



TOOLS TO HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

PUBLISHED BY THE OFFICE OF SCHOOL & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT





THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Office of School and Youth Development

Dear College Counselors:

Welcome to the College Counseling Workbook. This workbook is designed to promote the implementation of a comprehensive college-readiness program in every New York City public high school. Inside you will find instructional tools and worksheets to help guide you and your students through a four-year college preparation process. There are five sections (A-E) included in this binder:

- **Section A:** College Office Management Tips and Tools for College Counselors
- **Section B:** 9th-12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists
- **Section C:** College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students
- **Section D:** A Complete College File for Students, Grades 9-12
- **Section E:** The High School Student's Glossary of College-Related Terms

The suggestions, instructions, checklists, worksheets, examples and glossary included in this workbook provide a framework upon which each high school can create an environment in which each student has the expectation of college admission upon high school graduation; and the tools, knowledge and support to achieve this goal.

Thank you for your continued efforts to provide the best possible services to our students.

Sincerely,

Elayna Konstan
Chief Executive Officer

A

COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND
TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS

B

9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT
COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

C

COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND
WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS

D

A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE
FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12

E

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY
OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS

COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS

The following **College Office Management Tips and Tools** will help you create a College Office work space; learn how to write effective school profiles and letters of recommendation; and assist students in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Suggestions for Creating a College Office (A-1) will help school staff understand the hardware and organizational needs of a College Office. It's important for schools to designate an office or area to centrally serve as the base for College Counselors, student College Files, resources and all college-related functions.

Also included in this section, you will find **A College Counselor's Instructions for Creating a School Profile** (A-2) and **Tips for Writing Letters of Recommendation: Do's and Don'ts** (A-4), accompanied by a **Sample: School Profile** (A-3) and a **Sample: Letter of Recommendation** (A-5), respectively. The samples may be used as templates when formatting and writing your own school profile and letters of recommendation. [Note: All of the information on **Sample: School Profile** and **Sample: Letter of Recommendation** is fictional and should be replaced by actual information pertaining to your school and student(s).] **Tips for Writing Letters of Recommendation: Do's and Don'ts** may be shared with teachers, guidance counselors and administrators who may be called upon to write letters of recommendation for students. Educators are also encouraged to use the **Sample: Letter of Recommendation** (A-5) as a guide when constructing letters of recommendation for students.

You may use the **Sample: Transcript Request Form for a College Application** (A-6) and **Sample: Final Transcript Request Form** (A-7) as examples of the types of forms that will help you to process repetitive requests and tasks in a uniform and efficient manner. Create your own customized forms using the official letterhead of your school, appropriate school staff contact information, and prompts for pertinent information (e.g. Name, NYC School ID Number).

Contents:

- A-1: Suggestions for Creating a College Office
- A-2: A College Counselor's Instructions for Creating a School Profile
- A-3: Sample: School Profile
- A-4: Tips for Writing Letters of Recommendation: Do's and Don'ts
- A-5: Sample: Letter of Recommendation(Teacher/Educator)
- A-6: Sample: Transcript Request Form for College Applications
- A-7: Sample: Final Transcript Request Form

SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING A COLLEGE OFFICE

Every high school is encouraged to have a College Office. Here are a few suggestions to help College Counselors to create an ideal workspace:

- ☑ The College Office should be a centralized dedicated office or area in the school with a telephone and computer access. College counselors send and receive a great deal of correspondence electronically, via email and over the telephone. The room number should be posted in the school directory and bulletin boards. The College Counselor will need an e-mail account, address and telephone number. Business cards are also encouraged to be given to college admissions officers and parents.
- ☑ Invite all 9th grade students to visit the College Office and assign a personal College File to each student. Remember, college readiness is a four year process for high school students. They will need a College File as soon as possible to begin to gather and organize all college-related materials.
- ☑ A college resume should be started in the 9th grade and maintained which includes extracurricular activities, awards won, and pieces of personal writing that may become part of the college essay. Enlist the help of teachers (possibly through the English Department) and begin this as an in class activity.
- ☑ Outreach is essential for speaking about this process and publicizing the office. Have a form ready for all new students to collect pertinent data (contact info-email and phone number, prospective area of study, GPA, PSAT/SAT scores). In addition, do an interest inventory with students to determine their preferences (large vs. smaller school, geographic, culture of the school etc.) (See C-3)
- ☑ Post a schedule of College Office hours and a policy that states when students may visit (e.g. during advisory or lunch period).
- ☑ Install additional computer terminals to allow each student the opportunity to submit an online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); complete online interest inventories; visit official college websites; complete CUNY applications and search for scholarship opportunities.
- ☑ Hang colorful bulletin boards and posters to advertise colleges, scholarships, community service opportunities, and college readiness programs.
- ☑ Create a library of college brochures and reference books. Maintain current literature.
- ☑ Have hardcopies of SUNY applications available for students and worksheets for the FAFSA.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING A COLLEGE OFFICE CONT'D

- ☒ Prominently post the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) number for your school.
- ☒ Create a monthly newsletter for 12th graders with important college visits, college fairs, scholarships, and other college events.
- ☒ Plan a mail processing system (e.g. In/Out boxes) that will allow you to uniformly process large quantities of mail. Have students take responsibility for mailing out their application materials and providing envelopes with the appropriate addresses. While counselors may have to mail out transcripts (with official seals) and recommendations, students should submit (by mail or internet) their applications, essays, resumes etc. This teaches the student to be responsible and will allow the college advisor to focus on advisement.
- ☒ A College Office produces many repetitive forms and letters which state the same information for different students. When possible, create forms and form letters to help you and your students to perform these tasks efficiently. Here are some ideas for creating College Office forms:
 - Use the **Sample: Transcript Request Form for College Applications** (A-6) and **Sample: Final Transcript Request Form** (A-7) as examples
 - Save forms electronically so they can be easily filled-out and/or reproduced
 - When appropriate, install a heading with school letterhead and provide contact information for the college office
 - Use various colors of paper to create a color-coded system of recognizing similar forms
 - Keep stacks of forms in an area where students can access them and create an area (e.g. In box) where they can return the forms to you
 - Consider creating forms for the following purposes:
 - Transcript requests
 - Requests for mid-year reports
 - Requests for recommendation
 - Requests for final transcript

A COLLEGE COUNSELOR'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING A SCHOOL PROFILE

Purpose:

The primary purpose of a School Profile is to provide a synopsis of the information college admissions personnel need to know about the high school a candidate attends in order to accurately assess his or her college application. It should provide comparative data that makes it possible for admissions officers to judge the rigor of each high school in relation to other schools. Every college application sent from a high school should contain a School Profile. Think of the School Profile as a resume that outlines both practical (e.g. name of school, contact information) and specific (e.g. grading system, special programs) information. The School Profile may also be used to assess candidates for scholarships. Remember, college and scholarship applications are often reviewed in large numbers. Try to make the profile as concise and as reader-friendly as possible.

Format:

Schools should limit their profiles to one to two pages but preferably one page. Include all pertinent information which is printed below. Schools may print the School Profile on both sides of one page or choose to create a pamphlet. Graphs, charts, and tables are helpful visual aids but content and accessibility of information are more important than a fancy layout.

Standard School Profile Content:

- Label the School Profile with the school year (e.g. *School Profile 2008-2009*)
- Name, address, telephone, fax, and website of high school
- An image of the official school or city seal
- School Mission Statement or Overview
- Name, title, and contact information of key administrators, guidance counselors, and college counselors
- Six digit College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) Code
- Grading system / grade distribution
- Student enrollment
- Ethnic breakdown of the student body
- List Honors, Advanced Placement and other challenging curriculum features
- Include any school recognition such as *School of Excellence*
- National Merit Scholarship Program recognition and other scholarship winners
- Extracurricular and student activities
- School-specific designations (e.g. Specialized, Technology, Art) and the criteria for admission and/or graduation based on the specialization

A COLLEGE COUNSELOR'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING A SCHOOL PROFILE CONT'D

- SAT, ACT and/or SAT II mean scores (if available)
- Community Based Organizations and other programs associated with your school
- Grade weighting factors
- Post-graduate destinations (e.g. 4 and 2 year colleges, military, employment, etc.)
- Past college acceptances (most recent year or historical)
- Total Scholarship Earnings for the previous year

SAMPLE: SCHOOL PROFILE (SEE BELOW)



New York City Arts High School

789 Madison Avenue

New York, NY 10002

Tele. (212) 555-1234

Fax. (212) 555-2345

Jane Smith, Principal

John Pine, College Counselor

CEEB Code: 123456

website: www.NYCAHS.com

Selected as a ***School of Excellence*** by the United States Department of Education
(Note: This is not a real high school)

SCHOOL PROFILE 2006–2007

Overview

New York City Arts High School (NYCAHS) is located in vibrant Midtown Manhattan. Our competitive admissions process requires students to perform an audition, or present a portfolio, which displays artistic interest and aptitude. The NYCAHS academic program was designed in partnership with professors of City University of New York. We encourage all students to partake in a rigorous program of study including Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Our arts program was designed in partnership with the Times Square Cultural Society and Museum of Modern Art. Our diverse staff and students represent over thirty countries and speak twelve foreign languages. We encourage students to utilize our unique metropolitan campus to become immersed in an academic, artistic, and cultural experience each day.

