COLLEGE:
Making It Happen

A Guide for Middle School Parents and Counselors
California Education Round Table

A Message to Middle School Parents and Counselors from the Intersegmental Coordinating Committee

To be sure that your student will be ready for college, you will need to plan ahead – particularly if you want him or her to have a good choice of colleges. Don’t wait until high school to think about college. Begin when your student is in middle school (junior high school) or even elementary school. Start now!

This handbook is intended to help middle school parents, guardians, counselors, and their students begin the college planning process. It is not designed to provide all the information that a student will need to apply to college. Such information can be overwhelming at this point in the planning process. This handbook is designed to assist you in beginning the college planning process which will continue through high school graduation.

Good luck, stay focused, and above all, enjoy your college planning process!
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Question: Why Go to College?

Answer: A college education can provide your child with many opportunities for a better life.

“Educating our kids is an investment in our future and our society.”
Edward James Olmos

Question: What does a college education provide?

More Job Opportunities
The world is changing rapidly. Many jobs rely on new technology and require more brainpower than ever. There is fierce competition for jobs that only a few years ago seemed plentiful. In your child’s working life, more and more jobs will require education beyond high school. With a college education, your child will have more jobs with greater earning potential from which to choose.

Greater Knowledge
A college education will increase your child’s ability to understand developments in society, to think critically, to express thoughts clearly in speech and writing, and to make wise decisions. These skills are useful throughout a lifetime.

Greater Potential
A college education can help increase your child’s understanding of the community, the nation, and the world as he or she explores interests, discovers new areas of knowledge, gains skills, considers lifelong goals, and becomes a responsible citizen.

Question: What is a college education worth?

A person who attends college generally earns more than a person who does not. The chart that follows compares average annual and lifetime salaries among individuals who did not graduate from high school, high school graduates, and college graduates. One of the important benefits of a college degree is clear: significantly greater earning potential over a lifetime in today’s competitive job market.
If you are a high school student thinking about college, consider this: Someone with a Bachelor’s Degree earns nearly $1 million more over his or her lifetime than a high school graduate!

### Education Continues to be the Ticket to Higher Earnings

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Lifetime Income</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not High School Grad</td>
<td>$1.0 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask your child what his or her dreams are for the future. What talents, skills, or abilities does he or she already possess? Which jobs or occupations do they most admire? What classes or activities do they enjoy? By explaining that reaching any goal takes preparation and study, you can help them appreciate the benefits of a college degree. Be willing to discuss the reasons it is important to attend college. The earlier you begin helping your children aim toward their goals, the better their chances of reaching them.

### BE INFORMED
- of your child’s abilities, talents, passions, and goals.

### BE INVOLVED
- with developing your child’s future by supporting his or her goals.

### BE INSPIRED
- by all the benefits a college education will offer your child.

Question: How can I help my child see the importance of a college education when it seems so far off in the future?
Question: How can I help my child prepare academically for college?

Answer: Discover, build, and maintain an academic foundation with your child that will bring future success in high school and college.

Question: When should planning for college begin?

Planning for college occurs over several years and should be underway by middle school.

By sharing responsibility for your child’s future, planning for college should be an organized activity and should take place over a number of years. Parents and their children should not wait until high school to plan for college. By then, it may be too late financially and academically to apply and get admitted to the colleges that your child is really interested in attending.

Question: Specifically, what can I do to help my child prepare for college while still in middle school?

Successful performance in College Preparatory Courses is the best path to prepare for college. You should assist your child in planning to take these courses and other challenging ones throughout middle and high school. Use the Your Future! Worksheet in this guide to introduce and explain to your child the various courses required for college admission and to begin by choosing specific courses and achieving academically while in middle school.
Question: Why are these courses so important for my child?

These courses provide the building blocks for access to higher and more challenging courses in later grades that are crucial for access and success in college. Children will have more choices when selecting a college if they take the right courses in middle and high school. It is critical to be informed, plan ahead, enroll, and succeed in required subject courses as soon as possible, preferably in mathematics and foreign languages as early as the seventh grade.

Research shows that students who take Algebra and Geometry early (by the end of the eighth and ninth grades) are much more likely to go to college than students who do not. In a national sample, only 26 percent of low-income students who did not take geometry went to college, but 71 percent of low-income students who took Geometry enrolled in college.

Taking Algebra early in middle and junior high school prepares high school students for Chemistry, Physics, Trigonometry and other higher level math courses in high school. In addition, students should take at least two years of a language other than English (foreign language) and as many Honors and Advanced Placement courses as they can before finishing high school.

A recent study found that most students casually make decisions about the courses to take in school and that they make decisions with little help from parents or school staff. By the time a child is in sixth grade, families should start talking about going to college. Many people don’t realize that a college education also builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in earlier years. Your child should plan a high school course schedule early, preferably in the sixth or seventh grade.

Question: How can I ensure that my child will take these courses in middle school?

Make an appointment with your child’s middle school counselor and request that your child begin taking courses such as Algebra I, Geometry and a language other than English (foreign language) in the middle school years in order to plan ahead to complete the full sequence of college preparatory courses.

