

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

JUNIOR YEAR

FINDING PERSPECTIVE

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Finding perspective and achieving a healthy balance is the key to a successful junior year. This is both an exciting and important time in the life of a high school student. The college process starts in earnest as the second semester begins. As awareness of the college process is heightened, juniors may find it a challenge to balance their current reality: academics, co curricular activities, family, friends and sleep with all of the necessary planning in preparation for their college admission process the following fall semester. It is easy for students to get caught up in the frenzy of the college process and become overwhelmed (and unbalanced). This can lead to stress and anxiety over being "good enough."

Counselors work with students to explain that college admission should be considered a process involving self exploration, research, selection, application and final decision making. The primary focus should be on the student's well being, ensuring that the process does not become overwhelming by planning ahead and moving forward one step at a time. This allows students an opportunity to maintain focus on their academic work in addition to the other facets of their lives.

At the same time, juniors are also in the process of making themselves eligible to apply to the different college systems by meeting the various admission requirements of each system. Standardized testing begins as most colleges will require students to submit their scores from either the SAT or the ACT; some colleges require 2-3 SAT Subject tests.

The College Application Process section of this handbook provides a semester timeline for junior and senior years as well as guidelines, definitions, and step by step instructions for the key components involved in the college admission process.

Suggestions for Parents

- Continue to encourage your child to speak with her/his teachers, particularly when help is needed.
- Check in with your child regularly: maintaining balance (academics, co curricular activities, family/ friends and sleep) in junior year is essential for any successful student.
- Keep in mind that parents and students are often at a different place when it comes to thinking about college. Set aside agreed upon time each week (or every other week) to discuss college planning and preparation.
- Check the school calendar to plan college visit opportunities. Beginning the search process with local campus visits (Bay Area) is one suggestion to get started.
- Familiarize yourself with standardized testing options for your child. Discuss the available test dates and consider the calendar to plan accordingly.

Tips for Juniors

- Take care of yourself. Make sure you're eating well, sleeping regularly and managing stress successfully. Speak with a trusted adult in your life (parent, counselor, teacher, coach) if you need support.
- Need help with your organization and time management skills? They are the key to 'balanced' success in high school— counselors and the Academic Support Director are here to help.
- Plan Ahead. Make sure that you know your co curricular calendar ahead of time so you can schedule your standardized testing accordingly.
- Students should not plan to take standardized tests as many times as they can schedule. Effective strategizing includes spacing tests out and allowing for preparation time.
- To be eligible to apply for the Immersion program, students must complete their Christian Service requirement (100 hours) by the start of the school year.
- Follow the guidelines for creating a balanced college list as noted in this handbook. Explore options before creating a final list.
- Create your senior schedule carefully. Don't overload on honors/AP courses. Find the balance between academic success and challenge.
- Make healthy choices both in and out of school.

Timeline

Counselors stress the importance of self advocacy by encouraging juniors to initiate meetings. Structured, counselor initiated meetings will continue to disseminate relevant information about both academic/college related issues and timely personal topics. Of course, our doors are open to students at any time for any reason.

Fall Semester Timeline

September

College Representative Visits

We host College Admission representatives throughout the fall to meet with interested or curious students. Juniors are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings which are held either before school, during 5th period lunch and/or after school.

The specific schedule updated frequently and posted on Family Connection and in the Counseling Center. The college visit schedule (for the day) is also mentioned during our daily Announcements.

22nd Fall Meeting Day

Counselors will meet with their junior caseload to provide an overview of the upcoming PSAT, standardized testing for college, follow up about the Family Connection program, and to distribute the College Intake Survey.

17th (7pm) Junior Parent Night

October

PSAT Practice Sessions * Bring the sample test which was distributed during Junior Meeting Day

Optional practice sessions take place after school. This is ideal for those students who probably wouldn't take the practice PSAT test on their own. Students may attend one or all sessions, depending on their schedule. Specific dates will be announced in late September on Family Connection.

12th & 13th Mid-term Exams

14th PSAT Testing Day (Bring a calculator and #2 Pencils)

15th & 16th Faculty In-Service and Quarterbreak Holiday No classes for students!

November

25th -29th Thanksgiving Holiday

December

15th —18th Final Exams

21st Christmas Holiday Begins

Spring Semester Timeline

January

6th First Day of School (2nd Semester) & College Intake Survey due to counselor.

January–March Individual College Meetings with Juniors

The College Intake Survey (found on Family Connection) was created as a guide for juniors and their parents to begin individualizing their college search process. Once the survey has been received, counselors will schedule a full period college meeting with each Junior between January and March. During this meeting, the counselor and student will collaborate to create a preliminary college list, review standardized testing plans and discuss senior scheduling options.

