



College Application Guide

for students entering college in 2010-2011



Oak Hills High School

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OAK HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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INTRODUCTION:

Welcome. If you are a senior this year, we hope you have spent time visiting and/or researching colleges and are now ready for the application process. You have worked hard to get to this stage and should be excited about life after high school. There is still some work to be done and we are here to help. If you are not a senior in high school, we hope you find this packet an informative tool in helping to plan and prepare for college admission.

This College Application Guide is designed to give you an overview of what you should be aware of in your senior year. It will not answer all of your questions, but it will let you know what lies ahead. We hope you will read this guide thoroughly and come to us with any questions you have.

Guidance Staff	Grade	Email	Extension
Mrs. Harguess	11 th Grade	larae.harguess@hesperia.org	4763
Mrs. Dang	10 th Grade	evelia.dang@hesperia.org	4763
Mrs. Browning	9th Grade	renee.browning@hesperia.org	4762
Mr. Boberg	9th Grade	david.boberg@hesperia.org	4762
Diane Rodriguez	Career Center	diane.rodriquez@hesperia.org	4791

COLLEGE SELECTION CRITERIA:

The key is choosing a list of good colleges is research and an open mind. By now, you may have a list of 10-15 schools that seem appropriate for your interests and abilities. If you haven't done so already, you and your family should spend time researching each of these schools. Remember: the more you know about what you want, the easier it will be to find it.

- Have an appropriate spectrum of selectivity
 - Select 2 to 3 colleges that are “strong possibilities” (Chances of admission are high)
 - Select 3 to 4 colleges that are “eye-level” (Chances of admission are 50/50)
 - Select 1 to 2 colleges that are “dream schools” (Chances of admission are risky)
- Work effectively to gain admission in your college selections
- There is no need to apply to more than four or five schools
- What do you lose by applying to lots of schools?
 - You rob yourself of quality time needed to do well in your senior year
 - You impose unfair demands on your work energy and those of your teachers
 - You fail to make individual schools aware of your genuine interest
 - You spend more money than is necessary
 - You expose yourself to more rejection than anyone needs. Regardless of how hard you work to prepare for disappointment, it hurts!
- Your senior year at Oak Hills is an exciting time. We want you to enjoy it!

Tip: *It is reasonable to consider a college because it offers a major that you are interested in, but don't use that as the sole reason for a college being on your list. If your interests change (which is highly likely), you will have no reasons left to be at your chosen college.*

Tip: *For students who are interested in the medical field, you should not consider a college just because it has a great medical, dental, or pharmaceutical program. In reality, undergraduate and graduate programs at a university rarely mix and undergraduate students are unlikely to have opportunities to take advantage of the graduate school's resources.*

Tip: *For those who are seeking merit-based scholarships, it is a good idea to have a couple more “strong possibility” schools on your college list. This is because you will be viewed as a top candidate at your “strong possibility” schools, thus increasing your chances in attracting merit-based aid.*

APPLICATION OPTIONS:

The admission process is driven by deadlines. The following are a list of applications colleges use for admission. Please note that with the exception of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, however, UCs, CSUs, and some private colleges like USC do not offer any of these application options.

Early Decision:

- Designed for students who are absolutely certain of the school they would like to attend
- A student should never consider applying early decision to a school he/she has not visited
- A written commitment is required by the student to the college or university selected
- If a student is in fact admitted early, they have committed themselves to accept the offer and must withdraw applications to all other institutions
- Applications are due by November 1st
- Testing for these colleges should be completed by October
- It is possible to receive a deferral or postponement of the admission decision
- Upon receiving a deferral, a candidate is free to apply to other institutions
- Students may only apply to one Early Decision school

Early Decision II:

- Usually offered by only a small number of colleges
- It allows students to submit an application in January to their top choice school
- First semester grades are used in the evaluation process
- These colleges will notify students in February or March
- If admitted, student are obligated to enroll and withdraw all other applications just as they would during Early Decision

Early Action:

- Similar to Early Decision
- If accepted, a student is not obligated to attend the school and does not have to make any decisions until May 1st when all other decisions are due

Single-Choice Early Action:

- Similar to Early Action
- It prohibits students from applying to any other Early Action program

Rolling Admission:

- Implies a first-come, first-served policy
- Students who apply to a college that offers Rolling Admission need to be prompt in submitting their applications
- The earlier you apply the better

THE APPLICATIONS:

You have researched many colleges and universities. You have visited quite a few. You have received plenty of advice. Now you have to apply. The admission process is an attempt by colleges to select the most appropriate students for their particular institution in that given year. The following are the types of applications you will likely work on this fall.

University of California

The UC application is used for applying to any of the nine UC campuses. The UC's insist applicants to use the online application at universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/apply. Students can begin working on the application October 1 and can submit it between November 1st and November 30th.