Question: What are the college preparatory courses?

Refer to the Your Future! Worksheet in this guide. Each high school in the state has its own unique list of college preparatory courses that meet university admission requirements. It is called the College Preparatory course list or “a-g” Requirements. You can help your child learn about and prepare for these courses in middle school.

College Preparatory Course Requirements

Prospective college students must give priority to completing those high school courses required for admission.

Courses in mathematics and languages other than English completed in the seventh and eighth grades with grades of at least C may be counted...
Question: Do different colleges require different combinations of the College Preparatory Course requirements?

All colleges and universities will regard completion of this pattern of courses favorably. See the Your Future! Worksheet for more information. Both the California State University and University of California use these specific course requirements to determine eligibility. See Chapter 4 “Types of Colleges and Universities” for a list of resources with more specific information on different colleges and their subject requirements.

Question: What is a GPA?

A GPA is your child's grade point average.

Question: How is a GPA calculated?

All the grades your child receives in high school are converted into numerical values: 4 points for an "A", 3 points for a "B", 2 points for a "C", 1 point for a "D". The total points for all grades is then divided by the number of courses taken.

Question: How do colleges decide which students to admit?

In helping your child plan for a college education, it is important to know beforehand the information colleges may review when evaluating students. College admissions may be based on:

- Average of grades (GPA) earned during high school.
- The level of difficulty of high school courses.
- Rank in class, although not all schools calculate class rank.
- Written recommendations by teachers and guidance counselors.
- Scores on national tests like the SAT I, SAT II or ACT (see the Your Future! Worksheet for more information).
- High achievement in academic courses throughout middle and high school.
- Extent to which a student challenges him/her self.
- Pursuit of academic interests outside of school.
- Special talents like music, art, and sports.
- Participation in leadership roles in school or community activities such as sports, student government, music, drama, community service, and part-time jobs.
Standardized Tests

Beginning in 2004, California is requiring students to pass the California High School Exit Examination to earn a diploma. Be sure to monitor your child’s results on any test that could prevent him or her from graduating.

Your child is planning to attend college, so you’ll need to pay attention to tests that are usually required for college admission, including the SAT I, SAT II, ACT, and others.

In addition, be sure that your child signs up to take the PSAT in September of the 8th and 9th grade year because it will help him or her prepare for the SAT in high school which is required by many colleges. Additionally, the PSAT is a key to national college search processes and scholarships.

Many colleges and universities require that students take the SAT and/or ACT for the admissions process. The more times a child takes the PSAT, the greater the likelihood that he/she will be prepared for the SAT in high school.

Question: What else can I do to help my child achieve academically?

- Create an academic plan with your child and his or her counselor for middle school that prepares your student to take college preparatory courses in middle and high school.
- Become a knowledgeable, supportive partner in educational planning.
- Attend the education planning night at the middle school where local high school counselors present their programs and schedules.
- While your child is still in middle school, visit the high school he or she will be attending to meet members of the counseling staff and inform them that your child should be placed in a college preparatory sequence of classes.
- Obtain the College Preparatory (“a-g”) course list from the high school your child will be attending or from the internet at www.UCOP/pathways.edu.
- Using the college preparation course list for the high school, develop a tentative schedule of specific courses for all four years.
- Review this academic plan with your child’s counselor at least once a year.
- Revise this college preparation plan each year with your child.
  - If you have access to a computer, have the child check out the High School Planner on Californiacolleges.edu. This is free of charge and can help you gauge your student’s success in meeting admission requirements.
  - Ensure that the school enrolls your child in college preparatory sequence of classes.
- Monitor the academic progress of your child in these courses. Encourage your child to participate in academic enrichment programs offered at your school and through local colleges and universities (See Chapter 5 “Academic Resources and Organizations”). These programs exist to help your child reach academic goals by offering advisement and tutoring services.
- Ensure that your child passes the High School Exit Examination. Be sure to monitor your child’s results on any test that could prevent him or her from graduating.
Question: How can I help my child maintain the academic performance required for success in high school and college?

