

## Researching Colleges

### Important Questions

- Where is the college I plan to apply to? Do I want to be far away or do I want to be close to home? How is the weather in the area?
- Do I have the required course work for admissions?
- What is the student population?
- How many applicants were admitted last year at this college?
- Does this college have the major I want to study?
- What do the dorms look like?
- Will I have a roommate?
- What is the cost of attendance?
- Are scholarships available for me at this college?
- What type of financial aid is available?

### Campus Life

- How big is the campus?
- Where is the dorm and cafeteria located?
- Will freshmen have guaranteed on-campus housing?
- Is off-campus housing available?
- What activities or clubs are available?
- Can I join a fraternity or sorority?

### Academic Life

- What are the strongest academic programs?
- What are the course requirements for graduation?
- Does the college offer study abroad programs or internships?
- Do students that attend have strong acceptance rates into professional programs of study.

### College Enrollment Process

- When is the deadline for my application?
- Do I need to apply using "Apply Texas" or "Common Application" ?
- Will I have to write an essay?
- Will I have a college interview?
- Do I need to call and make an appointment for a campus visit?
- When are the scholarship and financial aid deadlines?
- Do I need to complete any additional institutional forms?

### Useful Websites

#### College Information

[www.bisd.us](http://www.bisd.us)  
[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)  
[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)  
[www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)  
[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

#### Funding Sources

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)  
[www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)



*BISD  
GUIDANCE & COUNSELING*

# *College Planning Guide*

**FOR GRADES 8 – 12**

## 8th Grade

### Fall

- Take academically challenging courses that will prepare you for college.
- Review class schedule with your counselor.
- Ask your counselor if a career interest inventory is available.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities.
- Register for the SAT/ACT if you participated in the Duke TIP Program (7<sup>th</sup> Grade)

### Winter

- Take the SAT/ACT if you participated in the Duke TIP Program (7<sup>th</sup> Grade)
- Plan a visit to a college in your area.
- Discuss college/career plans with counselors, teachers and parents.
- Investigate BISD Magnet Programs, Career Pathways.

### Spring

- Go online to investigate colleges and universities.
- Discuss your choice slip course selections with counselor.
- Review Recommended & Distinguished Graduation Plans.
- Check for available summer programs.

### Summer

- Read, Read, Read.
- Volunteer in your community or church to enrich your resume.
- Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com) for college planning information.

## 9th Grade

### Fall

- Take challenging courses to prepare academically for college.
- Review your courses and graduation requirements with your counselor.
- Remember that college acceptance is based on your high school performance.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities and community service.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT for SAT practice.

### Winter

- Review your PSAT results with your counselor.
- Plan a visit to a college in your area.
- Discuss college/career plans with counselors, teachers and parents.

### Spring

- Review Recommended and Distinguished Graduation Plans.
- Discuss your choice slip course selections with counselor.
- Investigate colleges online, visit your campus "GO Center" for help.

- Check for available summer programs.

### Summer

- Go to your Public Library and READ,READ,READ.
- Volunteer in your community or church to enrich your resume.
- Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com) for College Planning Information.

## 10th Grade

### Fall

- Review your courses and graduation plan with counselor.
- Focus on your GPA!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT for SAT practice.
- Visit Campus "GO Center" for college investigation

### Winter

- Discuss PSAT results with your counselor.
- Enrich your resume with volunteer work.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities.

### Spring

- Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com) for College Planning Information.
- Visit a college in your area.
- Continue to focus on improving your GPA.

### Summer

- Work on a Resume that lists your accomplishments and activities.
- SAT/ACT are tests of accumulated knowledge so READ, READ, READ, READ.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Fall

- Review Recommended & Distinguished Graduation Plans.
- Meet with your counselor to discuss graduation requirements
- Visit "GO Centers" for college planning assistance.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT for National Merit Competition.
- Sign up to attend the BISD Guidance & Counseling University Day.

### Winter

- Review PSAT/NMSQT..... results with your counselor.
- Review campus scholarship listing available at the Guidance and Counseling website @ [www.bisd.us](http://www.bisd.us) for scholarship opportunities and future funding sources.
- Register to take the SAT/ACT in the spring, get test waiver from your counselor.

### Spring

- Go to [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for practice SAT/ACT tests

- Go to [www.march2success](http://www.march2success) for more practice SAT/ACT tests.

- Review your choice slip carefully with your counselor.
- Take the SAT/ACT before the end of the year.

### Summer

- Request information from colleges/universities.
- Visit the NCAA Clearinghouse website if you plan to participate in college athletics.
- Join a volunteer community service group.
- Participate in a camp or summer college program.
- Prepare an updated resume.
- Check University admissions, testing, financial aid and housing deadlines.
- Visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com) for College Planning Information.

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Fall

- Meet college representatives.
- Attend BISD Guidance & Counseling University Day.
- Investigate scholarship information @ [www.bisd.us](http://www.bisd.us) /Guidance and Counseling.
- Plan College visits if possible.
- Visit the "GO Center" for assistance.
- Narrow your list of colleges.
- Complete admissions applications.
- Register for the SAT or ACT.
- Go to [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) for a practice SAT/ACT.
- Go to [www.march2success](http://www.march2success) for a practice SAT/ACT.
- Submit applications with early deadlines.
- Begin CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE if required.
- Apply for housing early.

### Winter

- Focus on academics.
- File FAFSA.
- Complete CSS PROFILE if needed.

### Spring

- Second semester grades will appear on final transcript so continue to apply yourself academically.
- Colleges will send Financial Aid Awards once you have cleared Admissions and have submitted financial aid documents if required.
- Notify college/colleges of final decision/decisions
- If needed, mail deposits.
- Take AP exams, if applicable.
- Request your final transcript.
- Request final college dual enrollment transcript.