



Texoma Christian School
High School & College Planning Guide

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Texoma Christian High School And College Planning Guide

Academic Record – *The High School Transcript*

Grade Point Averages

Credits and Grade Point Averages become officially recorded on the high school transcript for students in grades 9-12. TCS calculates the GPA according to national standards set by the *National Center for Education Statistics* (NCES) based upon Carnegie Units of Instruction. GPAs are derived from a four-point system based upon the following numerical scale:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>GPA points</u>
90-100 %	A	4.0
80-89 %	B	3.0
70-79 %	C	2.0
69 & below	F	0.0

Pre-AP, AP, and Dual-Credit college classes earn an additional GPA points as follows:

Additional GPA points

Pre-AP courses	.5
Dual Credit courses	.5
Advance Placement	1.0

“**Weighted GPA**” – Students receive additional GPA points or more weight for advance classes. This is a weighted GPA

Transcript Requests –You may email your request to kathy.howard@texomachristian.org Requests must be in writing and include: Students full name; admissions address to requested school and whether or not you want college entrance tests scores sent.

Class Rank

Due to our size, it is Texoma Christian School’s Policy to rank numerically only the top ten percent of students and not to rank the remainder of the class. Ranking students in such a small pool or number does not present our students in a favorable light. This policy, common to most small private schools, is listed on all transcripts as well as actual class size. However, a counselor letter of rank can be provided upon request.

The class rank calculation is determined on the 100.0 scale. Further, it is calculated based on weighted actual semester grades rather than GPA points. This provides an even more specific result. Students who take Pre-AP and Dual Credit courses receive an extra five points per class per semester to be calculated into their rank. AP courses receive an extra 10 points per class per semester to be calculated into their rank. Please note that these extra points are for ranking and GPA purposes only, it is the un-weighted actual grades that appear on the transcript and report cards.

National Honor Society

Membership in the Texoma Christian School Chapter of the National Honor Society is a high honor bestowed upon a limited number of TCS junior and senior students. To be eligible for membership, a student must have completed at least four semesters of high school, one of which must be at TCS. Candidates must have at least a 3.35 cumulative GPA to be considered. A list of potential candidates will be submitted to the high school principal and teachers who will evaluate candidates on their character, leadership, and service. A violation of the TCS code of conduct or of academic integrity may be cause for non-recommendation to or removal from membership in the National Honor Society. Members must continue to meet the standards for nomination, engage in service-related activities and projects to remain active and earn the NHS designation at graduation.

Class Scheduling

Scheduling of classes is based on the needs of students to complete graduation requirements. Graduation requirements are first priority while, every effort is made to allow for adjustments from year to year based on requests, and resources available.

Class Adds, Changes, or Drops

1. All changes to a student's schedule must be made within two weeks of the beginning of the semester.
2. Students must consult with the guidance counselor to discuss the implications of possible changes to the student's graduation plan.
3. Student must secure written parental permission and teacher recommendation, to make a schedule change.
4. Finally, the principal has the final authority to approve or deny the request for any change.

Coherent Sequence of Courses – Four Year Plans

Note: Not all courses listed are required for Graduation, see Graduation Plans for details.

9th	10th	11th	12th
Bible	Bible	Systematic Theology	Apologetics
English I	English II	English III	English IV
Alg I or Geometry	Geometry or Alg II	Alg II or Pre-Calculus	Calculus or Pre-Calc.
Biology	Chemistry	Physics	Anatomy & Physiology
World Geography	World History	US History	Government/Economics
Spanish I	Spanish II	Spanish III	Spanish IV
Health & Speech	Computer Technology	Fine Arts or Elective	Fine Arts or Elective
Physical Ed/Athletics	Physical Ed/Athletics	Physical Ed/Athletics	Physical Ed/Athletics

Graduation Plan Choice

TCS follows the State of Texas graduation requirements described as the Recommended and Distinguished Plans. Both plans are designed to provide courses needed to adequately prepare students for College.

**NOTE:* The 4 Advanced Measures for the Dist. Plan are obtainable as follows: PSAT commended score (1), AP tests score of 3 or above (1 per test), Dual credit college course work with a grade of “B” or higher (1 per semester).