12th Spring Meeting Period (#1)

Counselors meet with their Juniors in groups to discuss their PSAT results and to provide an overview of upcoming SAT/ACT testing dates. A preliminary 'Standardized Testing Schedule' will be discussed. Juniors should carefully consider their testing schedule for Spring 2010.

Honors/Advanced Placement Requests (for Senior year)

During late January and early February, applications for Advanced Placement and honors courses are provided in the following academic disciplines: English, math, language, science, and history.

The application process for each subject will be made available to students by the classroom teacher of each particular subject. The Course Catalog will be posted online for reference (www.siprep.org).

February

9th Spring Meeting Period (#2)

Counselors meet again with their students to model and discuss how to research colleges using Family Connection, books, websites, and college fairs.

24th (7pm) Career Night

The Career Night event is our second annual event designed for sophomore/junior students and parents. Speakers representing a variety of professions will be on campus to discuss the basics of their particular career field. Families may hear up to three different speakers throughout the evening; students and parents may also choose to go to different speakers should they wish to learn more about additional fields of interest.

March

8th & 9th Midterm Exams

Class Scheduling for Junior Year Begins

Counselors visit students in classrooms to review the scheduling process. Schedule Request Forms will be provided for students/parents to complete and sign by the indicated deadline.

16th (7pm) College Night for Juniors (parents and students)

Several seminars are provided featuring guest speakers on topics which typically include: Private Colleges, UC, CSU, Military Programs, Family Connection, Financial Aid and NCAA Eligibility.

Spring Semester Timeline Continued

April

17th (1:30-4:30pm) **National College Fair**

This event is held at the Civic Concourse Exhibition Center. It is another opportunity for parents/students to meet with admission representatives from across the country in one central location.

1st-11th **Holy Week and Easter Break** Classes Resume on April 12th

- Tip: This is a great time to visit colleges

18th **(College) Case Study Program**

This event provides parents and students with the opportunity to experience college application evaluations firsthand as members of a mock admission committee. A wide variety of college admission representatives will be at SI to run the sessions. A college fair will follow. Information will be mailed home in the spring to register.

20th **Spring Meeting Period (#3)**

Counselors will meet with their juniors to provide an overview of the college application including the academic transcript, college essays, teacher recommendations and counselor recommendations.

May

3rd-14th **Advanced Placement (AP) Exams**

June

1st-3rd **Final Exams**

Mid June: **Semester Grades** are mailed home and posted online.

30th **Senior College Counseling Questionnaire, Activity Resume, & Senior Parent Questionnaire** due to counselors.

July

Senior schedules are mailed to students at home. Instructions for schedule change requests are included within. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Family Connection: <http://connection.naviance.com/siprep>

In addition to beginning the standardized testing process, junior year is an important time for college research. Our goal is for students to have a working college list by the end of the junior year - a list of colleges the student is potentially interested in applying to that includes colleges falling under the categories of challenging, possible, and likely, reflecting the student's chances of being admitted. Many of our meeting periods during junior year are aimed at demonstrating appropriate ways to research colleges using Family Connection, websites, and college handbooks. Detailed information about researching colleges may be found in the college section of this handbook.

College Visit Schedule (at SI)

This occurs before school, during 5th period lunch, or after school. This is a great forum for students to hear more about a college they may be interested in and to meet the admissions representative in person.

Students who note their colleges of interest on Family Connection will receive an email informing them of a visit scheduled by any of the colleges on their list.

College Intake Survey—Forming the Initial College List (Located on Family Connection in the Document Library)

As a part of the college search process, we ask students and families to complete the College Intake Survey and return it to us on the first day of school in the spring semester. The idea of the survey is to facilitate meaningful conversation between students and parents about their college choice options. Ultimately, this makes the initial college list a much more manageable document.

Upon receipt of the College Intake Survey, the counselor and student will schedule a full length individual meeting early in the spring semester. Together they will draft a preliminary list of colleges for the student to research and complete other college related details such as calculating the student's UC GPA. This information will also contribute to building a foundation for each student's counselor to create their letter of recommendation for colleges.

The College Intake Survey may be found on Family Connection under the 'From Your School' section/'Document Library'. Click on 'Juniors.'

Family Connection Homepage

A major part of navigating the college process successfully is being attentive to detail! To help students keep up with the demands of the college process, we encourage students to log on to Family Connection every few weeks to stay on top of the relevant news/updates on the homepage. Counselor e-mails sent to student siprep accounts are also stored in the message section of Family Connection for students to review. A high level of awareness goes a long way towards easing anxiety and last minute crises during the junior year.

Summer Programs for High School Students

Found under 'Enrichment Programs' on the Family Connection homepage, the various programs that come to our attention in the counseling center may be researched here. Options include college coursework, visual/performing arts, athletics, Leadership forums, and programs with specific academic interests, to name a few. Dates and costs are as varied as the options found on this link. This is not an all inclusive list, but a general overview of the opportunities.