Intro | Academics | Testing | Search | Portfolio

PLHS Postsecondary Night

"Preparing for the College Application Process"

Intro | Academics | Testing | Search | Portfolio

Introductions

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Post-secondary planning…

…where the rubber meets the road







The foundation of post-secondary planning is academic preparation.

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PLHS Registration Week
1/24-1/31



Contact the school counselor ASAP if you would like to adjust the requests.

plhscounselingdepartment@plcschools.org

Typical University Requirements

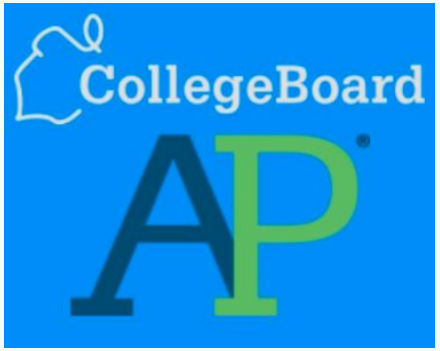
- 4 years English
- 3 years math (4 at UNL as the additional core)
- 3 years science
- 3 years social studies
- 1 additional year of a core (UNL requires this to be math)
- 2 years foreign language
- 20 on ACT (1040 SAT)
- GPA of 3.0
- Top half of class

Senior Year

- An easy senior year does not make an easy freshman year: Commit and Persevere
- Take as many core courses, honors and AP, as ability and time allow. Maximize free education.
- What is rigorous *and* manageable? (Ex: Double early release vs. all AP, etc.).
- Prioritize aligning course selections with post-secondary objectives.
- Foreign Language requirements vary among colleges within universities.

Advanced Placement

- Study a subject in greater depth.
- Know his/her capabilities.
- Develop skills and study habits for college.
- Improve admission eligibility.
- Save money.
- Get a head start for college.



Testing

ACT

- Midwest
- Scale of 1-36
- Sections: English, Math, Reading, Science
- $65

SAT

- Coasts (International)
- Scale 400-1600
- Sections: Math, Reading, Writing & Language
- $68

Both

- Norm-referenced
- 7 standard test dates a year
- Accepted by most institutions
- Have an optional essay

State ACT

- ALL juniors
- March 25th
- Accounts created & Non-Cog completed March in class
- Official scores can be sent to colleges
- State covers the cost

National ACT

- Students should plan 3 tests.
- Tests should be taken by the end of December of senior year to be considered for scholarship.
- Send scores directly from ACT.
- Register online at www.my.act.org for ACT.

  (For SAT, register www.collegeboard.com)
- Students must upload a picture during ACT registration for national dates.
- There is a cost but ask about fee waivers.

What is superscoring?
What does it mean for my student?
Which colleges take superscores?

Avoid comprehensive lists, check with the school.

ACT Prep

- Don't go into an ACT "cold" or try to determine a baseline; that is what Pre-ACT is for.
- Paper/pencil practice is best
  - Some programs offer mock ACTs.
  - Bubbling is a lost skill
- Other Prep options:
  - PLCS Courses: different levels and subjects
  - Outside programs: research what each has to offer

PLHS Strategy

- **Plan**: Decide which ACT dates are best for you
- **Prepare**: Practice, take a class
- **Perform**: Do your best for every ACT you take
- **Repeat**: X3 seems to be the sweet spot

Types of Colleges

College- an institution of post-secondary education

- Apprenticeship Program
- Trade School
- 2 year (Community College)
- 4 year (College or University)
- Military

Public	Non-Profit	Open Enrollment
Private	For-Profit	Selective Enrollment

Searching for a College

- First determine what school type aligns with ambition.
- Search websites. Use **Maia Learning**.
- Ask counselor, teachers, friends, etc.
- Attend College Fairs (virtual or in person).
- Apply to 3-5 choices.
- Have a dream school, reality school, and fallback.

