

**INFORMATION
FOR
POST-SECONDARY
PLANNING**

**ABINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT**

HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSIONS
ABINGTON HIGH SCHOOL (CEEB CODE 221-565)
GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT (781-982-2165)

SAMPLE TIME SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER:

- Discuss future plans with counselor and parents.
- Check weekly Guidance Announcements posted in your English Classroom or in Guidance regarding college information and scholarship applications.
- Compile a tentative list of 8 - 10 schools in which you might be interested, and write or telephone for applications.
- Attend COLLEGE MINI FAIRS at Abington High School
- Visit as many schools as possible. Ask for interviews when visiting.
- Register for SAT'S or ACT'S

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER:

- Re-take the SAT Reasoning Test, or Subject Tests.
- Narrow selection to approximately 3 – 8 schools and **make note of application deadlines**. Also, begin to ask teachers and/or counselor for necessary recommendations.

LATE NOVEMBER - EARLY DECEMBER:

- Apply to Early Action or Early Decision schools
- Begin to submit applications to colleges and make transcript requests to guidance.

JANUARY:

- Have parents fill out the FINANCIAL AID FORM.
- Plan to attend Financial Aid Night (TBD)

JANUARY - APRIL:

- Colleges make financial aid decisions.
- By May 1st - student must notify colleges regarding their final decisions

VARIABLES TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Should you decide to continue your education beyond high school, the following factors should be considered before beginning your college search:

SELF-EXPLORATION - What are your interests, abilities, goals, expectations?

COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS - What are you looking for in the college you choose?

- **Type of institution** (i.e., two or four year, coed or female)
- **Geographic location** (i.e., north, south, east or west, distance from home)
- **Majors offered/curriculum** (i.e., liberal arts, technical, business)
- **Setting** (i.e., urban, rural, suburban)
- **Size of institution** (i.e., small, medium, large, very large)
- **Selectivity** (i.e., very difficult, difficult, moderately difficult, and open admissions)
- **Cost** (i.e., tuition, room and board, books, fees, travel, financial aid, scholarships)
- **Diversity of student body** (i.e., race, religion, national, international, age)
- **Extracurricular activities** (i.e., athletics, entertainment, culture, religious, educational)
- **Housing** (i.e., on-off campus, coed, single sex, special interest, size of room, food, meal plans, rules, roommates)
- **Facilities** (i.e., buildings, architecture, libraries, student unions, classrooms, lecture halls, labs, recreational/athletic offerings, stores, laundry, handicapped access)

CAMPUS VISIT

A personal visit to a post-secondary institution is often the most useful step in helping students and their parents decide whether or not to apply to a particular school. Students are encouraged to make use of group tours, open house events and group information sessions as a way of obtaining first-hand impressions of schools they have previously researched.

Write, call or e-mail the admissions office of the colleges in which you are interested two or three weeks in advance and make arrangements for a personal interview if possible and a tour of campus facilities. Some colleges, usually large universities, will grant only group interviews.

Visits during the regular academic year provide a more accurate view of the academic and social life of a campus, but families often make use of summer

vacation to visit several schools that are at a distance. Where possible, it is a good idea to avoid the distortions of registration, final exams and special campus events such as homecomings or festivals. Several high school holidays such as Columbus Day weekend or Veteran's Day allow students who visit colleges to minimize the disruption to their own academic program.

Information regarding campus visits and open houses can be found on the college's website.

THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS INTERVIEW

While the trend at colleges and universities is away from the once all-important personal interview and toward a more relaxed, general information meeting, some colleges still require an interview, some recommend it (which is an offer you should not refuse), and still others leave it up to the applicant. Please note, the college interview is generally not as important as other items in the application process; however, an interview can prove crucial when the decision hangs in the balance.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. Arrive promptly, dressed in a manner which you feel represents your "best foot forward."
2. Conduct yourself in a friendly, inquisitive and interested manner. Phonies are easy to spot, but the person with no enthusiasm or questions can be equally as unimpressive.
3. While it is not necessary, feel free to bring your parents. They probably won't sit in on the interview, but they, too, may have questions and concerns which may be answered on campus.

WHAT ARE SOME QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT BE ASKED DURING AN INTERVIEW?