- Ensure that your child is scheduled to take challenging academic courses. This is the best way to prepare for, and succeed in, high school and college.
- Ask your child questions about school, class work, and homework every day.
- Personally meet all of your child’s teachers every term.
- Encourage your child’s success and academic interests.
- Let teachers and counselors know that your child is going to college.
- Encourage your child to strive to maintain “A” and “B” grades in all classes.
- Praise your child when he or she receives good grades and offer help when you think there is room for improvement.
- Keep in touch with teachers and guidance counselors. Remember that your child, the counselor, teachers, and you are all on the same team and have the same goal for your child.
- Ask teachers and counselors about your child. How can he or she improve? Let the counselor know that you are interested in your child’s education and want to work together to get the best college preparatory education possible for him or her. Your interest shows your child that you think school is important.
- A child’s learning continues outside of school. Children are learning all the time and you are their teacher for much of that time.
- Read aloud to each other. Start early. A love of reading starts at home and so much of education depends on the ability to read.
- Encourage your child to read which greatly helps children to prepare for college admissions tests and develops comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills. Remember to turn off the television for quiet reading time.
- Help your child with studying. As often as you can, review your child’s notes, assignments, and grades and ask review questions already prepared by the teacher or in textbooks.
- Establish a clear set of rules and expectations with your child about acceptable behavior at school.
- Take advantage of resources in your community. Routinely go with your child to the library, museums, concerts, plays, craft shows, and fairs. Interesting experiences expose children to new ideas and ways of understanding the world around them. These experiences will, in turn, help them understand their school work.
- Emphasize to your child the importance of hard work and responsibility by giving your child reasonable jobs to do around the house. Developing good work habits early help children apply self-discipline in school.
- Arrange a quiet well-lighted place for your child to study. If this is not possible at home, arrange for your child to study at a local library or study hall at school.
Question: What can I do if I feel my child needs extra help?

If your child is not taking initiative or is having trouble in a certain academic area, you should arrange to speak with his/her teachers. The teacher can tell you the areas in which your child needs to improve, perhaps recommending pre-college support programs, a tutor, or other means by which your child can receive additional help. If the problem is beyond any particular subject, make arrangements to meet with a school counselor or teacher who may identify other means of assistance.

As students enter the middle school years of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, they increasingly need to take control of their own learning. This means organizing their assignments, seeking out help when needed, and having the self-discipline to complete assignments thoroughly and on time. Demonstrating this kind of independence and initiative is even more important for high school students who are but a step away from full adulthood.

If you feel your child could benefit from additional academic assistance or tutoring, see Chapter 5 “Academic Resources and Organizations” for a list of resources.

• Encourage your child to keep his or her notes, assignments, books, supplies, and binders organized.
• Establish a daily routine for your child. Set aside regular times for play, meals, study, and bedtime. By having an established daily routine, your child will learn planning and organizational skills.
• Obtain reference materials (such as a dictionary and an atlas) to which your child can refer, when needed. If it is not possible to obtain such materials, it should be possible to use or borrow them from your local library.

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Question: How can I keep my child motivated about the benefits of a college education?

- **Take your child on field trips to local universities or colleges.** This is a great way for children to see and become excited about attending college.

- **Communicate high expectations.** Emphasize the importance of learning and education. Stress the value of education. Children learn directly from parents whether or not to value education. Studies have shown that when parents expect their children to do well in school, they do!

- **If one is offered, attend a College Information Day** at your school or at a school in your district. This is your opportunity to find out more information about college and university requirements. Make sure that you attend with your child and share the information.

- **Build a portfolio of your child’s work,** including sample essays, artwork, math problems, even videos and computer programs. Saving your child’s work shows that you care and serves to motivate him or her by documenting the creativity, accomplishments, and progress made toward the goal of a college education.

- **Explore the Student Friendly Services website** (www.californiacolleges.edu) which provides students and their parents with information about higher educational options in California. The site is “the common front door” to all colleges and universities in the state and offers two major functions:
  - College exploration, including virtual campus tours, searches for campuses that meet specific criteria, and a student-campus matching capacity.
  - Guidance and counseling, including information on financial aid and admissions planners for high school and transfer students.

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**BE INFORMED**

of the courses and academic planning needed for college.

**BE INVOLVED**

with your child’s education and schoolwork by becoming his or her best teacher.

**BE INSPIRED**

by the achievements your child shows in preparing for college.
Question: Isn’t college very expensive? How am I going to pay for it?  

Answer: Eighty percent of students going to college use financial aid.

“I used pretty much everything. Scholarship, CAL Grant, university grant, PELL grant, a couple of loans, and work study as well.”  
Sam Perez, Jr.

Many people who dream of attending or sending a child to college are very concerned about the costs. There are a number of programs and resources you can use to help pay for your child’s education. Again, information and planning are the keys.

Financial Aid is money that is made available to help students pay for the cost of attending college. Many organizations, including colleges and businesses along with both the state and federal government, are partners in investing in the education and future success of today’s youth.

Many students attending college in California use state, federal, institutional, and private financial aid programs to help them with the cost of college attendance.

It is a combination of different types of financial aid: scholarships/grants, loans, and part-time employment since students often receive financial aid from more than one source.
Grants and Scholarships  
Grants and scholarships provide aid that does not have to be repaid by the student or the parent; some grants and scholarships require that recipients maintain certain academic grades. Grants are often awarded on the basis of financial need alone. Scholarships usually require certain academic achievements as well as financial need. Virtually all colleges directly provide some form of grants and scholarships which is known as institutional aid.

The Cal Grant Program  
If a California student graduates from high school with a “B” average, or a 3.0 grade point average (for Cal Grant A), or 2.0 (for Cal Grant B) and needs money to attend a California college, a Cal Grant will help pay the cost of fees at public colleges and universities, vocational and technical schools, and independent (private) institutions for all qualified applicants. This grant does not have to be repaid - it’s money that does not need to be repaid!

