



College Preparatory Guide

Prepared by the College Guidance Office
Lisa Roldán, Counselor

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From the Desk of the Counselor

Students, Parents, Guardians:

College is a wonderful time to learn, grow and further prepare for a future of service to God and His people in any vocation of choice.

At DLS, we strive to challenge and prepare our students for the rigor of college, and to learn the value of maintaining a healthy balance between a career and life outside of work. We encourage the formation of healthy habits, especially spiritual and academic habits. College can put study habits, faith habits, and even nutritional habits to the test. I take great pride in the holistic college preparatory program at Dallas Lutheran School.



As Freshmen and Sophomores, we begin to encourage students to work hard from the start to maintain their personal best possible Grade Point Average (GPA), and to stay focused on their coursework. Also, we promote participation and exploration of extracurricular activities in athletics, the fine arts and groups and clubs.

In addition to my role in college guidance, I am privileged to teach the Junior Religion class. We are able to talk very specifically about the college admission process together. Many college admissions representatives from across the U.S.A. visit our school. We also explore our gifts and interests, research which colleges would be a good fit, and review what to look for on visits and on websites. Finally we work on applications, resumes and essays.

Senior year is a time for the final preparations, as well as celebrating our acceptances, making the decision, and learning about the enrollment and financial aspects of college life. It is an honor to rejoice with our seniors as they receive the acceptance letters from those colleges of choice.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or schedule a time to visit; I serve as a resource for our students and their families to accomplish their college admission goals.

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Important Links:

- DLS School CEEB Code: **441767**
- SAT Online registration www.collegeboard.org
- ACT Online registration www.actstudent.org
- For College search www.cappex.com, www.collegeboard.org,
www.parchment.com
- Financial Aid & Scholarships www.finaid.org, www.fastweb.com,
www.cappex.com, www.zinch.com, www.scholarships.com,
www.ScholarshipPoints.com
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid www.fafsa.ed.gov
- Common Application www.commonapp.org
- Texas Common Application www.applytexas.org
- Discover Business Degrees & ACT/SAT Prep www.discoverbusiness.us/

Transcript Requests:

Dallas Lutheran School has partnered with Parchment, a leader in eTranscript exchange, to send high school transcripts electronically, securely and confidentially, to colleges and universities of your choice. The service is available online, 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

Students and alumni simply request a transcript and designate the academic institution, organization or individual that they would like to receive it. Users will be notified when their request is complete and can also track the status of their request or view a saved copy of their transcript.

The cost for current students and LHS/DLS alumni is \$5 per copy.

[Request Your Transcript](#)

SAT/ACT Information

Most colleges and universities require the SAT or ACT as part of the admissions process. Plan to begin your SAT I and ACT testing during the second semester of your junior year to be prepared to apply to schools with early deadlines in the fall of your senior year. You should take each test, and then decide which you liked better. Then take that test again to see if you can improve your score. The majority of colleges require “official” test scores, so it will be necessary for you to have the test scores sent directly to the colleges. Both the SAT and ACT websites provide information on how to send official test scores.

SAT I: Take the SAT I in January, March, May or June of your junior year. You also can take this test in the months of October, November or December. It is helpful to know the testing requirements for the schools that you plan to apply to in order to determine if the college or university will accept the best combination of scores (superscore) or your highest test score on any one given test date.

SAT II: Subject - More selective colleges require the SAT II tests as part of the admission process in addition to the regular SAT I scores. SAT II tests are subject tests. Each subject is one hour in length and you may take three (3) subjects on any given test day. Exams for the SAT I and SAT II tests are given on the same day. Please plan your testing calendar carefully! It is recommended to take the SAT II exams as soon as you have completed the course.

ACT - The ACT covers four content areas, English, Mathematics, Reading and Science, plus Writing. You should take the ACT for the first time during the months of February, April or June of your junior year. If you decide that you prefer this test, you can take it again in September, October or December.

SAT/ACT REVIEW COURSES

There are several test prep companies in the Dallas area that provide classes or one-on-one preparation for the SAT and the ACT. Dallas Lutheran School has partnered with Kaplan Test Prep, but there are many other options available. Khan Academy has partnered with SAT to offer free online test prep for the SAT at www.khanacademy.org.

REGISTERING FOR SAT I/ACT/SAT II

Registration for SAT is available at: www.collegeboard.org

Registration for ACT is available at: www.actstudent.org

Be sure to include the school code (441-767) in order for DLS to receive your scores.