Reminders

- The UC application fee is \$60.00 per campus (price subject to change). If you apply to 9 UC campuses it would cost you \$540.
- Make sure to complete the 2010-2011 application.
- A UC application workshop will be held in November, date TBA.
- For help with your Personal Statement, go to OHHS website→Guidance→UC Admissions.
- Always print a copy of everything you submit online.
- Obtain a certificate of mailing (not certified) for any documents you mail through the Post Office. Don't send anything in such a way that the college has to sign for it (such as certified). If you do not have internet access there are computers available in the Career Center.
- UC applications do not require letters of recommendation or transcripts.
- It is the student's responsibility to submit a FINAL transcript request to our school registrar in May.
- UC entrance exam requirements are SAT Reasoning or ACT Plus Writing AND Two SAT Subject exams. (The SAT Subject test will no longer be required after 2011).
- Register for the SAT online at collegeboard.com. Test dates are October 9, November 6, and December 4, and the cost is \$45. Two Subject exams will cost approximately \$50-60.
- Register for the ACT online at actstudent.org. Test dates are September 11, October 23, and December 11, and the cost is \$47.
- Both collegeboard and ACT websites offer a lot of test preparation tools and information.
- Oak Hills High School's APT/CEEB/SAT/ACT code: 054316

Tip: To be safe, we ask that all CSU applications be submitted by October 31st and all UC applications be submitted by November 15th.

Tip: CSU's only count the Critical Reading and Math sections of the SAT (1600-point total). When calculating your SAT score for admission to a CSU, do not include the Writing section of the exam.

California State University

The CSU application is the simplest of the three and is used for applying to any of the 23 CSU campuses. Like the UC's, the CSU's also prefer applicants to use the online application at csumentor.edu, but unlike the UC's, you must submit one application per each CSU campus you are applying to. Students can submit their application between October 1st and November 30th. Please note that the more-selective Cal State campuses will not accept applications after the initial filing period. The same holds true for majors that are already impacted.

Reminders

- The CSU application fee is \$55.00 (Price subject to change) per campus
- Make sure to complete the 2011-2012 application
- Cal State application workshops will take place in October, date TBA.
- Always print a copy of everything you submit online.
- Obtain a certificate of mailing (not certified) for any documents you mail through the Post Office. Don't send anything in a way that the college has to sign for it (such as certified). If you do not have internet access there are computers available in the Career Center.
- CSU applications do not require letters of recommendation or transcripts.
- It is the student's responsibility to submit a FINAL transcript request to our school registrar in May.
- CSU entrance exam requirements are the SAT Reasoning or ACT without writing.
- Register for the SAT online at collegeboard.com. Test dates are October 9, November 6, and December 4, and the cost is \$45.
- Register for the ACT online at actstudent.org. Test dates are September 11, October 23, and December 11, and the cost is \$32 (without writing).
- Oak Hills High School's APT/CEEB/SAT/ACT code: 054316

Common Application

The Common Application is an application that is accepted by over 300 private and public colleges throughout the country. Popular colleges for Oak Hill's students that accept the Common Application include Cornell, Harvard, Stanford and Pomona Colleges. A general guideline to follow is that if you are applying to two or more schools that accept the Common Application, then you should use it. The Common Application and any supplemental forms can be found online at commonapp.org.

College-Specific Applications

The colleges that don't use the Common Application, such as La Verne and Azusa Pacific Universities, have their own application. These applications are usually similar to the Common Application in terms of the paperwork needed. Please check with the individual college's website for application information.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

1. Submit Paper or Online Application Form--required by all colleges (to be sent in by student)

You can't apply without using a paper or an online form. Although each of them looks different, they all tend to ask for similar information. Most of the information will be fairly straightforward and sensible.

Biographical Data:

Be sure to be as accurate and complete as possible. Mistakes will cause problems for future communication. As for parents and siblings, the colleges like to have information about them in order to form a more complete picture of your home and background. Please be precise. Find out what your mother or father's exact title is at work and where he or she works. Know their dates of graduation, degrees held, and colleges attended. The care you take in completing the application is considered to be a reflection of your precision of thought.

Educational Data and Grades:

Fill in the courses you have taken here at Oak Hills and at any other schools and grades received (if asked). Colleges typically do not just look at a student's grade point average (GPA). A student's GPA is meaningless without some context. Colleges will also look into the strength of your course selection and the trend of your academic performance.

Standardized Test Scores:

Standardized test scores are seldom used as the primary criterion for admission decisions. However, since it is difficult to compare so many students from different high schools, the tests sometimes assist in admission decisions. Students need to send their SAT/ACT scores directly to each college to which they are applying.

Extracurricular Activities:

When you get to the section about awards and honors, don't worry about quantity. Be sure to list all of your significant commitments but be careful of Oak Hills jargon. Colleges may not understand what Interact or Link Crew refers to. You should also be careful to specify the time you spent each week on each activity. If the activity is seasonal or episodic, note that. The colleges simply want to know how you spend your time. If you have a job, take care of a younger sibling, are a member of a band, or do volunteer work, put it down.