RECOMMENDED PLAN (RP)		DIST. ACHIEVEMENT PLAN (DAP)	
Bible	4.0 or each year enrolled	Bible	4.0 or each year enrolled
English	4.0 English I, II, III, IV	English	4.0 English I, II, III, IV
Social Studies	4.0 W. Geography W. History U.S. History Government (.5) Economics (.5)	Social Studies	4.0 W. Geography W. History U.S. History Government (.5) Economics (.5)
Math	4.0 Algebra I Algebra II Geometry Pre-Calculus or Math Models <i>If taken prior to Alg II</i>	Math	4.0 Algebra I Algebra II Geometry Pre-Calculus
Science	4.0 Biology I Chemistry I Physics I Anatomy & Physiology	Science	4.0 Biology I Chemistry I Physics I Anatomy & Physiology
Foreign Lang.	2.0 (The Same Lang.)	Foreign Lang.	3.0 (The Same Lang.)
Fine Arts	1.0	Fine Arts	1.0
Physical Ed.	1.5	Speech	.5
Computer Appl.	1.0	Health	.5
Electives	3.5	Electives	2.5
Total Credits	30.0	Total Credits	30.0
		<i>*4 Advanced Measures are required thru taking dual credit courses or AP tests</i>	

Advance Placement Courses

AP gives a student the chance to try college-level work in high school (11th & 12th grade); to gain valuable skills and study habits for college as well as prepare for AP exams. If you obtain a "qualifying" grade on the AP Exam, there are many colleges that will grant you credit or advanced placement for your efforts. AP tests are offered here at TCS each year in May. AP exam current cost is \$86.00.

AP courses are high school credited courses with college-level course work, designed to prepare students to be successful on Advance Placement tests.

Pre-AP courses are offered in 9th & 10th grade to prepare students for AP coursework. More information about the AP program is available on the College Board web site at www.collegeboard.com/ap

Dual Credit Courses

This course work (offered 11th/12th grd) can award you dual (both high school & college) credit for the course taken. Research shows wide transferability of this coursework, however, you should ALWAYS CHECK with the college of your choice to confirm.

To enroll, students must:

- 1) Pass a college entrance test THEA, SAT or ACT (see details below)
- 2) Complete a GCC admissions application on line at www.grayson.edu
- 3) Pay the GCC course tuition & purchase text books
- 4) The course must not interfere with TCS day classes if taken off campus
- 5) Choose from approved list (not all GCC courses are approved by the state as high school courses)
- 6) Must receive a "C" or above for high school credit and a "B" or above to receive an "advanced measure" toward the distinguished degree plan

The following scores are acceptable for entrance to GCC. If you did not obtain these scores, you will be required to take and pass either the THEA or Compass test at the GCC testing center.

Acceptable Tests/Scores:

- SAT: 1070 combined verbal and math with at least 500 on each section
- ACT: 23 composite score with at least 19 on English and Math sections
- PSAT: 107 combined verbal and math with at least a 50 on each section (for Jrs)

Dual Credit Tuition & Fee Exemptions

Students may be eligible for tuition and fee exemptions or reduction based on family income. For more info see the following links or contact the GCC business office.

Eligibility Guidelines: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/IEGs08-09.pdf>

BCIS – GCC Tech Prep Credit: Student's who complete BCIS with an "A" or "B" and enroll in one course at GCC can submit a request to obtain college technology credit for it towards a degree plan at GCC. Acceptance and transferability of this credit by other colleges varies and is at the discretion of each institution.

Post High School Planning

It is our goal to serve the needs of our students in fully developing their God given individual talents, gifts and personal interests. Navigating the college search and application process, academic guidance, course selection and career exploration are some of the important areas of focus as we journey with students in pursuing their dreams. Each year students will engage in key activities that provide stepping stones. We encourage you to begin your journey early and use the information in this handbook to assist you in understanding your options and opportunities.

Parents are reminded that colleges and universities have the right to determine their own admissions requirements, procedures, and protocols. Moreover, the entrance requirements of American colleges and universities vary greatly and college entrance is becoming ever more competitive. For this reason, TCS parents and students are admonished to consider and investigate the entrance requirements of the college or university of their choice early in the high school years so that a more informed course selection and graduation plan choice can be made. And remember...

College Admissions is match to be made, not a prize to be won.

College Visitation

During the high school years, students may be granted permission to be excused from school for a reasonable period of time to visit colleges and universities.

College Planning Materials & Activities – Keeping Track

Students are encouraged to keep track of their activities and searches. Students will be guided through a number of college planning and self discovery activities through out their 4 years, encouraging them to get involved in the planning of their future. Students will be given access to ConnectEDU, an internet based system where students can enter their high school activities, awards, service etc. and easily keep track. The following list includes areas in which records should be kept.