Searching for a College

College & Career Expo, 5th Annual – October 2025 in the afternoon at PLHS

- Many colleges, businesses, & military recruiters will be coming to PLHS
- Great opportunity to start or continue your post-high school planning.
- Watch for more information and prepare to make the most of this opportunity!

Campus Visits

- Go to college's website
  - Call admissions to schedule appointment
  - Look for junior visit days
- Make a list of questions
- Visit different types of schools: big/small, public/private, etc.

College Reps

- College representatives come to PLHS to visit with students about their programs, scholarships, and admission criteria.
- Scheduled rep visits are listed and students may sign up on **Maia Learning**.

College Application "Portfolio"

- GPA
- ACT
- Resume
- Essay
- Recommendations
- Transcript

Characteristics of the Resumé

- Include what happened in high school.
- Focus on school/community activities and awards.
- Write words and phrases only.
- Use Maia Learning, EdQuest or other templates.
- List in order of importance.
- Focus on meaningful activities.
- Keep it simple and plain, yet individualized.

The scholarship/admission essay

- Personal and passionate (Original)
- Don’t just list activities
- Narrative, anecdotal to show character
- Stay relevant to the prompt
- Conclude with positive outlook

Recommendations

(Request senior year)

- 1-3 people who know the student personally
- People with a title relevant to how they know the student: teachers, coaches, employers, supervisors, clergy etc.
- Ask politely before requesting via Maia L.
- Allow 2 weeks
- Must remain confidential

Costs | Academics | Testing | Search | Portfolio

EducationQuest FOUNDATION

402-391-4033

Costs of Education

	Wayne State	UNL	Creighton	Metro CC
Tuition/fees	$ 8,215	$ 10,434	$ 48,856	$3,375
Books	$1,536	$ 1,100	$ 2,500	$1,500
Room/Board	$ 10,142	$ 14,120	$ 13,652	N/A
Total	$ 19,893	$ 25,654	$ 65,008	$4,875

*Figures are Averages according to EducationQuest

Scholarships (merit based)

- Evaluated on grades, testing, leadership, community service, talents, course selection, associations or plans.
- Search websites, watch bulletins.
- Newsletters and Senior bulletins can be accessed via email, PLHS website or Monarch Memo.
- Prepare portfolio early.
- Don’t pay for scholarship searches.

Ways to spot a questionable scholarship list

- A fee is required.
- The Privacy Policy states that SSN and financial account information may be requested for additional services.
- The Privacy Policy states that they and third parties may use data for marketing and advertising purposes.
- E-mail is the only contact.
- This company is not Better Business Bureau accredited.
- Not a member of the National Scholarship Provider Association.

Financial Aid (Need based)

- Formula used by federal government.
- File FAFSA (**Free** Application for Federal Student Aid) after October 1 of senior year.
- Private schools may have more funds available. **Don't automatically rule out a private or out-of-state school due to cost.**
- Use the estimator on https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/

Financial Aid Formula

Tuition and Fees	$5,300	$17,000	$2,300
Books/supplies	800	800	1,400
Room/Board	5,500	4,800	3,000
+Personal/Trans	2,700	2,200	3,000
Cost of Ed.	$14,300	$24,800	9,700
-SAI	7,000	7,000	7,000
Financial Need	$7,300	$17,800	$2,700

What should we be doing now?



Basic Steps

- Earn good grades
- Prep well, Test well
- Refine resumé
- Mull over essay ideas (Embrace English Class)
- Research schools and scholarships

maialearning

Maia Learning is the platform PLCS uses to coordinate career and college planning and includes:

- Career assessment tools
- Career research and organization
- Resume builder
- College searches and organization
- Requesting and sending Letters of Recommendation
- Transcripts
- College rep visits
- And more

More steps:

- Roughly plan out the year on a calendar
- Campus visits
- Continue involvement, volunteer
- Summer classes/internships
- Appointments with counselors as needed
- Talk with possible recommenders

Thank You

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