***Tip:** Some students find it easier to complete this section of an application by first creating a profile of all their activities and awards. Given that most applications don't have enough space to list all your accomplishments, it is easier to identify your most significant activities and awards when you have all of them written down in front of you on one piece of paper.*

The Essay(s):

Remember two points: First, your essay is the one part of the application process over which you have complete control, and second, no essay is perfect because there is no absolute standard. Don't try to determine what the colleges want you to write. Each admission officer has a different view of the essays. Some read for content, some for form. Others don't read them at all. What the colleges do want is for you to put forth your best effort and to share information about yourself that is authentic. Use your own voice (too many adult proofreaders diminishes students' voice dramatically,) make certain to answer the questions asked, and turn to your English teacher for advice.

Carelessness is cruelly punished. So, too, are blandness, superficiality, and insincerity. This is no time to be satisfied with a first draft. **This process is about rewriting.** It takes time, but an excellent final product is worth it.

We have seen the result of well-intentioned family members or friends who write or rewrite student essays. The product of too much time spent with a thesaurus or someone of a different generation is easy to spot. Originality, creativity, and candor are valued in this process.

Your biggest ally is time--time to write, think, edit, rethink, rewrite, and start all over again. The more time you dedicate to the process the more comfortable you will become with writing about yourself. Your counselor is happy to review your essays and give feedback, but keep in mind that while you are writing your essays, he or she is writing your recommendations, so an early start is crucial.

Tip: Although you may not need to spend a lot of time writing, you will need to take a lot of time planning a great essay. An essay may look great to you when you first write it, but it is not likely to look nearly as good after two weeks. Be prepared to spend between four to six weeks and at least four or five rewrites for each essay. We suggest using a planning tool such as a Thinking Map.

Tip: The Common Application's essay prompts are cut and dry. Some students have found the prompts from the individual colleges to be much more interesting, but also more difficult (students rarely get practice writing reflectively; this is why using a Thinking Map will help a lot).

Application Fee:

Almost all colleges charge an application fee. Please remember that applications aren't complete until the application fee is paid. If you are eligible for free lunch or a SAT/ACT fee waiver at OHHS, you may qualify for an application fee waiver. Please see your counselor for further information.

Tip: To save time on their part, some colleges charge a discounted application fee if you apply through their own website instead of through the Common Application website.

2. Report Standardized Test Scores to Colleges--required by all colleges (submitted by the testing agencies at the request of the student)

The reason that colleges want to see an official copy of your test scores is two-fold. First, they want to confirm your test scores. Second, you may not know all your test scores at the time you apply (especially if you are planning to take the November and/or December exams). It is your responsibility to ensure that your official scores are sent to every college you are applying to (if you are applying to four UC or Cal State schools, you need to send scores to each individual school, not to the UC or CSU system).

You should take advantage of the pre-paid reports (four for every test) and send your scores to colleges you are considering. Please keep a record of the schools to which you are sending your scores. In the fall of your senior year, your counselor will assist you in verifying that your scores have been sent.

For the SATs: Students are responsible for contacting the College Board and requesting that their scores be sent to all colleges. Students are given four free score reports each time they take the test. Each score report will include all SAT's taken. Additional reports can be requested for an additional fee.

For the ACT: Same instructions as for the SAT. Please note that the ACT differs slightly from the SAT as students can choose to submit only the best ACT score instead of all ACTs taken.

For both the SAT and ACT: Remember to supply Oak Hills High School code when registering for the test. This lack of information can cause delays in your college applications. Oak Hills High School's College Board code (CEEB) for the SAT and the ACT is 054316.

Tip: For student's who are planning to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse, do not forget to submit your test scores to them in addition to the colleges you are applying to. The NCAA Clearinghouse's College/Scholarship code is 9999.

Tip: For students who are planning to apply at a CSU, the code 3594 can be used to send SAT scores to all 23 campuses.

Tip: If you have listed a CSU as an ACT score report recipient, you can use the ACT Scores Manager to release your score to additional campuses. Before you can use the ACT Scores Manager, you must first have arranged for your scores to be sent to a CSU campus.

3. Send High School Transcripts to Colleges (sent by the counselor at the request of the student)--required by most colleges, but not the UC's, while the CSU's (other than Channel Islands) will request transcripts on an individual basis.

If you want to send transcripts to college coaches, scholarships, or the NCAA Clearinghouse, please request transcripts by completing a Transcript Request Form available from the Records Office.

In addition to sending your transcript, we will also include a copy of Oak Hills High School's School Profile. This includes a great deal of information about Oak Hills and puts your GPA in some context. The profile helps admission professionals understand the difference between our school and the thousands of other schools from whom they receive applications. In addition, it helps them put your performance in the context of other Oak Hills students. Please note that the profile is updated and revised every year.

Once you are accepted to a college and you decide to accept their offer, you must request a FINAL transcript in May.

4. Letters of Recommendation--usually required from private colleges and from some public colleges, not required by the UC's and the CSU's. The initial form is found in the application and completed and sent by the counselor and/or teachers at the request of the student.

There are two forms in college applications that would usually be accompanied by letters of recommendations: the Secondary School Report, which is completed and sent by your counselor, and the Teacher Recommendation, which is completed and sent by your teacher.