- Community and School Service Projects
- Honors and awards (school and outside)
- Extracurricular Activities (including leadership & awards)
- Employment
- Career Exploration/Self Discovery
- College Searches
- Scholarship Searches
- College & Scholarship Essays
- Testing records

College Resumes – ConnectEDU

High school students will be registered on www.connectedu.net/members in the Fall of the Freshmen year, where they will begin their college resume and given instruction on how and what to record in the years ahead. Parents may gain access to view and assist their students by contacting the guidance counselor for username and passwords.

Athletics and College Scholarships

NCAA Interest

Many college athletic programs are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The NCAA has three membership divisions, I, II, and III. Institutions are members of their division based on size and scope or their athletic programs and whether they provide scholarships. If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or II athletics, YOU MUST BE CERTIFIED by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

It is **your responsibility** to make sure the Clearinghouse has the documents it needs to certify you. These documents

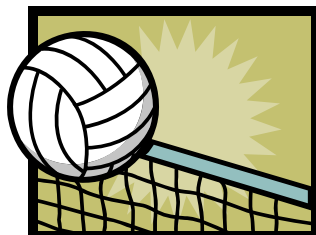
- 1) Register online and pay the fee by going to www.ncaaclearinghouse.net and clicking on "prospective student" and then on "registration form". Most students register the summer after the Junior year or at the beginning of Senior year.
- 2) Submit an official high school transcript from every school you have attended to NCAA showing at least 6 semesters (typically at the conclusion of Junior year)
NCAA required courses line up well with the Texas (and TCS) graduation plan requirements; you can look up our school by entering our school code of 446-499.
- 3) Submit SAT or ACT scores directly from SAT/ACT
- 4) Follow all directives from the NCAA Clearing house such as:

Student-athletes request final amateurism certification spring of senior year by completing the following:

1. Senior Student-Athlete log in to his or her account at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.
2. C/O "Enter/Update Amateurism Questionnaire" link on the left
3. Go to the bottom of the screen and click on "Enter/Update Amateurism Questionnaire."
4. Review each question to make sure it is answered correctly.
5. C/O "Exit Questionnaire" icon at the top. This will take you to the previous screen.
6. At the bottom of the current screen, click on the "Final Authorization Signature" icon and complete the electronic signature information.

NJCAA Interest

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) is the governing body of intercollegiate athletics for two-year colleges. For more info: www.njcaa.org



Testing

8th grade: All 8th graders take the **EXPLORE** test in the spring. This test provides information regarding college readiness by indicating whether or not your student has reached certain “benchmarks” appropriate for his or her current grade level.

9th – 11th grade: High school students take the **PSAT** (Practice test for the SAT), in the Fall of their 9th, 10th & 11th grade years. The test is administered on national PSAT test day in October, here on campus, during a regular school day. For 11th graders, this is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship program.

10th grade: All 10th grade students take the **PLAN** (Practice test for the ACT) during the fall of their sophomore year, here on campus, during a regular school day.

11th/12th grade: Students are encouraged to take **the SAT & the ACT** (College Entrance Tests) in the spring of their Junior year, which are offered locally on national test dates.

Texoma Christian School High School Code: 446-499

SAT \$45

A reasoning test

Measures critical thinking skills

3 sections Math, Reading, Writing/Essay

Penalty for guessing

Given locally at Austin College

ACT \$32.00 + \$15 (optional writing section)

An achievement test

Measures what you have learned in class

All 3 plus a science section

No penalty for guessing

Given locally at Grayson County College

- Both tests are accepted at most colleges and universities
- Both given 6-7 times per year from August – early June
- Students are encouraged to take both and to take them 2-3 times if possible; colleges will use your best scores for entrance purposes.

If you score an SAT below 1070 or an ACT below 23, you must take the THEA to enroll in a Texas College such as GCC for example; including dual credit coursework.

THEA (\$40.00) An achievement test given for entrance into Junior Colleges and Dual Credit courses, offered at Grayson County College several times through out the year. You may register online at www.registerblast.com/grayson or at GCC testing center (903) 463-8608.