Grading System

Numerical Grade	Letter Equivalent	GPA Equivalent	Approx. GPA Distribution
100 - 95	A+	4.0	4 %
94 - 90	A	3.75	10 %
89 - 85	B+	3.5	16 %
84 – 80	B	3.25	23 %
79 – 75	C+	3.0	21 %
74 – 70	C	2.75	11 %
69 - 66	D+	2.5	8 %
65	D	2.25	4 %
<=64	F	<2.0	3 %

SAMPLE SCHOOL PROFILE CONT'D

Advanced Placement Courses

A.P. English Literature
 A.P. World History
 A.P. Government and Politics
 A.P. Trigonometry
 A.P. Biology
 Art Studio
 A.P. Spanish

National Merit Scholars

Natl. Merit Scholarship Finalists	4
NMS Semi-Finalists	7
NMS Letters of Commendation	12

Overall 4 year Scholarships 2007= \$5, 000, 00(2 Possee winners and 1 New York Times Finalist)

Art Studios and Performing Arts Courses

Painting Studio	Drawing Portfolio	Ceramics	Creative Writing
Dance Studio	Architecture Portfolio	Photography	Novel Workshop
Acting Studio	Computer Graphics Portfolio	Sculpture	Fiction Workshop
Set Design	Animation	Origami	Poetry
Orchestra	Plastics	Guitar	Haiku

Extracurricular Activities

Graffiti & Outdoor Art League (GOAL)
 Triple Threat Theater (TTT)
 The New Factory (TNF)

Sports Teams

Varsity Tennis
 Varsity Fencing
 Girls Field Hockey

Class of 2007 College and University Acceptances

Amherst	Georgetown U.	Oneonta (SUNY)	Tufts College
Babson College	Hostos (CUNY)	Oswego (SUNY)	U. Massachusetts
Brooklyn College (CUNY)	Howard U.	Pennsylvania State U.	U. New Mexico
Bryant College	Hunter College (CUNY)	Princeton U.	U. Rhode Island
Colgate U.	Juliard	Providence College	U. Vermont
Dartmouth College	Kingsborough (CUNY)	Purchase (SUNY)	Villanova U.
Emerson	Marlboro	RI School of Design	Wesleyan U.
FIT (SUNY)	Morehouse College	Rutgers (SUNJ)	Yale U.
Fordham U.	New York U. (NYU)	Seton Hall U.	York College

Current Student Enrollment

Grade 09 = 167
 Grade 10 = 149
 Grade 11 = 137
Grade 12 = 125
 Total = 578

Post-Graduate Destinations (June 2007)

Attending 4 year colleges	=	71%
Attending 2 year colleges	=	17%
Enlisted in Military	=	3%
Employed	=	7%
Other	=	2%

SAMPLE SCHOOL PROFILE CONT'D

Ethnicity

Black	30.8%
Hispanic	57.4%
White	6.1%
Asian/other	5.6%

Guidance Counselor and Advisor Contact Information

Name of Staff Member	Title	Telephone
John Johnson	College Counselor	(212) 555 - 1234
Art Arthur	Arts Advisor	(212) 555 - 2345
Patty Patterson	12th grade Guidance Counselor	(212) 555 - 3456
Ellen Ellerby	11th grade Guidance Counselor	(212) 555 - 4567

New York City Arts High School – “Where students become artists and artists become great.”

TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: DO'S AND DON'TS

Students often ask teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and other school staff members to write letters of recommendation to help them gain admission to colleges. The following suggestions will help educators to write powerful letters of recommendation:

Do

- Limit length of letters to one or two pages. Admissions officers receive many recommendations and do not have time to read multiple pages. All letters should be typewritten with correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Be positive and enthusiastic about your recommendation.
- Include new information that is not evident from reading the application and transcript.
- Know both the student and college well so that you can tailor the letter to explain why the student is a good applicant, or fit, for that particular college. Speak to parents, other school staff members, and the students themselves to gain a better understanding of their strengths, interests, and goals.
- Address letters to the more selective schools with the particular name of the university.
- Describe extenuating circumstances that will help to explain gaps, or peaks and valleys, in transcripts or performance records.
- Be cautious when including personal information (see “Don’ts” below). The general rule is not to include any information of a private nature if it will hurt the student’s chances of gaining admission to a school. If you have concerns consult with peers and colleagues. You can also speak to the student and parent and if they agree obtain written permission from the parent or legal guardian. Please be aware as well that many universities have a waiver of access to the recommendation.
- Use adjectives and verbs to portray active students with full academic schedules, extracurricular calendars, and social lives. Colleges hope to admit: self-starters, leaders, problem solvers, and innovators. Colleges are looking for students who have: created, articulated, imagined, matured, been positive, gotten involved, and remained confident. Find the right words to describe each student vividly.
- Ensure that each student has given you necessary supporting materials from the college including secondary school reports, instructions, envelopes and deadline dates (**and at least 2–3 weeks prior notice**) for writing and submitting letters on time.
- Before writing the letter, ask each student for a **Letter of Recommendation Request Form** (C-9), **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2), **College Resume** (C-8), and a copy of his/her most recent transcript. In completing the College Recommendation form make certain that students expound on their activities. For example, rather than simply listing that the student played basketball he/she should indicate what he/she has learned and/or accomplished from this activity. Now choose several specific examples to highlight the student’s strengths. Use formal letter construction:
 - **Introduction:** Introduce yourself and the student and explain why you are qualified to recommend him/her. Are you his/her teacher/guidance counselor/coach? How long have you known the student? What courses/activities/sports did you instruct him/her in? Also introduce the main theme (student strength) of your letter.

TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: DO'S AND DON'TS CONT'D

- **Body of Letter:** Make several points to illuminate the student's strengths. Remember to illustrate your point with specific details: action examples of academic and extracurricular efforts; direct quotes from the student or parent; classroom observations; and anecdotes to display positive attitudes. Attempt to create an interesting, multi-dimensional description of each student.
- **Closing Statement:** Offer your recommendation, contact information, and a final prediction, based on past performance, of the type of college student he/she will be.
- Keep a copy of each letter of recommendation (hard copy and electronically) and the supporting documentation.

Don't

- Don't write letters in longhand.
- Don't submit first drafts. Ask a colleague to proofread each letter.
- Don't use the same form letter for each student. If you do use a generic template, change the name of the college in the greeting and throughout the text, and add student-specific information.
- Don't use the letter of recommendation to list courses and the grades received for each. Add new information that cannot be gleaned from the transcript.
- Don't use generalizations or clichés. Avoid writing statements such as: *"Jennifer is the most intelligent student I have ever met."* Instead, give specific examples of actions and accomplishments to illustrate Jennifer's intelligence.
- Don't include negative or sensitive information until you know all of the rules of confidentiality protecting each student. Speak to the guidance counselor and principal if you're unsure of what to include and exclude. Occasionally, you may have to divulge sensitive information about a student. Be sure to understand the rights of students, and your own rights, before including questionable information. If you are considering doing this and have some concerns consult with a supervisor.
- Don't accept a **Letter of Recommendation Request Form** (p. C-9) if some extenuating circumstance precludes you from providing a fair recommendation.
- Don't feel obligated to give the student a copy of his/her letter of recommendation. Letters of recommendation may be confidential if you wish.

**New York City Arts High School**

789 Madison Avenue
New York, NY
10002

Tele. (212) 555-1234

Fax. (212) 555-2345

website: www.NYCAHS.com

Dear Rhode Island School of Design Office of Admissions:

John Smith was a student in my Painting Studio course during the 2005-2006 school year and United States History I and II courses during the 2006-2007 school year. John has been a student at NYCAHS for four years.

First, it should be noted that simply gaining acceptance to NYCAHS, a highly competitive school that accepts only 1 in 20 applicants based on a rigorous review of academic performance and audition or portfolio review, is quite an accomplishment. I was one of a panel of reviewers when John was accepted into our school in 2004. Most of our staff can still recall the astonishment we felt upon first seeing his portfolio of exceptional charcoal sketches and watercolor paintings. It did not hurt his standing with us that he also maintained an A average and perfect attendance throughout middle school. Still, we could not have possibly imagined the heights he would reach since his acceptance at NYCAHS.

While John was a serious painter, often silent and concentrated for an hour at a time in Art Portfolio class, he could also be animated and engaging. While the arts are never far from his mind, he still often led animated debates in my U.S. History class. He spoke about artistic persecution in Puritan New England; he was adept at uncovering the social commentary of Melville's writings; and he compared the 1980s art scene to the Gold Rush. John received a near perfect score in both US History I and II followed by an 92 on the New York State Regents examination. Throughout his high school career he has never scored below a 90% in an English, Social Studies, Foreign Language (3 years of Advance Placement Spanish) or Physical Education course. His overall average, an 84, does not properly reflect his excellence in these studies. While it should be noted that his Math and Science grades have been somewhat lower, usually ranging between 75% and 90% throughout his high school career, they have nonetheless remained consistent. This fact illustrates one of John's most unusual and outstanding traits; he puts forth great effort in both the subjects he is naturally inclined to as well as those in which he must make great effort to succeed. John is not satisfied with simply being a great student of the arts. He is intent on being a great academic student as well.

John also has a great capacity to form lasting friendships and community. Three years ago, in response to a rash of graffiti vandalism in the neighborhood directly surrounding our campus, John founded the first chapter of the Graffiti & Outdoor Art League (GOAL) at NYCAHS. John and several members of GOAL traveled to nearby high schools to address the problem of graffiti vandalism in the neighborhood. As a result, there are now three other chapters of GOAL in local high schools and the members of all four chapters meet regularly to donate time to painting murals with, and teaching art to, elementary students. John and one of the murals painted by GOAL were recently praised in an article in the *Arts & Leisure* section of the *Sunday New York Times* (March 25, 2007).

I'm confident that the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is the perfect post-secondary school for John to continue his academic, community, and artistic endeavors. For above all, John is an artist of great talent. He has excelled in virtually every medium we offer: paint, plastics, photography, and ceramics. He has also mastered the English Language Arts, scoring an 87% on the Regents examination. For John, this proficiency has served as a base for him to explore elective courses including Creative Writing, Fiction Workshop, and Poetry. I believe only a school such as RISD can provide John with the proper environment to challenge his artistic ambitions. I offer my highest recommendation for John's application to your school.

Thank you for your consideration of this outstanding young man. If I can provide any further information feel free to contact me at 212-555-1234 or RBrown@schools.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert Brown

SAMPLE: TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____

NYC School ID Number: ____ - ____ - ____

Official Class: _____

Enter the name of each college to which you would like your official high school transcript sent. Indicate: If you have submitted a complete application (YES/NO) to the college (or College Office); if you have included an envelope addressed to the appropriate college (YES/NO); and the application deadline.

