

Preparing for College -- Junior Year

Don't miss the deadlines! You can register and prepare for the ACT and SAT online. Check out www.actstudent.org and www.collegeboard.com to register and find more information on each test. Most colleges require that students take either the ACT Test or the SAT Reasoning Test. You may send your score to four colleges. If you already have some schools in mind, send them your information to let them know you're interested. When registering, if you want your test scores on your high school transcript, be sure to include our high school code: 380850.

Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration (<i>late fee required</i>)
ACT	April 12	March 7	March 21
SAT Reasoning or SAT Subject Tests	May 3	April 1	April 10
SAT Reasoning or SAT Subject Tests	June 7	May 6	May 15
ACT	June 14	May 9	May 23

UPCOMING COLLEGE-RELATED EVENTS:

Pacific Northwest Association for College Admission Counseling College Fair – Visit http://www.pnacac.org/default_files/CollegeFair_Portland08_Participants.htm for a comprehensive list of over 100 participating colleges and universities.

Date: Sunday – March 16

Place: University of Portland, Chiles Center

Time: Noon - 3 pm

The Washington Council Spring High School Tour – Participants will listen to representatives from a variety of private and public colleges and universities within the State of Washington. See Ms. Calcagno for further details.

Date: Monday – March 24

Place: Clark College

Time: 9 am - Noon

COLLEGE FAIRS PROVIDE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO BEGIN RESEARCHING SCHOOLS. THEY CAN ALSO BE OVERWHELMING, SO IT'S BEST TO PLAN AHEAD:

Make a list – Look over the list of participating schools in advance and choose the ones you want to find out more about. Research these colleges by visiting the College Counseling website and creating a college search using the TCCi Family Connection. All students should be able to log into the system and can search for schools that will be at the fair using the “College Search” tool. Once you're in the College Search, go to the “Type” Section, then select “Spring College Fair” under “College Groups” and add any other criteria to create your list. Remember, you should create a preliminary list of schools based on priorities that are important to you (ie. location, major, size, etc.). Before attending the fair, write up a short list of questions to ask each admission representative. It is recommended that you ask the same questions of everyone to allow for a better comparison of schools.

Ask questions that you can't get out of a viewbook or online -- Avoid questions like, "How many people are in the freshman class?" Instead, ask what the two or three most popular majors are (that can give you a good idea of the main interests of the majority of the students). If you have a particular major in mind, ask how many students take that major; what research faculty members are involved in (and the opportunities for undergraduates to participate in it); or what courses you would take your first year in a particular major. If you're undecided, ask about what services and support are available to help you explore various majors. Other things you can ask about: extracurricular activities, what kinds of students the college is looking for, what percentage of students receive financial aid, and other concerns unique to your interests and situation.

Develop A Plan -- Before attending the fair, make sure you have the following supplies: a small notebook with your list of colleges and questions you want to ask, and a pen or pencil. Your notebook and pen are great tools for keeping all those conversations straight. After you leave a table, jot down your impressions of the college and the answers the admission representative gave you. Try to do this before you visit the next table, while your impressions are still fresh.

- **You may want to print up a few sheets of self-stick address labels.** Include your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, high school, year of graduation, cumulative GPA, intended major(s) or areas of interest, and any extracurricular activities you're considering participating in. At the fair, place the address labels on the college information cards to save you time in filling out the same information over and over at each college's table.
- **Check out the schedule of information sessions.** Many fairs have sessions on the search process, applications, financial aid, and other issues presented by experts in the field. These sessions are a great place to ask general questions about the college admission process.
- **If a family member attends the fair with you, talk about your plan ahead of time.** You may decide to split up—perhaps a parent/guardian can attend the financial aid seminar so you can visit more colleges. Another option is staying together for part or all of the time. You may find that adults ask different questions than you do. Also, it can be helpful to get a second opinion on your impressions of particular colleges.

Browse -- Planning ahead ensures that you get to visit the colleges that most interest you. But also make sure to leave time for browsing. Be adventurous and don't just focus on 'name' schools. You may find that a school you've never heard of offers the exact major, extracurricular program, etc., that you're seeking.

Follow up -- By the time the fair is over, you'll have a bag filled with information about colleges and likely be experiencing information overload. If you're feeling overwhelmed, take a day or two away from the college search. Then get out all of those brochures, along with the notes you took while at the fair, and read through them. You may find that some colleges aren't as interesting as you first thought. Others only look better the more you research them. For those colleges, follow up by filling out the information cards in the brochures or by starting to schedule college visits.

~ Adapted from Jennifer Gross and the National Association for College Admission Counseling website. Be sure to visit www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/Events/CollegeFairs/NCF/nationalcollegefairsstudents.htm for additional suggestions as well a "checklist" for attending the fair.