

School Counseling Department Newsletter



30 Tips of Dignity & Respect, Tip 12:

Be culturally competent.

Differences are barriers if we allow them to be.

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Upcoming Events:

- Feb 15 - No School/ Teacher P.D.
- Feb 20 - Progress Reports
- Feb 21 - Taste of West Ashley
- Feb 25 - Operation Get Smart

The Charleston Center is on campus on Thursdays for Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Intervention Services. TTC is on campus for FAFSA assistance on Tuesdays. See your counselor for information.

It is time to schedule IGP appointments!!!!

Contact your school counselor

BRING IN COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE LETTERS AND SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS

We want to celebrate with you!

What all SENIORS need to know. . .

Senior Year is a busy and extremely important time in the college admissions process. This is your last chance to get the ACT and SAT scores you need, and senior year is when you have to narrow down your college options to the handful of schools to which you'll apply. You'll need to get your college essay up to snuff, line up your letters of recommendation, and apply for financial aid. During the application process, you'll need to keep active in extracurricular activities and maintain high grades.

1. Know how to brag about yourself to colleges, employers, and scholarship committees. Fill out the Profile Sheet and bring it to your counselor or anyone else you ask to write a letter of recommendation for you.
2. Know about Naviance Family Connection. Visit <https://connection.naviance.com> for information on all colleges and universities, and scholarship information and applications.
3. Know about scholarships and financial aid. Get a monthly scholarship newsletter. Make sure you also visit individual college websites for information on scholarship programs specific to those schools. Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in OCTOBER. www.fafsa.ed.gov.
4. Know about the SAT and ACT. Seniors planning to attend college should have already taken at least one of these tests, but may wish to take them again during their senior year.
5. Know your graduation requirements! The Class of 2018 needs the following to graduate:
A total of 24 prescribed units of credit: English- 4, Mathematics- 4, Science- 3, U.S. History- 1, Economics- 0.5 U.S. Government- 0.5, Other Social Studies- 1, Physical Education or Junior ROTC- 1, Computer Science (including keyboarding)- 1, World Language or Career and Technology Education- 1, Electives (including Personal Health)- 7, TOTAL 24

February -- March: If you submitted the FAFSA, you should receive the Student Aid Report (SAR). Carefully look it over for accuracy. Errors can cost you thousands of dollars. Contact colleges that didn't send you a confirmation receipt for your application. Don't put off applying to schools with rolling admissions or late deadlines—the available spaces can fill up. Keep your grades high. Colleges can revoke offers of admission if your grades take a nosedive senior year. Some acceptance letters may arrive. Compare financial aid offers and visit campus before making a decision. Don't panic; many decisions are not mailed out until April. Continue applying for appropriate scholarships.



BE A CHAMPION OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

Bullying is repeated negative behavior toward a less powerful person.

Teasing vs. Bullying

TEASING:

Usually involves 2 or more friends who act together in a way that seems fun to everyone involved;
NEVER involves social or emotional abuse;

BULLYING:

Saying mean or hurtful things, making fun or calling mean names;
Ignoring or excluding on purpose;
Hitting, kicking, pushing;
Telling lies or spreading rumors;
Trying to make others dislike someone



What to do if you're bullied?

Report any acts of bullying behaviors immediately;
Tell a trusted adult – a parent, a counselor, an SRO, a teacher or administrator.

If you see something, SAY SOMETHING!!!!

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS: ACT and SAT

Please be reminded that it is the responsibility of the student/parent to register for the ACT and SAT tests. The Counseling staff can answer questions at any time. Log on to sat.org/register or www.actstudent.org to register.

- The ACT / SAT are college admissions tests & aid institutions in determining a student's potential for success in college. (Students planning on attending a 2-year or technical college generally do NOT need to take either test.) Colleges/universities in S.C. accept both ACT and/or SAT scores. Students should refer to the admission requirements for each institution they plan to attend.
- It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** you take the writing component at least once. It is not so necessary on subsequent retakes.
- If qualify for and would like to request testing accommodations for the ACT or SAT, it is **your** responsibility to initiate the process by discussing the procedure with your counselor. The approval process is very time-consuming (minimum 6 – 8 weeks). Each testing agency (College Board / ACT) has its own application for accommodations.



5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE ADMISSION

You can get in. Really.

College admission isn't as competitive as you might think. Fewer than 100 colleges in the U.S. are highly selective, which means they accept less than 25 percent of applicants. Close to 500 four-year colleges accept more than 75 percent of applicants. And open-admission colleges accept all or most high school graduates.

You are more than test scores.

Colleges care most about the work you've done in high school. They look for students who have earned strong grades in challenging courses. They also try to learn about your character by looking at what you do outside the classroom. Take advantage of opportunities like the application essay and college interview to show a more complete picture of who you are.

You are in charge.

This is your big future—you're in the driver's seat. Stay focused on what's important to you and what you want to get out of the college experience. College planning can feel overwhelming at times, but if you take charge and stay focused on your goals, you can make it work for you.

You are unique.

You should base your choice on how well a college fits your needs. Don't worry about how it's ranked on a list or how famous it is. The effort you put in and the opportunities you take advantage of once you get there matter more than the college you go to. Once you graduate from college, your achievements and skills will matter most.