Full Name of College	I have submitted a complete application to the college. YES/NO***	I have attached an envelope addressed to the college. YES/NO	Application deadline.
1	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__
2	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__
3	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__
4	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__
5	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__
6	YES/NO	YES/NO	__/__/__

* The College Counselor should make a photocopy of each completed request form and note the dates transcripts were mailed out. Enter the form into the student's official College File when all requested transcripts have been sent. This photocopy will serve as receipt and documentation of the colleges to which each student applied.

** The College Counselor should post clear instructions explaining how and when students should submit college documentation and transcript requests (w/ addressed envelopes) to the College Office.

*** In submitting a complete application make certain that students are clear that this requires the application itself, payment or fee waiver, updated transcript, SAT/ACT scores and SAT 2 scores if necessary, essay, Recommendation and accompanying forms (teacher and counselor), and supplementary materials (portfolio etc). All of these pieces should be submitted before the application deadline.

**** Please note that there are different types of applications students will work on. The common application allows students to submit applications to multiple schools which participate in this process while only doing work on one application. Common applications can be submitted on paper or through the Internet. As of the 2007-2008 academic year CUNY applications must be submitted online, SUNY online or by mail and private schools vary in their submission. Check websites of specific schools for more information. Please note that while many college applications can be submitted online certain pieces of the application such as transcripts, fee waivers or payment, and other supplementary forms will still have to be mailed to the university.

SAMPLE: FINAL TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____

NYC School ID Number: _ _ _ - _ _ _ - _ _ _

Official Class: _____

Dear (____ Enter name of college counselor ____):

I have accepted an invitation to attend (____ Enter name of college ____).

Please forward my final transcript to the address below:

Name of College: _____

Attention: _____ Enter Admissions Office / Name of Admissions Officer _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Expected Date of Enrollment: _____

Scholarships won/4 year amount _____

Thank you,

Student Signature: _____

Print Name of Student: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Print Name of Parent: _____

* The College Counselor should make a photocopy of this form and enter it into the student's official College File after the requested transcript has been sent. This will serve as documentation of which college the student intends to attend.

** College Counselors may also opt to request an envelope addressed to the appropriate college.

COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND
TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS

A

9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT
COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

B

COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND
WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS

C

A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE
FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12

D

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY
OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS

E

9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

College counselors should duplicate the **9th–12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists** and share them with students. The four checklists, one for each year of high school, inform students which tasks they should be performing and when. Students can use the checklists to mark their own progress in the college-preparation process, checking off each task as it is completed.

Students will need specific **College–Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** (see Binder section C) to complete the tasks on each of the **9th–12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists**. Each year, college counselors should provide each student with copies of the specified **College–Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** needed to complete the tasks for that year.

Below, note the **College–Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for 9th–12th Grade Students**. For your convenience, there is also a *Quick Reference Chart* providing this same information graphically.

Contents:

- **B-1: 9th Grade Student College Preparation Checklist**
 - ✓ C-1: Student Biographical Information Worksheet
 - ✓ C-2: Student Activities Tracking Worksheet
 - * Graduation Requirements Card (w/ appropriate cohort and program type)
- **B-2: 10th Grade Student College Preparation Checklist**
 - ✓ C-1: Student Biographical Information Worksheet
 - ✓ C-2: Student Activities Tracking Worksheet
 - ✓ C-3: College Interest Survey
 - ✓ C-4: College Interest Statement
 - ✓ C-5: Career and College Search Tips For Students
 - ✓ C-6: College Wish List
 - * Graduation Requirements Card (w/ appropriate cohort and program type)
- **B-3: 11th Grade Student College Preparation Checklist**
 - ✓ C-1: Student Biographical Information Worksheet
 - ✓ C-2: Student Activities Tracking Worksheet
 - ✓ C-4: College Interest Statement
 - ✓ C-6: College Wish List
 - ✓ C-7: Application Tracking Calendar / Exam Tracking Calendar
 - ✓ C-8: College Resume
 - * Graduation Requirements Card (w/ appropriate cohort and program type)

9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS CONT'D

• **B-4: 12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklist**

- ✓ C-1: Student Biographical Information Worksheet
- ✓ C-2: Student Activities Tracking Worksheet
- ✓ C-6: College Wish List
- ✓ C-7: College Application Tracking Calendar / Exam Tracking Calendar
- ✓ C-8: College Resume
- ✓ C-9: Letter of Recommendation Request Form (Teachers/Educators)
- ✓ C-10: Completing the FAFSA – Tips for Students
- ✓ C-11: Decline College Invitation Letter
- ✓ A-6: Transcript Request Form for College Applications
- ✓ A-7: Final Transcript Request Form
- * Graduation Requirements Card (w/ appropriate cohort and program type)

Quick Reference Chart

WORKSHEET	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
C-1	X	X	X	X
C-2	X	X	X	X
C-3		X		
C-4		X	X	
C-5		X		
C-6		X	X	X
C-7			X	X
C-8	X	X	X	X
C-9				X
C-10				X
C-11				X
*A-6				X
*A-7				X

9TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Locate the **College Office** in your school and meet with college counselors, advisors, and/or mentors involved in the college preparation program. Begin to research colleges and think about which college might be a good fit for you. Have at least one meeting with the college advisor. Go to the college office as much as time permits to research colleges.
- ☐ Ask your college counselor to set up a **College File** with your name on it in the College Office. Use this file to keep all college-related information during the next four years. You can begin by filing information about colleges in which you may be interested in learning more. Begin to ask your parents, siblings, neighbors, and people you admire about the colleges they attended.
- ☐ Ask your guidance counselor for a **Graduation Requirements Card**. Check to see if the card has the correct *cohort* (the year you first entered 9th grade) and program (e.g. General Education Students, Career and Technical Education Students, or Students with Disabilities). Do you understand all of the credits and Regents exams scores you must accumulate to graduate in four years? Remember, you will need at least 8 credits to officially enter the 10th grade.
- ☐ Ask your college counselor for a **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** (C-1). Your guidance counselor and parents can assist you with difficult questions. Return the completed worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Begin to participate in extracurricular, leadership, community service, and/or athletic activities. Ask your college counselor for a **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2) and use it to record your extracurricular progress and achievements. After recording your most recent activities, return the worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Volunteer to perform at least one hour per week of **Community Service**. Ask your college counselor, parents, and community-based organizations how you can serve your community. Ask community service organizations to provide you with written documentation of your service time. Remember, community service is often required for scholarships and college applications.
- ☐ Participate in summer activities throughout high school (academic program, e.g. College Now, Leadership activity, or internship/job). This will not only make you a better rounded individual but these summer activities make you a more desirable applicant to colleges.
- ☐ **Most importantly, maintain high standards in each of your academic, extracurricular, and community service activities.**

10TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Check your **Graduation Requirements Card**. Are you taking the courses and Regents exams you will need to graduate in four years? Remember, you will need at least 20 credits (including 4 in English or ESL, and 4 in Social Studies) to officially enter the 11th grade. Note that the Advanced Regents diploma requirements include three years of foreign language. If you intend to receive an Advanced Regents diploma you will need to begin taking a foreign language when you enter 10th grade. Ask your guidance counselor to include foreign language in your course schedule.
- ☐ Update the information on your **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** (C-1). Return the updated worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Update your **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2). Place copies of all awards, certificates, community service-hours documentation, and other commendations in your College File. After recording your most recent activities, return the worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ The **PSAT/NMSQT** (Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) will be administered on a school day in your high school. Make sure you know where and when it will be administered. The PSAT is now free for all 10th and 11th grade students in New York City. Then meet with your guidance counselor to discuss your results. Your performance on the PSAT/NMSQT will indicate which areas of study you need to concentrate on to do well on the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test). Remember, colleges **will not** see the results of the PSAT. However, colleges **will** see the results of your SAT and many use the SAT as a main selection criterion for applicants.
- ☐ Ask your guidance counselor how you can become eligible to participate in the **Advanced Placement (AP) Program**. Many schools set specific criteria for AP eligibility. Guidance counselors may assess past academic performance and PSAT/NMSQT scores prior to scheduling students for advanced courses. Typically, eligible students may take AP courses in the 11th and 12th grade. AP courses on your high school transcript indicate to college admissions officers that you have taken a challenging curriculum. AP courses may also lead to college credit and can help save time and money when you reach college.
- ☐ Consider what type of college you would like to attend and what you would like to study. You can begin to focus on the type of college you're interested in attending by completing the **College Interest Survey** (C-3). Then use the answers from your **College Interest Survey** to create a personalized **College Interest Statement** (C-4). See your college counselor for copies of the **College Interest Survey** and **College Interest Statement**.
- ☐ Using your **College Interest Statement** (C-4) as a guide, you are ready to begin a preliminary search of colleges you may wish to attend. Your college counselor will provide you with a list of **Career and College Search Tips for Students** (C-5) for ideas about the kinds of career options available and the colleges that will best prepare you for them.

10TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST CONT'D

- ☐ You are now ready to complete the first draft of your **College Wish List** (C-6). Ask your College Counselor for a copy of the **College Wish List**. Using the results of your preliminary college search, create a list of the colleges you would like to attend. This list is only a guide to help you to focus on colleges that may suit your interests. You can change your **College Interest Statement** (C-4) and your **College Wish List** at any time.
- ☐ **Most importantly, maintain high standards in all of your academic, extracurricular, and community service activities. High achievement in competitive courses throughout high school will convey to college admissions officers that you are well prepared for the rigor of college courses.**
- ☐ Summer activities are important. Do something productive. Study for the SAT as well. Ask your guidance counselor or college advisor if your school has a preparatory program for the SAT. Find out if there is a cost and when the deadline is to apply.

11TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Check your **Graduation Requirements Card**. Are you taking the courses and Regents exams you will need to graduate in four years? Remember, you will need at least 28 credits (30 for students who first entered grade 9 in-or-after the 2004-2005 school year) to officially enter the 12th grade.
- ☐ Update the information on your **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** (C-1). If you don't have a **Social Security Number** yet, let your parents know that you will need one in order to receive valuable financial aid to help pay for college. If you are not a United States citizen, attempt to secure an **Alien Registration Number**. Return the updated worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Update your **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2). Place copies of all awards, certificates, service hours documentation, and other commendations in your College File. In your final years of high school, take on leadership roles in extracurricular activities, student government, community service, and/or athletics. College admissions officers prefer to see increasing involvement and progressive responsibility in fewer activities rather than fleeting interest in many activities. After recording your most recent activities, return the worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Attend the **College Fair** at your school or campus and the Big Apple College Fair in your borough. Ask your counselor for more information. Speaking to admissions representatives from Universities and collecting literature is great way to learn more about schools. **(See sample questions to ask at a college fair)**
- ☐ Prepare for the SAT by enrolling in an **SAT-Prep** course at your school or community-based organization. There are many free courses offered in the community. Kaplan and Princeton Review also offer classes and private tutoring. Check with your college advisor about options, start dates, and deadlines to register for these classes. Visit the College Board website (www.collegeboard.com) to view the *SAT Preparation Booklet*, *Practice Questions*, and *The Official SAT Question of the Day*. Also, visit your school library or local New York City Public Library to borrow SAT-Prep guides.
- ☐ You should take the **SAT** (or ACT) by the spring of junior year. Don't forget to register online at College Board (www.collegeboard.com) well in advance or you may be charged a late registration fee, or worse, not be allowed to attend. Speak to your college advisor to determine if you are eligible for a fee waiver which means you will not be charged to register for the test. This is determined by your family's income and the number of people in your household. Registration deadlines are listed on the website. Also, depending on your college major and corresponding college application requirements, you should begin to research which SAT II subject tests you will need to take. Many private schools require SAT II tests. If you opt to take the ACT, visit the Student Site for ACT Test Takers at www.actstudent.org for test and registration information.
- ☐ Now revisit the first draft of the **College Wish List** (C-6) you prepared in 10th grade. Do the choices on your **College Wish List** match the criteria of the **College Interest Statement** (C-4) you prepared in 10th grade? Do the colleges offer the areas of study and majors that match your strengths

11TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST CONT'D

and interests? If not, consider eliminating some colleges from the list. Or maybe you've discovered a college to add to the list? Have you decided to put them in a different order of priority? Remember, your **College Wish List** can be changed as you learn more about college choices and your own interests.

- ☐ Contact the colleges on your final **College Wish List** (C-6) and ask them to send you applications and brochures. Use the summer vacation to research college admissions criteria (e.g. GPA and SAT scores), available courses and majors, tuition costs, extracurricular activities, student population, professorial staff, and campus life.
- ☐ Begin to speak to your family about which colleges are realistic based on your academic performance, geography, family obligations and cost. If possible visit the colleges/universities which seem feasible with family over the summer. Colleges often run tours for prospective students. Talk to faculty, students, admissions officers and try to get a feel for whether this is an environment which you would enjoy and feel comfortable in. If you can not visit schools there are often "virtual tours" on college websites. However, actual visits are preferable.
- ☐ Now that you've done research and narrowed the choices on your **College Wish List** you should have an idea of which schools you most wish to attend and which schools are most likely to accept a student with your qualifications. Now plan to make **College Visits** to the campuses you are most likely to attend.
- ☐ It's time to prepare your **College Resume** (C-8). Gather the **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** (C-1), **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2), **College Interest Statement** (C-4), and College Wish List (C-6) you prepared in 9th and 10th grades. You will also need a copy of your most recent transcript available from your guidance counselor. All of the information you need to complete the **College Resume** can be found on these documents. Similar to a career resume, the **College Resume** will help you when completing applications. In 12th grade, you will use this document to complete your college essays; and scholarship and college applications.
- ☐ Use the Exam Tracking Calendar (C-7) to record scores from all required college entrance exams (e.g. PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, SAT II and/or ACT) and then ensure that each college you applied to has received your best grades. SAT scores or ACT scores can be submitted to many colleges. Therefore, it is advantageous to take both tests and choose the better scores.
- ☐ Before the summer break, meet with your guidance counselor to discuss the courses and Regents exams you will need to complete during your senior year in order to graduate.
- ☐ **Most importantly, maintain high standards in each of your academic, extracurricular, and community service activities. High achievement in competitive courses throughout high school will convey to college admissions officers that you are well prepared for the rigor of college courses. Do something productive over the summer and study for the Fall SAT exam.**

12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Check your **Graduation Requirements Card**. Are you taking the courses and Regents exams you will need to graduate in June? Remember, most students will need to complete a minimum of 44 credits and pass a minimum of 5 Regents exams to graduate.
- ☐ Update the information on your **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** (C-1). Remember, if you don't have a **Social Security Number**, inform your parents that you will need one in order to receive valuable financial aid to help pay for college. If you are not a United States citizen, attempt to secure an **Alien Registration Number**. Return the updated worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Update your **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet** (C-2). Place copies of all awards, certificates, service hours' documentation, and other commendations in your **College File**. In your final year of high school, take on leadership roles in extracurricular activities, student government, community service, and/or athletics. College admissions officers prefer to see increasing involvement and progressive responsibility in fewer activities rather than fleeting interest in many activities. After recording your most recent activities, return the worksheet to your College File.
- ☐ Continue to research and narrow the choices on your **College Wish List** (C-6) by attending college fairs, gathering college applications and brochures, and visiting campuses. **(See Sample Questions to ask at College Fairs)**
- ☐ Review your **SAT** (or ACT) scores and compare them to the SAT scores suggested on the brochures of colleges you hope to attend. Take the SAT again before December. Many students score higher the second time they take the SAT due to familiarity with the test and studying.
- ☐ Pre-register at (www.collegeboard.com) and take any **SAT II** subject tests required for the college applications you are completing.
- ☐ Register for scholarship opportunities on Fastweb.com and create an online profile. Students are then emailed scholarship opportunities based on the information in their online profile.
- ☐ Most college applications require a personal statement or essay. Remember to follow instructions on the application and be sure to write about the topic specified. Have an English teacher or college advisor read over your essay before you submit it. Your essay should be free of typos, spelling and grammatical errors.
- ☐ Open an email account strictly for college. Make sure you check this email regularly as colleges will correspond with you through this medium. Know that you are being evaluated in this process so have a professional email address i.e.), MJones@hotmail.com.

12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST CONT'D

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- ☐ Please note that because the Internet is so widely used many colleges are no longer mailing out applications/brochures etc. You may request these materials but be prepared that you may have to refer to the Internet to download information about particular schools as well as undergraduate applications.
 - ☐ Most college applications require several **letters of recommendation**. Attempt to secure letters from your junior and/or senior course teachers. When deciding from whom it is best to request a recommendation, attempt to choose teachers who know you well, both academically and personally. Ask your College Counselor for copies of the **Teacher Recommendation Request Form**, complete it, and attach your **Student Activities Tracking Sheet (C-2)**, **College Resume (C-8)**, most recent transcript and any additional forms and/or envelopes addressed to the appropriate college admissions location. Follow all instructions from the college. Submit this entire packet to your teacher. Remember, teacher recommendations customarily include a description of your classroom performance, yet college admissions officers also consider extracurricular activities and interests, personal achievements, challenges, and character. Your activities tracking sheet and resume will help teachers to write a recommendation that represents you as a whole person.
 - ☐ You may consider applying through an **Early Decision** process in the fall of your senior year if you are certain of which one college you would most like to attend. Early decision acceptance is binding, which means, upon submission of the application, you have agreed to attend if accepted. Be sure to understand your obligations to the college prior to applying through this process. Colleges often require the signature of a parent/guardian and college counselor before accepting an application for Early Decision. If you're not certain which college you hope to attend, but would still like to apply early, consider applying in the fall through a non-binding **Early Action** process. The application deadlines at schools for these two programs are usually either November 1st or November 15th. Both processes will respond to your application by mid-year.
 - ☐ Note the deadlines for your applications. Always submit your entire application before the deadline date. For schools that utilize rolling admissions your chances of acceptance are better if your application is submitted early. As a general rule try to submit all of your applications by January 1st of your senior year.
 - ☐ Finalize your **College Wish List (C-6)** and apply to the remaining schools. Most students apply to 5-10 colleges. Be sure to include both your ideal colleges and a few where you are fairly confident you will be accepted. You should apply to at least one "Safety school." A "safety school" is a college that you are certain will admit you just in case your other choices of colleges do not.
 - ☐ Return your completed college applications to the College Office. Don't forget to request that your transcript be sent to the colleges you are applying to. Your College Counselor can provide you with a **Transcript Request Form for College Applications (A-6)**.

12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST CONT'D

- ☐ Submit the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** as soon as possible on or after January 1 prior to fall enrollment. Your college counselor can provide you with **FAFSA – Tips for Students and Parents** (C-10).
- ☐ Ask your College Counselor about scholarship opportunities that may help you to pay for college. The *Scholarships for New York City Students* guide is available in your College Office.
- ☐ Ask your college counselor for a **College Applications Tracking Calendar** (C-7). This calendar will help to keep track of the college applications you send. If you haven't received notification of receipt from a college don't hesitate to contact them.
- ☐ Also included on the **College Applications Tracking Calendar** (C-7), you'll find the **Exam Tracking Calendar**. Use the **Exam Tracking Calendar** to record scores from all college entrance exams (e.g. SAT and/or ACT) and then ensure that each college to which you applied to has received your best grades.
- ☐ High schools that do offer **Advanced Placement (AP) Courses** usually require an **Advanced Placement Examination (AP Exam)** near the end of the year. Ask your AP teacher(s) when the AP Exam(s) for your course(s) is/are scheduled. You may be eligible to receive college credit with a passing grade on the AP Exam. Ask colleges if they grant credit for AP Courses.
- ☐ Upon receiving your acceptance letters from colleges, you will need to decide which college you will attend and which colleges you will not attend. Consider carefully the offer of acceptance, including the price of tuition, and your financial aid package and scholarship allotment. It's a good idea to visit the campus before accepting an invitation.
- ☐ Most schools require that you send a deposit by May 1st to confirm that you will be attending their school the following fall. This is only for the school that you wish to attend and that has accepted you. Before sending a deposit make certain that the school has given you a financial aid package. If you do not get the financial aid within a week after your acceptance contact the school's financial aid office.
- ☐ Colleges have registration deadlines for prospective students. Be sure to discuss all decisions with your parent(s)/guardian prior to confirming your decision to attend or sending any money.
- ☐ Send a **Decline College Invitation Letter** (C-11) to any college you do not intend to attend. An example of a **Decline College Invitation Letter** is available from your College Counselor.
- ☐ Before departing high school you must submit a **Final Transcript Request Form** (A-7). These forms are available from your College Counselor and must be completed and returned to the College Counselor. This will ensure that your final transcript is sent to the college you intend to attend in the

12TH GRADE STUDENT COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLIST CONT'D

fall. The final transcript will be sent after you have completed all of your high school courses and exams. Colleges will not allow you to attend without a copy of your final transcript indicating that you have completed all graduation requirements.

