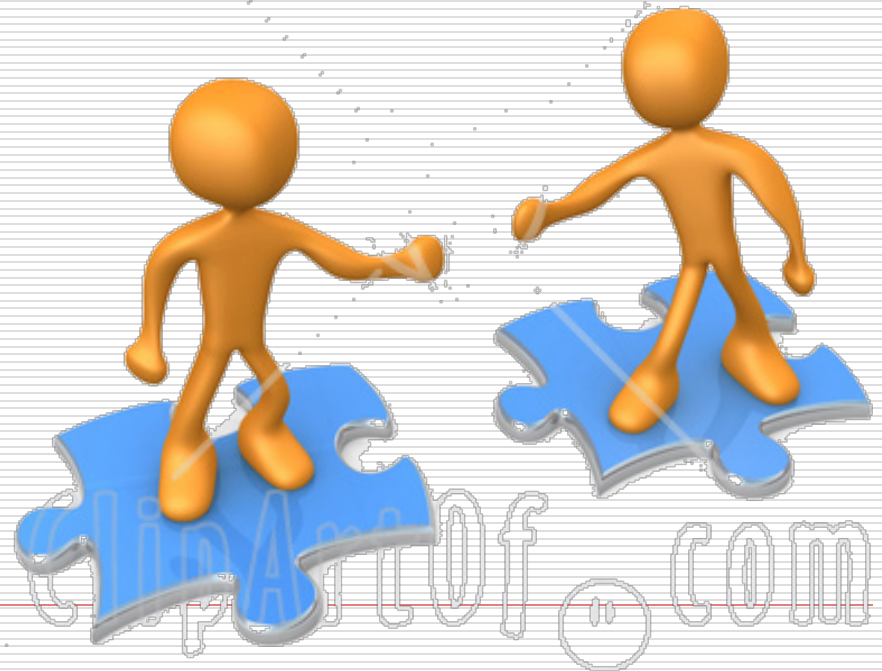


# A ROAD MAP TO COLLEGE

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## Putting the Pieces Together



# Welcome / Agenda

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- Timeline
- Admission Tests
- Choosing the Right College
- Application Steps
- Debunking Common "Myths"
- Managing Stress

**Note the QOHS Road Map Handout!**

# Early College Planning Tips

## *9th Grade*

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- Take rigorous classes/maintain high grades
- Take the PSAT
- Participate in extracurricular school/community activities
- Start keeping a record of these activities
- See your counselor to discuss academic/career/personal issues
- Visit the College/Career Center to learn about careers/colleges/financial aid/scholarships

**Remember 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Counts!**

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# Early College Planning Tips

## *10<sup>th</sup> Grade*

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- Continue using 9<sup>th</sup> grade tips
  - Maintain academic rigor/high grades
  - Take the PSAT – learn/improve
  - Plan next year's program to reflect interests/abilities
  - Take AP courses as appropriate
  - Consult with counselor/teachers about taking SAT Subject Tests in completed subjects
  - Think depth/ commitment in extracurricular activities
  - Learn how to use Naviance/Family Connection for college planning
-

# Beginning the Application Process

## *11<sup>th</sup> Grade - Fall*

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- ❑ Meet with counselor to review transcript/graduation requirements
- ❑ Continue taking rigorous classes/maintain upward grade trend
- ❑ Take the PSAT/NMSQT
- ❑ Meet with college Admission representatives through College/Career Center
- ❑ Start identifying appropriate colleges using Family Connection and other resources

# Continuing the Application Process

## *11<sup>th</sup> Grade - Spring*

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- Attend college fairs/school sponsored programs
  - Take SAT/ACT/Subject Tests as appropriate
  - Develop tentative list of colleges
  - Identify and begin visiting colleges
  - Research financial aid/scholarships
  - Familiarize yourself with college applications/common application/essays
  - Decide who will write your recommendations
  - Submit resume to counselor
-