- **SAT and ACT Test-taking Strategies**
- If you don't know an answer, don't leave the question blank or guess randomly. Eliminate the choices you know are wrong, then make an educated guess from the remaining options.
- Early in the set of questions, the obvious answer is usually right.
- Eliminate the obvious on hard questions. On the hard questions (they will appear late in the set), obvious answers are usually wrong. Eliminate these when you guess.
- Look for the fast points in Reading. If you are short on time and can't read every passage, try to answer the "Vocabulary in Context" questions. These questions have a line reference that you can refer back to without reading the entire passage.
- Each question is worth the same number of points. If a question is confusing or too time-consuming, don't lose your cool. Instead, move on . You can come back to hard questions if you have time at the end of a section.
- The answer is often hidden in some way. It might be written in a way that students don't expect – such as .5 instead of $\frac{1}{2}$.
- Make sure you're filling in answers next to the right numbers on the answer grid.
- You paid for that test booklet, personalize it. Scratch work is extremely important. Don't be embarrassed about it—writing in your test booklet will help you keep your mind focused. Mark up geometry diagrams. Keeping track of your work directly on the page will help you avoid careless mistakes. When you use process of elimination to eliminate a wrong answer, cross it out! Don't leave it there to confuse you if you have to choose between two remaining answer choices. When you answer a question but aren't entirely confident in your choice, circle the question or put a big question mark next to it. That way, if you have time to go back at the end of the section, you can find the question easily and quickly.

ON THE DAY OF THE TEST

Bring the following with you to the test center:

1. Admission ticket
2. Photo ID
3. *Several* #2 pencils
4. Eraser
5. Approved calculator with fresh batteries (see the website for calculator information)

6. Test proctor cannot provide test “tools”
7. Dress in layers as the room temperature will vary and you may need a sweater.

College Search Process

WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON A TOUR

- General appearance of the campus
- Student attire
- Friendliness
- Student conversations
- Transportation
- Faculty presence
- Library
- Laboratory and computing and printing facilities
- Fine arts facilities
- Dorms
- Campus security
- Technology and electronic resources
- Athletic/recreational facilities
- Food Service/Menu options

QUESTIONS TO ASK ON A COLLEGE VISIT

1. What percent of applicants are accepted?
2. What percent of first year students return as sophomores?
3. What percent of entering students actually graduate?
4. What percent of graduates who apply to law school are admitted? Med school? MBA programs?
5. What percent of first year classes are taught by graduate assistants?
6. Stop several students and ask them about the school and their programs. Ask them if they were choosing a college today would this college be their first choice? Watch for their facial expressions and any hesitation in their voice.
7. Ask about internships in your major field.
8. What are the three most popular majors on campus?

Helps and Tips

10 WAYS TO JUMPSTART COLLEGE PLANNING

1. GET INVOLVED

Getting ready for college isn't all work. You should find something you really like to do and dive into it. Develop skills that will be appealing to colleges. Colleges like to have a diverse and motivated student body. Involvement in activities indicates you have shown a commitment and take on responsibility.

2. DO THE WORK

If you expect to go to college later, expect to study and work hard now, and throughout the four years of high school.

3. TAKE CHALLENGING COURSES

Colleges look at grades, but also how difficult the courses are. They want to see that you have challenged yourself. Plus, if you pursue advanced courses, such as AP® or dual credit, you may be able to get college credit.

4. GET HELP

Are you having trouble in a class? Our school has peer tutors, students in upper grades who'll help you. Talk to teachers and let them know you want extra help.

5. READ

You should read at least 30 minutes every day, beyond study and homework. Read what interests you. . . magazines, novels, etc. Your strength in reading will be essential when you take the PSAT, SAT & ACT exams.

6. DON'T DELAY

Take the most challenging courses you can! Take solid math and other courses that will prepare you for the college you plan to attend.

7. GET THE COLLEGE-BOUND FACTS

How will you know all the right moves to get into college? Ask someone who's done it. Get to know your counselor. Ask a trusted teacher. Doing web research can also be helpful.

8. FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents, talk to Mrs. Roldán and help your student stay on the right path. Your support will be important as the student begins to make important decisions about his/her future.