1. Why have you selected this particular college?
2. In what academic areas are you interested? Why? Be prepared to speak on sciences, social studies, English, etc.
3. What kind of things are you most interested in outside of school? Why?
4. What type of reading material do you enjoy? How has a certain book influenced you?
5. What, in your opinion, is a college education? What do you hope to gain from college?
6. Is there a particular current event you are following? Why is this event important to you?

7. What are your strengths? Weaknesses?

TESTING INFORMATION

Most colleges require that the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the (ACT) be taken. Many students plan to take either test once during their junior year and once during their senior year.

*The PSATs are normally taken in October of the junior year. They are not required for college admission. PSAT scores are not reported to colleges.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS are also required by some colleges. Students normally take these tests in grade 11 and grade 12. Each student is responsible for studying college requirements to determine the level and the type of SUBJECT tests required. If taking the ACT, you may not need to take SAT Subject tests as well. Check with your college's testing requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the test applications and to register on time. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE CONTACTED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS TO REMIND THEM TO SUBMIT THEIR SAT TEST APPLICATIONS.

REGISTER ON LINE FOR SAT'S: www.collegeboard.com,
REGISTER ON LINE FOR ACT'S: www.actstudent.org.

ARRANGE TO HAVE YOUR TEST SCORES SENT DIRECTLY TO THE COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING.

NOTE: You cannot take both SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject Tests on the same date.

PREP COURSES

A list of Test Prep Courses which are offered in the area is available in the guidance office. See your COUNSELOR if interested.

TRANSCRIPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Your high school transcript must be sent to the schools to complete your application for admission. Numerous factors make it necessary for you to submit a request for a transcript at least 2 or 3 weeks in advance. In addition, most schools will not act on transcripts that do not contain first-term senior grades.

In order that you may understand what information the schools use to evaluate your application, the following information is included on your transcripts:

- A record of the subjects taken and final grades earned since Grade 9. This includes summer school grades.
- A list of the activities in which you have participated in since Grade 9.
- Your rank in class as of the end of Grade 11. This is a figure showing your position in the class in relation to all other members of the class. Your class rank is based on grades earned in leveled courses taken in ninth through the eleventh grades. A final class rank is done at the end of the senior year.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE FOR YOUR COLLEGE BOARD SCORES TO BE SENT TO THE VARIOUS COLLEGES YOU HAVE SELECTED. Unofficial Scores will be **NOT** included on your transcript.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

If a student needs a recommendation from a teacher, the student should ask a current or former teacher to write a letter of recommendation. Be sure you allow your teachers at least two to four weeks to complete your recommendation. Since most letters must remain confidential, please ask your teacher to return the completed letter to the guidance office.

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER TO A TEACHER

Date:

Dear (Name of teacher)

I want to thank you for writing a college recommendation for me. I appreciate the time and effort you have devoted in helping me.

Sincerely,

COLLEGE ADMISSION POLICIES

EXPLAINED BELOW ARE THE MOST COMMON ADMISSION POLICIES STUDENTS MAY ENCOUNTER AS THEY APPROACH THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS. STUDENTS SHOULD SEE THEIR COUNSELOR IF THEY HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS REGARDING ANY OF THESE EXPLANATIONS.

Early Decision - This plan is offered by many colleges to applicants who are sure they want to attend a certain college. This college should clearly be the applicant's first choice. Traditionally, the deadline for early decision applications has been November 1. Colleges, in turn, render a decision by mid-December. In recent years, some colleges have also instituted a second round of early decision (usually in January)

If accepted under this plan, the student is under strong moral obligation to withdraw or forego applications to all other colleges. Some colleges exchange lists of students accepted under this program.

Early Action - This program is similar to early decision, except that, if admitted, the applicant is not morally obligated to withdraw other applications and has until May 1 to decide.

Rolling Admissions - Under this program a college considers a student's application as soon as all the required credentials such as the school record and test scores have been received. Notification of acceptance or rejection to the applicant is made as soon as a decision is made. Colleges that follow this practice may make their admission decisions continuously over several months, in contrast to the practice of other colleges who accumulate their applications until late in the year and announce all their decisions at the same time.