# Types of Admission Tests

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- ❑ **PSAT** -practice test for SAT-11<sup>th</sup> grade score used to determine National Merit Award finalists
- ❑ **SAT**- tests reasoning/ critical thinking skills
- ❑ **ACT**-tests knowledge you have learned from subjects studied in high school
- ❑ **SAT Subject Tests** - hour long subject tests required by some colleges
- ❑ **TOEFL**- Test of English as a Foreign Language-evaluates ability of non-native speakers to use/understand English in academic setting
- ❑ **Accuplacer** –provides information on math, English and reading skills for college course placement (Montgomery College)

# Sign up for Admission Tests

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- SAT ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com))
- ACT ([www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org))
- TOEFL ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org))



# Identify College Possibilities

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## Use Websites

- <http://connection.naviance.com/qohs>  
(Family Connection)
- [www.myRoad.com](http://www.myRoad.com)
- [www.ww.usnews.com](http://www.ww.usnews.com)
- [www.anycollege.com](http://www.anycollege.com)
- [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)
- [www.wisechoice.com](http://www.wisechoice.com)



# Additional Resources for College Selection

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## □ Attend College Fair

- April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>

Montgomery County Fairgrounds

## □ Make Spring College Visits

- Tour the Campus

- Sit in on a Class

- Talk with students

- Ask about Financial Aid



# Other Resources

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## College/ Career Center

- Assists in researching careers/colleges
- Provides scholarship information
- Hosts college representatives

## College Guides and Websites

## Family, Friends, Teachers, Alumni

# Types of Colleges

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## □ Two Year and Community Colleges

- Degree after two years of study
- Can transfer to four-year school
- Offer technical/certificate programs for job market entry

## □ Four-year Colleges

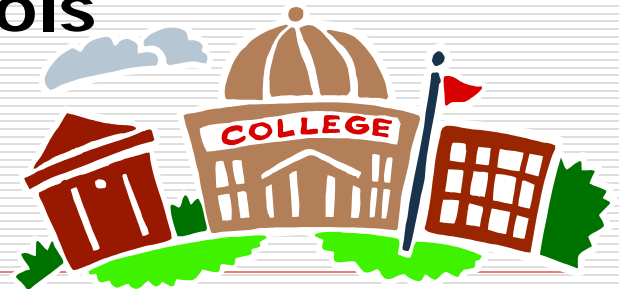
- Broad base of courses leading to B.A. or B.S.

## □ Universities

- Graduate and undergraduate degrees

## □ Vocational and Career Schools

- Students taught skills needed to perform a particular job



# Research Financial Aid

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## Websites

- [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
- [www.schoolsoup.com](http://www.schoolsoup.com)
- [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
- [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- [www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)
- [www.educationplanner.com](http://www.educationplanner.com)



# What Do Colleges Look For?

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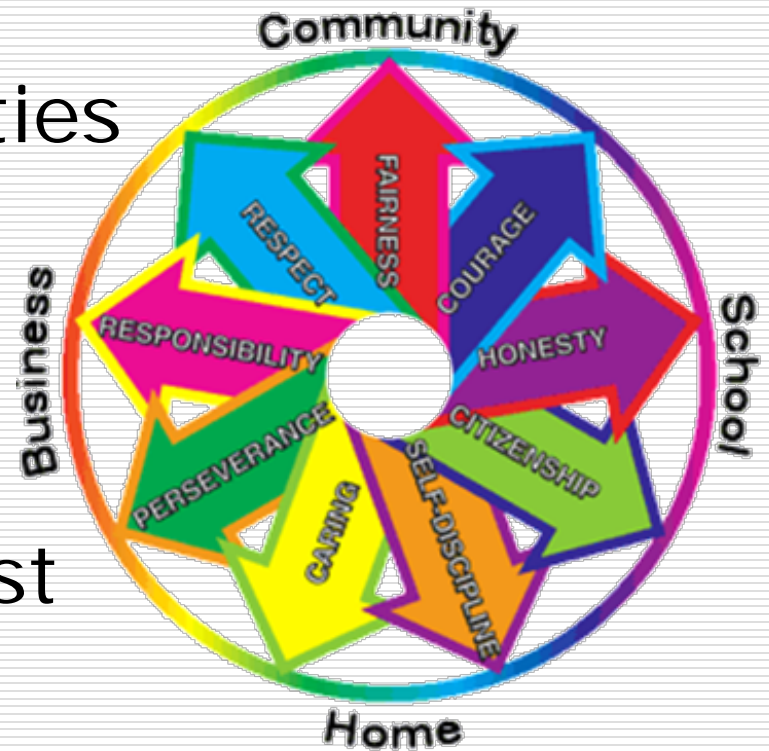
- ❑ Quality of Academic Program
- ❑ GPA (WGPA)
- ❑ SAT or ACT Scores
- ❑ Personal Statements and Essays



