

10th Grade College Planning

1. Choose your classes carefully. Make sure you are taking classes that are challenging for you.
2. Getting good grades should be your main focus during your sophomore year. The work you do now is laying the foundation for your future study habits, so work hard!
3. In the Spring of Sophomore year, consider being part of the Distinguished Scholar program which will include taking our most rigorous classes and participating in volunteer activities. You will receive detailed information about this at the appropriate time.
4. Get to know your teachers. They will likely be writing your letters of recommendation. Be sure that you leave a good impression!
5. Start thinking about your life after high school, including the types of jobs that might interest you.
6. Participate in extracurricular activities. While Academics are very important, they aren't everything. Explore your interest in a sport, school club, music or drama group, or community volunteer activities. Remember that colleges would rather see real involvement in one activity instead of a loose connection to several.
7. Make a list of colleges that interest you, and create a spreadsheet of the demographics of those colleges: size, distance, academic offerings, etc.
8. Attend local college fairs. There is one coming to Austin in April. I will email you info regarding college fairs which I hear of.
9. Begin visiting college campuses. If you are traveling, take the opportunity to set up official college visits in the places you go. An official college visit will allow you to sit in classes, eat in the cafeteria, tour the dorms, etc.
10. Look for job, internship and job-shadowing opportunities. Admissions officers like to see well-rounded applicants who have participated in high school extracurricular activities, but also consider volunteering or job shadowing in a career area that interests you.
11. Take the PSAT seriously. Although the 10th grade PSAT is a practice test, make sure you are diligent when taking the test. Consider seriously preparing for the junior year PSAT when the time comes.
12. Keep track of your achievements so when you start filling out college applications, you won't have to try to remember all of your awards and extracurricular activities. Log them in a spreadsheet and keep a hard-copy file to save time when applying.
13. Build strong time-management skills. They are necessary for college.