



## Family Information Sheet Three: I'm Going to College!

### **Dear Family Member,**

Today's Kids2College lesson focused on the steps students need to take to be college and career ready. Your student took a Learning Styles Inventory that provided them with tips on how to get the most out of their study time. We then discussed the steps your student needs to take to be college-ready. These steps include the types of classes they need to take in middle school and high school and college admissions tests. Knowing these steps now is important to making sure they make the right choices during each step of their educational career.

It is important to understand what classes your student needs to take to be college-ready. This will help you give your student advice as they pick their classes each year. We have given you a list of the classes your student needs to take to be ready for college. If you have questions about which classes to take, please speak with your student's guidance counselor.

College entrance exams are also important. Your student will not start taking these exams until high school. Be aware of what tests are required — it will help you and your student be prepared! This letter includes information about these tests and tips for how you can help your student prepare.

### **Family Activity**

Today your student received information about how they can get help in classes they are having difficulty with. They also learned about ways that they can get involved in extracurricular activities, including clubs and after school programs. Ask your student to share this list with you and talk about the different opportunities available. Discuss the following questions:

- Are there any subjects you feel like you could use some help in?
- Who can you speak to for help in that area?
- Are there any activities on this list that interest you?
- Do you know of other activities in your community that you could get involved in?

Thank you for helping your student as they work towards making the college dream a reality!

Sincerely,

**The Kids2College Team**

# I'm Going to College!

## Kids2College Family Information Sheet

### What Classes Do You Need To Be College Ready?

In order to be considered for admittance into college, you typically need to have taken the following:

- **English/Language Arts** — All four years of high school
- **Mathematics** — Three, preferably four years of high school
- **Science** — Three, preferably four years of high school (incl. lab science)
- **Social Studies** — Three, preferably four years of high school
- **World Language** — Two, preferably three years of high school
- **P.E./Health** — At least one year, preferably more
- **Computer Science** — Is recommended
- **Arts** — At least one year is recommended for many colleges
- **Challenging Electives** — Whenever possible

**Tips for Parents:** Take an active role in your student's course selections! When choosing classes for ninth grade, make sure your student is on track to meet the minimum requirements for college admission. Ninth graders should take year-long courses in English, math, and science, as well as social studies and challenging electives. If your student did not take algebra in middle school, it should be taken in ninth grade. There may be additional requirements for your state. Talk to your student's teacher to find out if this is the case.



**Standardized tests** are tests on which everyone answers similar questions about the same content. College entrance exams are standardized tests. They are used to compare students from different schools using a common scale. Over 90% of four-year colleges and universities require standardized college entrance exams. This is why it is important to understand what they are, when they are given, and how to perform well on them.

There are two tests students can take for practice and two official tests that will count towards college admission.

Students have many chances to practice taking college entrance exams. The results of these practice exams may help students find topics

they should study to do their best on the actual college entrance exams.

**PSAT®** — Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test

- Tests critical reading, math, and writing skills
- Scores are not reported to colleges
- Typically is taken in October of sophomore and/or junior years of high school
- Junior year, scores may qualify the student for the National Merit Scholar Scholarship Competition

**PLAN®** — “Pre-ACT” Test

- Includes four sections (English, math, reading, and science)
- Scores are not reported to colleges
- Typically is taken sophomore year

## Official College Entrance Exams

### SAT® — Reasoning Test

- Tests critical thinking and reasoning skills
- Includes three subjects (writing, critical reading, and math)
- Should be taken junior and/or senior years of high school

### ACT® — ACT Assessment Test

- Tests content knowledge as well as critical thinking and reasoning skills
- Includes four sections (English, reading, math, and science)
- Includes an optional writing section
- Should be taken junior and/or senior years of high school

<http://www.khanacademy.org> provides free practice tests and YouTube lectures on many topics for K-8 students, plus SAT test prep. Talk to your student's teacher about how they can best prepare.

## Tips for Parents

- Find out what preparation options are available in your area. Remember that students should begin studying 2–3 months prior to the exam!
- Encourage your student to build their vocabulary and reading skills by reading newspapers, books, and magazines.
- Ask a teacher or counselor to go over your student's test results with you. There is a lot of information available on score reports.
- Support your student's efforts to prepare for the exam in addition to their regular homework.

**A little preparation  
can go a long way!**

## Middle School: Your First Step towards Reaching Your Goals

Today your student received this checklist. It lists what they can do during middle school to prepare for high school. Here are some tips on how you can help them achieve their goals!



### Sixth Grade

1. Encourage your student to develop good study habits and complete their homework.
2. Ask your student what they are learning in school.
3. Make sure your student is attending school everyday.

### Seventh Grade

1. Encourage your student to be involved in school and community activities.
2. Make sure your student is completing their homework and studying for exams.
3. Discuss possible careers with your student. Help them learn more about these careers using the steps outlined in the College and Career Portfolio.
4. Discuss your student's class choices with their counselor. Make sure they are set to take algebra in the eighth grade.

### Eighth Grade

1. Keep encouraging your student to complete their homework and maintain good study habits.
2. Meet with your student's counselor. Talk to them about the classes your student needs to take in high school in order to be college-ready.
3. Attend a financial aid seminar. Become familiar with the resources available to you and your family.
4. Communicate with your student. Talk to them about the classes they are taking and the activities they are involved in.