Educational Loans  
Loans are another type of financial aid available to both students and parents. The interest rate on educational loans is commonly lower than commercial loans. These loans are often subsidized by the state or federal government or by colleges themselves.

Work-Study Programs  
Many students work during the summer and/or part-time during the school year to help pay for college through the Federal Work-Study Program. This program provides part-time employment financed jointly by the federal government and the colleges. The jobs are often on campus and the money earned is used to pay for tuition/fees or other college expenses. Students usually work 10 to 15 hours a week at a guaranteed minimum wage or higher.

Private Scholarships  
Businesses, professional groups, civic organizations, and individuals make scholarships and grants available to help students who need financial assistance to afford college. Most colleges will allow students to use private scholarships to replace loans in their financial aid package.

See Chapter 7 “Financial Aid and Scholarship Resources and Organizations” for a list of contacts.
The cost of college varies significantly and is based upon three types of expenses:

**Tuition and Fees**
“Tuition and fees” is the amount of money that colleges charge for instruction and for the use of some facilities, such as libraries. Tuition and fees can range from a few hundred dollars per year to more than $20,000. See the Your Future! Worksheet for more information.

**Room and Board**
“Room and board” refers to the cost of housing and food which varies significantly from campus to campus.

**Other Expenses**
Students must also pay for books, school supplies, transportation, and other living expenses. These expenses are all included when figuring the cost of education and the amount of financial aid a student receives.

In considering different colleges, students need to look at the cost of attending each one. However, it is important not to become discouraged by the “total budget” because a “financial aid package” will reduce the actual cost for the student and/or the parents.

Whether or not a student receives some form of financial aid, families are expected to contribute to their children’s education, even if the contribution is a small one. Most families use a combination of resources to help pay for their children’s education, including:

- Money they have saved over time
- A portion of their current income
- Loans
- Their children’s part-time and summer earnings

Typically, families pay for college over a long period of time just as they do for homes and cars. High school counselors and college staff can help families determine the way that their contributions and financial aid sources are going to cover the cost of college.
Each family needs a plan that will enable them to contribute toward educational costs. The plan need not be complicated but should take into consideration:

- What current expenses you have
- When you anticipate your child will go to college
- How much money you can afford to set aside on a regular basis
- What amount you plan to contribute

Carefully consider your entire family’s needs and goals as you develop this plan. If your children are still young, you have the advantage of time to plan ahead.

If at all possible, it is wise to start saving money for college as early as possible in your child’s life.

Look at the example below. Putting $5 a week in a savings account that earns 6 percent interest adds up to $3,578 in ten years. Some families save all their “loose change” by putting it in a savings account on a regular basis.

**Remember To Start Saving Early!**

<table>
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<th>4 years</th>
<th>6 years</th>
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<td>$9,418</td>
<td>$13,379</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Question: When should my child start saving for college?

If you involve your children in planning during the early years, whether that means opening a savings account for each of them or dropping pennies in the piggy bank on a regular basis, they will be more likely to take an active interest in their education.

As soon as they are old enough to handle the responsibility of a paying job, plan that a portion of their earnings goes into a college savings account. In this way, they, too, will be invested in their future education and contribute to the goals of your entire family.

Question: Are there any tax-free savings accounts for education?

Golden State ScholarShare College Savings trust is a tax advantage savings program sponsored by the State of California. Anyone can open a ScholarShare account on behalf of a student and start saving for college with an initial contribution of $25. For more information, log onto the website at www.scholarshare.com or call toll-free 1-877-SAV-4EDU (1-877-728-4338).

Question: How can I learn more about financial aid?

Attend financial aid meetings held in your school district to learn more about the basic types of financial aid and ways to apply by the deadlines. Many corporations, labor unions, professional associations, religious organizations, and credit unions provide scholarships. Contact the specific organization or main headquarters directly to apply.

In addition, some organizations, particularly foundations, offer scholarships to students of specific racial or ethnic backgrounds, geographical areas, religions, genders, talent, etc. Use your nearest public library and look for directories that list such scholarships or see Chapter 6 in this handbook.

Question: What if my child doesn’t qualify or receive any grants or scholarships?

All students have access to deferred, low or no-interest loans from individual colleges, the federal government, and banks. Some loan programs provide loan cancellation benefits for graduating students who teach certain subjects or teach in certain schools. Regardless of qualification, all students should apply for financial aid.
Question: Do scholarship or financial aid organizations charge fees for information or applications?

**WARNING:**
Do not pay to apply for scholarships! Beware of scholarship scams! Students and parents should not pay for information regarding scholarships and other forms of financial aid. Be suspicious of any organization which does any of the following:

- Requests a fee to apply for scholarships
- Insists on your credit card or checking account number
- Pressures you to act fast
- Requests an advance fee upon application
- Guarantees that you will win a scholarship or get a specific result from a search
- Charges you a fee for any scholarship
- Sends notification that you were selected for a scholarship for which you never applied

**BE INFORMED**
of the variety of financial aid available to help pay for your child's college education.

**BE INVOLVED**
in the process of saving for college as early as possible.

**BE INSPIRED**
by the value and investment in a college education that will continue to pay and reward your child throughout his or her lifetime.
Question: What types of colleges are available in California?

