

Finding YOUR Future



A parent guide to
post-secondary options



Franklin D. Sampson
Director of Guidance & Counseling

Dr. Mark Henry, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Dear Students and Parents:

This booklet has been prepared to provide you with information to use in exploring all of the wonderful options available to you after high school, and to assist you in creating a plan for successful graduation and your post-secondary options. (A Spanish version of this book is available on line at www.cfisd.net.) The information within this book is subject to change at the discretion of the institutions included in this publication. Efforts will be made by your counselors to provide you with updated information as it becomes available and to help you in every way possible as you prepare for your future. Additionally, individual college websites provide comprehensive, updated information about admission, financial aid, and curriculum, and you are encouraged to frequent these websites to access the wealth of information available to prospective students.

If you need assistance navigating through this sometimes murky process, please feel free to make an appointment to meet with your counselor. This publication is intended as a resource for your personal use and future reference, but it is not intended to be a substitute for a conference with your counselor. Important information concerning scholarships, job opportunities, and college visitation days will be made available to you through your counselor. In addition, the Cy-Fair ISD Guidance and Counseling website, found at www.cfisd.net, lists available scholarships, enrichment opportunities, and other valuable college and career resources for your use.

Decisions you make this year are paramount to your future; therefore, carefully investigate the information contained within this book. Making a decision based on good information enhances your chance for success, and working closely with your counselor will ease the transition from high school to post-secondary education. There are also many other people whose knowledge and expertise are a wealth of information for you, including your parents, older siblings, favorite teachers, family friends, employers, and youth directors. All of these individuals can play an important part in the decisions you make as you map out the exciting road to your future. Enjoy the journey!

Sincerely,

Guidance and Counseling Department
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS I.S.D. GUIDANCE & COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Franklin D. SampsonDirector of Guidance & Counseling

Angela RhymesCoordinator of High School Guidance & Counseling

Angela Williams-Thomas.....Coordinator of Middle School Guidance & Counseling

Mary HestandCoordinator of Elementary Guidance & Counseling

Shayla Rodriguez-Bell Bridgeland High School

Stephanie Heefner Cy-Fair High School

Lauri BakerCypress Creek High School

Lori Battaglia.....Cypress Falls High School

Kimberly ChildressCypress Lakes High School

Marilu MayfieldCypress Park High School

Deirdre (Dede) CashCypress Ranch High School

Brandi BlomquistCypress Ridge High School

Jennifer BarnesCypress Springs High School

Karen TylerCypress Woods High School

Maria LewisJersey Village High School

Jacqueline ReederLangham Creek High School

Brenda Bond.....Windfern High School

Revised January 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction

Guidance & Counseling Staff

College Admissions Process

Education Pays	2
Steps for College Admission	3
Selecting a College	4-5
College Visits	6
Brief Summary of Admission Process	7
College Admissions Terminology	8-9
State of Texas Top 10%	9-10
State of Texas Common Application	10
Access for Undocumented Students	11
College/Career Assessment Programs	12

Financial Aid

Financial Aid Check-List	14
Web Sites and Helpful Resources	15
Financial Aid Process	16-19
Selective Service	19
Frequently Asked Questions	20-21
Organizations that Offer Help	22
Scholarship Process	23-24

Testing Information

College Admission Exams	26-28
Testing Schedule & School Codes	29
STAAR / End of Course (EOC)	30
Texas Success Initiative / TSI	30-31
Tech-Prep / CLEP / Department Exams	32

Ways to Earn College Credit

AP Exams	34
Dual College Credit	34
Articulated Credit	34

Post-Secondary Options

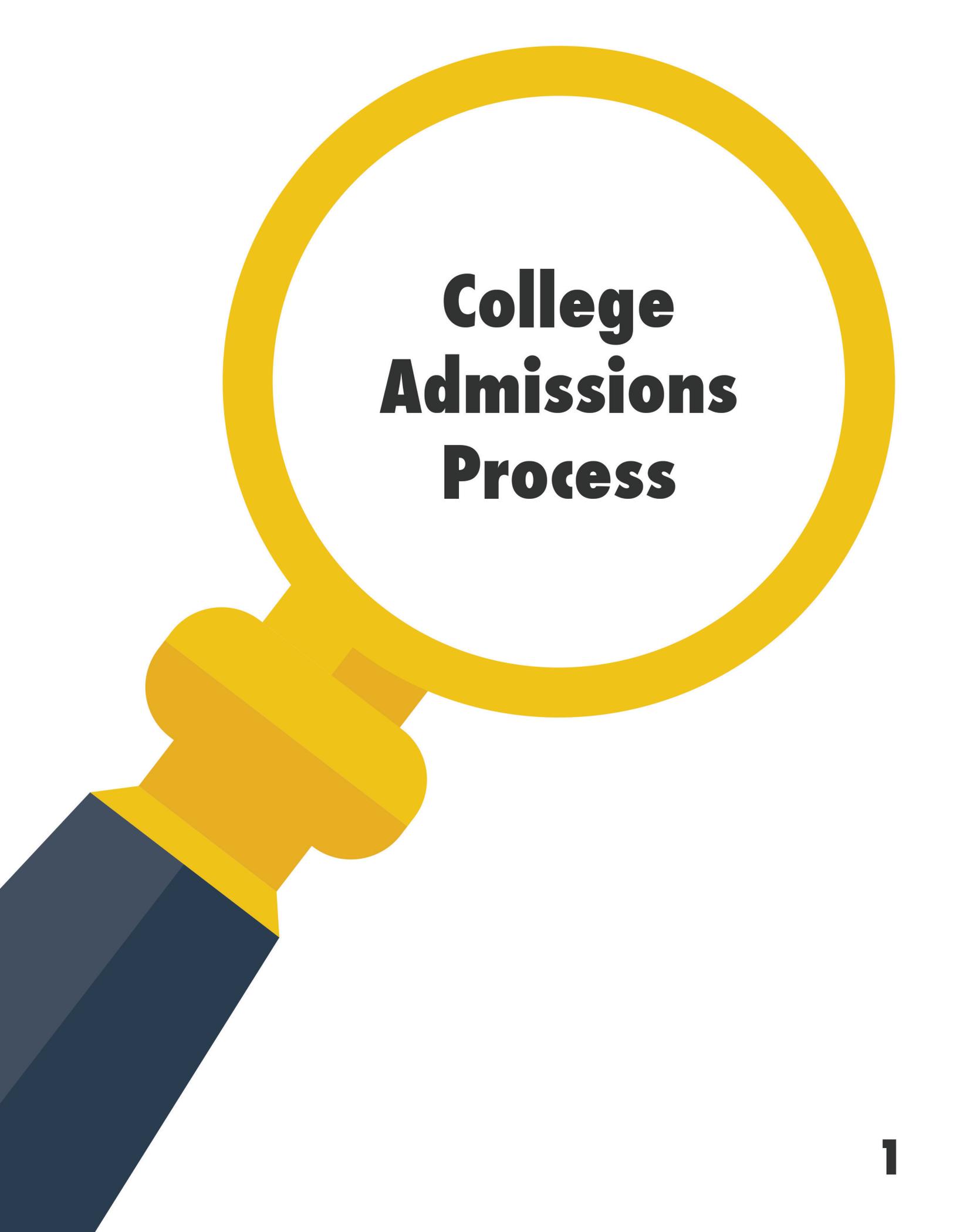
4 Year University	36-37
Community College	37-39
Trade / Technical	39-41
Military	42
Employment	43-44

Career & College Planning

11 th Grade Plan & Checklist	46-47
12 th Grade Plan & Checklist	48-49

Endorsements

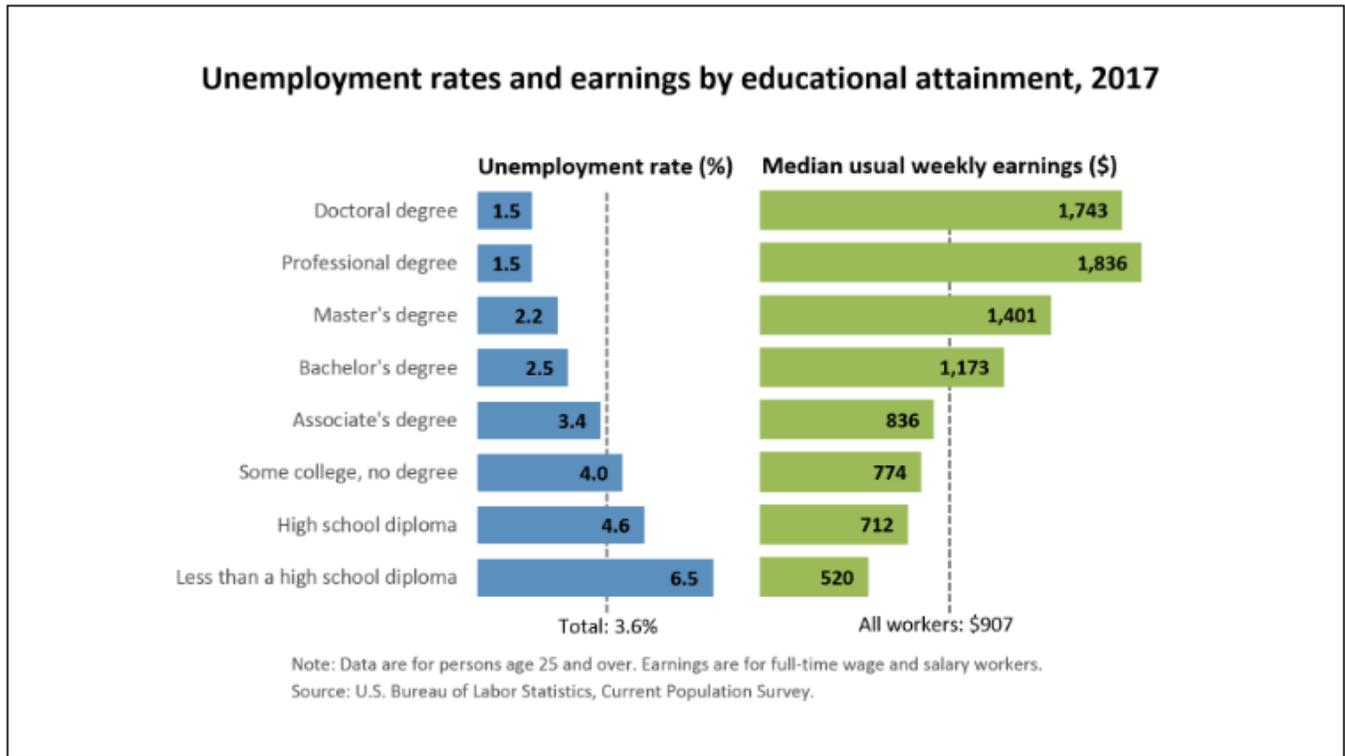
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Endorsement Chart	50-51
---	-------



College Admissions Process

Education pays...

Education pays in higher earnings and lower unemployment rates



[Data Table](#)

These education categories reflect only the highest level of educational attainment. They do not take into account completion of training programs in the form of apprenticeships and other on-the-job training, which may also influence earnings and unemployment rates. For more information on training, see: <https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/education-training-system.htm>.

BLS has some data on the [employment status](#) of the civilian noninstitutional population 25 years and over by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic origin online.

The Census Bureau also has some data on [educational attainment](#) online.

Last Modified Date: March 27, 2018

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Steps for College Admission

- _____ Step 1 Make a calendar of all test, application and housing **deadlines** as you receive them.

