finaid.org

www.fastweb.com--this is a great source of scholarship money

www.scholarshipamerica.org

www.christianconnector.com

www.schoolsoup.com

www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org

www.scholarships.com

www.collegeboard.com

www.careersandcolleges.com

chegg.com/scholarships

scholarships.com

cappex.com/scholarships

To help student decide on college major, college life, occupations, etc.:

www.facts.org

www.students.gov

www.studentaid.gov (career interest inventory)

www.going2college.org

www.planstudent.org

www.cappex.com

To compare colleges:

www.collegeboard.com

Students

Find a College: Compare Colleges

Junior-year timeline:

September

- ___ Maintain your extra-curricular record.
- ___ Attend the Christian College Fair (September 13th, 6 p.m., Natalie Thomas Gymnasium)

October

- ___ Take the PSAT.
- ___ Junior year PSAT scores may qualify a student for the National Merit Scholarship Competition and the National Achievement and the National Hispanic Scholars Programs. Even though these scores will not be used for college admission, it is still a good idea to take the PSAT. The more times you take standardized tests, the more familiar you will become with the format and the types of questions asked.

November

- ___ Junior year grades are extremely important in the college admission process because they are a measure of how well you do in advanced, upper level courses. Grades are also used to determine scholarships and grants for which you may be eligible, so put in the extra effort and keep those grades up!
- ___ If you will require financial aid, start researching your options for grants, scholarships, and work-study programs. Make an appointment with your guidance counselor or start by visiting NACAC's Web Resources for the College-Bound at www.nacacnet.org for more information.

December

- _____ During December you should receive the results of your PSAT. Read your score report and consult your school counselor to determine how you might improve on future standardized tests. The PSAT is excellent preparation for the SAT, which you will take in the spring.
- _____ If you plan to take the ACT, register now for the February ACT. Many colleges accept the ACT or the SAT. Some colleges require the ACT or both SAT and the SAT Subject Tests. When you begin to explore different colleges and universities, double-check to see what they prefer.

January

- _____ Begin to make a preliminary list of colleges you would like to investigate further. Surf the Internet and use the college resources in the guidance office or library.
- _____ Ask your parents for your Social Security number (required on many college applications). If you were never issued a Social Security number, contact the closest Social Security office as soon as possible to obtain a number.
- _____ Register for the SAT Reasoning Test in the Spring if you have completed the math courses covered by the test (Algebra I, Geometry, & Algebra II). If not, plan to take the SAT in May or June. Prepare for the SAT or ACT by signing up for a prep course, using computer software, or doing the SAT/ACT practice tests available in the counseling office or at bookstores. Do not spend so much time trying to improve standardized test scores that grades and extra-curricular involvement suffer.

February

- _____ Continue to be diligent in your academic and extracurricular work.
- _____ Check with the Guidance office on the amount of community service hours you have.
- _____ Consider taking college-related trips with friends and family.

March

- _____ Write, telephone, or use the Internet to request admission literature and financial aid information from the colleges on your list. Begin visiting colleges. Set up appointments. Interviews are always a good idea. Many colleges will tell you they are optional, but an interview will show interest, enthusiasm and initiative on your part and provide an excellent opportunity to have your questions answered.

April

- _____ When selecting your senior courses, be sure to continue to challenge yourself academically.
- _____ Register for the May/June SAT and/or the May/June SAT Subject Tests. 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. Register for the June ACT if you want to take that test.
- _____ Look into summer jobs or apply for special summer academic or enrichment programs. Colleges love to see students using their knowledge and developing their skills and interests.

May

- _____ Get a jump start on summer activities: consider enrolling in an academic course at a local college, pursuing a summer school program, applying for an internship, working, or volunteering. If you work, save part of your earnings for college.
- _____ Take the SAT or the SAT Subject Tests.

June

- _____ After school ends, get on the road to visit colleges, if you have not done so already. Seeing the college firsthand, taking a tour, and talking to students can be the greatest help in deciding whether a school is right for you. Although it is ideal to visit colleges during the academic year, going in the summer will also be valuable. Admission offices employ their students to give tours and answer questions from prospective students and their parents.
- _____ Take the SAT, the SAT SubjectT tests and/or the ACT.

July

- _____ Visit colleges, take tours, have interviews and ask questions. Make college visits a family event. Involve your parents and siblings in every step of your application process. Choosing the right college is a tough decision; the opinions of those who know you best can provide helpful insight into which college is best for you.
- _____ Begin preparing for the actual application process: draft application essays, collect writing samples, and assemble portfolios or audition tapes.