Test preparation information:

- www.thea.nesinc.com – has practice THEA tests
- check out The Official THEA Test Study Guide, available in our library
- www.act.org ACT info. – has practice tests
- www.collegeboard.com SAT info. – has practice tests
- check out College Board’s Official SAT Guide & College Board’s 10 Real SAT Tests
- <http://testprep.collegefortexans.com> & <http://number2.com/> for FREE ACT/SAT prep
- www.collegeprepgenius.com
- www.princetonreview.com College search and test prep info

CLEP Exam Credit

Most colleges and universities grant credit for CLEP exams, but not all. There are 2,900 institutions that grant credit for CLEP and each of them sets its own CLEP policy; in other words, each institution determines for which exams credit is awarded, the scores required and how much credit will be granted. **Therefore, before you take a CLEP exam, check directly with the college or university you plan to attend to make sure that grants credit for CLEP and review the specifics of their policy.** These tests are given on most college campuses at a current cost of \$72. For more information, go to www.collegeboard.com.

College Entrance Testing Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students with learning disabilities may be eligible for college entrance testing (SAT/ACT) accommodations. The following links will lead you to resources of information on eligibility and documentation requirements.

For the SAT: <http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/index.html>

For additional questions email ssd@info.collegeboard.org or call 609-771-7137

SAT SSD eligibility requirements – you must have:

1. Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations,
2. Have documentation on file at your school that supports the need for requested accommodations and meets the *Guidelines for Documentation*, and
3. Receive and use the requested accommodations, due to the disability, for school-based tests.

If any of these requirements are not met, you may still be eligible. You may send your disability documentation with the *Student Eligibility Form* to the College Board for review and determination.

For the ACT: <http://www.act.org/aap/disab/index.html>

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

Local DARS office assists students and their families in transitioning into college including qualifying them for potential scholarship money. For more info contact the local transitional counselor Kathryn Bowdre at (903) 813-8222. It is best to contact this office not later the fall of a student's junior year.

College Majors and Career Exploration

“You are God’s workmanship – created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for you to do!” Ephesians 2:10

Students will be guided through a number of self-discovery activities through out their middle and high school years to include personality, interests, and abilities/skills. These activities are designed to allow students to understand their uniqueness and how their personality, interests and gifts relate to the world of work. They will also be exposed to a variety of career professionals who will share about their fields through presentations and an annual “Majors Fair”.

Other resource students will be exposed to include:

- College Board’s Book of Majors available in our library.
- Websites such as:
 - www.lifeafterhighschool.org
 - www.careercruising.com, Username “graysoncc”, password “gocenter”; on this site students take an interest tests which provides a list of careers to consider based on their personal interests.
 - www.careers.typefocus.com Student individual username and passwords available from guidance counselor; on this site students take a personality test which provides a personality profile and list of careers to consider.

Two Year Colleges, Career and Technical Schools

Students can prepare for many of today’s high growth career fields by attending a two year college or a career or technical school. Students can also start at a two year college and then transfer to a four year college. Two year colleges and career/technical schools will require applicants to take a college entrance test, (THEA, TAKS, SAT or ACT), if you plan to obtain a 2 year degree or take courses to transfer to a 4 year degree program; however; certificate programs offered will not require these tests.

Military

Military Academy, Army, info go to www.myfuture.com, www.usma.edu or contact our congressmen Ralph Hall’s local office at (903) 892-1112 or District office, Tom Hughes at (972) 771-9118

Air Force Academy (www.usafa.af.mil) Liaison Officer; Lt Col Eric Miller, McKinney, TX, 972-529-9793

US Naval Academy Admissions (www.nadn.navy.mil) N TX Area Coor.; Cpt Tom Kapurch; 972 768 3088

US Naval Academy Blue & Gold Officer; Davida Hopkins-George; 903-868-5750; 903-957-4105 or email at bgogearge@cableone.net

US Coast Guard Academy (www.cga.edu)

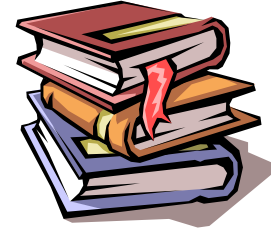
Timelines for College Admissions

Freshmen

Make High School Count

Realize that your grades count!

- Your academic record, the transcript, is crucial to college entrance because it tells a college who you are over a 4 year period. College will be looking for strong grades and tough course choices. If you struggle in a course, help is available; ask your teachers and counselor!



Develop good study skills now

- Practice good time management, plan ahead

Plan now to take a wide variety of rigorous courses

- This will not only help you with gaining college admission but will also better prepare you to be SUCCESSFUL once you are in.

