

## **COLLEGE PREPARATION TIMELINE from your college counseling team**

### **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Read! Read!! Read!!!
- Develop strong study habits.
- Do your best in school.
- If you are having difficulty, don't give up!  
Get help from a teacher or a tutor.
- Get involved in school-based or community-based activities that allow you to explore new activities and discover new interests.

### **9<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Ninth grade counts!  
Universities are looking for consistently good students—students who have proven to be involved and focused throughout the four years of high school.
- Continue to read, read, read!
- Continue to strengthen your study habits
- Stay involved in school activities and community activities. This is the time to try a little of everything so that later you can choose and concentrate on the two or three activities you really enjoy.
- Begin keeping a folder that contains certificates, diplomas, and awards that you receive. This will simplify the college application process.

### **10<sup>th</sup> grade**

- If ninth grade counts, then tenth grade certainly counts! Stay focused and do your best. Good study habits are vital—don't wait until the night before! Core courses—Math, English, Sciences, Social Sciences, and Foreign Languages—are the ones that most universities will look at the hardest.
- Continue to read, read, read!
- Concentrate on the two or three activities that you really enjoy and love to do!
- Learn to balance your studies with other activities. Keep in mind that the first thing college admissions officers will look at are your transcripts with the courses you have taken and the grades you have received. Nevertheless, they are interested

in a well-balanced student who has been involved in Community Service, Debate, Sports, and/or the Arts.

- Consider taking the PSAT. If you are going to take the PSAT, then you should prepare for it. Check out the following site: [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html)
- Consider carefully which diploma you want to pursue: Bachillerato en Ciencias y Letras or Bachillerato en Letras. Then choose which courses you want to take the following year in eleventh grade, keeping in mind that colleges look first and foremost at the core curriculum, but like to see where your interests lie. Always take the most rigorous courses available. Taking the Honors Level courses proves the student's willingness to confront challenges and work hard!
- During the summer after the tenth grade, you will be participating in the Social Service Program. Take a notebook along with you to keep track of the experiences you live during those three weeks. You should also jot down your thoughts and reflections. Those experiences and reflections may serve you well when you are writing your essays required for the college applications.

## **11<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Eleventh grade is important. Focus and work hard!
- Continue to read, read, read!
- Make certain that you maintain a balance between your studies and the activities that you love.
  - Seek leadership roles if possible. Leadership does not happen overnight—it comes from applying yourself to an activity and showing a passion for it.
  - Nevertheless, community service ranks very high as far as extracurricular activities go—higher than being president of a club.
- You might possibly want to consider taking the SAT Subject Test in Biology early in the year since you completed the Biology course in tenth grade. But you do need to realize that you would have to prepare well to take this test. Discuss this possibility with one of the members of our college counseling team.
- Consider taking the SAT or the ACT in October, November or December of this year.
  - You must register to take the test. You can check the College Board or the ACT websites to find out about dates for both registration and testing. Space may be limited so it is best to sign up ahead of time.
  - You must place the Academia's code—882191—on your application so that it will be reported to the AIP. The AIP can then submit your scores in the counselor's letter.

--Prepare well so that you feel comfortable with the format and content of the test on test day.

- When choosing your classes for the following year, your 12<sup>th</sup> grade, you may be tempted to 'ease up' on academics. Don't! Take the most rigorous classes. Remember that you are competing with students from around the world for admission to the universities. Additionally, the more challenging your classes, the easier your adjustment to a college classroom. Make certain you are well prepared for what lies ahead!

### **Vacation between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

- Use this time to prepare for the SAT or the ACT.
- Register to take the TOEFL.

### **12<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Work hard all year. You will be required to send your transcript for the entire twelfth grade. You need to keep in mind that even if you have been accepted early, a university reserves the right to deny admission if the student's GPA has gone down the second semester.
- Stay involved in extra-curricular activities, seeking leadership roles if possible, but choose your activities carefully. Extra-curricular activities should not take up so much of your study time that your GPA suffers. Also, you should keep in mind that there are activities that require quite a bit of your time, but do not contribute, nor should be included as an extracurricular in your application, such as "Carnavalitos" and "Debutantes."

### **March**

- Take the TOEFL.
- Register to take the SAT, the ACT or the Subject Tests in April, May or June if need be. AIP code: 882191
- Fill out the form provided for you on NAVIANCE for the counselor letter. Make certain that you have included all information pertinent to your presentation as a candidate for university studies, as well as a contributing member of the university community to which you plan to apply. Bring the form and your resume when you ask Mrs. St. Malo or Mrs. Arosemena to write your letter.
- Research possible colleges and universities using online resources. Start your research early.

### **April**

- Register to take the SAT, the ACT or Subject Tests in May or June if need be. AIP code: 882191
- Register for the TOEFL if need be.

## **May**

- Take the SAT or Subject Tests if need be.
- Take the TOEFL if need be.

## **June**

- Take the SAT or Subject Tests if need be.
- Begin to narrow your search for possible colleges or universities
- Prepare a chart with the names of the schools, the application deadline for each, the application fee for each, and all other application requirements such as essays, letters of recommendation, etc. Use the chart as a checklist as you complete each stage of the application.
- If you plan on competing in Division I or Division II college sports and want to be eligible to be recruited by colleges, you must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

## **August**

- Further narrow your search to an appropriate number of schools to which you will apply.
- Begin to fill out the applications. Don't hesitate to ask for help.
- Register for the Common App if necessary.
- Ask your teachers for a letter of recommendation if necessary for your applications.
  - Select one or two teachers who know you well and who have challenged you. Admission officers like to hear how you have responded to challenges.
  - Ask the teachers now; don't wait until late in the school year when teachers are so busy that they don't have time to write a good letter.
  - Follow instructions. If a school requests a letter from a Math teacher, don't substitute with a letter from a teacher of a different subject. If they want two letters, don't send three.
  - Fill out the form on NAVIANCE and give each teacher a copy of your completed form and your resume when you request a letter.
  - Remind the teacher of any writing or special projects that you completed for his or her class.
  - If the teacher writes the letter in Spanish, either Mrs. St. Malo or Mrs. Arosemena will translate it.
- Send Mindy a list of the universities or colleges to which you are applying that require the school to send your transcripts, counselor letter of recommendation and teacher letter of recommendation.
- Begin working on your essays.
  - Make certain that you are responding to the question or topic that you have chosen from the list of possibilities that they have given you.
  - Give yourself enough time so that you can

write and then put it down for a few days and then come back to it.

--Ask an objective source to read and critique your essay; you can ask a teacher or a member of the counseling team for help. Remember that family members will be biased so it is best to get the opinion of someone who is not closely related to you.

--Do not allow a well-meaning family member or a private college counselor to write your essay for you. They want to hear your voice and not that of a forty-year-old. They want to get to know you!

--Be extremely careful not to plagiarize!

--Edit and rewrite your essay! Your essay is important!

**BOTTOM LINE: We are here to help you! If you have any questions or concerns, if you need any help with any part of the college application, don't hesitate to ask!**