9. MENTORS

The encouragement of other adults who can lend their enthusiasm will help make sure you succeed. Look to Mrs. Roldán, a teacher, or someone else you trust to help develop interests in a particular area.

10. CONFRONT PERSONAL ROADBLOCKS

High school can be a stressful time for students. If you have a problem that is getting in the way of schoolwork, try to sort it out. PARENTS: keep an open mind and a listening ear ready. Mrs. Roldán may be able to help with advice or simply point you to resources at school or in the community that can help.

College Financial Aid

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are based on merit. A scholarship is an award that represents achievement. Beware of scams or agencies offering scholarship "help" for a fee.

Your best source of scholarships/grants will come from the college or university that you decide to attend. Apply early. Work with the financial aid office of each school.

Be wary of the company or person who tells you that many scholarships go unclaimed each year and then tries to sell you a list of scholarships. There are many scholarships on the horizon and REMEMBER...SCHOLARSHIP means SCHOLARSHIP! Most require a minimum GPA of 90% with top 25% class rank. There are some scholarships available for students of certain heritage, interests or service to community.

Many colleges and universities have one scholarship form which makes application for any scholarship for which you qualify at that institution. In some cases you will get this form ONLY after admission acceptance.

As scholarship applications for special awards arrive, the counseling office will make these available via the daily announcements.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid is based on need. You must file a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) after October 1 of your senior year in order to be considered for Financial Aid. This is a lengthy process, but you may use your tax return from the previous spring. Filing early is important as once the grant money is given away, it's gone! The website is www.fafsa.ed.gov

Financial Aid comes in several forms:

1. Federal Pell Grant
2. Federal Supplemental Grant
3. Federal Work-Study
4. Federal Perkins Loan
5. Federal Stafford Loan
6. Federal Plus Loans for Parents

Once your FAFSA is on file at your college financial aid office they will evaluate it and notify you about programs for which you qualify

Good Scholarship/Financial Aid Web Sites include:

www.fastweb.com

www.cappex.com

www.zinch.com

www.scholarships.com

www.scholarshippoints.com

Community Service Hours

- At least 60 hours of Community Service are required for graduation from Dallas Lutheran School. You may begin working on projects toward this goal on the first day of school of 9th grade. To ensure credit, each project must be authorized by Mrs. Roldán. Appropriate service projects would be work at any non-profit organization such as churches, schools, hospitals, animal shelters, soup kitchens, mission trips, etc. Credit will not be given for babysitting, driving other students to school or work done for family or immediate relatives. Please see Mrs. Roldan for service hour forms.

Senior Info

TIMELINE

August – October

- Explore websites; apply to at least three colleges
- Attend the Christian College Fair in September at Prestonwood Christian Academy
- Write necessary essays
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers
- Check NCAA requirements for freshmen athletes
- Check your community service hour record
- Check your transcript

October

- Applications should be submitted between Oct. 1 - Oct. 15
- Request your transcript from www.parchment.com
- Fill out the FAFSA

November – May

- Provide Mrs. Roldan with copies of acceptance letters and scholarship letters as you receive them. You can also forward acceptances that you receive by email to her

January

- Complete “midyear” reports as required

January – April

- Make final decision
- Negotiate final packages with school
- Make financial arrangements (scholarships, grants)
- Make housing arrangements

May

- Complete a request for your final transcript from www.parchment.com
- GRADUATE!

APPLICATIONS

For many colleges the importance of submitting your application by October 1st is that you will not be issued a housing application until you are admitted. At some colleges, housing is a real premium and campus housing is a must at least for your freshman year.

Application requirements vary from college to college. Be sure to pay attention to the guidelines on the colleges' websites. Applications should be submitted with no mistakes . . . edit carefully! All will require an "official" transcript from DLS. You must request the transcript from www.parchment.com. Some colleges require an essay or two. Many applications require teacher recommendations. Allow sufficient time for these to be written, and then follow through with friendly reminders.

ATHLETES

Students wanting to participate in Division I or II college athletics are required to register with NCAA. Talk to Mr. Frieling as he can provide valuable information.

SPIRITUAL TRANSCRIPT

Walk boldly as an example to other students during this important time in your life. Many around you are looking up to you as an example. Know that God is in control of all things! He already knows where you're going to school and who your roommate will be. Find daily encouragement and guidance from prayer and Bible study as you go down this path of great opportunities. Ask for God's guidance in prayer as you make choices and in ALL things GIVE THANKS!