Start practicing for college entrance testing now

- Take the PSAT each Fall of high school and take practice tests on line
- Take a “Test Prep Course”; begin understanding the patterns of these tests early

Continue to explore your interest, strengths & gifts

- Register at www.collegeboard.com; one of their free services includes info on “turning interests into jobs” and a personality test.
- Take interest inventories on line at www.lifeafterhighschool.org or www.careercruising.com, user I.D. is “graysoncc”, password is “gocenter”
- Talk to family members about their careers

Get involved & Keep a list of your activities

- Community service of all kinds is important to college & scholarship applications.
- **KEY!** → Focus on activities that interest you, **quality rather than quantity.**
- Consider a summer job, internship, camp experience or volunteering opportunities
- Maintain your list/resume on www.connectEDU. Your counselor will help you create an account where you can keep track through out your high school years.

Start a college search now at

- www.collegeboard.com or www.fastweb.com

Attend College Fairs whenever available

- Sherman & Denison High School both offer a local opportunity to attend and meet representatives from up to 100 colleges and universities

Sophomores

Prepare a solid foundation & boost your skills

High school grades COUNT

- Continue to keep your grades up, seeking help as soon as you struggle

Identify academic strengths & weaknesses

- Take the PLAN test (pre-ACT), it can help you see where you may need to focus academically; it also contains a career component with an interest test
- Utilize free access to College Board's "my college quickstart" at www.collegeboard.com; here students can view their personal PSAT test results with feedback on why incorrect answers were missed.

Don't forget – CHARACTER COUNTS

- Be mindful of your behavior; you will need administrators and teachers to complete recommendations for you!
- In the spring of Sophomore year, students will be considered for the TCS chapter of National Honor Society. Considerations will include GPA, service & character

Continue to build your college resume

- Get involved in extracurricular & service activities seeking opportunities for leadership
- Keep a list of your activities updating your college resume on ConnectEDU regularly

Begin to compile a college search list by:

- Asking "What kind of college experience am I looking for?"; "What kind of college will help me grow as a person as well as gain a degree?"; "Do I want to stay close to home or move away?"; "Am I more comfortable with campus where some of my classes may contain 200 or more students or where the student to professor ratio is smaller?"
- READ this book! Colleges That Change Lives by Loren Pope
- Explore the College Library in our TCS library; look through the College Board's College Handbook for brief descriptions of college campuses all over the US.
- Utilize collegeboard.com or ConnectEDU.net where you can set up a personal folder to compile your own lists and research schools

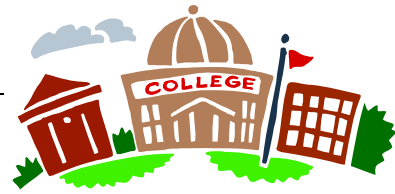
Remember:

College admission is a match to be made not a prize to be won.

A degree from a prestigious university does NOT guarantee success.

Juniors

Narrow your search & make campus visits



Narrow your college choices to 3-5 by researching & visiting campuses

- DECIDE if you prefer a small or large campus?; decide if location is a factor?
- Discuss college financing with your parents and begin researching your options and resources.
- Make PERSONAL visits to campuses

What To Ask On A College Visit

- What percent of first year classes are taught by graduate assistants?
- What are the three most popular majors on campus?
- What percent of first year students return as sophomores?
- What percent of entering students actually graduate?
- What percent of graduates who apply to Graduate school are admitted?

Research Scholarships

- Register with www.fastweb.com; begin getting familiar with the various scholarships available;
- Begin to prepare outlines of essays; you can obtain a list of commonly asked scholarship essay questions from your guidance counselor & TCS website

Prepare College Essay

- Complete a college entrance essay in Junior English class

TEST! Take College Entrance Exams

- Take the SAT and ACT early in the spring of your Junior year so that you will have scores for college applications in the coming summer and fall; it is also important to have SAT/ACT scores early to qualify for dual credit senior year
- The SAT II Subject tests are required by more competitive colleges. Each subject takes one hour and you may take three subjects on any given test day. It is recommended that you take the SAT II exams as soon as you have completed the subject in your junior year but no later than November of the senior year.

Continue to build your college resume

- Apply to Camp RYLA the summer of your Jr. year (a leadership training camp); see your guidance counselor for details
- Continue to be involved in extracurricular activities, community service, leadership and employment
- Up date your list of your activities on your ConnectEDU account.

Seniors

Narrow your search and apply!