Secondary School Report:

- Completed and sent by your counselor
- Details the highlights of your secondary school career
- Notes your up and downs, your strengths and weaknesses
- Counselor will include positive factors about the student

Tip: When a student asks an individual to write a letter of evaluation, s/he must sign a statement that s/he either reserves the right to see the letter or forfeits the right to see the letter. While colleges will not take into consideration whether the applicant reserved the right, most evaluators will. Evaluators often write very neutral letters when the student reserves the right to access them. This is self-defeating to the applicant as colleges do not want to see neutral letters.

Teacher Recommendation:

- Not all schools request or even accept recommendations
- These letters represent the student's chance for some glowing support
- Select teachers who can positively highlight different aspects of you

Recommendation Request Protocol:

You should ask teachers and/or counselors well in advance whether or not they would be willing to write on your behalf and give them the forms at least three weeks prior to the deadline. **Do not count holidays or school breaks as part of the three weeks.** The Oak Hills Guidance staff sets three weeks prior to the deadline date or Nov 30th, whichever comes first, as the last day for students to request a letter of recommendation from them.

Complete the student section of the forms and provide the teacher and counselor with:

- The recommendation forms (photocopied forms are fine). The Common Application is not an online form.
- A list of the colleges with their application deadlines.

What Your Teachers Need to Write Your Letter of Recommendation

- A stamped, self-sealing envelope pre-addressed to the colleges's Office of Admissions along with the address of the college with Oak Hills High as the return address (7625 Cataba Road, Oak Hills, CA 92344). You need additional postage for an over-sized envelope.
- The due date for the letter of recommendation.
- You must submit your request for a teacher letter of recommendation at least three weeks before the due date.

What Your Counselor Needs to Write Your Letter of Recommendation

- Your Student Profile found on the OHHS website.
- A list of colleges you will be applying to with their addresses and application deadlines.
- If required by the college, all Secondary & Mid-Year School Reports. If you have filled out an application on-line, you may need to download these reports to give to your counselor.
- If required by the college, SAT or ACT scores (photocopies are okay) if you did not have them sent to OHHS.
- No envelopes for mailing are necessary for counselors.
- The deadline for submitting these items is three weeks prior to the deadline date or Nov 30th, whichever comes first.

Submit all forms and requests at one time. It is much easier for counselors and teachers to do several forms at one time for you than one each week. If you add colleges to your original list, you must let your writers know. They keep copies of the letters and can mail them out as needed. Be sure to indicate the deadline for each letter.

Other Comments about Letters of Recommendations

Remember this: how you behave, how you appear, and how you treat faculty will determine what your letters will be like. In a sense, you write the letter long before the faculty member actually gets to it. Behave as you would like to be perceived. Colleges will ask for a maximum of three letters of recommendation: one from your counselor for the School Report and two Teacher Recommendations. Please only ask a maximum of two teachers to write letters of recommendations. Teachers' time is just as important as your time. Please do not make them do more work than they already do. Teachers are extremely busy and they may want to write you a letter but they need time.

The question always arises, "what about letters from people outside of Oak Hills? Can I have them write for me too? One extra letter won't hurt. Two, maybe three extra letters might be trying too hard. A final thought about extra letters of recommendation: family, friends, or alumni who offer to write on your behalf should know you well (not just know your parents or the Dean of Admissions, but YOU!). Politely decline otherwise. A good rule of thumb, if your file is now thicker than the phone book, you've probably gone too far.

5. Supplements - required by certain colleges only if using the Common Application to apply

Supplements are additional information required by certain colleges if you apply with the Common Application instead of the college's own application. The supplements' questions vary widely by institution. Some are fairly simple, such as asking you to list any relatives who have attended the college. Others require additional essays. You must be very careful, however, to make sure that you carefully and completely fill out any supplemental forms required by schools that use the Common Application.

Please also note that some colleges will require you to submit their supplements the same way (electronic or paper) as you submitted your Common Application. Please check the colleges' websites and the Common Application website for additional information.

6. The Interview

First and foremost, inquire about the interview requirements. With the increase in applicants, some colleges have done away with on-campus interviews and depend on local alumni to provide them. Many have taken it a step further and done away with them entirely. Schools are very clear in their admission literature about their preferences. Required, recommended, encouraged, available or fully irrelevant--what they say is what they mean. Look at the websites and brochures to find out what the school wants.

Here are some observations:

- The interview is primarily an exchange of information. You are evaluating the college as they evaluate you. Make sure you have some questions in mind for your interviewer. Don't miss this opportunity to determine what they are all about. Think of it NOT as impressing a stranger but as making a friend.
- Interviewers come in as many varieties as students. Some are the dean or director; others are associates or assistants. Some are simply locals hired to do interviews and some are currently at the school. Some care, some don't. Some are perky and bubbly; others are quiet and analytical. All are human beings. Don't be fooled by the title on the door or the lack of title or even the lack of a door. Be interested and engaged.
- Don't try to second-guess how you did in the interview. You probably can't tell anyway. Just give it your best shot and go home happy.
- Always be honest, forthright and complete with the interviewer. Sometimes they can help you clarify decisions, identify strengths, offer advice or suggest alternatives.
- Don't bother bringing up your grades or SAT scores. Typically admission officers will not request this information during an interview. However, should they ask, provide the necessary information and move on. Admission officers take their roles as counselors seriously and can often give you helpful feedback regarding your options.
- Please, please don't think that the hour and a half interview is a better interview than the 30-minute one. Some Interviewers have the time, others don't. Here quality beats quantity every time.