Answer: There are over three hundred colleges and universities in the State of California which are organized into five different sectors.

The State of California offers a rich and wide variety of schools, colleges, and universities. Each has its own specific requirements for admission and each grants degrees in distinct areas of study upon successful completion of the course work.

“Thank God I have my family there. They always say we know you can do it. They see so much potential in me that sometimes I don't even see.”

Maria Perez

Question: What are the five different kinds of colleges in California?

There are three public systems of higher education that are funded through taxpayer dollars:

- The California Community Colleges (CCC)
- The California State University (CSU)
- The University of California (UC)

Two other types of colleges exist which are independent and not supported by taxpayer funds:

- Private colleges and universities (also known as independent colleges and universities)
- Specialized schools and colleges
California Community Colleges (CCC)

Background: The California Community Colleges offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses leading to a variety of valuable certificates and degrees. People may train for a new career, upgrade their job skills, or pursue special interests. Students may also complete the first two years (freshman and sophomore) of a university education and transfer to a college or university to complete a Bachelor's Degree.

General Entrance Requirements: The California Community Colleges admit any high school graduate or any person 18 years of age or older. The colleges will educate students of all abilities to meet their goals.

Basic Facts and Figures: The California Community Colleges serve more than 2.6 million students annually in 109 separate community colleges. Many of the 109 colleges have additional locations so that a community college education is readily available throughout the state – north or south; urban or rural. A California resident can attend a community college anywhere in the state (not just the one in his or her hometown) and California residents pay only $26 per unit. The colleges offer many student support programs, including financial aid, to be sure a college education is affordable for everyone who wants this opportunity.

Please visit www.icanaffordcollege.com for more information.

California State University (CSU)

Background: The California State University (CSU) is the nation's largest university system, with 23 campuses stretching from Humboldt in the north to San Diego in the south, and enrolling 409,000 students. Each campus has its own personality, academic focus and strengths, special geographic features, and traditions. CSU is renowned for the excellence of its faculty and programs and for its emphasis on high-quality teaching. With two million alumni, it is a national leader in producing students who later earn doctoral degrees in science and engineering and it prepares about 55 percent of the teachers in the state. As the CSU carries out its mission to provide access to high-quality education for the students of California, CSU campuses are focused on providing educational opportunity for all qualified students, preparing highly qualified candidates for the job market, and being responsive to our state's changing needs.

General Entrance Requirements: First-time freshmen must be high school graduates, completed a specified pattern of coursework, and have combined grade point averages and standardized test scores that place them among the upper one-third of California high school graduates. Completion of fifteen units of College Preparatory Course Requirements with grades of "C" or better is required.

CSUMentor (www.csumentor.edu): CSUMentor provides middle school, high school, and community college students, their families and counselors, via the Internet, important outreach, pre-admission, financial aid, and admission information.
University of California (UC)

Background: The University of California has an international reputation for academic excellence, with undergraduate education as one of its highest priorities. Whether students are seeking a broad liberal arts education, preparing for graduate study, or training for a profession, such as medicine or law, UC has literally hundreds of majors from which to choose. The faculty includes 20 Nobel Prize winners as well as winners of the Pulitzer Prize, Guggenheim Fellowships, and Fulbright Scholarships. Faculty membership in the prestigious National Academy of Sciences is the largest of any university or college in the nation. Most faculty members teach and conduct research. On the average, there is one faculty member for every 18 students, although this varies by campus and major of study.

General Entrance Requirements: UC is committed to providing a place on one of its campuses for all eligible applicants who are California residents. Eligible applicants have grades and test scores that place them in the top 12.5 percent of high school graduates statewide. Most incoming freshmen have high school grade point averages of 3.3 or above (a strong “B” average) in academic courses and combined SAT I verbal and math scores of at least 1000, or an ACT score of at least 21. Students must complete subject, examination, and scholarship requirements and submit an application during the November filing period.

For complete information on UC entrance requirements, majors, and campuses, consult “Introducing the University”, which is available free from high school counselors or on-line at www.ucop.edu/pathways.

Basic Facts and Figures: Of the more than 176,000 total students who attend UC, more than 141,000 are undergraduate students. UC general campuses, where undergraduate students earn Bachelor’s Degrees, are located in Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz. A ninth general campus in Merced will open in 2004. The San Francisco campus is a graduate campus for health sciences, such as medicine and dentistry.

California’s Independent Colleges and Universities

Background: California is home to almost 80 private, independent colleges and university. Nine out of ten students receive financial aid, and the average financial aid package is almost $19,000, ensuring that college is available to everyone. The campuses are diverse – 40 percent of the student body are from African American, Asian American, Chicano/Latino, or Native American backgrounds.