- **Apply to at least 3 schools in the fall; early decision is often November 1, check your school!**
- **Continue to visit campuses and schedule interviews**
- **Request recommendations early, at least 1 full week in advance**
- **Check your emails weekly for timely info from your counselor; check the TCS website regularly for carefully selected college guidance instructions**
- **Plan to apply for 1-3 scholarships per month using info from our college library, emails from your guidance counselor and the TCS website**
- **Selective Service – Men you must register within 30 days of your 18th birthday at www.sss.gov If not, you may not be eligible for Federal Student Aid.**
- **Voters Registration – you may register to vote at www.sos.state.tx.us**
- **September: Make a list of admissions and scholarship deadlines on your planner for all the colleges you plan to apply to. Many schools scholarship deadlines are in December 1.**
- **September: Sign up for SAT Subject Tests early, if required by your college(s)**
- **January: Begin to gather tax information for the FAFSA www.fafsa.ed.gov**
- **February: Plan to complete the FAFSA & your college's financial application because most priority deadlines are March 1 – check your schools!**
- **March: Sign up for Advance Placement tests with your counselor**
- **March & April: Watch scholarships from your counselor; numerous local and other scholarships are due in March and April**
- **May 1: After reviewing financial aid package offers, make your decision known to your college of choice by no later than May 1**
- **May: Look for a summer job, internships or volunteer opportunities; these will continue to be important activities as you seek future opportunities!**
- **May: Give a list of your awarded scholarships to your counselor**
- **May: Request a final high school transcript to be sent to your college**
- **All Year: Be mindful of your grades, maintain your GPA, even after college acceptance**
- **All Year: Enjoy your senior year!**

College Planning Resources

Basic College Admissions Criteria

(not in any particular order of preference)

- GPA
- Entrance exam scores SAT/ACT
- Rigorous High School Course Selections
- Extra Curricular activities in High School
- Leadership and Community Involvement
- Recommendations
- College entrance essays
- Rank: Schools (less than 100 in a graduating class) do not rank, expect for the top 10 %. Colleges see this commonly and take this into consideration.

***Always check with the Admissions office of the colleges that interest you for their specific criteria.*

MySpace/FaceBook – Beware, what you put on the internet is instantly out of your control and no longer private. Colleges do commonly look at these materials.

Texas Top 10% Rule

Applicants for admissions to any Texas general academic teaching institution as listed in Ed. Code 61.003 will be automatically admitted if applicant is:

- 1) first-time freshman;
- 2) graduated with a GPA in top 10% of Student's graduating class;
- 3) graduated in one of the 2 school yrs preceding the academic year for which the applicant is applying for admissions from a public or private high school in TX that is accredited by a generally recognized accrediting agency, which TCS is.

To qualify for automatic admissions an applicant must:

- 1) Submit an application before any filing deadline established by the institution;
- 2) The institution shall review the applicant's record and any other factor the institution considers appropriate to determine whether the applicant may require any additional preparation for college-level work or would benefit from inclusion in a retention program;
- 3) The institution may require a student who has been identified as needing additional instruction to enroll during the summer immediately after the student is admitted to participate in appropriate enrichment courses and orientation programs;
- 4) A student who has not been identified as needing additional preparation for college-level work may enroll, if the student chooses during summer immediately after the student is admitted.

General Outline of High School College Planning Activities

9th

- Choose a degree plan and complete 4 year plan
- Register on ConnectEDU and start keeping track of activities and awards
- Take the PSAT
- Complete career exploration activities (utilizing website resources, classroom discussion and the TCS Majors Fair)
- Learn to how to conduct college searches and identify a “good fit”
- Encouraged to attend College Fairs – invited to attend SHS & DHS Fairs
- Encouraged to get involved in extracurriculars, community and school service
- Encouraged to begin SAT prep courses and practicing

10th

- Update degree plan and 4 year plan
- Update resume info and colleges searches on ConnectEDU
- Take the PSAT & the PLAN
- Complete self discovery activities (various interest & personality inventories)
- Continue Career Exploration Activates (utilizing website resources, classroom discussion and the TCS Majors Fair)
- Encouraged to attend College Fairs – invited to SHS & DHS Fairs
- Continue involvement in extracurriculars, community & school service

11th

- Update degree plan and 4 year plan
- Update resume info and colleges searches on ConnectEDU
- Encouraged to NARROW COLLEGE SEARCH & VISIT campuses
- Take the PSAT for the last time
- Encouraged to register for the SAT early in the spring
- Continue self discovery & career exploration activities (utilizing website resources, classroom discussion and the TCS Majors Fair)
- Encouraged to attend College Fairs – invited to SHS & DHS Fairs
- Continue involvement in extracurriculars, community & school service
- Encouraged to seek leadership opportunities
- Write a College Entrance & Scholarship essay in English class