Here are some tips:

- Be sure to set up the interview well in advance and then arrive early. You can walk around, clear your head, pick up a campus newspaper, and get a sense of the place.
- You don't have to dress for the prom. If you're overdressed you'll probably feel uncomfortable. Practically speaking, you'll do a lot of walking on the campus so you'll want to be as cool and comfortable as you can be. A sweater, slacks or skirt, and casual shoes are just fine. Just don't be too casual and do be neat and well groomed. Jeans, T-shirts, shorts, or any clothing that is too revealing are not a good idea.
- Be sure you have basic information about yourself and the college committed to memory.
- It is critical to know fundamental facts about the college (number of students, male/female ratio, key programs, etc.). Also be sure that the college offers the major you express an interest in. Know the courses you have taken and plan to take your senior year. The college can then give you an idea as to whether your courses meet their expectations.
- Be sure to introduce the admissions officer to parents or relatives who are with you. Get it right and be poised.
- Thank you notes are a must.

Possible interview questions that you may be asked:

- How did you hear about us?
- Why are you interested in us?
- What other colleges are you looking at?
- What are your favorite subjects?
- What are your strengths, weaknesses?
- Do you have a specific major in mind? (Don't be afraid of being undecided.)
- Tell me about Oak Hills High School.
- Tell me about your family.
- Tell me about your community.
- What activity do you enjoy most?
- What books have you recently read outside of school?
- What are you passionate about?

Remember, there are no "right" answers, only your answers. Don't be afraid to pause and think. Be enthusiastic! It pays to be specific about what you like and why you like it, whether in regard to your own life or to the college.

Alumni Interviews

Some colleges rely on alumni around the country to help conduct interviews. Most alumni interviews are fair and productive, perfectly adequate substitutes for an on-campus interview.

Some points to remember:

- Some colleges require an alumni interview. Someone will contact you directly after you have applied. It is the student's responsibility to follow through on the request for an interview.
- Don't let yourself be talked into thinking that the interviewer will be able to "get you in." He or she is only one part of a large, complex process.
- If you have concerns regarding your alumni interview, please share them with your college counselor before contacting the admissions office.
- This interview information is helpful on scholarships interviews as well.

7. Extra Materials

Should you consider sending an art portfolio, a music tape, an athletic video, or a sample of creative writing or special science project? All of these "forms" should be carefully selected and produced, and should only be submitted in consultation with your counselor. If you decide to submit supplemental materials, get to work on them as soon as possible. Some colleges will consider these projects or have their faculty evaluate them for potential. If you want the material back, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the materials.

With regard to art materials, slides for their Art Department and prints for the admissions office are often the best practice. For music, make sure the tape is clear and that your part is prominent. For writing, choose a sample of your best work and reproduce it clearly. For science, it helps to offer a brief explanation for the non-scientist. Caution: Do not send materials that are irreplaceable--you may never get them back.

Email, website registration, and passwords: During the student's Junior year they will begin to register with several websites have to do with college. Students may want to create an "Education" email address that they use when corresponding with testing sites and colleges. We suggest the student use the same user name they use to access their high school grades and their school ID number as their password. If they use the same log ins for every account, then there is less chance that they will forget the log in. When applying to colleges, students will be asked to create a Portal account for each college applying for; colleges use this account to communicate with the student. It is very important for the student to check their email and portal accounts at least once a week. Typically, this is where colleges inform student of their acceptance.

Students should register with www.californiacolleges.com and complete the High School Planner during the middle and end of their Junior year. If this is done, the information will be pre-populated on the student's college applications when they start to complete them.

AFTER THE APPLICATIONS ARE SUBMITTED:

By the end of the first semester, you should have finished with the entire application process.

A. For students applying to private colleges: you will need to have your counselor complete and submit Midyear Report forms. The Midyear Report consists of your updated transcripts (with first semester senior year grades). The Midyear Report forms are found in the individual college application packet or in the Common Application. Please submit them to your counselor no later than January 15.

B. All Parents should attend the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Workshop in January at Oak Hills High School. At this session we will help explain the essential aspects of the financial aid form. The time and location will be announced.

C. This is a great time to be searching and applying for outside scholarships. Great scholarship search websites are available in the Career Center. Please note that the [Guidance page](#) on our website also keeps an updated list of local and national scholarships.

***Tip:** Although the large awards for many of the national scholarships sound tempting, the odds of winning those are slim as you will be competing with thousands of other students nationally. You are likely to have better luck with smaller scholarships offered by local organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) as they receive significantly fewer applicants.*

***Tip:** There are a lot of company's that advertise help in attaining scholarships, most are scams. If you have to pay anything to get scholarship money, you should ask your counselor or career center if the business is legitimate.*

D. Be certain to reply to any further requests for grades or information from the colleges as soon as they arrive. Sometimes additional information is needed for colleges to make their decision.