Each private college and university is unique. Students can select the school and environment that best fits their individual needs. Students enroll directly out of high school or transfer from community or other colleges. Some schools are small; others are large. Some are faith-based; a few are for women only. Some focus on art, or music, or science. Some are in large cities; others are in small towns. Some have large on-campus communities; others have large commuter student populations.

Individualized choices, unique environments, and personal attention allow students at independent colleges and universities to tailor their college experience to their own needs while obtaining the skills necessary to succeed in life. For additional information about the individual schools, go to www.aicmentor.org.
General Entrance Requirements: The admissions requirements are similar to those at the California State University and University of California systems. Some are highly selective and others have very specific requirements related to their specialties, such as art, music, or technology. For specific questions, go to www.aiccumentor.org or contact the individual school.

Basic Facts and Figures: Over 233,000 students attend California’s independent colleges and universities. These schools are for-profit institutions that are fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Ninety percent of students attending independent colleges and universities in California are satisfied, or very satisfied, with the quality of their education.

Specialized Schools and Colleges

Background: The proprietary or vocational sector of the higher educational system has over 3,000 schools and colleges which grant certificates of completion or Associate’s of Arts Degrees. Of these, 14 institutions are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). As such, they have the same regional accreditation as the four other types of institutions listed above.

General Entrance Requirements: While admissions requirements vary at each institution, it is recommended that students enroll in challenging academic courses (math, science, language, English, and history) since many of the programs are technical or business-oriented in nature. As such, they require sound academic preparation in written and oral communication, math, and critical reasoning skills.

Basic Facts and Figures: Many of the specialized colleges have been in existence for over 20 years with hundreds of thousands of graduates employed in their industries. Financial aid programs are available as well as job placement assistance. The colleges are associated with industry professionals and most have boards of advisors.

Question: Are there any other types of opportunities for higher education?

National and International Educational Opportunities

Students in California are not limited only to higher education opportunities in the state. Well-prepared students also have literally thousands of institutions to choose from across the country and the world! Opportunities in the United States include over 3,000 public colleges and universities and 1,600 independent colleges and universities:

- Such opportunities include the Air Force Academy, Coast Guard Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, the Naval Academy, and West Point where our country’s military leaders are trained;
- Other options include the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) which focus on providing a college education primarily for African-American students;
- Hispanic serving institutions which serve large Latino populations; and,
- Tribal colleges which serve Native American students.

The educational possibilities in the United States and in other countries are almost endless for well-prepared students.
**BE INFORMED**

of the different colleges available and the various requirements each has for admission.

**BE INVOLVED**

with the process of selecting school courses which will offer the best chances for your child’s admission at all colleges.

**BE INSPIRED**

to offer support and guidance so that your child knows you are committed to the goal of a college education.
Question: Are there any organizations or resources available to help me assist my child in preparing for college?

Answer: Many programs offer support and guidance specifically to middle school students.

"The opportunity is out there, but you have to go out and get it."

Purcell Keeling

Please visit the Academic Preparation Program Reference and Information System (APPRIS) website at www.appris.org. The APPRIS system provides an accurate, current description of the following programs whose purpose is to prepare your student for higher education. These programs offer support and guidance for middle school students and their parents. Contact your child’s counselor to find out if any of these programs are available through his or her middle school or a nearby college or university.
Access and Academic Development Outreach Program (AADOP)

The California State University Outreach Programs inform students and their families about admission requirements, financial aid, and educational opportunities available at CSU campuses. Campus outreach staff members also provide academic and career advice and conduct individual analyses of student transcripts. The Access and Academic Development Outreach Program represents the campus to prospective students, their families, and the community.

Office of the Chancellor
California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802
Phone: 562-951-4733

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

AVID is designed to increase schoolwide learning and performance. The mission of AVID is to ensure that all students succeed in rigorous curriculum, enter mainstream activities of the school, complete a college preparatory path, increase their enrollment in colleges and universities that offer a Bachelor’s Degree, and become educated and responsible participants and leaders in a democratic society.

AVID Center
5353 Mission Center Road, #222
San Diego, CA 92108
Phone: 619-682-5050

California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)

The Cal-SOAP Program provides information about postsecondary education and financial aid. It seeks to raise the achievement levels of students from low-income families, from schools or geographic areas with documented low or no college participation rates, or from families in which they would be the first to attend college.

California Student Aid Commission
P.O. Box 419030
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9030
Phone: 916-526-8920

California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP)

The California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP) develops “cooperative efforts to improve the academic quality of public secondary schools with the objective of improving the preparation of all students for college”.

CAPP
California State University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802
Phone: 562-951-4780

Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP)

EAOP turns dreams of a university education into reality for more than 85,000 California students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds at more than 630 low-performing schools. Hardworking, academically promising students get the help they need to prepare for admission to the University of California. Challenging courses, academic advising, preparation for standardized tests, on-campus residential programs, Saturday and Summer Academies, and educational programs for families are the foundation of EAOP. Most EAOP students enter the program in middle school and continue through high school graduation. EAOP offices are located at each UC campus and in Fresno.

