

College Planning Handbook For Students & Parents

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Message from the Counselor

The college admission process is an exciting, challenging time in the lives of students and their families. It can be filled with adrenaline and disappointment, tedious work and patient waiting, dreams of the future and memories of the past. It is a time to get your plans in order knowing that:

- 1) God is with you
- 2) God has a plan for you
- 3) God will direct your steps

Take the proper perspective and walk confidently through the college admission process knowing that God already has a plan for you.

This guide has been prepared to assist Destiny Christian School students and their parents through the college admissions process. It is designed to maximize options and minimize stress. It is not designed to be a “quick read,” but as a tool to be used again and again throughout the process. I will be happy to work with each of you individually as your needs arise. It is truly exciting to discover the plans that God has for your future. Walk boldly during this college journey knowing that you are in HIS hands.

Serving Him,

Lori Hamel, Registrar

TESTING

Testing dates for this school year are provided in a separate handout and at www.destinywildcats.com.

ASVAB

The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) is administered at DCS, and is typically scheduled every two years. This is an aptitude and interest assessment test designed to predict future occupational and academic success. It is also used as an entrance assessment for those who may be considering the military.

PSAT

The PSAT is given at DCS during the month of October for all 11th grade students. This is one of **THE** most important standardized tests that a student takes. The PSAT is the official test for qualifying for the **National Merit Scholarship Program**. While this score is not officially part of the college admission process unless a student is a National Merit Scholar, many colleges subscribe to PSAT lists by group scores.

PLAN

The PLAN is the preliminary test for the ACT. While this score is not part of a scholarship competition, it will offer valuable knowledge in planning for the SAT and ACT exams. The PLAN is also given at DCS during the month of October.

ACT/SAT

Colleges and universities require the ACT or SAT as part of the admissions process. **Most colleges will accept either test.** Carefully check the admissions information from prospective colleges and universities to verify what test and scores are required. **It is recommended that you take the ACT in the spring of the sophomore year, the fall & spring of the junior year, and in the fall of your senior year.**

Registering for ACT and SAT

It is YOUR responsibility to register for the ACT/SAT testing. The registrar's office has all of the necessary registration forms. Registration can be completed by mail, phone, or via the Internet. Please refer to the registration packets for further information. **DCS school code is 371-028.** You must include this code in order for Destiny Christian School to receive your scores and include them on your official transcript.

ACT – The ACT covers four content areas with math scoring only one fourth of the composite grade. Some students (even high achieving math students) perform better on the ACT.

SAT – Take a minimum of two SAT I tests during the junior year. It is important 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 or your highest test score on any one given test date.

SAT II – 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 takes one hour in length and you may take three subjects on any given test day. Exams for the SAT I and II tests are given on the same day.

Reporting Scores to Colleges

Many colleges and universities will accept test scores on your official transcript. However, a few schools require that scores be sent to them directly from ACT or SAT. Please check the requirements for the schools to which you are applying.

You may list six college school codes when you register at no additional charge, or you may decide to take the tests, receive your scores, and then send them to the colleges and universities all at once for an additional fee. The choice is an individual one and depends mostly on your confidence level in testing.

Standby Testing

If you miss the late registration deadline, it is possible to take the test as a standby. However, you will be allowed to test **ONLY** after all examinees who hold tickets for that specific center and examinees with center changes have been seated and it has been determined that the test center has sufficient testing materials. **DO NOT RELY ON THIS OPTION.** There is an additional fee for standby testing.

ACT/SAT testing information

www.collegeboard.com

Test Preparation Web Site

www.ACT.org

[Http://collegeprep.okstate.edu](http://collegeprep.okstate.edu)

www.chadcargill.com

[Http://collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com)

www.criticalthinking.org

Contacting the College or University

Students, please make sure that you initiate the contacts with the colleges and universities you are interested in attending. I encourage you and your parents to talk with college admissions representatives. **NEVER ALLOW ANYONE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY ON YOUR BEHALF.**

Visiting Campus

“You gotta go to know!” Just being on campus for a few hours will tell you much about you and the college. Always contact the admissions office on campus at least two weeks before the planned visit to schedule your specific appointment. If you wish to visit a class or specific department on campus, please make your wishes known to the representative setting up your visitation. A tour of the campus does not necessarily include visiting a class. Before you leave the campus, find out where the students “hang out” and go there and just sit and watch for about thirty minutes to an hour. Do you see yourself there? Why or why not? Now, write down the answers to these questions while it’s fresh. You think that you will always remember, but if you are visiting several campuses, it’s nice to have notes for reference.

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 first year classes are taught by graduate assistants?
4. What are the three most popular majors on campus?

Tips for Interviews

1. Bring a copy of your resume.
2. Dress neatly.
3. Arrive early and get the lay of the land to be comfortable.
4. Show self-confidence with a firm handshake and good eye contact.
5. An interview is a two-way conversation. Be prepared to hold up your end of the conversation. Answer questions and stay on the topic.