Junior Info

YOUR GRADES ARE IMPORTANT! You will apply to colleges and send your transcript from the first 3 years of high school, before grades are finalized for the 1st semester of your senior year. Make every assignment this year count in your favor. You also need to keep up on involvement in school, church, and community as well as part time employment. A good work ethic carries a lot of weight.

TIMELINE

September

COLLEGE FAIRS

- The Trinity Christian Academy College Fair is a resource event for all juniors. Parents are encouraged to attend with their student. In addition, many college representatives will be on the DLS campus throughout the year to visit with students.
- The Christian College Fair at Prestonwood Christian Academy is an excellent opportunity to ask questions and make contact with Christian Colleges across the United States.

October

PSAT TESTING

- The junior year is the ONLY time that a student takes the PSAT as part of the National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test. This is a big day with major scholarships at stake.

January

- Review PSAT results.
- Register for the SAT and ACT tests. DO NOT HAVE THE SCORES SENT TO THE COLLEGES ON YOUR INITIAL TEST REGISTRATION. Allow yourself the opportunity to see the score first. There's time to send the score after you have evaluated your options.

- You should prepare for the SAT and ACT just as if you were taking final exams. Your score will reflect how much you have prepared for these college entrance exams. Visit www.collegeboard.org and www.actstudent.org for study tips.

CAMPUS VISITS

SPRING BREAK is a great time to visit colleges and universities. Consider the following criteria before you go:

1. Desired course of study
2. In state/out of state
3. Public/private
4. Two year/four year
5. Near/far from home
6. Large/small
7. On/off campus living
8. Cost
9. Extra-curricular activities

Make a list of colleges which meet the above desired criteria. Check the entrance requirements for these colleges. Explore college websites.

FINANCIAL PLAN

Prepare your financial plan. Research financial aid, employment, loans, scholarships and grants. Most institutions will prepare a financial package after you have been accepted.

Sophomore Info

Make the best grades possible and get involved in school, church and community service.

TIMELINE

- **OCTOBER** Take the PSAT (compare results from the previous year; a 100 point gain is desirable).

CAMPUS VISITS

- Consider visiting college campuses. Call the admissions office of the campus to arrange a visit.

CURRICULUM

Take all the math, science, history, foreign language, and English that you can. Colleges look for students who stretch themselves academically. Consider taking Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Credit (DC) courses. Begin to think about career goals and match those with course work and college requirements.

- Review your diploma goal.
- Repair or strengthen your GPA...there's still time!

EXTRA CURRICULAR

- Continue to build extra-curricular experiences. Quality of experience is more important than quantity, so get involved in clubs or programs that you really enjoy. Become a leader in activities.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- Take a hard look at your spiritual gifts. As a student, you have a responsibility to develop academically. As a child of God, you have a responsibility to develop spiritually for the glory of God.

Freshman Info

Welcome to High School! The next four years will pass very quickly. Soon you will be making decisions about college and career. If you follow the following tips and guidelines you will be in the best position possible as you begin the college selection process in three years.

Make the Most of High School

- Write down 10 goals, both academic and personal that you want to accomplish this year.
- Make sure you are enrolled in the most challenging courses you can handle.
- Get organized and budget your time.
- Remember your job for the next four years is to be the best student possible.

TRANSCRIPTS

It's time to begin preparation for college! With the very first grading period of the 9th grade year, students begin building their permanent high school transcript. The grades a student earns in the first quarter of the freshman year will be used to determine college acceptance, scholarship possibilities and in many cases graduate school acceptance.

TESTING

Freshmen participate in the PSAT as practice for testing procedures. The PSAT score will NOT become part of the student's permanent testing record. Students may qualify as a National Merit Scholar in their junior year ONLY.

PROFILE DEVELOPMENT

Many colleges and universities are basing acceptance on the student profile rather than ACT/SAT scores exclusively. The profile portfolio starts in 9th grade. The key elements are: Grades, Courses, Involvement, Community Service and Test Scores.

SELF EXAMINATION

- The courses you take...

- The grades you make...
- What you do with your time...
- Your level of extracurricular participation... (Long-term commitment and leadership within your chosen activities are what colleges are looking for.)

Make a good start rather than trying to “catch up” later. LEARNING is ACTIVE. You must DO SOMETHING to make it happen.

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