12th

- Review degree/graduation plan during Fall Senior Review with the Counselor
- Encouraged to apply to colleges of choice (3-5) early in the Fall
- Take the SAT again early in the Fall if needed
- Encouraged to meet all college application & scholarship deadlines
- Watch for & complete various Scholarship applications through out fall & spring
- Continue to keep grades up even after college acceptance
- Enjoy Senior Year!

The College Search *College admission is a match to be made not a prize to be won.*

In looking at colleges consider the following:

Location	Size	Competitiveness	Community
Cost	Facilities	Available Majors	Reputation

Texas Schools

- www.collegefortexans.com
- www.thecb.state.tx.us The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Site
- <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/InteractiveTools/HELM/> Link to an interactive map of Texas colleges and universities

Christian College Information

- www.naccap.org National Association of Christian Colleges
- www.christiancollegementor.com
- www.collegeview.com Secular and Christian College info

Special Constituency Sites

- www.hsf.net The Hispanic American Scholarship Fund
- www.blackexcel.com African American
- www.hillel.org Jewish
- www.ncaa.org and www.njcaa.org Athletic
- www.aihec.org Native American

General College Search

- Check out the “College Library” in our TCS Library, where you will find very helpful books such as College Board’s College Handbook & Hobson’s Christian College Guide.
- Complete searches on www.collegeboard.com or www.connectedu.net . You can do searches by state, major, type of college etc.
- Check out websites such as www.usnews.com for college rankings info.
- Visit college websites; now a quick and comprehensive way to get current information on most schools as well as contact admissions personnel.
- Visit campuses, take campus tours, sit in on a class, talk to students, spend the night in a dorm, check out campus life & extra-curricular activities.
- Research entrance requirements for the schools of interest.
- Make the personal “good fit” a priority.
- If you happen to know majors that interest you, find out how many of their graduates in those areas are accepted into grad schools i.e. law or med schools.
- Don’t discount the more expensive schools, they generally provide much more scholarship money.

College Application Process

- www.commonapplication.org Application utilized by over 500 institutions across the nation including private and public
- www.applytexas.org This site has the common application for Texas school as well as the option to call up information about Texas schools. This is a great site!
- www.eduinonline.com Apply to 34+ Black colleges online

Early Decision

This is a program where you apply to your first choice early in the fall of the senior year, receiving notification by approximately mid-December. If accepted, you are committed to attend and must withdraw any other outstanding applications. Early Decision must come with a warning. It's not a good idea unless students have done a thorough college search and know without a shred of doubt that this is the college for them.

Questions to ask yourself before you decide to go Early Decision

1. Have you thoroughly researched several colleges and know what your options are?
2. Do you know why you're going to college and what you want to accomplish there?
3. Have you visited several campuses, spent time in classes, stayed overnight, and talked to professors?
4. Do the courses the college offers match your goals?
5. Are you absolutely convinced that one college clearly stands out above all others?

Early Action

Early action is a program where you apply early in the fall of senior year; gain admissions info prior to spring but is not binding; providing flexibility (see institution for exact policy).

Rolling Admissions

This policy allows colleges to notify students of admissions as soon as the application is received and reviewed. In this situation it is wise to apply early because once the admissions quota is reached applications are no longer accepted.

Regular Decision

This plan is where institutions review most of their applications before notifying the majority of candidates of their admissions. In this process, colleges set a deadline for completing applications and will respond to completed applications by a specified date. If you are applying for financial aid, you will follow an additional process and deadline.

Wait List

This term is used by institutions to describe a process in which they may initially delay offering you admissions. Rather, the institution extends to you the possibility of admissions.

College Financial Aid – Ways to Pay!

1. Government Funded Grants & Loans: You must complete the FAFSA form available beginning in January of your senior year. Get quick results by completing this form on line at www.fafsa.ed.gov. (FAFSA technical assist 800-433-3243) Colleges disburse available funds based on these results. Delaying could mean less money available for YOU!

Federal & State Financial aid comes in several forms: www.studentaid.ed.gov

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal & State Supplemental Grants
- Federal Work-Study
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Stafford Loan
- Federal Plus Loans for Parents

Once your FAFSA is on file at your college financial aid office they will evaluate it and notify you about programs for which you qualify.