- ☐ Be sure to attend **Freshman Orientation** during the summer preceding your first year of college. Freshman Orientation will help you to become familiar with other students, the college faculty, and the campus.

You've been accepted to attend college. Congratulations!

QUESTIONS TO POSSIBLY THINK ABOUT WHEN RESEARCHING COLLEGES AND ATTENDING COLLEGE FAIRS

- **What is the reputation of this college/university? Do I or don't I have the academic record to have a reasonable chance of being admitted to the school?**
- **Does the school offer the majors which I am interested in? Is my possible major a strong program at the school?**
- **Are there any special academic programs that I can take advantage of (honors programs, HEOP, 3-2)?**
- **What is the Student to Faculty ratio?**
- **What is the cost of the school (tuition, room and board etc.)?**
- **What is the average financial aid package received by students? What is the average debt for a graduate?**
- **What is the graduation rate? How many students graduate in four years?**
- **What are the acceptance rates to various graduate programs? Is there a job placement program and what percentages of graduates are placed?**
- **How many students attend the school? What is the composition of the student body (ethnically, gender, geographically)?**
- **What types of internships are available through the school?**
- **What extracurricular activities would I want to participate in during college and does the school offer them?**

School websites and guides such as Peterson's and Barron's which should be in your college office may answer some of these questions. However, these are good questions to ask during college fairs and college visits. Admissions officers should have answers to many of these questions. The key in this process is to try to find a school which is the best fit for you as an individual. You want to choose a school, in which you will receive a good education, prepare you for the workforce and provide a positive social experience.

COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND
TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS

A

9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT
COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS

B

COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND
WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS

C

A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE
FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12

D

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GLOSSARY
OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS

E

COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS

Each of the **College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** included in this section can be reproduced and copies should be distributed to high school students. College counselors should disseminate **College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** (Binder Section C) at appropriate times, corresponding with the tasks of each grade level, as outlined in the **9th–12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists** (Binder Section B).

For students to complete the tasks outlined in the **9th–12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists** (B1-B4) they will need copies of specific **College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** (C1-C11).

Below, note the list of **College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** in this section. Following the title of each exercise or worksheet, note the indicated **Grade(s): 9, 10, 11, and/or 12**. These grades indicate to college counselors when students will need access to specific **College-Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** in order to complete the tasks outlined in the **9th–12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists**. For your convenience, there is also a Quick Reference Chart providing this same information graphically.

Contents:

- **C-1: Student Biographical Information Worksheet (Grades: 9, 10, 11, 12)**
 This worksheet allows each student to write a brief summary of the information required to complete applications for colleges, scholarships, and financial aid so they will have it on hand whenever necessary. **Student Biographical Information Worksheets** should be updated each year and returned to the College File.
- **C-2: Student Activities Tracking Worksheet (Grades: 9, 10, 11, 12)**
 This worksheet helps each student to keep a brief record of the extracurricular activities, leadership roles, community service, and athletics in which they participate. **Student Activities Tracking Worksheets** should be updated each year and returned to the College File.
- **C-3: College Interest Survey (Grade: 10)**
 This brief questionnaire will help sophomore students to begin to think about the general type of college they may be interested in attending. **College Interest Surveys** should be completed and returned to the College File.
- **C-4: College Interest Statement (Grades: 10, 11)**
 Each student should complete this simple worksheet using the results of his/her **College Interest Survey** (C-3). When complete, the **College Interest Statement** will provide a short paragraph describing the type of college he/she wishes to attend. Students should be encouraged to visualize the campuses they hope to attend and to write more extensively about the college experiences they hope to have. **College Interest Statements** should be completed and returned to the college file.

- **C-5: College and Career Search Tips For Students (Grade: 10)**

A list of organizations and websites designed to help students explore: strengths and interests; careers that match those strengths and interests; the educational requirements of preferred careers; and the colleges that can prepare them for those educational requirements.

- **C-6: College Wish List (Grades: 10, 11, 12)**

Each student should create a **College Wish List** of the colleges he/she would most like to attend. The **College Wish List** should be completed and returned to the College File.

- **C-7: College Application Tracking Calendar/Exam Tracking Calendar (Grade: 11, 12)**

Each student should keep a detailed record of crucial college and entrance examination application components, deadlines and dates, and results. The **College Application Tracking Calendar/Entrance Exam Tracking Calendar** should be regularly updated and returned to the College File.

- **C-8: College Resume (Grades: 11, 12)**

Each student should be encouraged to prepare a **College Resume**. Similar in appearance to an employment resume, the **College Resume** provides a synopsis of his/her experience: grades, entrance examinations, and extracurricular activities; which will make him/her an asset to the college he/she is applying. Use the **College Resume/Template** as an example of how a **College Resume** might look but feel free to create your own version of the **College Resume** to best serve the needs of students in your school.

- **C-9: Letter of Recommendation Request Form (Grade: 12)**

Each student should deliver the **Letter of Recommendation Request Form** to the educator from whom he/she hopes to receive a college recommendation.

- **C-10: Completing the FAFSA – Tips for Students (Grade 12)**

Duplicate and distribute the instructions for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) provided on **Completing the FAFSA – Tips for Students**. Students should be made aware of the availability of financial aid, and the method of applying for it, as soon as possible. They should submit the FAFSA on or after January 1 preceding fall enrollment in college.

- **C-11: Sample: Decline College Invitation Letter (Grades: 12)**

Students should send a courtesy **Decline College Invitation Letter** to each college they are accepted to but do not intend to attend.

STUDENT BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION WORKSHEET

Last Name

First Name

Street Address

Apartment #

Borough (or City)

State

Zip Code

E-Mail

Home Telephone #

Work or Alternate Telephone #

() -

() -

Date of Birth (month/day/year)

6 Digit School Code or CEEB Code

/ /

9 Digit NYC Student Identification #

Driver License #

- -

List All Other High Schools You Have Attended

Name:

Location:

Name:

Location:

SAT I

SAT II Score

SAT II Score

ACT Composite

Subject

Score

Composite Score

Print Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

Signature of Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

The **Student Biographical Information Worksheet** contains confidential information and should be stored in your confidential College File.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES TRACKING WORKSHEET

Your **Student Activities Tracking Sheet** should be kept in your College File. Use the **Student Activities Tracking Sheet** to record your involvement in extracurricular and leadership activities, community service, athletics, employment and summer activities. Be sure to keep copies of awards, certificates, service-hours documentation, and other commendations for your college file. This information will be useful when you begin to write college essays and request that teachers write letters of recommendation for you. These activities, in addition to your academic work, show colleges that you are a well-rounded student with many interests. Impressive student activities may help you to win scholarships and/or be admitted to the colleges of your choice. Remember, colleges prefer to see progressive responsibility and growth in a few activities rather than brief interest in many activities. So join a club, run for election, help others in your community, or try out for a sports team. Get involved! Stay involved!

Extracurricular Activities

Grade	Club/Team/Group	Title	Honors/Awards
9			
10			
11			
12			

Leadership: Student Government/Student Advisory Councils/Internships/Employment

Grade	Organization	Duties / Responsibilities	Title
9			
10			
11			
12			

Community Service

Grade	Organization	Service Activity	Number of Service Hours
9			
10			
11			
12			

Athletic Activities

Grade	Team	Position	Honors/Awards/Titles
9			
10			
11			
12			

COLLEGE INTEREST SURVEY

This survey will help you to write a brief statement describing the type of college or university you wish to attend. Don't worry! Just select the first answer that comes to your mind. Remember, there are no incorrect answers and answers can always be changed to accommodate new interests. This is the first step to finding the right college for you.

Answer each question with your first preference:

Question #1 What size college or university would you like to attend? (# of students)

Small (<2,000)	Medium (2,001-5,000)	Large (5,001-15,000)	Very Large (15,000+)
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Answer #1 _____

Question #2 What category of college or university would you like to attend?

CUNY (NYC)	SUNY (NY State)	Private	Historically Black	Technical
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Answer #2 _____

Question #3 In what setting would you like to attend college?

Large City	Small City	Suburban	Rural	Abroad (not U.S.)
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Answer #3 _____

Question #4 What type of degree (program of study) would you like to pursue?

Associate's (2 year)	Bachelor's (4 year)	Tech/Certificate	Co-Op (work/study)
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Answer #4 _____

Question #5 In which subject are you most interested? (It's OK to choose more than one, or, add your own.)

Accounting	Business/Economics	Engineering	Health/Nursing	Medical	Physics
Agriculture	Chemistry	English/Writing	History	Music	Psychology
Archeology	Computers	Law/C.J.	International	Nutrition	Social Work
Architecture	Dance/Drama	Culinary Arts	Journalism	Philosophy	Sport / Athletics
Biology/Marine	Dentistry	Film/Video	Liberal Arts	Religion	Other Arts
Botany	Education	Forestry	Management	ROTC / Military	OTHER _____

Answer #5 _____

Question #6 I'm also very interested in...

Athletics	Arts / Culture	Fraternities	Ethnic diversity	Other _____
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Answer #6 (list all that apply) _____

Question #7 My greatest concerns about applying to college are...

Academic –	Financial –	Social	Other
Are my grades good enough	How will I pay for college?	What about family / friends?	

Answer #7 _____

Question #8 The best thing about going to college will be...

Answer #8 _____

COLLEGE INTEREST STATEMENT

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Name of Student: _____

Official Class: _____

NYC School ID Number: ____ - ____ - ____

Complete your personalized **College Interest Statement** (C-4) using the answers from your College Interest Survey (C-3). Remember, this is a general statement to help you begin the college search. You can change your statement at any time.