- _____ Step 2 Take your SAT/ACT tests (we suggest the second semester of junior year). Take SAT subject tests if your college requires them (we suggest taking them no later than October of senior year).

- _____ Step 3 Obtain and review college applications, housing forms, and financial aid information at the colleges of your choice.

- _____ Step 4 Complete and submit admission applications and housing forms.

- _____ Step 5 Ensure SAT/ACT score reports have been sent to the appropriate colleges.

- _____ Step 6 Fill out an official **transcript request form** in your high school registrar's office.

- _____ Step 7 Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as **October 1st of your senior year.**
The earlier submission date will be a permanent change, enabling students to complete and submit a FAFSA as early as October 1 every year.

- _____ Step 8 **Request a final transcript to be sent to the college you plan to attend** confirming your high school graduation.

SELECTING A COLLEGE

There are over 3500 colleges and universities in the United States, so selecting the right college that best fits your abilities and ambitions is one of the most important decisions you will make as a young adult. For those of you who have already made a decision concerning which college you would like to attend, your attention needs to be focused on being admitted to that institution. For those of you who have not made this important decision, your attention will need to be focused on narrowing your choice of colleges to a workable list. In most instances there is a wide selection of colleges available which will meet your needs. However, each of these colleges is a reflection of an educational philosophy combined with the make-up of the size of its student body. Therefore, selecting the college which is just right for you can be an overwhelming task unless you study the differences between colleges and establish priorities that are important to you. The first step in researching colleges is to exercise your own goals and plans for the future.

Factors usually considered when selecting a college include the following:

1. **Location** - Some students prefer to attend college in the same city or close to home while others would be able to adjust and function as well or better farther away.
2. **Type** - Colleges are either privately or publicly financed. Private colleges may be church related, and this factor will often influence a student's selection.
3. **Cost** - This includes tuition, fees, room and board, and travel expenses. Tuition at state-supported schools is substantially lower than that of private schools. Students who wish to attend out-of-state public schools are assessed out-of-state tuition fees, which in most cases will equate with tuition at a private school.
4. **Admission Requirements** - In addition to presenting acceptable scores on entrance exams, some colleges require a particular class rank as well as a certain number of units in high school preparatory courses, essays, recommendations, and interviews.
5. **Curriculum and Degrees Offered** - A major consideration for choosing a college should be the availability of adequate programs of instruction in the area you intend to study.
6. **Honors Program** - Distinctive academic activities may be available to students who meet certain requirements.
7. **Physical Facilities** - Colleges should have appropriate classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and residence halls.
8. **Financial Aid** - In most instances, financial aid is available to bridge the gap between the cost of education at an institution and the expected contribution by the family. Some families may qualify for financial aid at private schools, which makes the cost comparable to that of public colleges (see section on financial aid).

9. **Transfer of Credits** - Credits earned at your institution of choice should be recognized by other colleges if you decide to transfer. Always check with the new school to determine which courses will be counted for credit.
10. **Extra-Curricular Activities** - The college should offer a variety of activities which are of interest to you, such as student government, social organizations, athletic or intramural activities, and/or community service opportunities.
11. **Family Tradition** - Your family may have strong ties to a particular college.
12. **Size** – The size of colleges range from very small (500 students) to very large (35,000 students or larger). Student-faculty ratio and typical class size are also important factors to consider.

From the above list, set and define your top priorities when selecting a college.

Step 1: List four or five characteristics that are most important to you.

For example:

Curriculum offered:	Strong and highly rated program available in intended major.
Cost:	Tuition, fees, room and board no more than \$9,000 per year.
Location:	No more than three to four hours commuting time.
Size:	Enrollment 10,000 or fewer students.

Step 2: Narrow your choices to colleges that meet your specific criteria. Determine the colleges' admissions standards to make a "good match." Consult college catalogs such as *The College Handbook*, *Compendium of Texas Colleges*, and *Barron's Profile of American Colleges*. Additionally, there are many excellent resources that can be found on the Cy-Fair ISD Guidance and Counseling web page at www.cfisd.net.

Step 3: Attend College Night programs to talk with admissions representatives and obtain first-hand information about the colleges they represent.

Step 4: Talk with your parents about your possible choices and how you plan to finance your education.

Step 5: Plan visits to several college campuses for you and your parents. To arrange a college tour, visit college websites to register for tours or call the Office of Admissions to secure an appointment. You may also want to ask for appointments with an admissions representative for your high school, an advisor in your major, and/or the offices of financial aid and housing.

Step 6: Talk with current students and alumni at each school to get varied perspectives on the kind of college experience you can expect at each place.

Step 7: Throughout this time of decision, **feel free to consult with your counselor** concerning any questions you may have. You are encouraged to arrange a conference with your counselor at a time when your parents may attend.

College Visits

Students are allowed two college visits during their junior year and two college visits during their senior year. Prior to your visit, fill out the college visitation form, and take it with you to your college visit. You must obtain documentation of your visit from the college to be given to the attendance office upon your return to campus.

Questions To Consider During College Visits

- What are your personal study habits? Do they fit with the school attitude?
- Do you know your degree direction? Does the school have adequate curriculum for it? Does it satisfy your specialized interests? How supportive is the career center in helping recent graduates find jobs in your area of interest?
- What are the admissions standards to the university and to the degree program you desire?
- Are there advanced placements? What type are they?
- Are there special academic programs available, such as honors programs, accelerated degree programs, or academic support programs?
- Is there a study abroad program? In what countries? In what degree programs?
- What are the class sizes? Are most class formats lecture or discussion?
- How is the academic year divided? (semesters, quarters, block system)
- What percentage of the freshman class returns for the sophomore year?
- How diverse is the student body? (scholastic, geographic, socioeconomically)
- What percentage of graduates are accepted to professional schools?
- What kinds of internship opportunities are available?
- What kind of technology is available to students?
- What do students do for fun on weekends?
- What percentage of students are involved in intramurals, community service, and fraternities/sororities?
- What percentage of applicants are admitted to the university? What percentage of students receive financial aid?
- What percentage of students live on campus as freshman? As upperclassmen?

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE ADMISSION PROCESS

1. **Take the required admission tests** and have the score report sent to the college by the testing program.
2. **Accurately complete the application** for admission (usually online) and any other document required by the college. In some instances, the student will be required to write essays or short answer responses to specified questions. Students may also be required to include a photograph and document extracurricular achievements.
3. **Pay the application fee** (usually online) if required. Since this fee is nonrefundable, it is advisable for you to narrow your choices to four or five schools before applying.
4. **Provide high school recommendations**, if required. The counseling office and teachers will assist you in completing these recommendations and will send them directly to the college. Give the person(s) writing your recommendations at least two weeks notice.
5. **Request your official transcript** be sent to the college(s) in the registrar's office at your school. You must complete a transcript request form and pay the required fee (if applicable) for each transcript sent to colleges. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the high school to the college. If a counselor is writing a recommendation letter on your behalf, inform the registrar so all documents can be mailed together.
6. **Complete health forms**, if required.
7. **Apply for housing** by completing an application and submitting the required fee. The time to apply for housing varies from college to college. Check college websites for deadlines. Some require that the student is accepted for admission before an application for housing is mailed to the student. Other colleges will accept housing requests prior to accepting the student. Housing is critical at most schools, and residence halls are assigned on a first come, first serve basis. Some colleges require freshman students to live on campus.
8. **Apply for financial aid after October 1st** of your senior year by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This is a separate procedure and all requests regarding finances should be directed to the college's office of financial aid. (See section in this booklet.) Please note: before any prospective student can be considered for financial aid, he/she must be accepted for admission. An application for financial aid does not constitute an application for admission and vice versa.
9. If you have not received a response via email or letter that your application for admission has been received within a reasonable length of time, contact an admissions counselor. **Continue to check your online application status** to ensure all application materials have been received by the application deadline.
10. **Request an official transcript** be sent to the college you plan to attend upon graduation. At most colleges you are unable to register for classes unless your final transcript is on file.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TERMINOLOGY

Early Decision

The Early Decision plan is designed for a student who has determined that a particular college is his/her first choice and the student plans to attend the college if accepted. Early Decision applicants apply in the fall (usually November or December) and learn of the decision of their application during December or January. Students may apply to other schools under the Regular Decision option, but if they are accepted Early Decision, they are required to withdraw their applications from other schools and attend the Early Decision school. EARLY DECISION IS A BINDING AGREEMENT and is only suggested for students who are very certain of their first choice college.

You will have to check with each individual college to determine deadlines and if Early Decision is available for the colleges on your list. A student is usually released from an Early Decision obligation if a financial aid package award is not adequate based on financial need. If you are thinking about an Early Decision plan, you should take the required college entrance tests the summer before your senior year. Also, check to see if your college or university requires SAT Subject Tests. The ideal time to check into Early Decision procedures is during your junior year in high school.

Early Action

Early Action is the same as Early Decision, EXCEPT a student is not required to commit to the school or withdraw applications from other colleges. Early Action is non-binding and simply allows a student to apply early and learn of an admissions decision before regular applicants, usually in December or January.

Rolling Admissions

Application process through which admissions applications are evaluated upon receipt and applicants are usually notified within 4-5 weeks of the decision if accepted.

Admission by Review

An admissions process used by colleges/universities to assess the probability of college academic success of applicants who do not meet published admissions criteria. This process considers various factors: high school course work, extracurricular activities, leadership positions, community service, work experience, letters of recommendation, and/or extenuating circumstances of an individual.

Provisional Admission

An admissions decision which allows an applicant to be "provisionally" accepted, dependent upon completion of requirements set by the college/university. These requirements may include summer session attendance with specified courses and GPA attainment or limitations on the number of courses taken in the fall.

Open Admissions

An admissions process that allows virtually all applicants to be accepted, without regard to such traditional qualifying criteria such as test scores, class rank, or GPA.

Deferred Admission

A program that allows an accepted student to postpone college enrollment date for up to 3 years for personal reasons. Deferred admission is also used to describe Early Decision or Early Action applicants who are not accepted in the early applicant pools but whose applications will be reviewed with the regular decision applicant pool.

Candidate Reply Date

Sponsored by the College Board, this agreement establishes a common date, May 1, as the earliest time a subscribing college may require an accepted applicant to notify the college that he/she plans to attend.

Candidate Notification Date

The date by which an institution will announce its decision on a student's application. (usually the first two weeks in April).

Waiting List

An institution's list of students who were not accepted initially, but who may be accepted at a later date if space becomes available.

Applicant Pool

The total number of students who are applying to a given college or university in a particular year.

Yield

The number of students who are accepted to a school and accept an offer of admission.

STATE OF TEXAS TOP 10 PERCENT AUTOMATIC COLLEGE ADMISSION POLICY

Students who are in the top 10 percent of their graduating class are eligible for automatic admission to any public university in Texas.

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §51.803, a student is eligible for automatic admission to a college or university as an undergraduate student if the applicant earned a grade point average in the top 10 percent of the student's high school graduating class, or the top 7 percent of eligible 2018 summer/fall freshman applicants for admission to the University of Texas at Austin, and the applicant:

- (1) successfully completed the requirements for the Recommended High School Program (RHSP) or the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP);
- (2) earned the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program; or
- (3) satisfied ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent.

In accordance with Title 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), §5.5(e), high school rank for students seeking automatic admission to a general academic teaching institution on the basis of class rank is determined and reported as follows.