E. Keep working hard in your classes and do not drop your core classes. The college expects you to complete courses listed on your application. If it is absolutely necessary that you change your schedule, it is your responsibility to notify each college admissions office and explain your decision to drop.

F. Remember to update your college application decisions with your counselor as you receive your acceptance/denial/waitlist letters and any scholarship award letters so we can prepare the graduation list of college acceptances and placements.

G. You will gradually receive your letters of acceptance, with a majority of them arriving during March and early April. Financial aid awards are usually sent about two weeks after the acceptance letters. You will have until May 1st to submit a deposit to the college you plan to attend in the fall. To be fair to the colleges and other applicants, please do not make multiple deposits. By then, you have had more than enough time to research and decide.

FINANCIAL AID / FAFSA:

- Use the FAFSA (Free Application for Student Aid) to apply for financial aid for all colleges and universities in the United States (even community colleges).
- Submit your FAFSA online between January 1-March 2 at fafsa.ed.gov.
Tip: Submit FAFSA as early as possible. Some school's grants deadlines fall in February.
- Go to pin.ed.gov to register for your FAFSA PIN.
- Both parents and students should apply for a PIN.
- Check with private and out-of-state schools for their financial aid filing deadline; they may have earlier filing deadlines.
- Are you applying to any private schools? If so, check to see if they require the CSS PROFILE application. The CSS PROFILE is an additional financial aid application required by certain private colleges/universities. You can register for the CSS PROFILE online at profileonline.collegeboard.com.
- You must submit a FAFSA even if you are completing the CSS PROFILE.
- Cal Grant/GPA Verification Forms: Oak Hills High School will AUTOMATICALLY SEND your name, Social Security number and GPA to the California Student Aid Commission if we have your CORRECT Social Security number on file. **Check with your counselor to make sure we have your CORRECT Social Security number.**
- Always print a copy of everything you submit online.
- Obtain a certificate of mailing (not certified) for any documents you mail through the Post Office. Don't send any materials in such a way that the college has to sign for them (such as certified).
- Note: Do not assume you will not qualify for financial aid. Some colleges and organizations require FAFSA for some scholarships.

FOR PARENTS ONLY: COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE:

Written by Jennifer Gross. Copyright © 2002 National Association for College Admission Counseling

The transition from high school to college can be as challenging for parents as it is for their college-bound students. Here are some tips for parents who are preparing their student for college.

Expect the Unexpected Your student will vacillate between many emotions. They may alternate between wanting to be close and pushing you away. Remember that your student is probably torn between sadness about leaving home and excitement about the adventures ahead. Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger, authors of *Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years*, compares this behavior to that of a two-year-old: your student may run ahead of you, but she'll still turn around to be reassured that you're still there.

Encourage Independence - But Offer Support

It can be tempting to do too much for your student, especially in the light of their upcoming departure. Restrain yourself from handling college arrangements for them. If your student has a question about the college, encourage them to contact the appropriate office themselves. After all, your student will soon need to be responsible for dealing with the college bureaucracy themselves.

"Additionally, parents should support students' decision-making about the courses they plan to take and the activities they plan to be involved in--rather than make those decisions for their sons and daughters," says Marcy Kraus, director of orientation programs at the University of Rochester. "On more than one occasion I've heard a student tell me that their mom or dad picked their fall courses for them--this is often not a good idea!"

The balance between offering support and taking over can be difficult to maintain. Students themselves may want your advice sometimes and reject some advice at other times. During this time of changing roles, good communication--and a sense of humor--are essential.

Form an Informal Support Group

Other parents of college-bound students can be invaluable. They can reassure you that you're not alone and give you a "reality check" about your student's possibly erratic behavior (their students are probably acting in a similar way). You can share ideas for making your students' last summer at home a meaningful one. And after your student leaves for college, you can support each other as your way of life changes.

Help Your Student Say Good-Bye

Encourage your student to spend time with family and friends over the summer. Be there to talk when your student comes home from saying good-bye to a high school friend. Have some family get-togethers. "Make occasions to restate your love, concerns, and respect for your student," says John Boshoven, Director of College Counseling at the Jewish Academy of Metropolitan Detroit.

Make Plans for Communication

Discuss with your student ways to communicate with you while he or she is at college. Many parents enjoy receiving e-mails from their college-aged students, and students often prefer this method of communication because it allows them to reach out to you on their timetable. If you'd like a weekly phone call, make that clear to your student. Once he or she is at college, ask them when it would be easiest to get them on the phone. Also, expect the frequency of communication to vary. Some kids get swept away by the activities of college life and neglect communication with their family. Others may call every day until they feel more at ease with their new life. It depends on the personality and college experiences of your student.