I would like to attend a _____, _____
(answer #1) (answer #2)

college or university in a(n) _____ setting. I hope to pursue
(answer #3)

a(n) _____ degree in _____.
(answer #4) (answer #5)

In addition to academics, I'm also interested in _____.
(answer #6)

My greatest concerns about college are _____.
(answer #7)

I'm most excited about going to college because _____

(answer #8)

Now I'm ready to search for colleges that will interest me!

COLLEGE AND CAREER SEARCH TIPS FOR STUDENTS

Websites

The following organizations provide websites designed to help you explore: your own unique strengths and interests; careers that match your strengths and interests; the educational requirements of your preferred careers; and the colleges that can prepare you for those educational requirements. You'll also find a variety of other college and career information on these websites. Visit the main websites and then venture off into more specific links. Get ready to make your **College Wish List** (C-6).

College Board (www.collegeboard.com)

My Road (www.myroad.com), available at CollegeBoard.com, helps students to match general interests to specific courses and colleges.

New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) (www.hesc.org)

HESC offers NY Mentor (www.nymmentor.edu), a comprehensive guide for students interested in attending colleges in New York State. Find tips on choosing, applying to, and planning for college.

United States Department of Labor (www.dol.gov)

Career Voyager (www.careervoyages.gov) suggests various career industries and the educational requirements necessary to qualify to enter them.

Fastweb (www.fastweb.com)

This website provides students access to college information and most importantly scholarship information. Students can complete an online profile and then receive scholarship information via email which meets their reported credentials, interests, achievements etc. *All students should register on this site by the second semester of their junior year.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/k12/)

This website links users to *BLS Career Information: Exploring Career Information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics*, with practical information about careers, the education necessary to pursue them, compensation, and future forecasts of the fields.

City University of New York – CUNY (www.cuny.edu)

CUNY offers a comprehensive website with information about all CUNY schools and academic programs.

State University of New York - SUNY (www.suny.edu)

SUNY offers a comprehensive website with information about all SUNY schools and academic programs.

New York City Department of Education - NYCDOE (www.schools.nyc.gov)

The NYCDOE website provides a variety of information about NYC public high schools and the

COLLEGE AND CAREER SEARCH TIPS FOR STUDENTS CONT'D

requirements for graduation

(<http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/GraduationRequirements/default.htm>).

New York State Department of Education - NYSED (www.nysed.gov)

NYSED offers College and University Campuses in New York State Directory and Contact Information at (<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/Oris/colleges/html/>).

Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/oco)

A comprehensive career website which gives detailed industry information such as future employment trends, educational requirements, day to day responsibilities etc.

United States Department of Education (www.ed.gov)

View tips for finding and choosing colleges and technical schools that match your interests and career goals at (<http://www.ed.gov/students/prep/college/consumerinfo/index.html>).

Zinch.com (www.Zinch.com)

This is a free service which allows students to upload their profiles, writing samples, and a video of extracurricular activities in which students can notify schools which subscribe to this service. Prestigious universities pay money to have access to this service and will view prospective students from this site.

Official College Websites, Brochures, and Tours

Once you've decided those colleges in which you are most interested, it is important to visit the official website, e-mail the school for information, and even arrange a campus tour. When you first contact colleges, introduce yourself; be sure to be polite, and ask for the name of the college admissions officer or secretary with whom you will correspond. Don't forget, you are now making your first impression. Along this train of thought make certain that your voice mail message and email account give you a professional image.

Personal References

Ask teachers, parents, siblings, and neighbors where they attended college. Research famous people in careers where you have an interest, learn which colleges they attended and how they reached their own career goals. Remember, high school is a time to consider your dream career.

COLLEGE WISH LIST

The **College Wish List** is designed to help you to focus on the schools that are best for you. First, use the **College and Career Search Tips** (C-5) to find colleges that match your interests. There are thousands of colleges and you will eventually need to choose just one. Remember, this is a wish list! Aim high; continue to perform well in academic and extracurricular activities, and your wishes may come true.

COLLEGE WISH LIST

Name of College or University and location	CUNY/SUNY PVT./OTHER	Program/ Major
1	CUNY	
2	CUNY	
3	CUNY	
4	CUNY	
5	CUNY	
6	CUNY	
1	SUNY	
2	SUNY	
3	SUNY	
4	SUNY	
5	SUNY	
6	SUNY	
1	PRIVATE	
2	PRIVATE	
3	PRIVATE	
4	PRIVATE	
5	PRIVATE	
6	PRIVATE	

COLLEGE APPLICATION TRACKING CALENDAR

COLLEGE APPLICATION TRACKING CALENDAR

Name of College/University	Letters of Recommendation			Application Deadline	Date Mailed	Reply
CUNY –	1	2	3			
SUNY –						
Private/Other						

EXAM TRACKING CALENDAR

Exam	Date Taken	Math Score	Verbal Score	Writing Score	Total Score	
PSAT/NMSQT						
SAT						
SAT (2nd test)						
Exam	Date Taken	Subject			Score	
SAT II						
SAT II						
Exam	English	Math	Reading	Science	Writing (optional)	Composite Score
ACT						

COLLEGE RESUME/TEMPLATE

First Name, Last Name
Street Address (w/ Apartment Number)
City, State, and Zip Code
Telephone Number
E-mail Address

Objective:**Academic Results:** (or attach transcript)**SAT score:** _____ and/or **ACT score:** _____

Math score: _____
 Verbal score: _____
 TOTAL Math/Verbal score: _____
 Writing score: _____
 TOTAL Math/Verbal/Writing score: _____

SAT II score(s): Subject: _____ score: _____
 Subject: _____ score: _____

College Level classes and other extra academic activities

Extracurricular Activities:

Name of Club/Team/Group: _____
 Dates Involved: From: _____ To: _____
 Leadership Position: _____
 Team Honors/Awards/Titles: _____
 Individual Honors/Awards/Titles: _____

Student Government, Student Advisory Councils, and Internships:

Name of Board/Council/Company: _____
 Dates Involved: From: _____ To: _____
 Position Held: _____
 Team Honors/Awards/Titles: _____
 Individual Honors/Awards/Titles: _____
 Internship Reference Name: _____ Tele. _____

Community Service (w/ documentation):

Name of Organization: _____
 Dates Involved: From: _____ To: _____
 Type of Service Provided: _____
 Community Served: _____
 Reference Name: _____ Tele. _____
 TOTAL Number of Community-Service Hours Completed: _____

Athletic Activities:

Name of Team: _____
 Varsity/Junior Varsity/Intramural: _____
 Dates Involved: From: _____ To: _____
 Position: _____
 Team Honors/Awards/Titles: _____
 Individual Honors/Awards/Titles: _____
 Name of Coach: _____ Tele. _____

Employment:

Name of Company: _____
 Varsity/Junior Varsity/Intramural: _____
 Dates Involved: From: _____ To: _____
 Position: _____
 Responsibilities: _____

Hobbies and Interests:**Additional Comments:**

* Note that for each category the most recent activities should be placed first.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION REQUEST FORM (TEACHERS/EDUCATORS)

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Most college applications require several **letters of recommendation**. Attempt to secure letters from your junior and/or senior teachers (and other educators). When deciding from whom it is best to request a recommendation, attempt to choose teachers who know you well, both academically and personally. Complete this **Letter of Recommendation Request Form** and attach your updated **Student Activities Tracking Sheet** (C-2), **College Resume** (C-8), most recent transcript and any additional forms and/or envelopes from the appropriate college(s). Follow all instructions from the college. Submit the entire packet to your teacher.

Today's Date: _____

Application Deadline: _____

Student Information

Name of Student: _____

NYC School ID Number: ____ - ____ - ____

Official Class: _____

Teacher/Educator Information

Name of Teacher/Educator: _____

Course Taken: _____

Date/Term of Course: _____

College Information

I am requesting recommendations to the following colleges:

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

Student's Signature _____

Print Student's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Print Parent's Name _____

* Use this form only as an example. Create a personalized version of this form to best serve the students in your school.

COMPLETING THE FAFSA - TIPS FOR STUDENTS

How will I pay for college?

College is often quite expensive but don't let financial concerns stop you from applying to those colleges you most wish to attend. With the help of federal and state financial aid most students can afford to attend college. The amount of financial aid you will be eligible for depends largely upon your income, the income of your parents, the number of people your parent and/or guardian are supporting and if other people in your family are attending college. First, you'll need to apply to college. Next, apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Based on the information you provide on the FAFSA, each college you are accepted to will notify you of the amount of financial aid you are eligible to receive if you attend that college. This amount is often referred to as a *financial aid package*. Financial Aid consists of grants, scholarships, loans (which must be paid back after graduation), and work study.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA must be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Hard Copy/paper worksheets should be available but ultimately the application should be submitted online. High school students should **complete the FAFSA on or after January 1 prior to fall enrollment** to determine their eligibility for financial aid. Remember, some financial aid is given on a first-come-first-served basis so submit the application as soon as possible. Students may find themselves waiting for their families to complete their tax returns. Students may use the tax return from the previous year as a means to complete the FAFSA. This is advisable as the sooner students submit their FAFSA the greater the likelihood of obtaining more financial aid. For example, students filing for the 2008-2009 school year can use their families 2006 taxes to complete the FAFSA. Once families complete their 2007 taxes they can then do an update on the Student Activity Report. **Note that you will have to file a FAFSA for each year you are enrolled in college. In other words, the FAFSA that you file in your senior year of high school does not apply to the next four years of college.**

Free

Remember, the FAFSA is a free application and there should be no costs associated with completing it. The website (www.fafsa.ed.gov) and helpline (**1-800-4-FED-AID**) provide assistance free of charge. If money is requested for any portion of the application process ask your college counselor for help. You may have the incorrect website.

What do I need to complete the FAFSA?