- (1) Class rank shall be based on the end of the 11th grade, middle of the 12th grade, or at high school graduation, whichever is most recent at the application deadline.
- (2) The top 10 percent of a high school class shall not contain more than 10 percent of the total class size.
- (3) The student's rank shall be reported by the applicant's high school or school district as a specific number out of a specific number total class size.

- (4) Class rank shall be determined by the school or school district from which the student graduated or is expected to graduate.

An applicant who does not satisfy the course requirements is considered to have satisfied those requirements if the student completed the portion of the RHSP, DAP, or the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program that was available to the student but was unable to complete the remainder of the coursework solely because courses were unavailable to the student at the appropriate times in the student's high school career as a result of circumstances not within the student's control.

To qualify for automatic admission an applicant must:

- (1) submit an application before the deadline established by the college or university to which the student seeks admission;
- (2) meet all curriculum requirements for admission established by the college or university to which the student seeks admission; and
- (3) provide a high school transcript or diploma that indicates whether the student has satisfied or is on schedule to satisfy the requirements of the RHSP, DAP, or the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program or the portion of the RHSP, DAP, or the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program that was available to the student.

Colleges and universities are required to admit an applicant for admission as an undergraduate student if the applicant is the child of a public servant who was killed or sustained a fatal injury in the line of duty and meets the minimum requirements, if any, established by the governing board of the college or university for high school or prior college-level grade point average and performance on standardized tests.

STATE OF TEXAS COMMON APPLICATION FOR FRESHMAN ADMISSION

All Texas public four-year colleges and universities will use the State of Texas Common Application for entering freshmen. The application booklet contains detailed instructions for completion of the application, deadlines, general information, and the application itself. Students are encouraged to apply online using the common application at www.applytexas.org. Instructions should be read very carefully. It is advisable to print a hard copy of your application before you "submit".

COLLEGE ACCESS FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

If you are an immigrant student, or know someone who is, you can go to college regardless of your immigration status. Effective since Fall 2001, Texas law HB 1403, enables immigrant students, including *undocumented students*, to qualify as Texas residents and pay in-state tuition. This tuition is much lower than the tuition paid by international students. In August 2005, the state Congress approved a new law SB 1528 that expands the benefits of HB 1403.

To qualify, a student must meet the following four provisions:

1. Graduate from a public or private high school, or receive a GED, in Texas;
 2. Reside in Texas for at least 3 years leading up to high school graduation or receiving a GED;
 3. Reside in Texas for the 12 consecutive months right before the semester you are enrolling in college; and
 4. Provide the institution an affidavit stating that you will file an application to become a US permanent resident as soon as you are eligible to do so.
- Students who do not meet requirements above but who have filed an **I -130** (family petition) or **I -140** (work petition) with immigration services (USCIS), and have received a **Notice of Action** as a response from the USCIS, are also eligible to receive instate tuition if they have been here for at least 12 months.
 - People holding work visas (H1-B) and their dependents (H-4) can now also receive in-state tuition at state universities. The same rule applies for NACARA and TPS applicants, among others.

Students who are classified as Texas residents under this law, also qualify for state financial aid!

If you have completed the Recommended High School Program, you can receive the *TEXAS Grant* and the *Texas Public Education Grant* (TPEG) at public universities. There are several other financial aid programs you may receive at a community college, technical college or at a private university: The *Texas Educational Opportunity Grant* (TEOG), *Texas Equalization Grant* (TEG), or the *College Access Loan* (CAL). To apply you will need to fill out the **TAFSA** or **FAFSA** (depending on the institution), even if you *do not have a social security number*, and submit it directly to the university/college that you are planning to attend. You can find the FAFSA in your high school counselor's office or in the financial aid offices of colleges or universities. For additional information, see web site:

www.collegeforalltexans.com

COLLEGE CAREER ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Before students begin to explore college options, it is important to consider educational and career goals. Cypress-Fairbanks ISD uses several tools to assist students in planning for the future.

CAREER CRUISING – is an online career guidance and curriculum program that is available to students, parents, administrators, teachers, and counselors. This career assessment tool is administered to eighth grade students and is accessible to students throughout their high school years, both at school and at home.

Career Cruising has five major tools for students:

- Ability to store career exploration and planning information
- Keeps track of career development activities
- Create career and education plans
- World class assessments
- Intuitive career exploration

With seamless integration into the career and education planning process, Career Cruising's Portfolio Tool and Resume Builder lead students effortlessly through the steps of preparing for the world of work.

My College Quickstart – is the College Board's dynamic and exciting website that assists students with their future planning. With *My College Quickstart*, students can:

- Take a self-assessment test to help them determine their interests
- Research careers and college majors into which they may want to enter
- Search for colleges and determine which would fit them best
- Read articles on professionals and other students who have gone down paths similar to those in which they are interested and develop a personable portfolio, resume, and application essay

Students who take the PSAT/NMSQT receive a free *My College Quickstart* account with the My College Quickstart online college planning package. These accounts will last for the entirety of their high school careers. Students should visit with their counselor or English teacher for additional information.



Financial Aid

FINANCIAL AID CHECK-LIST

- _____ 1. **Apply for admission** to the college(s) you are considering in the fall.
- _____ 2. **Research the financial aid process at the college(s)** you are considering. All colleges require submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for federal aid programs (such as the Pell Grant). Determine if supplemental forms are also required for financial aid consideration, such as the CSS Profile, which is used by many private colleges.
- _____ 3. Find out the **financial aid priority deadline** for each college.
- _____ 4. Parents and students should **complete their income tax returns** as soon as possible after January 1 of the student's senior year.
- _____ 5. Prior to filling out the FAFSA, create a new FSA ID (replacing PIN #). An FSA ID gives you access to **Federal Student Aid's** online systems and can serve as your **legal signature**. Gather all documents needed for the FAFSA. Consider completing the FAFSA On-the-Web Worksheet to prepare for completion of the FAFSA.
- _____ 6. Beginning **October 1** of your senior year, provide information about your family's financial circumstances by filling out and submitting the FAFSA. Submission of the FAFSA online is preferred and yields faster results.
- _____ 7. Be sure to **list the code numbers of colleges or agencies** you want to receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) on your FAFSA.
- _____ 8. **Review the Student Aid Report (SAR)** for accuracy and make corrections if needed.
- _____ 9. Meet the **priority deadline** for financial aid set by the college(s) you are considering.
- _____ 10. **Ensure your Student Aid Report (SAR) is sent by the federal processor to your college(s)** by the priority deadline. No financial aid can be offered until the college has received your Student Aid Report.
- _____ 11. **Provide verification documents**, including copies of income tax returns, to your financial aid officer, if requested.
- _____ 12. **Communicate openly with your financial aid counselor**. Apprise your financial aid officer of changes in family financial circumstances such as death of a parent, divorce, or loss of a job.
- _____ 13. **Sign and send acceptance letter** of financial aid to financial aid officer. You may accept all or part of a financial aid package.
- _____ 14. **Reapply for financial aid each year.**

PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL AID

A student's financial need for federal aid programs is determined by criteria established by Congress and is reflected in a formula called the Congressional Methodology. The Congressional Methodology is based upon general principles and assumptions and can be summarized as follows:

- Parents have an obligation to finance the education of their children to the extent that they are able.
- A family's income and assets combined produce a comprehensive index of the family's financial strength and its capacity to contribute toward educational costs.
- Factors such as family size, extraordinary expenses, age of the parents, and other considerations must be weighed in relation to income and asset information in order to measure a family's true ability to pay for an education.
- Students and their families must be accepted in their present financial condition; the objective facts of a family's financial situation must be examined to determine the family's ability to pay.
- Students have a responsibility to help pay for their own education and should also be expected to contribute a share of their income and assets.

FINANCIAL AID IMPORTANT WEB SITES

FSA ID (Federal Student Aid) (replaces PIN #) <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>

FAFSA on the Web and Federal School Codes..... www.fafsa.ed.gov

Student Aid on the Web – planning for college,
paying for college, and repaying student loans..... www.studentaid.ed.gov

The Student Guide..... www.studentaid.ed.gov/guide

Looking for Student Aid..... www.studentaid.ed.gov/LSA

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)

Toll-free number for questions
about federal student aid..... 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

TTY (for the hearing impaired)..... 1-800-730-8913

Toll number for inquirers calling
from foreign countries..... +1-319-337-5665

Inspector General Hotline

Reporting student aid fraud
(including identity theft), waste, or abuse
of U.S. Department of Education funds..... 1-800-MIS-USED
(1-800-647-8733)

E-mail:..... oig.hotline@ed.gov

Website:..... www.ed.gov

IN SUMMARY: APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID IS A FIVE STEP PROCESS

Passage of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992, re-authorizing the Higher Education Act of 1965, has brought significant changes in the national delivery system for financial aid.

The Higher Education Amendments mandate use of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as the standing form to apply for federal student aid funds and prohibit charging students or parents a fee for collecting, processing, or delivering financial aid through use of the FAFSA. This legislation simplifies the process of applying for federal financial aid and ensures that students can do so at no cost. Supplemental data may be required only for institutional and state programs, and students may be charged a fee for collecting, processing, and reporting that information.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

Students should check with the university or college that they plan to attend for their financial aid application requirements.

1. **Obtain a supplemental application for financial aid** from the financial aid office of the college you will attend, if required. Return it to the office of financial aid at that specific college by the school's deadline. (Remember the admissions office must accept you before you will be considered for financial aid.)
2. **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**, the need analysis form required by the college, on-line.

We recommend that students and parents save time by creating a new Federal Student Aid ID, <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>. An FSA ID gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and can serve as your legal signature.

Important Note: Only create an FSA ID using your own personal information and for your own exclusive use. You are not authorized to create an FSA ID on behalf of someone else, including a family member. ***Misrepresentation of your identity to the federal government could result in criminal or civil penalties.***

Use the most accurate income information you have to complete the FAFSA. If you have not filed your tax return, use pay stubs to estimate total income for the preceding year.

- W-2 forms and other records of income
- current bank statements
- records of any benefits received from Social Security, Departments of Veterans Affairs and the other agencies
- business/farm records
- your driver's license
- your tax return and your parent's tax return

The FAFSA asks the student to name schools to which the student authorizes release of the FAFSA data. The student will not pay for FAFSA processing or for sending reports from it to the schools written in on the FAFSA.

Colleges that want tax returns from you will ask for them. Do not mail tax returns to colleges unless they are specifically requested. Any additional information regarding your financial position or unusual circumstances should be mailed directly to the financial aid office. Be sure to put applicant's name, social security number and date of birth on each page.

Print and keep a copy of your completed FAFSA. Also keep the instruction booklet.

Provide all required signatures.

3. After the application is processed, **you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR)**. It will show all the information from the FAFSA that was used to calculate the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), or how much you are expected to pay for college. The SAR allows the student to check the information and make corrections, if necessary. The student will not pay a fee for corrections made on the SAR or for sending corrected reports to schools. The SAR will relay messages about the student's eligibility for federal student aid. USDE will insert the appropriate dependent or independent verification form with the SAR to all students selected for verification by the Central Processing System (CPS).
4. **Financial Aid Packages/Awards**. When the financial aid officer receives an application and a Student Aid Report, he/she will be able to determine a package to meet the individual student's specific financial needs.

A student demonstrates a financial need when the cost of attending a college is greater than the total of the parent's and student's contribution (called the EFC) as determined by information submitted on the FAFSA .

A financial aid package is the combination of various financial aid awards.

