



ANOKA-HENNEPIN  
SCHOOLS  
*A future without limit*

# Career and College **PLANNING GUIDE**



Secondary  
Technical  
Education  
Program

# Introduction

The primary mission of the Career and College Specialist (CCS) is to professionally educate and effectively assist students as they navigate through high school and transition into their college and career experience.

In collaboration with the high school counselors, our goal is to provide students with the resources needed to successfully navigate the career and college planning process. This guide is intended to serve as a tool in helping students and families make informed decisions.

During this exciting and often overwhelming time in your life, know that we are here to help! As additional questions or concerns arise, please feel free to contact the Career and College Specialist at your high school Career Center.



## Career and College Specialist Contacts:

**Andover High School**  
763-506-8551

**Anoka High School**  
763-506-6273

**Blaine High School**  
763-506-6760

**Champlin Park  
High School**  
763-506-6844

**Coon Rapids  
High School**  
763-506-7220

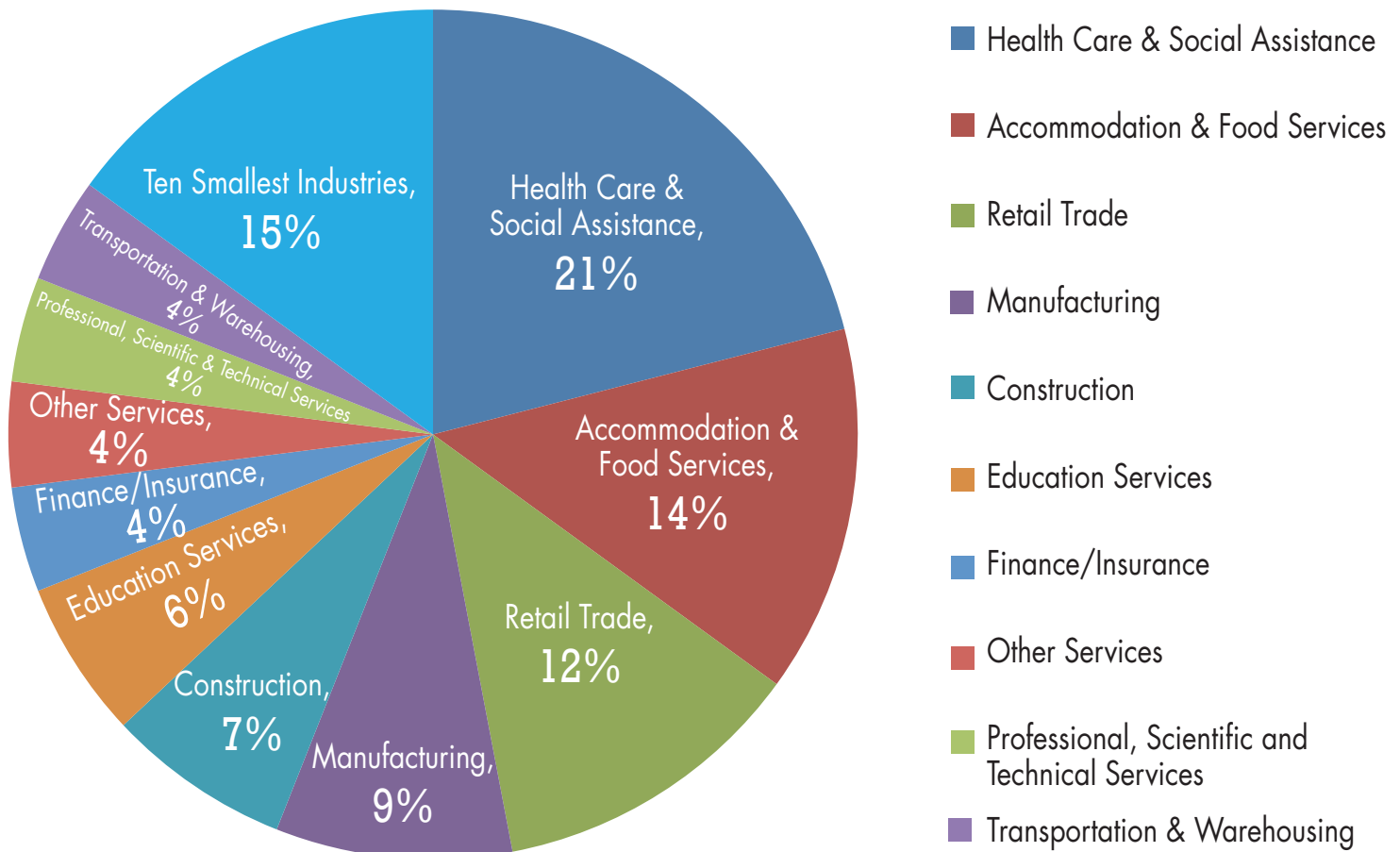
**STEP**  
763-433-4030



## Acknowledgements

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# Minnesota Job Vacancies by Industry



## High Demand Jobs

### Healthcare & Social Asst.

Registered Nurses  
 Home Health Aids  
 Nursing Assistants  
 LPNS  
 Medical Assistants  
 Dental Assistants  
 Physicians & Surgeons,  
 All other  
 Physical Therapists  
 Dental Hygienists  
 Massage Therapists

### Production

Team Assemblers  
 Helpers – Production Workers  
 Machinists  
 Packaging & Filling Machine  
 Operators  
 Assemblers & Fabricators,  
 all other  
 Inspectors, Testers, Sorters,  
 Samplers, & Weighers  
 Computer-Controlled Machine  
 Tool Operators  
 Supervisors of Production  
 Workers  
 Production Workers, all other  
 Welders

### Construction

Construction Laborers  
 Carpenters  
 Electricians  
 Plumbers  
 Paints, Construction, &  
 Maintenance  
 Construction Equipment  
 Operators  
 Highway Maintenance Workers  
 Supervisors of Construction  
 Workers  
 Cement Masons & Concrete  
 Finishers  
 Sheet Metal Workers

### Informational Technology ( I.T.)

Computer Systems Analysts  
 Software Developers,  
 Applications  
 Computer User Support  
 Specialists  
 Computer Occupations,  
 all other  