Before you begin to complete the FAFSA, gather the following documents:

Personal information:

- Driver License Number
- Date(s) of birth of your parent(s)/guardian
- Social Security Numbers (if available) of your parent(s)/guardian
- Alien Registration Number (if not a U.S. citizen)
- Know the legal marital status of your parents

COMPLETING THE FAFSA - TIPS FOR STUDENTS CONT'D

Financial information:

- Tax returns and W-2 (previous year)
- Tax returns and W-2(s) of your parent(s) (previous year)
- An explanation of all untaxed income received (e.g. social security income, welfare)
- An explanation of all untaxed income your parent(s) received
- Records of all assets (e.g. real estate holdings, bank statements, stock certificates)
- FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN)
- FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN) for your parents

How do I get a FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN)?

Both you and your parents will need to create a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to complete the FAFSA. Request a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov. It usually takes about three business days for your PIN to arrive via e-mail. This is a permanent PIN that can be used whenever filing for any type of financial aid. Write your PIN down in a safe place so that you remember it. **Do not share your PIN with others as this PIN gives access to your financial information.**

Use your PIN for the following functions:

- Electronically “sign” the FAFSA before submitting
- Make corrections to your application
- Check the status of your application
- Renew your application in future years

What happens after I submit the FAFSA?

After you have completed the FAFSA, you will receive an electronic notification from the United States Department of Education. This notice usually arrives within three days and will have a link to your Student Aid Report (SAR) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

Student Aid Report (SAR) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

- The Student Aid Report (SAR) is a summary of the information you provided on the FAFSA. It determines how much financial aid you are eligible to receive and your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) — the amount you and your family are expected to contribute to your college expenses. The SAR also notifies you if you are eligible for a Pell Grant.

About your Student Aid Report and Expected Family Contribution

- If you do not receive a SAR within 2 weeks call **1-800-4-FED-AID**
- If there are mistakes on the SAR visit www.fafsa.ed.gov, go to **FAFSA Follow Up**, and click on **Make Corrections to a Processed FAFSA**. Also, notify the colleges you have applied to so they can adjust your financial aid package.
- The six colleges you indicated on the FAFSA will receive your SAR at the same time that you do. Each college will then calculate a financial aid package and notify you of the amount of aid you will be awarded if you do attend that school. If you plan on applying to more than six colleges, you may add additional schools after your initial six by going to www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- If there is an asterisk next to your EFC you will need to provide documentation of the information

COMPLETING THE FAFSA - TIPS FOR STUDENTS CONT'D

provided on your FAFSA. Colleges may ask for documentation such as copies of Tax returns, W-2 forms, bank statements etc especially when considering a student for opportunity programs such as HEOP, EOP, Seek and College Discovery.

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

If you indicate on the FAFSA that you live in New York State and are applying to a New York State college or university you will be able to file for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) at the end of the FAFSA process. For more information about TAP visit New York State Higher Education Services Corp. (NYS HESC) at www.hesc.org or call **1-888-NYS-HESC**. **Note: On the TAP application students can only submit one New York State College. This college can be changed at any time.**

Important Reminders

- Follow all directions when submitting the FAFSA
- Enter your e-mail contact information on the FAFSA for a faster response
- Submit all information as soon as possible and prior to deadlines **(Note: Different Colleges have different deadlines)**
- Keep copies of all personal and financial documentation
- Make copies of all FAFSA submissions (online or print applications) and the SAR
- Correct mistakes on your SAR immediately
- Respond to all queries about financial aid immediately
- After completing the FAFSA, remember to complete any additional paper work, requests for documentation etc. Many schools require the CSS/Financial Aid profile which is available at www.collegeboard.com/profile. For questions contact help@cssprofile.org or **305-829-9793**.

Contact Information

FAFSA online: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Financial aid helpline: **1-800-4-FED-AID**

For a FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN): www.pin.ed.gov

New York State Higher Education Services Corp.: www.hesc.org or **1-888-NYS-HESC**

SAMPLE: DECLINE COLLEGE INVITATION LETTER (A PERSONAL LETTER TO BE SENT BY STUDENT)

Name of Student
Home Address (include Apartment Number)
City, State, Zip Code
Home Telephone Number
E-Mail Address

Enter Date

Name of College
Office of Admissions
College Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear **[Enter College Admissions Office(r)]**:

Thank you for accepting my application for admission to (**Enter Name of College**) for the fall term of (**Enter Year**). However, I do not intend to attend your college at this time.

Thank you for the invitation to study at (Enter Name of College).

Sincerely,

(Signature of Student)

(Print Name of Student)

- Use this form only as an example of the proper format for a Decline College Invitation Letter.

**COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND
TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS**

A

**9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT
COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS**

B

**COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND
WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS**

C

**A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE
FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12**

D

**THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY
OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS**

E

A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12

Throughout the four-year college-readiness process, students should be encouraged to keep all college-related items in **A Complete College File for Students, Grades 9–12**. The College Counselor should be certain to assign a College File to each new student upon arrival to the school. College Files should be kept in the College Office to allow both the College Counselor and student access to the contents as needed. As each student completes the various tasks outlined in **9th –12th Grade Student College Preparation Checklists** (see Binder Section B, B1-B4), he/she should enter the corresponding **College–Readiness Exercises and Worksheets for Students** (from Binder Section C, C1-C11) and any additional college-related materials into his/her college file. Students can check off each item on Contents of the **College File: A Checklist for Students** (D-1) as they go.

Contents:

- D-1: **Contents of the College File, A Checklist for Students**

CONTENTS OF THE COLLEGE FILE: A CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

There are many documents involved in applying to college and it is important to keep well-organized records and to make copies of everything. Your college counselor will assign an official College File to you which will be kept in College Office at your school. Keep this checklist in your College File and check off each of the items after you enter it into the file. By the time you graduate from high school, you should have the following items in your College File:

- ☐ A copy of the New York City Department of Education **Graduation Requirements Card** for your cohort (the first year you entered 9th grade) and diploma category (e.g. General Education, CTE, IEP)
- ☐ B-1: Completed **9th Grade College Preparation Checklist**
- ☐ B-2: Completed **10th Grade College Preparation Checklist**
- ☐ B-3: Completed **11th Grade College Preparation Checklist**
- ☐ B-4: Completed **12th Grade College Preparation Checklist**
- ☐ Copies of report cards, transcripts, and progress reports
- ☐ Samples of exemplary school work assignments
- ☐ C-1: **Student Biographical Information Worksheet**
- ☐ C-2: **Student Activities Tracking Worksheet**
- ☐ Score reports for the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT I, SAT II, and/or ACT
- ☐ C-3: **College Interest Survey**
- ☐ C-4: **College Interest Statement**
- ☐ C-6: **College Wish List**
- ☐ C-7: **College Applications Tracking Calendar/Exam Tracking Calendar**
- ☐ C-8: **College Resume**
- ☐ Contact information for college admissions offices, officers, and representatives
- ☐ Copies of all College Applications
- ☐ Copies of all Financial Aid and Scholarship applications
- ☐ C-11: **Decline College Invitation Letters**
- ☐ Documentation of community service hours
- ☐ Awards, certificates, and commendations for excellence in academics, extracurricular activities, leadership, and athletics
- ☐ News articles describing civic or school-related achievements
- ☐ Copies of scholarship award letters
- ☐ Copies of College Acceptance letters

**COLLEGE OFFICE MANAGEMENT TIPS AND
TOOLS FOR COLLEGE COUNSELORS**

A

**9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENT
COLLEGE PREPARATION CHECKLISTS**

B

**COLLEGE-READINESS EXERCISES AND
WORKSHEETS FOR STUDENTS**

C

**A COMPLETE COLLEGE FILE
FOR STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12**

D

**THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY
OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS**

E

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS

College counselors should duplicate **The High School Students' Glossary of College-Related Terms** (E-1) and share it with students.

Students may need to reference **The High School Students' Glossary of College-Related Terms** throughout the college-readiness process. They may hear terms used by college representatives and financial aid advisors, or find words on applications for college admissions and financial aid that they do not understand. There is an entire language to describe the college readiness process. This glossary will help students to define much of it

Contents:

- E-1: The High School Students' Glossary of College-Related Terms

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS

The High School Student's Glossary of College-Related Terms can be referenced throughout the college-readiness process. You may hear terms used by college representatives and financial aid advisors, or find words on applications for college admissions and financial aid that you do not understand. There is an entire language to describe the college readiness process. This glossary will help to define much of it.

ACT (American College Test): The ACT is similar to the SAT and is accepted by many college admissions officers as a substitute for the SAT. The major difference is that the ACT has a Science section and tests Math through Trigonometry while the SAT has no Science component and tests only basic Geometry and Algebra 2 in Math. You can find additional information about the ACT on the *Student Site for ACT Test Takers* at www.actstudent.org.

Admissions Office: Offices at colleges/universities that evaluate prospective students, promote their respective schools, and provide information about the application process.

Advanced Placement (AP) Program: Many high schools participate in College Board's AP Program by offering AP courses and exams. Participating colleges may, upon admission, award college credit for AP courses taken in participating high schools. Eligibility for credit is dependent upon an acceptable score on the AP Exam. You can find additional information about the AP Program on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com.

AP Course: A college-level course available to students in participating high schools.

AP Exam: The culminating exam of an AP course. An acceptable grade (usually 3 or higher) may make students eligible for college credit upon admission.

Bursar's Office: The office responsible for collecting college tuition and fees.

CEEB (College Entrance Examination Board) Code: Each high school has a six digit CEEB Code. Many entrance exams and college applications request the CEEB Code. Know the CEEB code for your school prior to taking the SAT or any other College Board exam.

College Essay: Most college applications require an essay written by the applicant. See individual applications for essay topics and questions. Always follow instructions carefully and limit your essay to the specified format, length and subject matter.

College Fair: An event for college admissions representatives to dispense information to, and display college brochures and applications for, prospective students. College fairs are often held at the high school or educational campus. Larger college fairs, such as The Big Apple College Fair, are held annually. Ask your college counselor for a calendar of local college fair dates.

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS CONT'D

College Interest Statement: An individualized general statement about the type of college you may want to attend. This statement will help to narrow the college search (C-4).