Deferred or Delayed Admission - A practice by some colleges to allow an accepted candidate to postpone enrollment in a college, generally for one term or one year.

Open Admissions - An admissions policy granting acceptance to all high school graduates without regard to additional qualifications.

Candidate's Reply Date Agreement - Most colleges agree to reserve May 1 as the date by which accepted applicants must indicate their intention to enroll. By use of a common reply date, students may evaluate all notices of admission and financial aid awards before deciding on any one college.

FINANCIAL AID: SOURCES & PROGRAMS

Student financial aid programs are designed to assist those who, without such financial assistance, would be unable to meet the costs of post secondary education. Financial aid comes from several different sources: the federal government, state government, colleges and universities, a variety of local private organizations and scholarship programs and banks.

In general, eligibility for financial aid is based on need. Some financial assistance is awarded not on the basis of need, but for scholastic excellence, athletics or other specialized talents. However, the total amount of such aid is very small in comparison with need-based aid. Need is defined as the difference between the costs at a school or college and the amount that the student and family is expected to contribute toward that cost.

The family's expected contribution is determined largely by a form called the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which is published by the Federal Government. The FAFSA is the most common form used for state and federal funds. Many private colleges and universities may additionally require students to fill out the CSS Profile form. In determining their financial aid package, colleges and universities are not bound by the analysis of need presented in the FAFSA.

A student who is eligible for aid will likely be offered a financial aid package composed of the following components: self aid (loans and work study) and gift aid (grants which do not have to be earned or repaid). Some schools vary the proportion of each kind of aid based on the student's academic performance or other factors.

LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Numerous scholarships are awarded each year to graduates of Abington High School. For the most part, students need only submit two applications to be considered for the vast majority of local scholarships. The completion of two applications, the Abington High School Scholarship Form and the Abington Citizen's Scholarship Form is sufficient to cover consideration for most local scholarship. See your guidance counselor for details.

A separate binder is maintained in the guidance office for other scholarships. These scholarships will be announced each week in the Guidance Bulletin. Students should read the Bulletin each week and check the Scholarship Folder.

HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR COLLEGE AND FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION ETC.

www.collegeboard.com - College planning, college search, financial aid info, scholarship search, SAT/Profile registration

www.mefa.org - For financial aid nights offered by MEFA, financial planning, tools and tips

www.cashe.com

www.salliemae.com

www.fastweb.com - The Internet's largest free scholarship search.

www.scholaraid.com

www.petersons.com - Peterson's provides information about the various colleges and universities. You can search for a college based on a prospective major. Applications for a number of colleges can be downloaded.

www.collegexpress.com - Great information on thousands of colleges, and "ask the expert" area, and plenty of general advice on the college transition process.

www.finaid.org - The most complete financial aid site on the Internet.

www.fasfa.ed.gov – The FAFSA must be filed to apply for financial aid for all colleges (even 2 yr. colleges) a fast , free, secure, and easy way for students to apply for financial aid.

<http://www.collegeview.com> - College View – good for essay tips

<http://www.nchelp.org> - Nat'l Council of Higher Education Loan Programs, Inc.

<http://www.nasfaa.org> - Nat'l Assoc. of Student Financial Aid Administrators

ADMISSION APPLICATION AND FINANCIAL AID TRACKING DOCUMENT

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5
College Name					
Application Deadline					
SAT scores sent					
Essays written					
Teacher recommendations					
Guidance forms					
Mid-year reports					
Application sent					
Financial Aid Documents					
FAFSA deadline					
FAFSA sent					
Profile required?					
Profile deadline					
Profile form sent					
College Fin. Aid Appl. Req'd?					
College Fin. Aid Appl. Deadline					
College Fin. Aid Appl. Sent					
	College 6	College 7	College 8	College 9	College 10
College Name					
Application Deadline					
SAT scores sent					
Essays written					
Teacher recommendations					
Guidance forms					
Mid-year reports					
Application sent					
Financial Aid Documents					
FAFSA deadline					
FAFSA sent					
Profile required?					
Profile deadline					
Profile form sent					

College Fin. Aid Appl. Req'd?					
College Fin. Aid Appl. Deadline					
College Fin. Aid Appl. Sent					