Plan the big day

If possible, give your student some latitude about whether you accompany him or her to the campus. If you accompany your student, be flexible. Talk with your student ahead of time about your plans and expectations. Once on campus, brace yourself for the brush-off. Many first-year students are eager to start their new lives without parents. Your student may be ready for you to leave before you're ready to go. On the other hand, some students unexpectedly cling to their parents.

One good idea is to leave your student to unpack with his or her roommate(s) while you run to the store to pick up any necessities. That gives your student some time alone before a possibly emotional departure. Many colleges now offer parent orientations, which give parents some information about the college and its programs. This can be reassuring to anxious parents--and can give you the tools to guide your student in case of problems in those first weeks.

Give Yourself Time

Home may seem very different without your student. If you have other students at home, remember that siblings will also go through a period of adjustment. Give yourself time to adjust to daily life without your student. You may grieve for a time or have a sense of time passing too quickly (or slowly). This is when talking to other parents can be especially helpful. In time, both you and your student will adjust--just in time for your student to return for the holidays!

COLLEGE GUIDE RESOURCES:

	UC	CSU	Common Application	Other
Application Dates	11/1 to 11/30	10/1 to 11/30	Varies	Varies
Application Fees	Approx. \$60	Approx. \$55	Varies	Varies
Send Official Test Scores	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Send Official Transcripts w/ Application	No	No, only if requested by CSU	Yes	Yes
School Report	No	No	Yes	Varies
Teacher Recommendation	No	No	Varies	Varies
Supplements	No	No	Varies	No
	Comm. College	CSU	UC	USC
Fees/Tuition	\$480 (24 units)	\$3,797	\$8,062	\$38,570
Books & Supplies	\$1,566	\$1,566	\$1,523	\$1,500
Room and board	N/A	\$9,439	\$12,083	\$11,458
Miscellaneous	\$3,528	\$3,314	\$3,632	\$2,090
TOTAL	\$5,574	\$18,116	\$25,300	\$53,618

2 SAT Reasoning Tests	\$90	Most take the test more than once.
2 SAT Subject Tests	\$50	Required for UC & some private colleges.
2 ACT	\$47	Most students take both ACT and SAT and more than once.
2 Private College Apps	\$100	Average fee is \$50 per application.
2 UC Applications	\$120	The fee is \$60 per campus.
2 Cal State Applications	\$110	The fee is \$55 per campus.
2 CSS PROFILES	\$41	UCs and CSUs do not require this.
Postage & copying	\$30	This amount will vary.
Total	\$588	

2010-2011 College Planning Calendar

<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Send for college applications & begin a file * Get off to a good start academically * 9/8: Regular registration deadline for the 10/9 SAT * 9/11: ACT test (register by August 6) * 9/17: Regular registration deadline for the 10/23 ACT * Work on college essays * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines) 	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 10/1-11/30: Filing period for CSU applications * 10/1: CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE available * 9/30: Regular registration deadline for the 11/6 SAT * 10/9: SAT test * 10/23: ACT test * 10/29: Regular registration deadline for the 12/4 SAT * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines)
<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 11/1-11/30: Filing period for UC applications * Deadline for Early Action and Early Decision * 11/5: Regular registration deadline for the 12/11 ACT * 11/6: SAT test * 11/30: Deadline to request letter of recommendation & to submit Secondary School Reports * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines) * Do we have your correct social security #? 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Get proof of mailing for anything not submitted online * Last time to take SAT and ACT for UCs & CSUs * Remember: UCs need two SAT Subject Tests * 12/4: SAT test * 12/11: ACT test * Do we have your correct social security #? * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines)
<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 1/1-3/2: Filing period for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) * Financial Aid Application Workshop (TBA) * Submit Mid-Year Report forms to your counselor * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines) 	<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Check that colleges have received all materials: application, test scores, and financial aid form * Carefully read all information from colleges * Continue to check for scholarships * If colleges request additional information send it to them immediately! Check e-mail and portal account
<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 3/2: Filing deadline to qualify for Cal Grants w / the FAFSA * UC and Cal State decision should arrive * If colleges request additional information send it to them immediately. Check e-mail and portal account * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines) 	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Most college admission decisions will arrive * Financial aid offers will begin to arrive * Make a final decision and mail the enrollment form & deposit to your selected school before May 1st * Check for scholarships (beware of deadlines)
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 5/1: Enrollment deadline for the majority of colleges * AP exams * Fill out housing forms. Most require a deposit * Write a thank you note and share your college news with teachers and counselors who wrote your letters of recommendation 	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At the registrar desk, complete a final transcript request form to be sent to the college you've chosen to attend * Make sure you have responded to all requests from your college * Remember to thank everyone who helped you!

Student Profile (Brag Sheet) (Also online at www.oakhillsbulldogs.com under Guidance & Downloads)

Please complete in detail. Use more paper if necessary.

Name _____ Date _____

Social Security # _____ E-mail Address _____

Colleges you plan to apply to:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

College Major(s): Career Goal(s):

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

List any school/community activities or work experience you've been involved with:

Activity/Club Name Position Held School Year

- | |
|----------|
| 1. _____ |
| 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ |
| 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ |

List any honors/awards received:

Honors/ Awards Description Date received

- | |
|----------|
| 1. _____ |
| 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ |
| 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ |

What makes you unique or stand out from other students who have similar GPA's and test scores?