Financial aid packages usually include a combination of some or all of the following types of aid:

Scholarships	These may be awarded on academic ability, standardized test scores, college major, leadership, special talent, need, or a combination of these credentials. Scholarships do not have to be repaid.
Grants/Awards	Awarded for specific reasons or criteria. In many instances, these are need-based. These do not have to be repaid.
Jobs/Work Study	Employment on or off campus and wages paid either by the institution or by an employer. Students who demonstrate a need may be eligible for employment by their institution under the federally supported work-study program.

Educational Loans Loans may be state and federal. Some banks, foundations, and credit unions have loan programs. The loans usually have a low rate of interest, must be repaid, but generally only after you have completed your education or if you leave college early. Research this option thoroughly before committing to this type of financial aid.

Sample Package Deal	<u>Example #1</u>	<u>Example #2</u>
Family Income	\$18,000	\$35,000
Cost of attending college of student's choice	\$ 6,825	\$ 6,825
Less financial aid:		
Pell Grant	\$ 950	\$ 0
T.E.G. (Texas Equalization Grant)	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Scholarship	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100
Loan	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,900
Balance due for year	\$ 975	\$ 1,525

(All figures are approximate and vary with each individual.)

You can take all or part of a financial aid package. It is up to the individual student.

Remember, financial aid is based on a first come, first serve basis. Apply early. (Applications may be submitted after October 1st of the senior year. Applications received before October 1st are not considered.)

5. **Verification.** Many schools require financial aid applicants to verify the information reported on aid applications. As part of the process, you may have to give a financial aid administrator verification of the following information:
- Income
 - Federal income tax paid
 - Your household size
 - The number of family members enrolled in post-secondary education
 - Certain untaxed income and benefits received.

In addition you may have to give your financial aid administrator a copy of your signed U.S. Income Tax Return and copies of appropriate W-2 forms as well. Keep copies on hand; if a copy is not available, it will take four to six weeks to obtain a copy from the IRS office and this may cause unnecessary delays.

If you do not provide proof, you won't receive aid from the Department of Education, and you may not receive aid from other sources.

If there are changes in your family's financial circumstances, you should contact the financial aid office at the college informing that office of the change.

What to do if your financial aid package is too small:

Ask the college if it offers any other sources for financing your education. There might be a tuition budgeting plan that will allow you to spread out your payments or a loan program just for students who don't qualify for federal loans.

Perhaps there is a program that can help you locate a part-time job or a "cooperative education" program that will allow you to work one semester and go to school the next.

Check with banks and other financial institutions to see if they offer special programs for families who wish to save or borrow for college expenses.

Look at your own funds to see if there is some way you can cut your current expenses and save more. Perhaps you can arrange a part-time job or change family assets into cash.

Look at your costs to see if you can find extra dollars by shrinking expenses. You might save money by living at home and commuting to college or by going to a lower cost college for a while and transferring later.

Ask for advice. If you think you might have financial problems, ask the college you plan to attend for advice and ideas. Check with your guidance counselor. Talk with students who are already in college. Whatever you do, don't give up! You may be able to come up with that final piece to your financial aid package that makes everything you want possible!

SOURCE: College Scoup (TM 2004) - The College Board

Financial Aid Information changes from year-to-year. The college you are interested in has a Financial Aid Department and all questions should be directed to them.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Selective Service - Every young man must register with the Selective Service within one month of his eighteenth birthday. It requires only about five minutes at the nearest post office. Registering is also required to obtain federal student aid, job training benefits, and federal employment. Applications for financial aid are cross-checked against the Selective Service registrants. Eligible students who have not registered will be denied financial aid and will be subject to fines or imprisonment.

Register online at www.sss.gov.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING FINANCIAL AID

What's different about the 2017–18 FAFSA?

Starting with the 2017–2018 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the following changes have been put in place:

Students are now able to submit a FAFSA earlier. Students have been able to file a 2017–18 FAFSA since Oct. 1, 2016, rather than beginning on Jan. 1, 2017. This gives students more time to complete the FAFSA, and potentially more time to compare aid offers from colleges.

For example:

When You're Attending College (School Year):	July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020
When You Can Submit a FAFSA for Your School Year:	Oct. 1, 2018–June 30, 2020
Which Year's Income and Tax Information to Report:	2017

*For more information visit: [The 2017–18 FAFSA: Get Your Dates Straight Understanding the Variety of Dates Associated With the FAFSA](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dates-17-18.pdf)
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/fafsa-dates-17-18.pdf>*

Is financial aid available only to less fortunate?

No. Financial aid is intended both to remove financial barriers for families who cannot afford the cost of an education beyond high school and to fill in the gap for families who can afford only part of the cost.

Are non-citizens eligible for financial aid?

Regulations vary among programs. With federal funds, a non-citizen who is in the U. S. as a permanent resident is eligible for assistance. See need analysis forms for complete definition.

How do I find out what other aid is available?

Your high school counselor and college financial aid administrator are the best sources of information. A variety of financial aid is provided by state agencies, local community groups, private foundations, corporations, and college financial aid offices, etc. The kinds of aid, amounts, qualifications, and application procedures vary widely.

Who should I call for more special financial aid information?

The office of financial aid at each college where you plan to apply.

Is there any special consideration if I have brothers and sisters or parents continuing their education beyond high school?

Yes. The expected parental contribution is adjusted for families with more than one child attending post secondary schools.

Even though I'm dependent, my parents will not provide any money for my education. What can I do?

Seek the assistance of the financial aid administrator at the college you wish to attend, but your parents will be expected to contribute to your college education.

My neighbor and I both applied for financial aid at the same college. Why did he get more aid than I did when they've got a bigger house than ours and her parents make more money than mine?

The circumstances in your neighbor's family may be different than they appear. What doesn't necessarily show are other factors, such as debts and medical expenses, which affect the computation of the family contribution.

What happens if I purposely provide inaccurate information and I'm caught?

If you use the FAFSA to apply for federal student aid funds and provide false information, you are subject to fines and/or imprisonment under the U.S. Criminal Code. State and local laws may also apply in such cases.

I don't feel it is the college's right to request my U. S. tax forms. What happens if I don't submit them?

If you fail to comply with a request for U. S. tax forms, the college will probably discontinue processing your application for aid. It is their right to do so.

My parents are divorced. Which parent fills out the FAFSA?

The parent you lived with most during the last 12 months. If you didn't live with either parent, or if you lived with each parent an equal number of days, use the parent who provided the most support to you in the most recent calendar year that you were actually supported by a parent and counted you as a dependent on his/her federal tax return.

My parents' (or my) circumstances are going to change. Should I enter on the FAFSA what's true now, or what will be true?

Enter what is true now. Where estimates are requested on the FAFSA, reflect what you expect to happen. Inform the financial aid office at the college of expected changes in circumstances.

If your family will have a much lower income, or if there is a change in your family circumstances such as a death or divorce, you may file another FAFSA to reflect this change. You may get these forms from your high school counselor or college financial aid officer.

Counselors at your high school cannot fill out your financial aid forms. Counselors are not responsible for the information contained therein. These are legal documents and the applicant is responsible.

A Counselor's Guide, CSS College Scholarship Service, College Board.

SPECIFIC FINANCIAL AID REFERENCE GUIDE

There are many types of financial aid available to you and/or your parents (including loans) to cover the cost of obtaining a higher education.

Below is a particular listing of some of the organizations or companies you may want to contact for more specific details.

- College For All Texans
www.collegeforalltexans.com
- Nelnet Education Planning
(information about student loans and where to find a lender)
1-888-486-4722 www.nelnet.com
- Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation
1-800-845-6267 www.tg.org
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
(Admission & scholarship info)
1-800-242-3062 www.thecb.state.tx.us
- College Board Online
www.collegeboard.org
- Texas Tomorrow Fund (Savings plan for future payment of college tuition)
1-800-445-4723 www.texastomorrowfunds.org
- Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation
(Scholarship services & info for Texas colleges)
1-210-525-8494 www.everychanceeverytexan.org/about/scholars
1-210-525-8495
- The Financial Aid Information Page - www.finaid.org
- FastWEB (Financial aid search through the web)
www.fastweb.com
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
1-800-392-3532 www.chci.org
- Hispanic Scholarship Foundation
1-310-975-3700 www.hsf.net
- Hispanic College Fund
www.hispanicfund.org
- U.S. Department of Education
1-800-433-3243 www.ed.gov

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP PROCESS

The following is a listing of helpful hints you need to follow in submitting scholarship applications. Students who are declared winners are usually the ones who do what is expected plus that little extra that distinguishes their applications from others.

1. Complete applications neatly and accurately. Type unless instructions specify handwritten responses.
2. Follow instructions exactly as outlined by the sponsor or agency.
3. Submit only complete applications. If you omit any item from the list of requirements or fail to respond to parts of the application form, you may automatically disqualify yourself. Some scholarship applications include photographs, autobiographies, essays, and letters of recommendation.
4. Meet all deadlines. School personnel may need up to 15 days to complete their part(s) especially if your application requires transcripts, letters of recommendation or evaluation by a scholarship committee.
5. If your application requires letters of recommendation, it is your responsibility to request teachers to send them to the counselors' office.
6. Apply for all scholarships for which you are eligible. Do not be selective. Many students have been recipients of several smaller scholarships which, when added together, are most helpful in meeting college costs.
7. Be sure and thank those who help you complete your applications.
8. Do not become discouraged if you do not get the first scholarship for which you apply; remember the competition is high. Scholarship winners must apply often and be persistent.

BEWARE OF SCHOLARSHIP FRAUD

In the senior year many "transitioning rituals" occur. Students order class rings and yearbooks. They take the SAT Reasoning and ACT tests. They apply for financial aid. By participating in many of these activities, students' names are placed in legitimate databases used to assist them in obtaining information from post-high school institutions, scholarship organizations and other sources of financial aid. There have been great concerns over increasing developments of commercial scholarship search groups. These groups many times require that parents and students pay for services that could have been obtained free of charge from high school counselors, career center technicians and post-high school financial aid administrators.

The number one tip: If you have to pay money to get money, it's probably a scam. Don't waste your money on fee-based scholarship matching services. Scholarships that sound too good to be true usually are. Learn how to recognize and protect yourself from the most common scholarships scam.

For more on Scholarship Scams: www.finaid.org/scholarships/scams.phtml

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), a watchdog group, lists claims that should raise red flags to parents and students:

1. **“The grant or scholarship is guaranteed or your money back.”**
No one can guarantee grants or scholarships without vital information on the student.
2. **“You can’t get this information anywhere else.”**
Scholarship search companies simply access databases that students can obtain on their own.
3. **“The scholarship will cost some money.”**
Experts warn that if you have to pay money to get money, it is probably a scam.
4. **“May I have your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship?”**
Never give out your credit card or bank account number.
5. **“We’ll do all the work.”**
Students must apply for legitimate scholarship grants themselves.
6. **“You’ve been selected by a certain foundation to receive a scholarship or grant.”** or **“You’re a finalist”** in a scholarship contest that you never entered.

According to the FTC, a number of bogus search companies falsely claim they are foundations or nonprofit organizations to make their offer look legitimate. If you receive such claims in the mail or by phone, see your counselor before committing to the soliciting organization.

Free Scholarship Searches - You are encouraged to apply for “outside” scholarships. This is a partial list of the “FREE” scholarship searches currently available.

- Cy-Fair ISD Scholarship Listing – www.cfisd.net (click on *students/parents*, then *College & Career Readiness*)
- College Board – www.collegeboard.com
- College Net – www.collegenet.com/mach5
- College View – www.collegeview.com
- FastWeb – www.fastweb.com
- Go College – www.gocollege.com
- Sallie Mae – www.salliemae.com

We encourage you to direct your future and not let your future direct you. When you choose a formal education which is attainable by you, do not let the cost of education prevent you from fulfilling your dreams. There is help available.