# What Do Colleges Look For?

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- ❑ Extracurricular Activities
- ❑ Special Talents/skills
- ❑ Community Service
- ❑ Recommendations
- ❑ Demonstrated Interest
- ❑ Interview



# What Should Students Look For?

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- Location
- Program
- Size
- School Personality (Fit)
- Cost
- Special Programs
- Admission Selectivity



# Summer Activities

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- Consider summer program, work experience, internship, or community service
- Visit colleges
- Review on-line college application forms
  - Requirements and directions
  - Essay
    - Choose topic
    - Do first draft

# Completing the Process

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

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- Meet with counselor
- Receive/review senior packet
- Parents night
  - Nuts/bolts of application process
- Finalize college list
- SAT/ACT
- Financial aid
  - November workshop - FAFSA
- Maintain academic rigor



**COMPLETE/SUBMIT COLLEGE APPLICATIONS**

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# College Applications..

## *How Many?*



- Start With a Wish List**
  - Cast a wide net
- Do Your Research**
- Narrow the Field**
  - ***Safety*** schools – little chance of rejection
    - Pick 1 or 2
  - ***Probable*** schools - likely acceptance
    - qualifications match
    - Pick 3 or 4
  - ***Reach*** schools – less likely acceptance
    - may not meet all criteria
    - Pick 1 or 2

# Understanding Types of Admission

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## □ Early Decision

- Binding agreement
- Apply early; College's decision made early
- Must attend if accepted

## □ Early Action

- Non-binding early decision

## □ Rolling Admission

- Applications evaluated upon receipt
- Decision letters sent as decisions are made

## □ Regular Admission

- School deadline - typically January or February
- Students notified early April



# Debunking The Myths

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- ❑ “The most expensive and prestigious colleges are the best”
  - Small and public colleges can have comparable or better programs
- ❑ “SAT or ACT scores are the only basis for college selection”
  - Many criteria are used including: course rigor, grades, test scores, essay, extracurricular activities and recommendations
- ❑ “Senior grades don’t count”
  - Many colleges want transcripts with 1st semester grades
  - Poor grades can result in rescinded admission offers

# Debunking More Myths

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- ❑ “I can visit a college after I’m accepted”
  - Students are rated on demonstrated interest
  - Visit shows strong interest/likelihood of attending if offered admission
- ❑ “Get into the toughest college you can”
  - Find the right fit at a college where you can be successful
- ❑ “Average to above-average income families should not apply for financial aid”
  - Filing a FAFSA allows access to all types of financial aid including grants and federal loans

# Some Closing Thoughts on

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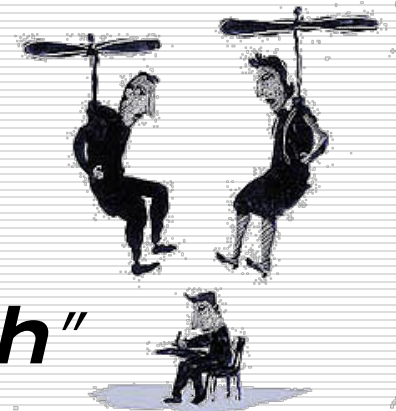
**Managing the STRESS!!**

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# Reducing Admission Anxiety

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- ❑ Refrain from being a *“helicopter parent”*
- ❑ Focus on the *“best match”* rather than on the *“best college”*
- ❑ Remember what is important for success in life...



***...ENJOY THE JOURNEY!!***

# A ROAD MAP TO COLLEGE

Putting the Pieces Together

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