



College Preparation

In this document I concentrate on the hands-on Preparation Phase which begins as 8th grade ends and continues until Thanksgiving of the senior year. After Thanksgiving the focus switches from *preparing* to go to college to the first stage of *actually going* to college. This next period, where concentration is placed on a list of final candidate schools, I refer to as the Application Phase. It will be covered in a separate document.

For a general overview the whole process, please see the College Selection Tips document.

Preparation Phase – What to know and do

Even though the key elements of the Preparation Phase are straight forward and commonplace, there are many things competing for time and energy during the high school years. It is not uncommon to see nearly all Preparation and Application activities compressed into the senior year. I help clients avoid this situation by scheduling and managing the key elements of this important Preparation Phase.

Know which phase you're in

- Savings & Basic Learning – K-8th grade, setting aside money for college as you grow and learn
- Preparation – 9th grade through Thanksgiving of the senior year
- Application – Thanksgiving of senior year through final selection and acceptance

Seek knowledge about this process and get help when needed

- Learn by researching for yourself, Use CAPlus to provide a comprehensive approach

Plan out the process

- Define your objective, Know core curriculum requirements, Plan for the SAT/ACT

Visit your guidance counselor

- Make an appointment, Show up for it, Be prepared to listen and take notes

Know how colleges will evaluate you

- GPA, Class rank, SAT/ACT, Extracurricular activities, Essay writing, Recommendations

Review the financial considerations, know what

- College will cost, Support is available from your family, Financial aid you will need

Outline your college search

- Define your criteria, Start with a big list, Narrow it down methodically

Two important ingredients needed to prepare successfully

- Taking Ownership of the process
- Being Proactive in doing something about it