Good Luck—Have a Good Year!



Testing Information

COLLEGE ADMISSION EXAMS

Most degree-granting colleges require an admission examination of some kind. These standardized college admission tests make it possible for the colleges to evaluate students who come from various sections of the country and from many different kinds of schools with diversified grading systems and standards. Most colleges ask students to take either the **ACT** or **SAT Reasoning Test**. See the test date calendar in the counselor's office, on-line at www.collegeboard.com, www.act.org, or on the CFISD Guidance and Counseling web site for upcoming dates and registration deadlines. We suggest students begin taking these tests the second semester of junior year.

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM (ACT)

The ACT Assessment includes sub-tests in English, Mathematics, Reading, Science Reasoning and an optional Writing test. Almost all colleges require a Writing test score for admission or placement. This series of tests is designed to measure a student's ability to perform intellectual tasks typically required of college students. The test takes about three hours to complete with additional time for the optional writing section. Students can register for the ACT online at www.act.org. Students may also register by mail and can get a registration packet from the counseling office.

Score reports are sent to colleges and other institutions at the student's request, and if the ACT assessment has been taken more than once, a separate record is maintained for each test date. Therefore, if the student requests a report be sent to a college, ACT will release only the record from the designated test date(s). A composite score out of a maximum score of 36 is issued.

SAT REASONING TEST

The new SAT Reasoning Test is a 3 hour and 50 minute, with the SAT Essay — or 3 hours without it, multiple-choice and essay test. The new SAT will retain its focus as an aptitude test. Among the biggest changes are a sharper focus on critical thinking, an emphasis on real-world problems, a new scoring system, and an overhaul of the essay section. Overall, the redesigned SAT will place a bigger emphasis on problem-solving and understanding context.

Students may visit www.collegeboard.com to view more new SAT changes and to register for the test online. Students may also register by mail. ***Registration packets are available in the counseling office.***

Colleges vary in their score requirements for admission, and some colleges use all three section score requirements for admission. The composite scores will include two main area scores: 1) evidence-based reading and writing, which will be the sum of the reading-test score and the writing- and language-test score; and 2) math. Each of the two area scores will be reported on a scale ranging from 200 to 800. The scores for the essay will be reported separately. A perfect SAT score will return to 1600. The College Board recently instituted Score Choice, which gives you the option to choose which scores (by test date for the SAT and by individual test for SAT Subject Tests) you send to colleges — in accordance with an institution's stated score-use practice. If you decide not to use Score Choice, all of your scores will be sent to your recipients. Students should still feel comfortable sending all scores, since most colleges consider a student's best score.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

In addition to the SAT and/or ACT, some colleges and universities (typically highly competitive schools) require or recommend one or more of the SAT subject tests either for general university admission, or for admission to a particular major program of study. The SAT Subject Tests are typically multiple-choice, one-hour tests and measure a student's level of accomplishment in specific subject areas. A maximum of three subject tests can be taken on one day, and the maximum score on a subject test is 800.

Your choice of tests will depend upon the requirements of the colleges to which you are applying. Most students take subject tests at the end of their junior year or at the beginning of their senior year. However, you should take tests like World History, Biology, or Chemistry as soon as possible after you have completed the course so the information is fresh in your mind. Foreign language tests should be taken after at least two years of study. Visit www.collegeboard.com to register for an SAT subject test.

ACT COMPOSITE SCORES COMPARED TO SAT REASONING SCORES

The ACT Assessment tests are curriculum-based tests of educational development while the SAT Reasoning, in contrast, measures general verbal, quantitative aptitudes (readiness to learn), and writing skills and is less curriculum-based.

ACT Composite Score	Estimated SAT Reasoning Total Score (Critical Reading & Math)
36	1600
35	1560
34	1510
33	1460
32	1420
31	1380
30	1340
29	1300
28	1260
27	1220
26	1190
25	1150
24	1110
23	1070
22	1030
21	990
20	950
19	910
18	870
17	830
16	790
15	740
14	690
13	640
12	590
11	530

**PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST /
NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST
(PSAT/NMSQT)**

The PSAT/NMSQT is an opportunity for students to take a test that is very much like the SAT with the same format, directions, sample questions, and question types. It measures critical reading, master problem solving, and writing skills for 11th grade students. The PSAT/NMSQT is the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The National Merit Scholarship Competition recognizes students for high scores, puts them in touch with many colleges and universities, and results in scholarships for students who become National Merit Finalists.

**PSAT - Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test / National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
2018-2019 Testing Schedule**

October 10, 2018 All High Schools

TEST CENTERS

Some district high schools have been designated as test centers for both the College Board tests (SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject Test) and the ACT. The test sites and center code numbers are:

	<u>SAT</u>	<u>ACT</u>
Cy-Fair High School	44-477	161800
Cypress Creek High School	44-484	195690
Cypress Lakes High School	44-046	231940
Cypress Woods High School	44-006	236950
Jersey Village High School	44-495	196570
Langham Creek High School	44-496	217240

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION FOR SAT / ACT

Students taking the SAT Reasoning, SAT Subject Test, or ACT at a testing center should take their **admission ticket and some form of identification that has their picture and their signature on it (license, passport, school I.D.)**. As part of SAT and ACT's test security requirements, students must upload a photo of themselves in order to complete their test registration. Photos will be used for identification purposes on test day and on the score report sent to the high school. If students do not have a photo ID that is acceptable, both SAT and ACT describe options on their website.

2018 - 2019 TEST INFORMATION

SCHOOL CODES

Bridgeland High School	440-281
Cy-Fair High School	441-690
Cypress Creek High School	443-358
Cypress Falls High School	443-346
Cypress Lakes High School	443-747
Cypress Park High School	440-047
Cypress Ranch High School	441-689
Cypress Ridge High School	443-535
Cypress Springs High School	443-317
Cypress Woods High School	443-302
Jersey Village High School	443-381
Langham Creek High School	443-424
Windfern High School	443-475

ACT ASSESSMENT TESTING SCHEDULE FOR 2018 - 2019 (TESTING SITES FOR SPECIFIC DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

September 8, 2018	Cy-Fair, Cy-Woods, & Jersey Village
October 27, 2018	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
December 8, 2018	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Woods
February 9, 2019	Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Woods, & Jersey Village
April 13, 2019	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
June 8, 2019	Cy-Lakes, Jersey Village
June 13, 2019	Cy-Lakes, Jersey Village

*ACT - Special administration for students with disabilities contact (713) 896-5014.

SAT ASSESSMENT TESTING SCHEDULE FOR 2018 – 2019 (TESTING SITES FOR SPECIFIC DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

August 25, 2018	Cy-Woods
October 6, 2018	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
November 3, 2018	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Ranch, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
December 1, 2018	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Ranch, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
March 9, 2019	Cy-Creek, Cy-Lakes
May 4, 2019	Cy-Creek, Cy-Fair, Cy-Lakes, Cy-Ranch, Cy-Woods, Jersey Village
June 1, 2019	Cy-Creek, Cy-Lakes, Jersey Village

ADVANCED PLACEMENT TESTING

This testing program gives students the opportunity to earn college credits while they are still in high school. A more detailed description is included in the next section entitled “Ways to Earn College Credit.”

TESTING REQUIREMENT FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

The State of Texas requires every public school district to assess students’ mastery of the state curriculum standards through a test called the **State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) End of Course (EOC)**. STAAR has been developed to better reflect good instructional practice and to more accurately measure student learning. The connection between the state curriculum (the TEKS) and the state assessment program (STAAR) has been strengthened so that students, schools, parents, and the general public receive meaningful information about what Texas students know and are able to do. The STAAR EOC is designed to measure academic skills, higher-order thinking skills, and problem-solving in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Students who do not demonstrate mastery on one or more sections of the STAAR EOC may take the failed section as often as it is given.

TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requires colleges to assess entering students for college readiness in reading, mathematics and writing, and to advise those students based on the results of the assessment.

All students entering Texas public colleges and universities must take and pass the TSI prior to enrolling in college level coursework. Students who do not pass all sections of the test must participate in developmental coursework in the subjects not passed.

The TSI allows colleges and universities to identify students who may need help with their academic skills in order to be successful in college-level work.

Students who meet certain qualifying standards on the SAT, ACT, or STAAR EOC exams **may be exempt** from all or parts of a state-mandated test such as the TSI.

Institutions may not use TSI test results to deny admission to any student. The assessment results are used to design individual programs that will help students succeed in their college courses. Under the TSI, colleges and universities have more flexibility in determining when a student is ready for college-level work.

To pass the new TSI Test, you must pass all three sections (Reading, Mathematics, and Writing). You may take one, two, or three sections at a given test administration.

Once you pass a section of the test, you do not have to take that section again. If you do not pass one or more sections, you may register again and take only the section(s) of the test that you have not already passed. A registration form and payment will be required each time you register.

You should plan to take the TSI in the spring semester of your senior year, if not earlier. The test is given on specified Saturday mornings. The TSI is given on college campuses only and students should contact the counseling office of the college or university for additional information.

All state colleges and universities will observe the statewide college readiness standards for each section of the TSI.

TECH-PREP 6-YEAR PLANS BETWEEN CFISD AND LONE STAR COLLEGE DISTRICT

Tech-Prep is a six-year sequence of study, including four years of high school and at least two years of college technical education. Students can get a head start on college and save both time and money by taking advantage of high school courses that articulate within these programs. Copies of sample six-year plans are available in your counselor's office.

THE COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP)