How would you contribute to the educational environment and intellectual vitality of a college?

What are your greatest strengths? Do you have any outstanding talents?

What non-academic accomplishment are you most proud of?

Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

List three goals you have in life and why?

Is there anything you'd like me to know about that may not have been apparent in your day-to-day life at school?

Name a favorite social activity, hobby or interest.

What 3 qualities would you most like others to remember you as having and why?

What would you want a college admissions officer to know about you?

GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE TERMS:

Advanced Placement Program (AP)

Gives motivated high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses in a high school setting. Thousands of colleges worldwide award credit or advanced placement to students with a qualifying grade on AP Exams. AP Exams are graded 1 to 5, with 5 as the highest.

American College Test (ACT):

The ACT is a college entrance exam administered by the American College Testing Corporation that measures educational development in English, mathematics, social studies, and the natural sciences. Scores are reported as 1 to 36, with 36 as the highest. Most colleges accept scores from either the ACT or SAT.

Associate's Degree

Awarded by a college or university after satisfactory completion of a two-year program of study.

Award Letter

A document issued to a student financial aid recipient that indicates the type, amount, and disbursement dates of the funds awarded for various financial aid programs.

Bachelor's Degree

Awarded by a four-year college or university after satisfactory completion of a program of study.

Campus-Based Aid

Financial assistance for students and their families administered by a college. Funds, regardless of their source, are awarded to students by the college's financial aid office, and not by a state, federal, or private agency.

College Board

A National nonprofit membership association whose mission is to prepare, inspire, and connect students to college and opportunity. The College Board administers the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests, Advance Placement Program (AP), CLEP, College Scholarship Service (CSS), and CSS/Financial Aide PROFILE.

College Scholarship Service (CSS)

A service of the College Board that assists postsecondary institutions, state scholarship programs, and other organizations in the equitable distribution of student financial aid funds by measuring a family's financial strength and analyzing its ability to contribute to college costs.

Cooperative Work-Study Education

A full-paid employment related to a student's field of study. The student alternates between work and full-time study. As a result, the bachelor's program usually takes five years to complete.

CSS/Financial Aid Profile

A financial aid form produced by the College Board required for students seeking aid at approximately 10 percent of the nation's four-year colleges (including the most highly selective institutions).

Deferral

When a student's application for early decision or early action is postponed, and will be considered with the regular applicant pool.

Deferral Admission

Allows an accepted student to postpone admission for one year.

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

A nonprofit organization that develops college entrance tests, including the SAT and SAT Subject Tests, for the College Board.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The amount a family can reasonably be expected to pay for one year of college.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The need analysis form produced by the U.S. Department of Education that is required for students seeking aid by nearly all colleges and universities.

Major

Area of concentration in a particular field of study. Usually students specialize in their majors during their junior and senior years at college.

National Merit Scholarship Program

A scholarship program based mostly on scores from the PSAT/NMSQT. Each year, National Merit students receive scholarships ranging from several hundred dollars to full costs of attendance.

Open Admissions

Schools that take any high school graduate until all the openings are filled. Almost all two-year colleges have an open admissions policy.

Profile

A financial aid form produced by the College Board required for students seeking aid at approximately 10 percent of the nation's four-year colleges (including the most highly selective institutions).

PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT and SAT Subject Tests. It also gives students a chance to qualify for National Merit Scholarship Corporation's (NMSC) scholarship programs.

Quarter System

Divided the nine-month academic calendar into three equal parts of approximately 12 weeks each. Summer sessions, if any, are usually the same length.

Registrar

College official who registers students and collects fees. The registrar may also be responsible for keeping permanent records, maintaining student files, and forwarding copies of student's transcripts to employers and schools.

Residency Requirements

Length of time stipulated by colleges or universities that students must spend on campus taking courses. The term also refers to time families or students must reside in a state before being considered eligible for state aid.

SAT (SAT Reasoning Test)

A 3 hour and 45 minutes exam that measures the critical thinking skills needed for academic success in college. It measures skills in three areas: critical reading, mathematics, and writing.

SAT Subject Tests

One hour, primarily multiple-choice tests that measure achievement in specific subject areas.

Semester System

Divides the academic year into two equal segments of approximately 18 weeks each. Summer sessions are shorter, but require more intensive study.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

The form sent to families in response to submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) indicating the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

An exam required by almost all U.S. colleges and universities for students whose principal language is not English. The test is made up of three multiple choice sections: listening comprehension, structure and written expression, and reading comprehension.

Transcript

Official record of a student's coursework at a school or college. A high school transcript is generally required as part of the college application process.

Undergraduate

A college student earning a bachelor's degree.

Waitlist

A list of applicants who may be considered for acceptance if there is still space after admitted students have decided whether or not they'll attend.

Work-Study

A federally funded program in which students take campus jobs as part of their financial aid package. To participate in a work-student program, students must complete the FAFSA.