College Now: A program in which NYC high schools are partnered with CUNY schools and high school students can take courses free of charge. These courses if passed can result in college credits. 11th and 12th grade students are eligible as long as they meet qualifying criteria in the following areas overall GPA, PSAT or SAT scores, and English/Math regents' scores. See your College Advisor about application deadlines and specific qualifying criteria. You should also talk to your college advisor about the transferability of these credits to colleges.

College Office: Where college counselors and/or advisors dispense information, meet with students and maintain college files.

College Advisor: Usually a teacher who provides part-time college preparation services.

College Counselor: Usually a licensed guidance counselor dedicated to providing full-time college preparation services.

College File: An individualized file containing all college-related material for one student.

College Resume: Similar to a work resume, the college resume provides practical contact information and outlines academic, extracurricular and professional accomplishments. The college resume will help you to prepare strong college essays; and it will help teachers to portray well-rounded students when preparing college recommendations (C-8).

College Wish List: An individualized list of colleges you would most like to attend (C-6).

Common Application: An application in which approximately 300 colleges and universities participate in. Students may file this via the internet (www.commonapp.org) or on paper. The major advantage is that a student completes one application and can apply to multiple participating colleges and universities.

Community College: A college specializing in programs of study usually lasting in duration of two full-time years. Community colleges offer Associate's degrees or professional certificates but not Baccalaureate or Graduate study programs. Most community college students commute to school each day rather than residing on campus. Most community colleges require only a high school diploma or GED for admission.

Community Service: Volunteer work that enriches students, schools and communities. Service is usually calculated by the hour and should be entered on the **Student Activities Tracking Sheet** (C-2) and documented by the organization for which the service is provided.

Commuter: A student who travels between home and the college campus for classes each day. Commuters do not live on campus.

Cooperative Education (Co-Op): A program of study typically lasting five years and culminating in a Baccalaureate degree. A Co-Op allows students the opportunity to participate alternately in full-time study and full-time employment. While a Co-Op may take longer to complete, it does have the benefit of earned income and work experience.

CUNY (City University of New York): A large network of over twenty public colleges and universities(4 year and two year colleges) in New York City. Tuition is less expensive for New York City residents. For additional information about CUNY visit www.cuny.edu.

College Degree: The title bestowed upon the graduate of a specific program of study.

Associates: The degree awarded to most two-year programs of full-time undergraduate study.

Bachelors or Baccalaureate: The degree awarded to most four-year programs of full-time undergraduate study.

Master's: The degree awarded to a specialized program of graduate study with a Baccalaureate degree prerequisite.

Doctorate: The degree awarded to a highly specialized program of study with a Baccalaureate and/or Masters degree prerequisite.

Certificates and Licenses: Non-degree programs designed for immediate employment in specific fields or trades. They are usually not accepted as prerequisites to graduate degrees.

Dormitory: A multi-student dwelling with shared common space and bathrooms usually designed to house only students enrolled at the college. Dormitory rooms come in a variety of configurations:

Single: A room designed for one student only.

Double: One roommate.

Triple: Two roommates.

Quad: Three roommates.

Suite: An apartment-like design with a small group of students sharing a common entrance, bedrooms, living space, bathroom, and kitchen.

Dorms may also be theme based and open to students who have a particular interest such as community service, international living, or Fraternity/Sorority.

Early Action: An early admissions process *without* binding acceptance. Applications are due in the fall of senior year usually November 1st or November 15th and admissions notifications are announced by mid-year. Early action is similar to early decision but without binding admission.

Early Decision: An early admissions process *with* binding acceptance. Students accepted during early decision must attend the college. This process is for students who know which single college they

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS CONT'D

would like to attend. Applications are due usually on either November 1 or November 15th of senior year and admissions notifications are announced by mid-year.

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP): Program at SUNY Colleges for New York State Residents who are classified as educationally and economically disadvantaged. Both of these criteria must be met for acceptance into the program. Criteria for each school are listed on www.SUNY.edu. If accepted a summer program is usually required and the student receives academic and financial assistance.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): A free-of-cost form used to determine eligibility for state and federal grants, loans, and work-study programs. For additional information visit www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 1-800-4-FED-AID.

Fall Back (or Safety Net) School: A college where you are very confident you will be accepted. This is a school you would like to attend if your first choice schools do not accept you.

Fee Waiver: Forms to replace specific registration and application fees. Waivers may allow students to register for the SAT or ACT, and apply to colleges, free of charge. Proof of income is required to determine fee waiver eligibility. See your college advisor for details.

Financial Aid: Money awarded specifically to assist students to pay for the cost of tuition and other college-related expenses.

Freshman Orientation: Usually occurs during the summer prior to the first year of college enrollment. New students gather to be familiarized with classmates/roommates, college staff, student services and the campus.

GPA (Grade Point Average): The GPA is a measure of overall scholastic achievement usually represented on a scale of 0–4. High schools may use an average, usually represented on a scale of 0-100, or the GPA. **Most colleges use the GPA. All four years of high school are incorporated into the GPA or average.**

Graduate Student: Students who have completed their Baccalaureate degree and are enrolled in a masters level program.

Graduation Requirements Card: A card used by the New York City Department of Education to inform students of the credit and examination requirements necessary to graduate from a New York City public high school. Cards and requirements differ based on cohort (year of entrance in high school), type of diploma and program of study. Graduation requirements can be viewed at <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/GraduationRequirements/default.htm>

Grant: A form of financial aid which is given to the student to cover tuition and other college related expenses. This money does not have to be paid back.

Higher Educational Opportunity Program: (See EOP– This is the equivalent program for private schools in NY State). Seek and College Discovery are the equivalent programs for CUNY. Note that all of these programs require financial verification and the filing of a FAFSA to be considered for acceptance.

Internship: Work-based experience performed by student interns. Internships may be paid or unpaid and may or may not be credit-bearing.

Letter of Recommendation: A personalized written endorsement of student performance. College applications typically require several recommendations from high school teachers (and/or guidance counselors).

Loan: A form of financial aid in which money is borrowed in order to pay for college expenses. Be aware of interest rates so that you can calculate your debt post graduation.

Major: A college program of study with a specific subject area of concentration.

Meal Plan: A pre-paid meal package which allows students to eat, usually at pre-arranged times and in pre-determined quantities, at the college cafeteria.

Minor: A college course of study with a specific concentration but with less courses/credits required than a major.

Open Admissions: A less rigorous college admissions process which requires a high school diploma or GED. Students meeting basic admissions requirements are usually accepted. Community colleges usually have open admissions.

PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test / National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test): Available to all New York City Department of Education high school students, the test indicates readiness for the SAT; preparedness for AP courses; and target areas for academic intervention. By taking the PSAT/NMSQT during your junior year, you are automatically entered into the applicant pool for the National Merit Scholarship competition. You can find additional information about the PSAT/NMSQT on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com. Note: **all NYC public school 10th and 11th graders now receive the PSAT free of charge during the academic school day.**

THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GLOSSARY OF COLLEGE-RELATED TERMS CONT'D

Rolling Admissions: A college admissions process without set deadlines. Applications are reviewed by the college when all required information is received. Rolling admissions allow students who miss conventional application deadlines, or are not accepted to a college of their choice, to apply at a later date. CUNY and SUNY both work on a rolling basis. Be aware that popular schools such as Binghamton, Stony Brook, Hunter and Baruch fill their classes for the next year quickly so applying earlier is advantageous.

Room-and-Board (see Dormitory and Meal Plan): A package which usually includes a dormitory room and a meal plan.

SAT I (Scholastic Aptitude Test): The SAT I measures reading, writing, and mathematical ability. The SAT score is a commonly used college admissions criteria. Many colleges and programs set specific SAT score range requirements. You can find additional information about the SAT I on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com.

SAT II (or SAT Subject Tests): Individual SAT tests for specific subject areas. You can find additional information about the SAT II on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com. Many private colleges require SAT 2's. Ideally, take the SAT 2 close to the time that you finish the coursework for the particular subject.

Scholarship: A financial award usually designated for payment of tuition or other college-related expenses. Scholarships are often awarded for achievement in academics or athletics. However, there are many scholarships offered for a wide range of abilities, characteristics, and accomplishments. Ask your guidance counselor for more information about available scholarships.

School Profile: A brief description of the academic and extracurricular programs offered at a high school. The school profile provides college admissions officers with a comparative tool to assess the rigor of each student's high school education. The profile is prepared by the school and should be included in every high school application. Ask your guidance counselor to include a school profile with each of your college applications.

Student Activities Tracking Sheet: A tool for monitoring your progress in extracurricular activities, leadership roles, community service hours, and athletic participation (C-2).

Student Biographical Information Worksheet: A one page tool designed to allow you to have all of the information you will need when registering for entrance exams (e.g. SAT and ACT) and completing applications for college admission, financial aid and scholarships (C-1).

SUNY (State University of New York): A large network of over sixty public college and university campuses (**4 year and two year**) in New York State. Tuition is less expensive for New York State residents. For additional information about SUNY visit www.suny.edu.

TAP (Tuition Assistance Program): A grant available to New York State residents who attend college in New York. To be eligible, you must complete the FAFSA.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): An English proficiency assessment tool used by colleges. It is often mandatory for college applicants who are non-native English speakers. Very often students who have taken ESL courses must take this exam. For more information go to www.ets.org.

Transcript: An academic record.

New York City Department of Education High School Transcript: A cumulative record of all courses and Regents exams taken; credits and grades earned; and attendance during high school. Transcripts are used by college admissions officers to assess your high school academic performance.

College Transcript: A cumulative record of all courses taken, and credits and grades earned, during college. College transcripts are often used by other colleges when students decide to transfer or apply for advanced or graduate studies. Transcripts may also be requested by prospective employers.

Transfer: To move from one college to another. Students often transfer from community colleges to four-year colleges. This process is advisable after one year of college. At this point only a student's college record is evaluated. High school grades and SAT scores are no longer factors for transfer admission.

Tuition: The cost of a college course of study or instruction. Tuition does not include books, room-and-board or any other college-related expenses.

Undergraduate Student: Anyone enrolled in college who has not yet completed a Baccalaureate (usually four-year) degree.

Work Study: Government program in which students obtain work through the financial aid office which helps to pay for college related expenses.

NOTES



TOOLS TO HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

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