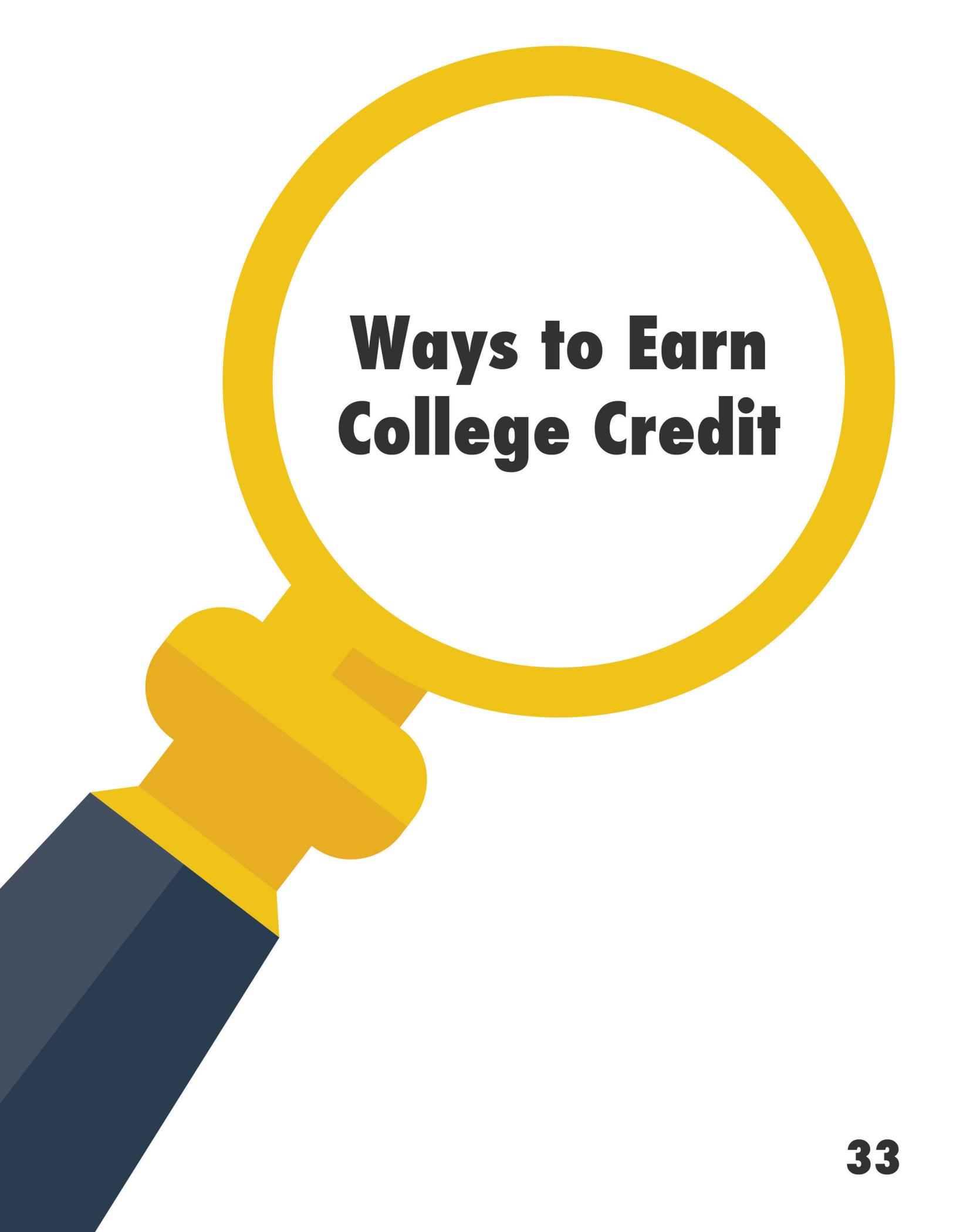
CLEP is a national program of credit-by-examination that offers the opportunity to obtain recognition for college-level achievement.

CLEP offers two types of tests: general examinations and subject examinations. The material in the general examinations is typical of those portions of the first two years of college often referred to as general or liberal arts education requirements. The examinations measure familiarity with the basic elements of their disciplines, which most colleges and universities expect their students to learn. The general examinations include: English composition, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, and history. Each is 60 minutes long and is composed of multiple-choice questions. The subject examinations are designed to measure knowledge and achievement usually covered in specific college courses and are used to grant credit for or exemption from these courses. Most of the subject examinations are 90-minute multiple-choice tests. In addition, most of the subject examinations have an optional 90-minute essay section, which can be taken if the college requires it.

The CLEP is offered the third week of each month. **Registration to take the CLEP is made directly to a university test center.** Consult www.collegeboard.com for fees.

COLLEGE-MADE DEPARTMENTAL EXAMS

In addition to the national testing programs, some colleges and universities offer their own credit-by-exam programs using locally constructed and administered exams. These exams are made by the faculty at the university and are designed to measure the student's level of mastery in specific subject areas. Usually, students must qualify to be eligible to take the exams by presenting acceptable scores on either or both the verbal and math part of the SAT Reasoning, and/or the appropriate subject test, and/or an appropriate course. These exams are sometimes administered during summer orientations. Students must usually reserve a testing date along with the summer conference reservation. At many colleges there is no fee for departmental exams. Like other exams taken for credit, these exams must be taken prior to enrollment in the course. Students need to be aware that departmental exams may not be transferable to other institutions. Students should check with individual colleges to determine if departmental exams are offered.



Ways to Earn College Credit

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM EXAMS (AP EXAMS)

The Advanced Placement Program is a cooperative effort between the College Board and the high schools to offer college-level courses and exams for secondary students. At the conclusion of the course, which is a special college-level learning experience, students are encouraged to take the three-hour AP exam administered in May of each year. Colleges may grant college-level course credit to students submitting AP scores upon admission to a university. Students should work closely with their teachers to determine which AP exams they should take. The AP exams differ from other tests which qualify the student for college credit in two ways. Primarily, they are based on the content of specific courses, and secondly, they offer essay components that are graded under controlled conditions. AP tests are offered in thirty-seven subject areas. Scores range from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest score. Most colleges require minimum AP test scores of 3, 4, or 5 to award credit for a course. Consult College Board publications for fees.

- **House Bill 1992 requires state public colleges and universities to accept a minimum score of 3 on Advanced Placement exams taken by high school students for college credit unless the institution's chief academic officer determines, based on evidence, that a higher score is necessary to show the student is sufficiently prepared to be successful in a related, more advanced course for which the lower-division course is a prerequisite.**

Consult college web-sites for their specific policy in regard to AP test results.

DUAL COLLEGE CREDIT

Students enrolled in certain junior and senior level courses may earn credit toward high school graduation requirements while simultaneously earning college credit through Lone Star College Cy-Fair. Dual credit courses are recorded on a community college transcript in addition to the high school transcript. Consult the counseling office at your school to determine dual credit course availability at your campus and at Lone Star College.

ARTICULATED CREDIT

What is Articulated Credit? Articulation is a process for coordination between an independent school district and a post-secondary institution (college or technical school) to help students transition from one level to another without experiencing delay, duplication of courses, or loss of credit. Specific Tech Prep courses mastered in high school can be transferred as credit to a specific associate's degree or college certificate program. Consult with your counselor for additional information.



Post-Secondary Options

POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS

Finding your future involves considering all of your post-secondary options in order to prepare for a lifetime of success. This process should be discussed with your parents and your counselors so that you make an informed decision and one that is best for you. As you plan for your future, keep in mind that many positions in 21st century jobs will require some post-secondary education.

Options to consider:

- I. 4-Year University
- II. 2-Year Community College
- III. Trade / Technical
- IV. Military
- V. Employment

I. FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university prepares students for careers that can be financially lucrative and rewarding. Colleges differ in degree program availability, cost of attendance, and admission requirements.

Public colleges are those financially supported by the state and are usually less expensive for in-state residents to attend (for example, the University of Texas or Sam Houston). **Private colleges** are those who are funded by tuition and donations from alumni and endowments, and are usually more expensive than public colleges (for example, Rice University or Texas Christian University). Private colleges may or may not be affiliated with a specific religious group. Though private colleges may be more expensive, they commonly may offer more financial aid or scholarships to prospective students, discounting the total cost of attendance and potentially making them comparably priced to a public university. When evaluating four-year college options, it is important to consider both public AND private universities in order to determine which schools will be the best fit in terms of degrees offered and cost of attendance after financial aid has been awarded.

Students considering attendance at a four-year college should research admission requirements, available programs of study, and visit colleges in person to determine if the school will provide the right "fit" for a student's personality and learning style. College websites offer information on visiting campus and daily tours.

What Do Colleges Look For?

- ***Academic Record*** The single most important factor when colleges are evaluating applicants is the transcript. **Grades are extremely important.** Fabulous extracurricular activities and high SAT scores are great, but nothing is as crucial as the grades you have made and the courses you have chosen to take. Colleges like to see an upward trend in grades, so if your freshman year was less than stellar, make sure you shine in the classroom during your junior and senior years. Your class rank and grade point average

are all part of your transcript. Additionally, the level of difficulty of the classes you take is carefully evaluated by the admissions office. Colleges want to see if you have taken advantage of advanced courses offered at your school, and prefer to admit applicants who have challenged themselves through their curriculum choices. In other words, take the hardest classes you can handle successfully.

- **College Entrance Exam Scores** SAT/ACT test scores are important, even though not all colleges require them. When taken together with your high school transcript, these two factors provide a solid prediction of how well you will do at the college level. Familiarize yourself with the format and types of questions on both tests so you can do as well as possible.
- **Extracurricular Activities** Though activities never trump a solid academic record and strong test scores, they do play an important role in the college admissions process. Extracurricular activities both in high school and in the community are significant because admissions officers are looking for students who will make an impact on their campus if admitted. Students who have skills or experience as athletes, leaders, volunteers, artists, or other unique abilities are carefully reviewed by the admissions office.
- **Demonstrated Interest in a College** Colleges want to admit applicants who will actually decide to attend their school above all others. Therefore, a prospective student's demonstrated interest in a university is becoming increasingly important in the admission process. You can demonstrate interest in a school by visiting (making sure the visit is "official" and you have registered in the admissions office), emailing, or calling the admissions representative assigned to your school.
- **Recommendations** Some colleges require letters of recommendations from people who know a student and his/her abilities and/or character well – teachers, coaches, club sponsors, counselors, or sometimes other students. Most private universities will require recommendation letters, while public universities often do not. Choose your references carefully and strive to make and maintain connections with teachers and adults who positively impact you in high school.

II. COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The decision to further your education by attending a reputable community college to gain additional education could not be made at a better time. Employers today are demanding more education from their employees than ever before. A degree or certification from a quality campus-based community college institute will carry significant value in any organization's hiring and career advancement decisions.

The majority of the community colleges offer a number of different classes, degree programs, continuing education and career education courses that will help you prepare yourself for a trade or career, for career advancement with the company where you are currently employed or to go on to participate in masters or doctorate degree programs. Many community colleges offer the following associate and bachelor degree options/tracks to help you prepare for the future:

- General Education
- Business Administration and Management
- HealthCare Administration and Nursing
- Culinary Arts and Cooking
- Engineering, Science and Architecture

- Graphic, Interior and Fashion Design
- Accounting & Finance
- Marketing and Advertising
- Website Design, HTML Programming & Flash
- Computer Science, Networking and Programming
- Psychology, Criminology and Behavioral Science
- Legal, Paralegal and much, much more!

So get started. With nearly 1300 community colleges nationwide to choose from and Lone Star College right at our back door, you are sure to find a community college and program of study that meets your unique needs. (courtesy of www.community-college.org)

Advantages of Community College:

- **Affordable**
- **Open enrollment**
- **Small classes with individualized instruction**
- **Close to home**
- **Job training that leads to career in two years or less**

Disadvantages of Community College:

- **Transferring of credits can sometimes be a problem**
- **Lack of on-campus housing**
- **Associate degree often earns less than Bachelors degree**

Statewide Community Colleges in Texas

Alamo Community College
San Antonio, Texas
210-485-0000
www.alamo.edu

Central Texas College
Killeen, Texas
254-526-7161
www.ctcd.edu

Del Mar College
Corpus Christi, Texas
800-652-3357
www.delmar.edu

Alvin Community College
Alvin, Texas
281-756-3500
www.alvincollege.edu

Cisco College
Cisco, Texas
254-442-5000
www.cisco.edu

El Paso Community College
El Paso, Texas
915-831-3722
www.epcc.edu

Amarillo Community College
Amarillo, Texas
806-371-5000
www.actx.edu

Clarendon College
Clarendon, Texas
806-874-3571
www.clarendoncollege.edu

Frank Phillip College
Borger, Texas
806-457-4200
www.fpcx.edu

Angelina College
Lufkin, Texas
936-639-1301
www.angelina.edu

Coastal Bend College
Beeville, Texas
866-722-2838
www.coastalbend.edu

Galveston College
Galveston, Texas
409-944-4242
www.gc.edu

Austin Community College
Austin, Texas
512-223-4222
www.austincc.edu

College of the Mainland
Texas City, Texas
409-938-1211
www.com.edu

Grayson County College
Denison, Texas
903-465-6030
www.grayson.edu

Blinn College System
979-830-4000
www.blinn.edu

Collin County Community College
Plano/McKinney, Texas
972-548-6790
www.collin.edu