You are not in this alone.

Family, teachers and friends are a great resource. Discuss your plans to go to college with them and ask for help and advice. Make an appointment with a school counselor or your principal to talk about the application process, colleges that will suit you and options for financial aid.

COMMON COLLEGE ADMISSIONS QUESTIONS

1. The easy A:

Is it better to take a lower-level class and get an “A” or struggle somewhat in a higher level and be thankful for a “B”?

A: The snarky party-line from college admissions officials is, “It is better to get the A in the higher-level course.” ***Rigor of coursework is scrutinized and is almost universally considered the single biggest factor in the admissions decision-making process.***

Most colleges would rather see a student stretch academically by taking a more demanding class than cruise through lower-level courses.

As students enter their second semester, they will be asked to select their courses for next year. Be sure to keep in mind what a college “recommends” and what it “requires” as far as course distribution. This information can be found on most college websites and in many college guidebooks.

As an example: the University of South Carolina requires a minimum of three science classes of which three must be lab sciences (biology, chemistry, physics, or upper-level courses requiring a lower-level course as a pre-requisite). Davidson College “recommends” four years of a foreign language; that means that if Davidson is on your junior’s list, they really expect that students will continue with Spanish in their senior year. ***Dropping core classes like foreign languages and science is not looked upon well by the more selective schools.***

2. Testing strategies:

My son didn’t do well on the PSAT and has had some tutoring. How many times should a student take the SAT? Do colleges get upset when students take them too many times?

A: Students generally begin taking the SAT in the winter or spring of their junior year. All juniors should have just received their PSAT scores from the October test. In addition to acting as a benchmark score, the PSAT serves as the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Taking the SAT or ACT three times is usually sufficient. Colleges process their applications differently, so many schools may not see how many times a student has taken any of the tests. However, there is a point of diminishing returns for students when taking the SATs. If a student has studied and/or had test prep and has not significantly improved, more tutoring might not have much of an impact. Parents need to remember that taking

the SAT is not fun and can make many students anxious, especially if there is a history of less-than-stellar test-taking performance.

3. Making time for campus visits:

It is really hard for us to get away for campus visits during the school year. Is it worth it to visit colleges during the summer when classes aren't in session?

A: Definitely. Colleges offer campus tours and information sessions all summer. The campus might not be buzzing with political demonstrations or humming with students studying in the library, but you and your student will still get a better feel for the college than any glossy brochure or website can provide. You'll be able to walk away with a good sense of the physical look and feel of the campus, and if you ask targeted questions, you'll also learn about the softer side of college life from the tour guide. A visit will also provide dedicated time for you and your student to compare notes and debrief.

I encourage all families to begin senior year with a final list of colleges. Since visiting every college on the list is often not feasible, I recommend focusing campus visits on reach and target schools in the spring and summer.

Seniors should visit safety schools, only if necessary, in the spring when a final decision needs to be made.

www.collegeadmissionsstrategies.com

What SC Colleges Want (GPA, ACT/SAT)

College/University	Location	Average GPA	Average SAT	Average ACT	Public/Private
Allen	Columbia	Minimum 2.0	Recommended	Recommended	Private
Anderson	Anderson	3.30	1045	22	Private
Benedict	Columbia	Minimum 2.0	750	15	Private
Bob Jones	Greenville	3.03	Not Required	23	Private
Charleston Southern	Charleston	3.73	1100	23	Private
Clafin	Orangeburg	3.18	879	18	Private
Clemson	Clemson	4.28	1225	28	Public
Coastal	Conway	3.0-3.7	1000	21	Public
Coker	Hartsville	3.2	1050	22	Private
College of Charleston	Charleston	A/B+	1150	26	Public
Columbia	Columbia	3.4	1000	20	Private
Columbia International	Columbia	3.7	1081	23	Private
Converse	Spartanburg	3.89	1050	22	Private
Erskine	Due West	3.4	1050	23	Private
Francis Marion	Florence	3.19	950	20	Public
Furman	Greenville	3.83	1285	28	Private
Lander	Greenwood	3.6	1000	21	Private
Limestone	Gaffney	3.0	1000	20	Private
Morris	Sumter	Minimum 2.0	700	18	Private
Newberry	Newberry	All Considered	870	21	Private
North Greenville	Tigerville	3.7	1100	24	Private
South Carolina State	Orangeburg	3.04	840	18	Public
Spartanburg Methodist	Spartanburg	3.26	900	18	Private
The Citadel	Charleston	3.5	1100	23	Public
USC - Aiken	Aiken	3.30	1000	21	Public
USC - Beaufort	Beaufort	3.31	929	20	Public
USC - Columbia	Columbia	3.5	1200	26	Public
USC - Salkehatchie	Allendale	HS Diploma	Recommended	Recommended	Public
USC - Upstate	Spartanburg	3.2	900	19	Public
Voorhees	Denmark	Minimum 2.0	Recommended	Recommended	Private
Winthrop University	Rock Hill	3.8	1040	23	Public
Wofford College	Spartanburg	3.56	1250	26	Private

**Based on 2014 Information available through <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>, individual colleges and Naviance