Calculate your need – Estimated Family Contribution (EFC):

Go to http://apps.collegeboard.com/fincalc/compare_aid.jsp

2. College Specific Scholarships: The majority of your scholarship money for college will come from the College you attend. Each College offers scholarship “packages” to students based on merit and/or need. Be sure to find out your college’s scholarship application process and “priority deadline”. Most colleges require that you fill out the basic FAFSA form in order to apply for any type scholarship.

3. Company Specific: ASK your parents employer! Many companies sponsor scholarships for their employee’s children. ASK!!

4. Independent Scholarships: Check out Resources in our TCS Library!

College Board’s [Guide to getting Financial Aid & Scholarship Handbook](#); Peterson’s [Get a Jump: The Financial Aid Answer Book](#)

5. Local Scholarships: local community scholarship information is listed on the TCS website in the spring – check it regularly!

Scholarship & Financial Aid/Loan Search Engines:

Sign up with a **scholarship search engine** and get info on scholarships specific to your interests. Such as:

www.weeklyscholarshipalert.com

www.fastweb.com

www.collegefortexans.com

www.freescholarships.com

www.salliemae.com

www.mapping-your-future.org

Scholarship Scams!

Beware of any scholarship offer that cost money. With information in this guide you can conduct your own search and obtain the same information. Beware of www.fafsa.com! This is a site that will charge you to do what you can do for free at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Common Scholarship Application Questions

Describe in 200 words or less, how this scholarship will help you achieve your educational and occupational goals.

What is the most challenging obstacle you have faced and how did you overcome it?

Explain how specific community service activities you have been involved in have impacted your life.

What is unique about your financial need and how do you plan to contribute to your college expenses?

Volunteer/Service Opportunities

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love." Mother Teresa

Suggested Agencies:

North Texas Youth Connection:

- Vicki Penn, Volunteer Coordinator (903) 893-4717 gcjavpenn@cableone.net

MHMR:

- Paula Cawthon, Volunteer Coordinator (903) 957-4865; pcawthon@mhmrst.org

Boys & Girls Clubs

- Sherman – (903) 892-9019 Denison – (903) 465-9008

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org/donate/volunteer/

- (903) 465-1330

Community Coalition Program with the Substance Abuse Council:

- Sheila Gawne (903) 892-9911

Churches:

- Get involved in your church, youth group, teach Sunday school, help in the nursery, help with church projects

Check out:

Volunteer Match Service

- www.volunteermatch.org search by zip code and areas of interest then email them directly through this link.

National & Community Service – Learn & Serve America:

- www.learnandserve.org- Spirit of Service Awards, Presidential Freedom Scholarships, President's Volunteer Service Award

Kohl's Kids Who Care Program

- www.kohlscorporation.com/communityrelations/ : you can read about their winners and how/what they got involved with

United Way; www.unitedway.org

Special Olympics; www.specialolympics.org

Volunteer in Parks; www.nps.gov/volunteer/

Make a Wish; www.wish.org/home/volunteer.htm

GET INVOLVED!

TCS Extracurricular Activities

- Student Council
- Discipleship
- Photo and Art Club (PAC)
- National Honor Society
- TAPPS Academic Competitions
- Yearbook Staff
- Cheerleading
- Athletics (Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Golf, Soccer, Track & Cross Country)

Leadership Opportunities

- Campaign for a leadership role in school clubs & student council
- Sport Team Captains
- Take initiative in your church youth groups and teach Sunday school
- Organize friends to complete a community project or to help someone in need
- Be a summer camp counselor
- Teach or coach sports to younger students (YMCA, Boys/Girls Club)
- Apply to Camp RYLA the summer of your Jr. year (a leadership training camp)
- Watch the Counselor's Corner in the spring for numerous summer opportunities by going to www.texomachristian.org click on "Departments" and then on "Academic & College Planning"
- National Youth Leadership Forums – www.nylf.org (leadership camps on Medicine, Law, Technology & Defense/Diplomacy)
- Congressional Youth Leadership Council Conferences – www.cylc.org
- Teen Mania's Global Expeditions - www.globalexpeditions.com, Mission Trips
- Youth With a Mission – www.ywam.org
- Christian Leadership – www.focusinstitute.org
- Christian Leadership – www.summit.org/conferences/
- Christian *Passion Conferences* – www.268generation.com

As always keep track of all of your activities