Hill College
Hillsboro, Texas
254-659-7500
www.hillcollege.edu

Brazosport College
Lake Jackson, Texas
979-230-3000
www.brazosport.edu

Dallas Community College
Dallas, Texas
www.dcccd.edu

Houston Community College
Houston, Texas
713-718-2000
www.hccs.edu

Howard College
San Angelo, Texas
325-481-8300
www.howardcollege.edu

Jacksonville College
Jacksonville, Texas
903-586-2518
www.jacksonville-college.edu

Kilgore Junior College
Kilgore, Texas
903-983-8209
www.kilgore.edu

Lamar State College
Port Arthur, Texas
409-983-4921
www.lamarpa.edu

Laredo Community College
Laredo, Texas
956-722-0521
www.laredo.edu

Lee College
Baytown, Texas
281-427-5611
www.lee.edu

Lon Morris College
Jacksonville, Texas
903-589-4000
www.beabearcat.com

Lone Star College System
(Cy-Fair)
281-290-3200
www.lonestar.edu

McLennan Community College
Waco, Texas
254-299-8622
www.mclennan.edu

Midland College
Midland, Texas
432-685-4500
www.midland.edu

Navarro College
Corsicana, Texas

800-NAVARRO
www.navarrocollege.edu

North Central Texas College
Gainesville, Texas
940-668-7731
www.nctc.edu

Northeast Tx Community College
Mt. Pleasant, Texas
903-434-8100
www.ntcc.edu

Odessa College
Odessa, Texas
432-335-6815
www.odessa.edu

Panola College
Carthage, Texas
903-693-2000
www.panola.edu

Paris Junior College
Paris, Texas
903-785-7661
www.parisjc.edu

Ranger College
Ranger, Texas
254-647-3234
www.rangercollege.edu

San Jacinto College
Houston, Texas
281-998-6150
www.sanjac.edu

South Plains College
Levelland, Texas
806-894-9611
www.southplainscollege.edu

South Texas College
McAllen, Texas
956-872-8311
www.southtexascollege.edu

Southwest Texas Junior College
Uvalde/Del Rio, Texas
830-278-4401
www.swtjc.edu

Tarrant County College District
Fort Worth, Texas
817-515-8223
www.tccd.edu

Temple College
Temple, Texas
800-460-4636
www.templejc.edu

Texarkana College
Texarkana, Texas
903-823-3456
www.texarkanacollege.edu

Trinity Valley Community College
Athens, Texas
903-675-6200
www.tvcc.edu

Tyler Junior College
Tyler, Texas
800-687-5680
www.tjc.edu

Vernon College
Vernon, Texas
940-696-8752
www.vernoncollege.edu

Victoria College
Victoria, Texas
361-573-3291
www.victoriacollege.edu

Weatherford College
Weatherford, Texas
817-594-5471
www.wc.edu

Western Texas College
Snyder, Texas
325-573-8511
www.wtc.edu

Wharton County Junior College
Wharton, Texas
979-532-4560
www.wcjc.edu

III. Trade and Technical Schools

Thinking about going to a career college or technical school? After high school, you can choose many different paths to continue your education. One path is to earn a certificate, degree, or diploma from a career college or technical school that will train you for a specific career, trade, or profession. These schools offer short-term training for students for a variety of technical positions, such as those listed below:

Automotive Technician
Air Conditioning/Refrigeration
Artist
Child Care

Interior Designer
Legal Assistant/Paralegal
Licensed Practical Nurse
Massage Therapist

Computer Technician
Cosmetologist
Court Reporter
Dental Assistant/Technician
Electrician
Hairstylist
Heavy Equipment Operator

Medical Assistant/Lab Technician
Photographer
Plumber
Respiratory Therapist
Truck Driver
Veterinary Assistant
Welder

With so many schools to choose from, it's important that you know the kinds of questions to ask before enrolling. One key issue is whether the school is accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or licensed by the state in which it is located.

Does the school offer job placement assistance?

Many career colleges and technical schools provide job placement assistance as part of their service. If the school does offer job placement assistance, ask about the job placement rates (the percent of graduates placed in jobs) and compare the placement rates with those of other schools. Ask for information about recent graduates, and find out where they went to work. Whenever possible, ask former students about their experience at a school you are considering. Did the training they received prepare them for the job they wanted?

How can you avoid diploma mills?

Unfortunately, there are some schools --- often called "diploma mills" --- that are more interested in taking your money than giving you a quality education. Information about how to avoid these types of schools can be found at: *U.S. Department of Education: [Diploma Mills and Accreditation](#)*.

Courtesy of www.ed.gov U.S. Department of Education

Trade and Technical School Checklist

- ✓ Earn your high school diploma
- ✓ TSI – plan to take the Texas Success Initiative test or show proof of exemption status.
- ✓ Application – contact the admissions office.
- ✓ Transcript – send your high school transcript to the admissions office.
- ✓ FAFSA – submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility for grants and loans

TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Texas State Technical College System

3801 Campus Drive
Waco, TX 76705
(254) 799-3611
www.tstc.edu

Texas State Technical College – (extension of Waco)

3801 Campus Dr.
Waco, TX 76705
(254) 799-3611

Texas State Technical College – Harlingen

1902 Loop 499 N.
Harlingen, TX 78550
1(800) 852-8784

Texas State Technical College – Abilene

650 E. Highway 80
Abilene, TX 77601
325-672-7091

Texas State Technical College – Marshall

2650 E. End Blvd. South
Marshall, TX 75621
(888) 382-8782

Texas State Technical College – West Texas/Abilene

300 Homer K. Taylor Dr.
Sweetwater, TX 79556
(325) 235-7300

Texas State Technical College – Breckenridge

307 N. Breckenridge Ave
Breckenridge, TX 76424
(254) 559-7700

Texas State Technical College – Brownwood

305 Booker St.
Brownwood, TX 76801
(325) 643-5987

A Sampling of Private Technical and Trade Schools in the Houston Area

(provided for information only; no endorsement of any program implied)

Art Institute of Houston
www.artinstitutes.edu
(713) 623-2040

Aviation Institute of Maintenance
aviationmaintenance.edu
(713) 644-7777

Champions School of Real Estate
Houston North Campus
www.championsschool.com
(281) 893-4484

Clerical Arts School
(713)780-0024

Court Reporting Institute of Houston
www.crid.com
713-996-8300

Devry University
www.devry.edu/Houston
(713) 973-3070

Houston School of Floral Design
(713) 977-4364

Institute of Cosmetology, Esthetics & Massage

www.icehouston.com
(713) 783-9988

ITT Technical Institute
www.itt-tech.edu
(281) 873-0512

Plumbers Training Center
(713) 861-3202

Professional Careers Institute
www.pctraining.org
(713) 783-3999

School of Automotive Machinists & Technology
www.samracing.com
(713) 683-3817

Brightwood College in North Houston (formerly Texas School of Business)
www.tsb.edu
(281)784-7300

Universal Technical Institute
www.uti.edu
(800) 325-0354

IV. Military Enlistment

Joining the military is a big decision and one that must be made with the support of family and trusted advisors. If you are thinking about joining, get the scoop, get in the know, and make an informed decision. You've seen the movies, you've heard the rumors, you've gone to parades... but what IS the military?

In simple terms, the U.S. Armed Forces are made up of the five armed service branches: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. There are three general categories of military people: active duty (full-time soldiers and sailors), reserve and guard forces (usually work a civilian job, but can be called to full-time military duty), and veterans and retirees (past members of the military).

There are plenty of jobs to choose from in the military, many of them requiring highly technical skills. Which one should you choose? First you need to succeed on the ASVAB, which can be taken at your high school or at your local recruiting office. After that, you must discuss the results with your recruiter, counselor, and parents.

(Courtesy of www.military.com)

Benefits – When young people enlist, they obligate themselves to active duty from two to six years. Besides basic pay and free education and training, the enlistee also receives free housing and free medical and dental care. The Montgomery GI Bill provides enlistees with excellent opportunities to earn money for college while in the military. Contact a recruiter for a more specific list of benefits.

Basic Training – Basic training is usually 6-10 weeks of intense mental and physical preparation in which enlistees receive classroom instruction, exercise, and field training. Enlistees also learn discipline, self-control, physical endurance, and respect for authority.

(Courtesy Lewisville ISD [Junior/Senior Handbook](#))

Military Checklist:

- ✓ Contact a local recruiter

Army – 281-256-4034
Navy - 281-469-0408
Air Force – 713-467-3418

Marines – 281-955-1268/0822
Coast Guard – 713-641-3559

- ✓ Take the ASVAB
- ✓ Earn your high school diploma

ROTC and Military Academies – College students who take ROTC will enter the military as officers after completing college. Academically gifted students may find excellent educational opportunities at one of the four military academies: the United States Military Academy at West Point (www.usma.edu), the Naval Academy (www.usna.edu), the Air Force Academy (www.usafa.af.mil), and the Coast Guard Academy (www.cgaa.edu). All academies offer a free college education to students they accept. Students interested in applying to one of the academies should start the process during their junior year. Additionally, students may be interested in attending a Senior Military College, such as The Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, Texas A&M Corps of Cadets, Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, North Georgia College and State University, Norwich University, or Mary Baldwin Women's Institute for Leadership.

V. Employment

Entering the work force immediately after high school graduation could limit career options that would be available otherwise. It is important to be knowledgeable about the sixteen federally defined *Career Clusters*. These sixteen *Career Clusters* provide a method to enable students to successfully transition from school to careers by serving as a platform to connect secondary and post-secondary education, academic and career-technical education; and education with the business, workforce development and economic development communities. It is hoped that the sixteen *Career Clusters* will provide an avenue to explore a wide variety of options. If you go straight to work, you should have a clear idea of the career that you want to follow.

Without vocational training, high school graduates may find limited career options. Rather than starting a career, they may be forced to “get a job”. The unfortunate reality is they may not be making more than minimum wage and their opportunities for advancement will be quite limited. However, businesses and industries are always looking for polite, industrious, punctual, well-groomed employees who are willing to learn. Employees with these qualities can prove invaluable to an employer, possibly leading to advancement and opportunity. High school graduates should attempt to find a job in an area that might prove to be a career interest and lead to job advancement.

Finding a Job

- **Prepare a Résumé!** – Prepare a professional looking résumé and attach a copy to each application you submit. You can also email or “snail mail” a copy of your résumé and a cover letter to prospective employers requesting an interview. To see examples of professional résumés, visit various résumé and job websites.
- **Explore Job Leads!** – Job leads can come from a variety of sources.
 - Co-op programs
 - Word of mouth (school counselors, friends, neighbors, relatives, teachers)
 - Former employers
 - Employment agencies
 - Newspaper ads
 - Internet job search sites

The best job leads will probably not be in the newspapers. For career-oriented jobs, it is best to network with people you know in the field you desire to enter and always keep a professional relationship with each of your past employers.

- **Dress for Success!**
 - **Look sharper** than you usually do. You must sell yourself and let the employer know you take the interview, and the job, seriously.
 - **Be conservative** in your attire; revealing clothes, product logos, clothing with holes, very short skirts, and unprofessional shoes are not appropriate.
 - **Careful grooming** is a must. Avoid too much of anything, such as colognes, make-up, or jewelry. Don't forget to shave.

