

Open Doors with Higher Education: Academic Resources and Family Support Checklist

How involved you are in your child's education? Along with financial education, it is very important that parents actively participate in their child's academic education from preschool throughout college. In high school students can take classes and tests that will help them be successful in higher education.*

Directions: Read the sentences in bold and check the box when you have the information or have taken the action that will help your child have success in college. In addition, try to fill in the blank.

- I know the classes that my child has taken or is taking and the grades he or she is getting.**

My child enjoys _____ class very much.

- I have asked the teachers and/or counselors how they see my child's performance in other areas, such as behavior.**

The name of my child's teacher is _____.

- I know which classes are recommended to help prepare students for success in higher education.**

In elementary school, students should learn how to read and write.
In middle school, students should take algebra and geometry.
High school students need four years of English, three or four years of math, three years of science, three or four years of social studies, and two years of a foreign language, plus a year of art and two years of computer literacy.

- My child and I have contacted teachers and/or counselors for information and support on career exploration, college or university selection, financial assistance, admission tests, and other things that higher education schools require.**

The name of my child's counselor is _____.

* In this work the terms "college," "university," and "post-secondary education schools" are all considered schools of higher education.

My child has taken the ACT “American College Test,” the SAT “Scholastic Aptitude Test,” or the PSAT/NMSQT “Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.”

A good score on the *ACT* or *SAT* enhances your child’s chance of being admitted into a college or university. A passing grade on one of these tests is needed for admission into many higher education schools. Generally, the student takes the *ACT*, *PSAT/NMSQT*, or *SAT* in eleventh grade. The student can retake the test to improve his or her score. Consult with your high school counselor about which test is most appropriate, based on the schools your child is considering. The school counselor can also provide information on test dates, locations, and registration.

The *ACT* test measures what the student has learned in junior and senior high school. The test covers English, reading, math, and science; also, students can take an additional writing test if the university they are considering requires it for admission.

The math, reading, and writing test known as the *PSAT/NMSQT* measures the student’s analytical and problem-solving skills, skills that are necessary for success in college. After this test, the student takes the definitive test known as the *SAT*. If the college your child wants to attend requires certain SAT Subject Tests, the student can take the *SAT* by subject. Subject tests measure the student’s knowledge of English, social studies and history, math, science, and foreign languages.

The last time my child and I talked about some of these tests was _____.

I know that my child can take college courses (or receive college credit for courses taken) while still in high school.

Students who take college courses at their high school while they are still in high school can save time and money when they enter college because they will have already completed some required classes. In addition, it may give them an advantage getting admitted into college. Depending on their grades, students may be eligible to take college courses while they are still in high school. This program is known as College Credit Classes or Advanced Placement (AP).

I keep my child’s report card in _____

I know that if my child’s grades allow it, he or she can finish the last two years of high school taking courses at a college.

School districts in Minnesota must pay the tuition and fees for students who choose to take certain courses at a college during the last two years of high school. This allows the students to save two years tuition fees as well as time when they continue with their college careers. This program is known as Post Secondary Education Option or PSEO.

- I know that my child may take college level classes and learn another language in high school, and that if he or she has a second language the classes may be recognized by other colleges and universities.**

Junior and senior high school students may take higher education classes such as languages, mathematics and computer science, experimental sciences, arts, and humanities free of charge in their high school. Students also have the opportunity to develop their skills interacting with people from other cultures. Students who earn an International Baccalaureate diploma in the high school may transfer these credits to Minnesota or out of state colleges and universities.

- I understand the difference between an education received at a two-year community college or technical school and an education from a four-year university.**

A two-year school is a community college or technical school that offers Associate degrees which can be transferred to a four-year college, university, or certificate program. A four-year school is a university or college, public or private, that offers studies at a degree level, such as a bachelors degree, in areas such as engineering and sciences, education, health, business, languages, history, social work, and other majors.

After high school my child wants to study _____.

- I know that my child can receive services from the *Talent Search* office from the TRIO program. I know school counselors can provide information about or refer my child to these services.**

The Talent Search office offers support for students with an economic or social disadvantage who really want to continue their studies beyond high school. The program supports students to help them finish high school and continue their studies in higher education. Counselors provide vocational orientation and tutoring, prepare students for admission tests, assist with applying for financial aid, and meet with the student's family.

The time my child does homework is _____.

- My child has attended college fairs.**

At these fairs, the student is invited to visit with representatives from a variety of community colleges, technical schools, and universities and is informed about careers and admission requirements.



I understand that many colleges and universities have a cultural diversity office that can provide information and assist my child's admission.

Parents and students can find the college's cultural office by asking staff in the admissions office or visiting the college's website.

The nearest college or university to our home is _____.



I know that if my child does not have, and will not receive, a high school diploma, he or she will need to pass the necessary tests to receive a GED (General Education Development) Certificate if he or she wants to go to college. Nearly all colleges and universities require either a high school diploma or GED.

I know that this school or agency provides the GED instruction:

_____.



I know that to increase my child's chance of being accepted into a university or college, in addition to good grades, he or she needs to participate in careers assessments, sports, or extracurricular activities such as math team, music, theater, or speech and either volunteer or have a job.

It is important for students to be able to document participation in a variety of activities as well as to build relationships with adults such as teachers and coaches who could write references for their college applications.

Last time I went to support my child in a school event was at

_____.



I know my child's primary language is not English and he or she may be required to take an English test before being admitted to college.

College admission counselors generally advise students who have English as a second language to take the test known as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The TOEFL test is a reliable test for admission at most universities in the U.S. It includes four areas: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Another test that students may be required to take for admission to a college is the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB). This tests the student in three areas: written composition, listening and comprehension, and writing (vocabulary, grammar, reading, and comprehension).



I know that I should tell the school counselor or social worker of home issues that could affect the academic work of my child. These problems could be an illness, divorce, a reduced income, or a serious economic problem such as a job loss.

I know that in this agency or clinic my family can get medical or psychological support

I know that in this agency I can learn how to make and use a spending and savings plan

References

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College classes your child can take while enrolled in High School:

College Board. (2006). Boletín Para Estudiantes de AP y sus Padres 2006/07
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Grades and extracurricular activities to help your child to enter into a post-secondary school:

Minnesota Office of Higher Education (2005). [El Gran Misterio de la Universidad](http://www.getreadyforcollege.org)
Guía para Padres. Explore la educación superior con sus hijos.
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English tests to enter a post-secondary school:

Educational Testing Services (2009). The TOEFL Test - Test of English as a Foreign Language. [ETS.org](http://www.ets.org)
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