August

- _____ Continue to refine your list of potential colleges and universities.
 - _____ If you are an athlete and plan on playing in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships.
- *Attained from the National Association for College Counseling

Senior-year timeline:

September

- _____ Make sure you have all applications required for college admission and financial aid. Write, phone, or use the Internet to request missing information.
- _____ Check on application and financial aid deadlines for the schools to which you plan to apply. They may vary, and it is essential to meet all deadlines!
- _____ Review your transcript and extra-curricular records with your school counselor to ensure their accuracy.
- _____ If needed, register for the October/November SAT and/or SAT Subject Tests, or September/October ACT.

- _____ If the colleges require recommendations, ask the appropriate people to write on your behalf. Provide recommendation forms, any special instructions and a stamped, addressed business envelope to the people writing your recommendation. Be thoughtful! Write thank-you notes to those who write recommendations and keep them informed of your decisions.
- _____ Do not take rolling admission applications for granted. (Some colleges do not have application deadlines; they admit students on a continuous basis.) These schools may reach their maximum class size quickly-the earlier you apply, the more availability there may be.
- _____ Plan visits to colleges and set up interviews (if you didn't get to them during the summer or if you want to return to a campus for a second time).

October

- _____ Mail applications in time to reach the colleges by the deadlines. Fill out the transcript request online to have your transcript mailed to the colleges.
- _____ If applying for early decision or early action, send in your application now. Also prepare applications for back-up schools. Remember, if you are accepted under the early decision option, you are expected to enroll at that college and to withdraw all other applications. Submit financial aid information if requested from early decision/action candidates.
- _____ Have official test scores sent by the testing agency to colleges on your list.

November

- _____ Be sure your first quarter grades are in good standing.
- _____ Continue completing applications to colleges. Make copies of all applications before mailing them.
- _____ If you need financial aid, you can apply on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) website at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require any other financial aid form.
- _____ Keep all records, test score reports, and copies of applications for admission and financial aid. Do not throw anything away until at least the end of your first year in college. Having detailed records will save you time and effort should anything be lost or should you decide to apply in the future to other colleges and scholarship programs.

December

- _____ Consult your school counselor again to review your final list of colleges. Be sure you have all bases covered. It is a good idea to make copies of everything before you drop those envelopes in the mail. If for some reason your application gets lost, you will have a back-up copy. File your last college application.
- _____ If you applied for early decision, you should have an answer by now. If you are accepted, follow the instructions for admitted students. If the decision is deferred until spring or you are denied, submit applications now to other colleges.
- _____ Apply for Bright Futures by completing the Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) — explained previously under the section Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

January

- _____ Keep up with your classwork! Grades and courses continue to count throughout the senior year.
- _____ Request that your counselor send an updated transcript (including your first semester grades) to the colleges to which you applied.
- _____ Complete your income tax forms as soon as possible. You will need those figures to fill out the FAFSA. Complete and return your FAFSA as quickly as possible after January 1. Check to make sure your colleges do not require any other financial aid forms. If they do, consult your guidance counselor or contact the college's financial aid office.
- _____ If planning to attend a Florida private, non-profit college, apply for the FRAG—explained previously

February

- _____ 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 after 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 a college transmitted your data directly, notify the college of any change.
- _____ If more than four weeks have passed after sending in your FAFSA and you have not received an acknowledgment, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or visit their website at www.fafsa.ed.gov for more information. They will need your name, social security number, address, and date of birth exactly as it was written on your FAFSA.
- _____ Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.

_____ Enjoy your final year in high school, but don't catch senioritis!

March

_____ Stay focused and keep studying-only a couple more months to go!

_____ Visit colleges to which you have been accepted to help you decide on a final choice.

April

_____ Review your college acceptances and financial aid awards. Be sure to compare financial aid packages in your decision-making process. If you are positive you will not enroll at one or more of the colleges, which accepted you, please notify those colleges that you have selected another college. Keeping colleges abreast of your plans might enable those colleges to admit someone else. If you know which college you will attend, send your tuition deposit and follow all other instructions for admitted students. You must decide which offer of admission to accept by May 1 (postmark date).

May

_____ By May 1, decide on the one college you will attend and send in your tuition deposit to that college. Notify the other colleges that accepted you that you have selected another college.

_____ BE PROUD-you have completed a difficult task!

_____ If your first-choice college places you on their waitlist, do not lose all hope. Some students are admitted off the waitlist. Talk with your counselor and contact the college to let them know you are still very interested. Keep the college updated on your activities.

_____ Take Advanced Placement examinations, if appropriate, and request that your AP scores be sent to the college you will attend. Make sure Dual Enrollment transcripts are sent to your high school and college.

.*Attained from the National Association for College Counseling