Sample Resumes and Applications

Name
Address
Telephone Number

GPA: 3.98

Rank: 5/25

Activities for Grades Nine – Eleven

Varsity Football – 9, 10, 11
All District – 11
State Champions – 10, 11
Drama Productions – 9, 10, 11
Lead – 10, 11
Student Government – 9, 10, 11
Class Representative – 9
Class President – 11

Honors

Citizenship Award – 9, 10, 11
National Honor Society – 10, 11

Community

Certified Red Cross Lifesaving and CPR
Church Youth Group Student Leader

Employment

McDonalds – 10, 11
DCS Summer camp – 10, 11

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There can be some confusion concerning scholarships and financial aid because both are administered out of one office. They are actually “apples and oranges” so we will separate the two.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are based on merit. They are awards that represent achievement. Most require a class rank in the top 25% of the class. **ALL LEGITIMATE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AWARDED.** There are multiple scams stating that thousands of dollars in scholarship money go unclaimed. No legitimate scholarship or scholarship service will require you to pay anything.

Your best source of scholarship \$\$\$ will come from the college or university that you decide to attend. So, apply early. The **DEADLINE** for scholarship applications usually falls long **BEFORE** the deadline for admission. Remember, you are working with three offices on each college campus:

- 1) Admissions
- 2) Scholarship/Financial Aid
- 3) Housing

Usually you are not able to work with #2 and #3 until your application is complete and on file at the university of choice.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid is based not on merit but on need. You must file a FAFSA (**F**ree **A**pplication for **F**ederal **S**tudent **A**id) after January 1, of your senior year in order to be considered for Financial Aid. This is a lengthy process, so have your taxes ready to go! The forms say that you can estimate your tax information, but based on past experience, to estimate only slows down the process. It is important to file early, because once the grant money is given away, it is gone.

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.

Scholarship/Financial Aid Web Sites

www.fafsa.ed.gov/ - Financial Aid
www.fastweb.com/
www.rams.com/srn/
www.ed.gov/pro_info/SFA/StudentGuide/
www.salliemae.com/

ATHLETES

You must **register with the NCAA** during your senior year if you plan to participate in intercollegiate sports at the Division I or Division II collegiate level.

You also must **register with the NAIA** during your senior year if you plan to play at an NAIA school.

Some athletes work with a recruiter. However, realize that YOU must be proactive and market yourself to college coaches. You will need an athletic resume. Mr. Hamel and your coaches will be happy to work with you individually if you need.

The following web site may offer some help.

www.cybermania.com/justinfisher-footballresume.htm

Send your athletic resume and video highlights to the college coach. If you don't know the name of the coach, call the campus and ask for the athletic department. They can give you the name and campus address for the coach.

College Prep Quick Reference Guide

Freshman

1. Starting your college resume
 - Every class is important, your grades will follow you for the rest of your high school career & affect acceptance to college.

2. Community Service
 - You will need 25-50 hours of community service each year. Begin early and turn in documented community service to Mrs. Hamel to add to your transcript.

3. OHLAP
 - Apply as soon as possible, see Mrs. Hamel for information
 - For Oklahoma families making less than \$50,000 per year

Freshman Activities Log –

*Extracurriculars, community service, sports, awards, etc.

College Prep Quick Reference Guide

Sophomore

1. Community Service - 25-50 hours per year
2. Colleges – Narrow down to top 5 choices
3. PLAN
 - A college readiness test for 10th graders designed to help measure academic development and explore career/training options
 - Taken in the fall of the Sophomore year
 - Generally taken in October of the Sophomore year, administered through DCS, no enrollment is necessary
4. ACT
 - The most widely accepted college entrance exam
 - It is recommended to be taken at least once in the Spring of the Sophomore year
 - See Mrs. Hamel for application information

Sophomore Activities –

*Extracurriculars, community service, sports, awards, etc.

College Prep Quick Reference Guide

Junior

1. Community Service - 25-50 hours per year
2. Colleges – Narrow down to top 3 choices
3. Scholarships – Research available scholarships
4. PSAT –
 - To be taken if planning to take the SAT or if seeking National Merit Scholarship
 - Generally taken October of Junior year
5. ACT –
 - Recommended to be taken a minimum of 2 times in the Junior year (once in Fall semester and once in Spring semester)
 - The ACT is considered to be a more curriculum-based exam, testing college preparedness
 - See Mrs. Hamel for application information
6. SAT –
 - Recommend taking in the Spring of Junior year
 - The SAT is considered to be a test to measure your critical thinking skills

****Most colleges accept both ACT and SAT scores, so it is generally not necessary to take both tests. Colleges in Oklahoma accept the ACT. To determine which test is best for you to take: 1) Check with the colleges you are most interested in to find out which test they prefer. 2) Consider your testing strengths. If you are the type of person that can quickly apply what you have learned, take the ACT. If you have faith in your ability to think outside the box and apply critical thinking skills, take the SAT.**

Junior Activities – (track on the back of this page)

*Extracurricular, community service, sports, awards, etc.

College Prep Quick Reference Guide

Senior

1. Community Service - 25-50 hours per year
2. ACT – Recommend taking 1 final time in Fall of Senior year
3. Scholarships
 - Fill out FAFSA app in Spring of Senior year (as soon as family taxes are done)
 - Most national scholarship apps are due by Feb. 1st

****Most colleges accept both ACT and SAT scores, so it is generally not necessary to take both tests. Colleges in Oklahoma accept the ACT. To determine which test is best for you to take: 1) Check with the colleges you are most interested in to find out which test they prefer. 2) Consider your testing strengths. If you are the type of person that can quickly apply what you have learned, take the ACT. If you have faith in your ability to think outside the box and apply critical thinking skills, take the SAT.**

Senior Activities –

*Extracurricular, community service, sports, awards, etc.