Office of the President
University of California
1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607
Phone: 510-987-9504

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)

The California State GEAR UP program is a middle school model for creating a college-going culture. Program services support the adults who influence a student’s education, specifically their teachers, administrators, counselors, and families. GEAR UP begins to provide services no later than the seventh grade as a solid educational strategy for increasing the number of students who will be prepared for, enroll, and succeed in college.

California GEAR UP Resources and Materials Clearinghouse: The Clearinghouse provides a single source of information, materials, and resources to support middle school educators, families, and students in preparing for college. The Clearinghouse is provided in three formats: a website at www.californicolleges.edu, a convenient Educators Kit, and an interactive, mobile “College Corner” kiosk that is available at middle schools throughout the state.
Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA)

MESA offers academic enrichment services for educationally disadvantaged students so they excel in math and science, go on to college, and attain degrees in math-based fields. Over 33,800 California students are involved with MESA at the pre-college, community college, and university levels. MESA’s pre-college program, at 450 schools in over 150 school districts, assists students so they will be eligible for admission to the most competitive colleges and universities.

MESA provides individualized academic plans, academic excellence workshops in math and science, study skills training, SAT and PSAT preparation, hands-on math and science competitions, career and college exploration, interaction with industry representatives, and parent involvement.

To the extent possible by law, MESA emphasizes participation of students from groups with low eligibility rates for colleges that award Bachelor’s Degrees.

PUENTE

THE PUENTE (Spanish for “bridge”) PROJECT is a national, award-winning program to increase the number of students who enroll in colleges and universities, earn college degrees, and return to the community as mentors and leaders to future generations. PUENTE trains school and college faculty to provide rigorous instruction, focused academic counseling, and mentoring by members of the community. THE PUENTE PROJECT is co-sponsored by the University of California and the California Community Colleges.

Upward Bound

Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families, families in which neither parent holds a Bachelor’s Degree, and low-income, first-generation military veterans who are preparing to enter postsecondary education. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rates at which participants enroll in, and graduate from, colleges and universities. All Upward Bound projects MUST provide instruction in math, laboratory science, composition, literature, and foreign language.
BE INFORMED
of the many resources and organizations dedicated to helping you provide the best education for your child and assisting in his or her preparation for college.

BE INVOLVED
with seeking out free assistance and options offered to supplement and guide your child’s education.

BE INSPIRED
to take advantage of all tutoring and support that is available to assist your child.
QUESTION: Where can I go for more information about Financial Aid?

ANSWER: There are a number of resources available to assist you in learning more about Financial Aid.

“We all go through trials and we can overcome them if we believe we can and if you have the right attitude.”
Danny Hanson

The contacts listed below provide information and resources on a variety of financial assistance programs which help pay for a college education.

Information About California Student Financial Aid
Request the Financial Aid Workbook by calling or writing the:
California Student Aid Commission
P.O. Box 419045
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045
916-526-7282
web site: www.csac.ca.gov

FAFSA on the Web
www.fafsa.ed.gov

Information About Federal Student Financial Aid
Request Student Guide by writing to:
Ed Pubs – US Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 1398
Jessup, MD 20794-1398
or order online web site: www.ed.gov (publications)

Golden State ScholarShare College Savings Trust
1-877-SAV-4EDU
(1-877-728-4338)
web site: www.scholarshare.com
Question: Are there any other sources available for information about private scholarships?

Information About U.S. Savings Bonds
Write to:
Office of Public Affairs
U.S. Savings Bonds Division
Washington, DC 20226
1-800-4US-BOND
web site: www.savingsbond.gov

Check with a librarian to find books about private sources of financial aid. School counselors may also have information about scholarship programs.
The Internet provides several free Scholarship Search Programs. There is a Scholarship Search Program called FastWeb that lists over 600,000 awards worth over $1 billion. Students may access it at www.fastweb.com
A good site for several sources is the Financial Aid Information Page at www.finaid.org. That site also provides information regarding scholarship matching scams.

WARNING: Do not pay money to apply for scholarships!

Information about Benefits for Becoming a Teacher
Federal Perkins/National Direct Student Loan Programs
www.ed.gov/studentaid

Stafford Loan
Teacher Cancellation
www.studentaid.ed.gov

California APLE
www.csac.ca.gov

BE INFORMED
of the many sources and organizations offering financial assistance for your child’s college education.

BE INVOLVED
in identifying and contacting the sources that will ensure that your child has resources to pay for college.

BE INSPIRED
to begin early financial planning for your child's college education.
This exercise will give you and your child a chance to look ahead and choose future courses. Be aware that some courses must be taken in sequence. On the form below, list your child’s current courses or courses he or she will take this year. Then list courses that he or she will take during each year of high school. If you are not sure about courses your child should take, you should make an appointment with your child’s guidance counselor and get some advice and secure the college preparatory “A-G” high school course list.