- **Consider How Employers Think!** Traits employers consider important include:
 - Dependability (always shows up to work with no history of absenteeism)
 - Team Player (good communication skills)
 - Responsibility
 - Self-starter (enthusiasm; not always having to be told to start a task)
 - Efficiency (ability to do things quickly and correctly the first time)

- **Have a Good Interview!**
 - Prepare for the interview by learning about the company and reviewing your qualifications for the job.
 - Take a few copies of your résumé and a list of references (with contact information) to the interview.
 - Arrive before the scheduled time of the interview.
 - Answer each question concisely with enthusiasm, using proper English and avoiding slang. Use good manners, shake hands, and always make good eye contact.
 - Ask a few questions about the job and/or organization.
 - Thank the interviewer by sending a follow-up letter or email, expressing your appreciation for the interview and repeating your qualifications and enthusiasm for the job.

Courtesy Lewisville ISD Junior/Senior Handbook.



**Career &
College
Planning**

11th GRADE CAREER and COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST

Check off each activity as you complete it.

FALL/WINTER(AUGUST-DECEMBER)

- Discuss your career and college ideas with your parents/guardians, teachers and counselor.** Explore career interests, search for colleges, learn about post-secondary options, and find answers to the following questions:
 - What careers am I considering? What training or education do I need?
 - What do I need to do to get that training or education?
- Create accounts and access resources such as Career Cruising, My College Quickstart, The College Board, and ACT** to find and receive updated college, career, and testing information. Be sure to keep your username(s) and Password(s) in a safe place for future reference.
- Take the PSAT in October.** Registration usually begins in early September.
- Learn the testing dates and registration deadlines for the SAT and ACT.** See the “Testing” section in this book for dates and more information.
 - **Register before the deadlines.**
 - Register online at www.collegeboard.com or www.act.org.
 - All students should take the SAT/ACT in the spring of junior year.
- Prepare for the PSAT, SAT, and ACT.** Take practice tests online or in practice books.
- Check your credits carefully with your counselor.** It is your responsibility to keep up with the credits required for graduation and ensure you are making adequate progress to graduate on time.
- Find out the date for **Cy-Fair ISD’s College Night** and make plans to attend.
- Research the dates for College Preview Days** (days set aside by colleges for prospective students to visit). Register for as many preview days as possible.
- Consult college websites** to review admissions requirements, degree information, housing, and financial aid information.
- FOR PRACTICE ONLY, print and complete either the Apply Texas application** (www.applytexas.org) or the national Common Application (www.commonapp.org).
- Begin creating your high school résumé.** Look at the extracurricular sections of Apply Texas and/or the national Common Application to ensure you have all of the required information on your résumé. Make sure your résumé includes the following sections:
 - Extracurricular Activities (including leadership positions)
 - Community or Volunteer Service
 - Talents, Awards, Honors
 - Employments, Summer Activities, Internships
- Discuss tech-prep articulated courses** as well as **Pass/Fail** options with your counselor.

SPRING/SUMMER (JANUARY-JUNE)

- **Review your credits** and make sure you are on track for graduation (check with your counselor if you are in doubt). If you need additional courses, consult with your counselor for courses offered in summer school, correspondence, credit-by-exam, or dual credit.
- **Search for scholarship and financial aid sources.** The Cy-Fair ISD scholarship website can be accessed at www.cfisd.net under the Guidance and Counseling Department.
- **Take the May or June SAT** if you haven't already tested and/or want to improve your scores.
- If you plan to participate in Division I or II Athletics, **complete the NCAA Clearinghouse electronic registration** at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net and begin making contact with college athletic departments.
- Continue to **attend College Preview Days**.
- **Explore AP and Dual Credit opportunities** for your senior year.
- **Plan a few meaningful activities for your summer.** Consider doing an internship, getting a job, or volunteering.
- **Create and maintain positive relationships** with teachers, club sponsors, and coaches who you may want to ask to write recommendation letters on your behalf.
- Find out essay topics for college applications and **begin writing rough drafts**.

***Search for scholarships on the district web site**

<http://www.cfisd.net/en/parents-students/academics/college-career-readiness/scholarship-bulletin-general-scholarships/>

12TH GRADE CAREER and COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST

FALL (AUGUST-DECEMBER) *Check off each activity as you complete it.*

- Narrow down your college selections** to four or five to which you intend to apply. These selections should include realistic choices along with a “safety” school where you are certain to gain admission and maybe a “dream” school where you know being accepted will be a reach.
- If you have not already visited colleges, now is the time to go!**
- If you have not already taken the SAT/ACT, register for and take them this fall.**
- Carefully read college applications and learn the meaning of “postmark” deadline and “received by” deadline.** The earlier you apply, the better. We recommend all of your applications be complete by the end of October.
- Begin applying for local, state, national and college-based scholarships.**
Search for scholarships on the Cy-Fair district website: <http://www.cfishd.net/en/parents-students/academics/college-career-readiness/scholarship-bulletin-general-scholarships/>
- Write thoughtful, organized essays** on the required application topics. Have your English teacher help you revise and edit your essays prior to submission.
- Finalize your extracurricular résumé** and have someone else look it over to ensure accuracy. Make sure your résumé includes each of the following: Extracurricular Activities, Community/Volunteer Service, Talents/Awards/Honors, and Employment/Summer Activities/Internships.
- Fill out college applications and submit them when they are complete.** Don't forget to pay the application fee (if required).
- Request an official transcript be sent to all of the colleges you are applying to** in the registrar's office at your school.
- Request letters of recommendations** from teachers, coaches, club sponsors, or counselors (if required). Follow these steps to ensure great recommendations:
 - Make a request in writing and record the date you submit the request.
 - Be sure to ask the writer to include your full name, birth date, and school name within the recommendation letter.
 - Specify the deadline by which you would like the letter mailed (allow AT LEAST two weeks for letters to be written; three weeks notice is preferable).
 - Provide a copy of your résumé, an unofficial copy of your transcript, and any forms the recommender must complete for the college.
 - Provide a completed Student Information Packet to the counseling office if a counselor is writing a recommendation.
 - Provide a stamped envelope addressed to each college admissions office.
 - Follow-up after the deadline you specified to make sure the letter was mailed.
- WRITE A THANK YOU NOTE** to your recommender.
- Complete the FAFSA as early as Oct. 1.**
 - Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov or the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TAFSA-for undocumented students)at www.collegeforalltexas.com.
 - File online, if possible, and receive results faster. (First come, first serve basis)

SPRING (JANUARY-JUNE)

- **If your college requires it, request a mid-term college update from your counselor** as soon as your seventh semester transcript is available.
- If you're planning to attend a public college (two-year or four-year) in Texas, **take the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) if you're not exempt.**
- **Continue to apply for scholarships** and inform the counseling office if you are offered any.
- **Register to vote** as soon as you turn 18. Voting is a privilege and your responsibility.
- **Men must register for the draft at age 18.** Register online at Selective Service System sss.gov
- **Avoid "senioritis" at all costs!** Remember, to graduate you must pass all of your classes! Colleges reserve the right to reverse an admissions decision if you fail classes or make poor grades during your senior year.
- **Complete a final transcript request in the registrar's office** to have your final transcript sent to the college of your choice after graduation.
- It's not too late! **You can still apply to some colleges!**

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD - The Endorsements

A student must complete the Foundation High School Program (22 credits), one additional math credit, one additional science credit, and two additional elective credits while completing the specific requirements of his/her selected endorsement.

STEM <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math</i>	Business & Industry	Public Services	Arts & Humanities	Multidisciplinary Studies
<p>Students may earn a STEM endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 5 options.</p> <p>Note: Algebra II, Chemistry, and Physics are required for the STEM endorsement <u>regardless</u> of the option the student selects from below.</p> <p>Option 1: Computer Science Students take 4 computer science courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science I K • Computer Science Principles AP • Computer Science II AP A • Computer Science III K • Project-based Research in Computer Science K <p>Option 2: CTE Students earn four (4) CTE credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same cluster that lead to a final course in the STEM cluster. At least one (1) of the courses must be an advanced CTE course (3rd year or higher course in a sequence).</p> <p>Option 3: Math Students take Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II AND two (2) of the following courses for which Algebra II is a prerequisite.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Calculus • Calculus AB or BC • Statistics AP • AQR K • Advanced Algebra • College Algebra K 	<p>Students may earn a Business & Industry endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 3 options.</p> <p>Option 1: CTE Students earn four (4) credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same cluster in one of the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources • Architecture and Construction • Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication • Business Management and Administration • Finance • Hospitality and Tourism • Information Technology • Manufacturing • Marketing • Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics <p>with at least one (1) advanced (3rd year or higher course in the sequence).</p> <p>Option 2: English Students take four (4) English elective credits that include three levels in one of the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Journalism: Newspaper or Yearbook • Debate <p>Option 3: Combination Students take a coherent sequence of four (4) credits from Option 1 or 2. Combination plan must include one (1) advanced CTE course.</p>	<p>Students may earn a Public Services endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 2 options.</p> <p>Option 1: CTE Students earn four (4) credits by taking at least two (2) courses in the same career cluster in one of the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Training • Health Science • Human Services <p>With a least one (1) advanced (3rd year or higher course in the sequence).</p> <p>Option 2: AFJROTC Student takes four (4) AFJROTC courses for 4 credits.</p>	<p>Students may earn an Arts & Humanities endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 3 options.</p> <p>Option 1: Social Studies Students take five (5) social studies courses for 5 credits.</p> <p>Option 2: Languages Other Than English (Foreign Language) Students take four (4) levels of the same foreign language.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OR</u></p> <p>Students take two (2) levels of one foreign language AND two (2) levels of a different foreign language (two levels in each of two different foreign languages for 4 credits).</p> <p>Option 3: Fine Arts Students take four (4) courses in the same fine arts area for 4 credits</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OR</u></p> <p>Students take two (2) courses in one fine arts area AND two (2) courses in a different fine arts area (two courses in each of two different fine arts areas for 4 credits).</p>	<p>Students may earn a Multidisciplinary Studies endorsement by selecting and completing the requirements from among these 2 options.</p> <p>Option 1: Four by Four (4 X 4) Students take four (4) courses in each of the four core content areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four (4) English credits including English IV • Four (4) math credits • Four (4) science credits including biology and chemistry and/or physics • Four (4) social studies credits <p>Option 2: AP / Dual Placement Students take four (4) Advanced Placement (AP) or four (4) Dual Credit courses for four (4) credits in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, or fine arts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OR</u></p> <p>Students take a combination of Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Credit courses for four (4) credits in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, or fine arts.</p>

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD - The Endorsements

A student must complete the Foundation High School Program (22 credits), one additional math credit, one additional science credit, and two additional elective credits while completing the specific requirements of his/her selected endorsement.

STEM <i>Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math</i>	Business & Industry	Public Services	Arts & Humanities	Multidisciplinary Studies
<p>Option 4: Science Students take Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, AND two (2) of the following courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP Chemistry • AP Biology • Anatomy & Physiology • AP Environmental Science • AP Physics I • AP Physics II • AP Physics C • Aquatic Science • Astronomy • Earth & Space Science • Environmental Systems • Forensic Science • Engineering Design & Problem Solving • Advanced Animal Science • Advanced Plant and Soil Science • Pathophysiology <p>Option 5: Combination Students take Algebra II, Chemistry, and Physics, an additional math course, an additional science course, AND three (3) additional credits from Option 1 (Computer Science) and/or Option 2 (CTE) in the STEM endorsement. If the combination plan includes a CTE course, at least one (1) course must be advanced.</p>				

