



Getting Into College

Tips for high school students

It's never too early to prepare for your future

9 th GRADE	10 th GRADE	11 th GRADE	12 th GRADE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on exceling in Math & English. • Take challenging courses. • Join clubs, sports & volunteer at your school and community. • Carefully choose elective courses that interest you and meet college requirements. • Meet with your counselor and let them know you are interested in going to college. • Start talking about college plans with your parents and what you all can do to start preparing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for work and internships that align with your future career goals. These type of networking opportunities can lead to future careers. • Begin researching colleges and their requirements. • Maintain a minimum of a 2.5 GPA. This is important for college admissions and scholarship opportunities. • Look for programs in your school that will help you as you prepare for college. Check out the College Prep Programs website for opportunities. www.cpp.unm.edu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prep for the ACT – You can find practice tests at act.org or sign up for prep courses in your area. • Take the ACT late in the spring semester. This will give you time to review more if you need to take it again in your senior year. • Visit colleges you are interested in and narrow down your choices. • Check in with your counselor to make sure you are on the right track. • Start looking into scholarship opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure the classes you are taking fulfill any leftover requirements for your college choices. • Maintain your GPA, do not let “senioritis” kick in! • Look into Dual Credit courses offered at local colleges. • Take the ACT preferably by the October Exam. Some colleges & scholarships will require scores. • Complete your FAFSA by October 1st! Look for a workshop at your school, or a nearby college/university.

Things to Consider When Choosing a College

- Admission Requirements & Deadlines
- Cost of Attendance
- Financial Aid Package
- Do they offer your intended major?
- Location: Rural vs. big city, weather, things to do, distance from home
- Size: School size and classroom size
- Student Success Programs and Resources
- Student Life: Dorms, activities, student groups

How to Apply for College

1. Talk to your school counselor about the subjects and careers that interest you and ask what colleges offer those types of programs.
2. Visit college websites to see what programs they offer and what other things the college has to offer and see if it looks like a good fit for you.
3. Complete an online application or print application.
4. Send in your official high school transcript and an official ACT/SAT score.
5. Include the non-refundable fee. If you cannot afford the application fee, ask if they have a fee waiver.

Find out more about the College Prep Programs at www.cpp.unm.edu

Prepare for College

- Find something you are passionate about and volunteer your time to make a difference in your community.
- Start setting SMART academic and personal goals!
- Be careful what you share, post & like on social media! Future employers, colleges and scholarships may look at these sources to learn more about you. Security settings don't always work.
- Read, read, and read! Reading helps you learn new things, acquire new vocabulary and language, and will help you prepare for challenging courses in the future.
- Create and maintain strong study habits. Doing something as simple as this will help you in college and beyond. Stay organized and study hard!
- Do your best in school, especially your core classes. Math, Science, English, and Social Sciences are all important classes. If you do well in them, this will help you on standardized tests like the ACT, and set you up for success in college.

Paying for College

- FAFSA – FREE Application for Federal Student Aid. Complete the FAFSA **EVERY** year beginning October 1st to qualify for the student aid below. Check for priority deadlines at your college.
 - Grants – Free money that does not need to be repaid. Grants are need based.
 - Loans – Borrowed money that must be repaid with interest.
 - Work-study – Money you earn working on campus.
- Scholarships – Free money! There is no limit on the amount of scholarships you can get. Apply, apply, apply! You can find scholarships for just about anything. Talk with your counselor about available scholarships.
- Deferred Payment Plan – Ask if your school will let you set up a payment plan to pay tuition and other costs.
- Work – Get a part-time job to help pay for college.

Career Research

- Think about what you want to do in the future and find someone who has your dream job. Set up some time to chat with that person and learn more about their career path. Here are some great questions to ask. What is the best and worst part of your job? How did you know you wanted to be a ...? How long did you have to go to school? What were your classes like?
- Think about what makes you unique? What are your hobbies? The things that make you “you” are great places to start when looking at career choices. If you like to draw and paint, consider being an Artist, Art teacher, or Designer.
- Look for opportunities to learn more about different career fields. For example the UNM CEOP-College Prep Programs offers a College Readiness Program & STEM focused program for high school students.
- Find jobs/internships that align with your career goals, network and learn as much as you can. Remember to be professional, these are the people who can help you move into your dream job.

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