<p>| This Year: ___ Grade | | Next Year: ___ Grade |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | <strong>Fall Semester</strong> | <strong>Spring Semester</strong> | <strong>Fall Semester</strong> | <strong>Spring Semester</strong> |
| <strong>English</strong> | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | |
| <strong>Mathematics</strong> | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | | |
| <strong>History/Social Studies</strong> | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | | |
| <strong>Science</strong> | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | | |
| <strong>Language other than English</strong> (Foreign Language) | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | | |
| <strong>Other</strong> | | | | |
| Full course title: | | | | |</p>
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| **English** |         |         |         |         |
| **Full course title:** |         |         |         |         |

| **Mathematics** |         |         |         |         |
| **Full course title:** |         |         |         |         |

| **History/Social Studies** |         |         |         |         |
| **Full course title:** |         |         |         |         |

| **Science** |         |         |         |         |
| **Full course title:** |         |         |         |         |

| **Language other than English** | Foreign Language | Full course title: |         |         |

| **Other** |         |         |         |         |
| **Full course title:** |         |         |         |         |
**Take Control of Your Future!**

Do you want more knowledge, more job opportunities, and a lot more money? College is for you! The world is changing everyday and it is harder to find well paying jobs if you do not have a college degree... so if you want the freedom to choose a good career and earn a high salary, then you should start preparing for college while you are still in middle school.

**Be Prepared**

Right now is the best time to prepare for college. During the next four years, you need to take the right courses, including Algebra in the 8th grade, to help you get into the college that best suits your needs. The chart below lists the courses that are required for freshman admission to the California State University, the University of California, and many independent colleges and universities. This pattern of courses is the same as recommended for community colleges. Talk to your counselors and teachers and use this chart to plan ahead and track your progress!

**High School Planning Chart**

This Planning Chart Belongs to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements (A-G Courses)</th>
<th>Years Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. History/Social Science</strong></td>
<td>2 Years. One year U.S. History or 1/2 year U.S. History and 1/2 year of U.S. Government or American Government. CSU requires one additional year of Social Science. UC requires one year of World History, Cultures, and Geography.</td>
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<td><strong>B. English</strong></td>
<td>4 Years of college preparatory English composition and literature.</td>
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<td><strong>C. Mathematics</strong></td>
<td>3 Years. Four years recommended. Algebra in the 8th grade recommended.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra, Geometry, Intermediate Algebra, or Higher Level Mathematics</td>
<td>3 Years. Four years recommended. Algebra in the 8th grade recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Laboratory Science</strong></td>
<td>2 Years. CSU requires one year of Biological Science and one year of Physical Science. UC recommends three years with at least two of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or other approved college preparatory laboratory science.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>E. Language Other Than English</strong></td>
<td>2 Years. UC recommends three years. American Sign Language is acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Foreign Language)</td>
<td>2 Years. UC recommends three years. American Sign Language is acceptable.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>F. Visual and Performing Arts</strong></td>
<td>1 Year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>1 Year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drama/Theater</td>
<td>1 Year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1 Year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Art</td>
<td>1 Year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G. College Preparatory Electives</strong></td>
<td>1 Year of academic courses in any of the above A-F areas and other approved alternative electives.</td>
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Mark an “X” in the year when you expect to take each course.

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<th>7th</th>
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<th>9th</th>
<th>10th</th>
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More planning and financial aid information is available at [www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu)
California Educational Systems at a Glance

You can afford to go to College! Financial aid is available from colleges and universities, State and Federal governments, businesses, and other organizations. All qualified students will receive a Cal Grant, which is “free” money that covers full student fees and/or living expenses at California Community Colleges, California State Universities, and University of California. Maximum Cal Grants at independent colleges and universities are $9,708; the average financial aid package at these institutions is $18,900.

California Community Colleges (CCC)
- Admit all students who are 18 years old or a high school graduate
- Enroll high school students under special arrangement to earn college or high school credits
- Encourage many students to attend for two years and then transfer to a college or university for a Bachelor’s Degree
- Have low fees and offer financial aid
- Offer a wide variety of opportunities to enhance your future and enrich your life
- For more information, visit the website www.cccco.edu

California State University (CSU)
- Each campus has its own personality, academic focus, and strengths
- Each campus has its own special geographic features and traditions
- CSU offers quality education in the liberal arts and sciences and specialized training for a variety of career fields
- On-campus housing is available on most campuses
- For more information, visit the website www.csumentor.edu or www.calstate.edu

University of California (UC)
- Each campus has its own personality, academic focus, and strengths
- Offers various advanced degrees, including medicine and law
- UC has many nationally ranked academic and athletic programs
- On-campus housing is available on all campuses
- For more information, visit the website www.ucop.edu

Independent California Colleges and Universities
- Eighty not-for-profit, fully accredited private colleges offer over 350 different degrees
- Average Financial Aid package is almost $19,500, and 90% of all students receive some form of financial aid
- Each school is different, offering students the opportunity to choose the type of educational environment that best suits their needs
- More information is available at www.aiccumentor.edu

Specialized Schools and Colleges
- Most students 18 years of age or older are eligible for admission
- Courses or programs offered are specialized (as fashion design or automotive technologies) for direct entrance into careers

College is affordable! Check out www.californiacolleges.edu for financial aid information