 Software Developers,  
 Systems Software  
 Computer Programmers  
 Network & Computer  
 Systems Administrators  
 Web Developers  
 Operations Research Analysts  
 Database Administrators

# Terms to Know



**ASSOCIATE DEGREE** – A degree awarded by community colleges and technical colleges upon completion of a course of study usually lasting two years. (Associate of Arts; Associate of Science).

**BACHELOR DEGREE** – A four-year college degree granted by either a private or public university (Bachelor of Arts; Bachelor of Science).

**COMMON APPLICATION** – Some schools allow you to use the Common Application to apply to several schools using the same basic form. Please be careful and note that there are several components to the Common Application. It is beneficial for you to sit down with your Career and College Specialist or counselor to make sure you are on track. You will also need to match your Common Application to your Naviance account, which you can do after you have completed the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) waiver within the Common Application. For more information on the Common Application, please visit [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).

**CUMULATIVE RECORD** – The complete record for all courses and grades earned during high school. Your high school transcript contains your cumulative record.

**EARLY ACTION** – An admission plan used primarily by highly selective colleges. Under early action, you follow an accelerated application process and usually apply by November 1st. You will be notified of a decision by mid-December, but, if you are accepted, you do not have to let the institution know of your decision until May 1st.

**EARLY DECISION** – An admission plan offered to well-qualified applicants who are definitely committed to their choice of college. Applicants will be notified of the acceptance or refusal in December. Acceptance under early decision requires you to withdraw applications at other colleges.

**FAFSA** – The FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid –used by aid providers to determine the amount of the student’s Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is the amount that the student’s family could contribute toward the student’s college education. EFC varies from student to student since it is based on the specific financial situation of the student and often of the student’s parents as well.

**LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE** – A college or university whose curriculum emphasizes general knowledge and developing broad intellectual capacities.

**NAVIANCE/FAMILY CONNECTION** – A web-based program that helps students organize their college search and applications, as well as scholarships.

**OPEN ADMISSION** – Colleges offering admittance to all students as long as they have completed high school or passed the GED.

**PRIVATE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY** – A school that is not supported by state taxes but may still be government regulated.

**RECIPROCIITY** – Minnesota has agreements with neighboring states to provide lower tuition for Minnesota residents to attend public colleges and universities in those states. Typically, non-resident admission fees and tuition are reduced (or eliminated) if you’re a reciprocity student. Minnesota has reciprocity agreements with Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota. It also has an agreement with the Canadian province of Manitoba and a limited agreement with Iowa Lakes Community College in northwestern Iowa.

**REGULAR ADMISSION** – The application process that requires application materials to be submitted no later than the specified deadline date printed in the college catalog or on the application form. Students typically receive responses in March.

**ROLLING ADMISSION** – The admission plan in which a complete application is acted on as soon as it is received. Students are admitted on a continuing basis.

**SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORTS** – Often called a Counselor Recommendation, many private colleges and universities require these to be submitted from your high school counselor.

**STUDENT AID REPORT** – The (SAR) is a document that gives you some basic information about your eligibility for federal student aid and lists your answers to the questions on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

## Post High School Options

**College** is any education beyond high school that results in an earned credential such as a certificate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree and beyond.

There are a number of different options available to students after high school. These opportunities can include:

**TWO-YEAR COLLEGES:** These 2-year options can also be private or public schools. The most common types of 2-year colleges are community colleges. Typically a 2-year college is less expensive than a 4-year college. Diplomas, certificates and degrees are offered through these schools. Many students will begin at a 2-year college and then transfer to a 4-year university to pursue an advanced degree.

**TECHNICAL COLLEGES:** Most technical colleges offer certificates, diplomas and associate degrees in many fields. Your typical length at a technical college will depend on your program choice and if you choose to be a full-time student. Most students attend technical colleges for two years. The programs and degrees offered at a technical college are very specific and are great options for those students who want to enter the work force quickly.

**FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES:** Your options for 4-year colleges are many, including private and public schools. These types of schools offer bachelor's degrees, which are usually completed in four years of full-time study. Some 4-year colleges also have graduate schools that offer masters and doctoral degrees.



**MILITARY:** The military offers many educational opportunities for students in return for their service to their country. Once you have decided the military is something you may want to pursue, you must meet all the requirements at the Military Entrance Processing Station. Students will also need to complete the ASVAB exam. High school counselors and Career and College Specialists can connect you with the recruitment officers, who can ensure you meet all the necessary requirements before high school graduation.

**APPRENTICESHIP:** Apprenticeships are a great way to enter a number of well-paying occupations in the manufacturing, construction, health care and transportation industries, among others. An apprentice gains hands-on work experience in an occupation, while also taking classroom instruction. Apprenticeship programs are sponsored by employers, labor unions and associations. Programs last between one and six years and provide wage increases as you gain work experience. Minimum qualifications must be met to apply.

**EMPLOYMENT:** Students may choose to go directly into the work force after high school graduation. If you know you would like to pursue a career that requires no further education, or have been offered a job within a company that will provide you the training you need, this may be an option for you. A meeting with your counselor will help you in planning, if this is the route you wish to take.

**GAP YEAR:** When choosing to do a gap year, students should consider what they would be doing to advance or enrich themselves both personally and professionally. Students can choose from an array of opportunities, including things like – learning a trade, volunteer work, travel, internships, and sports. Gap year opportunities should assist in improving students' knowledge, maturity, decision-making, leadership, independence and self-reliance.



# Conducting a College Search

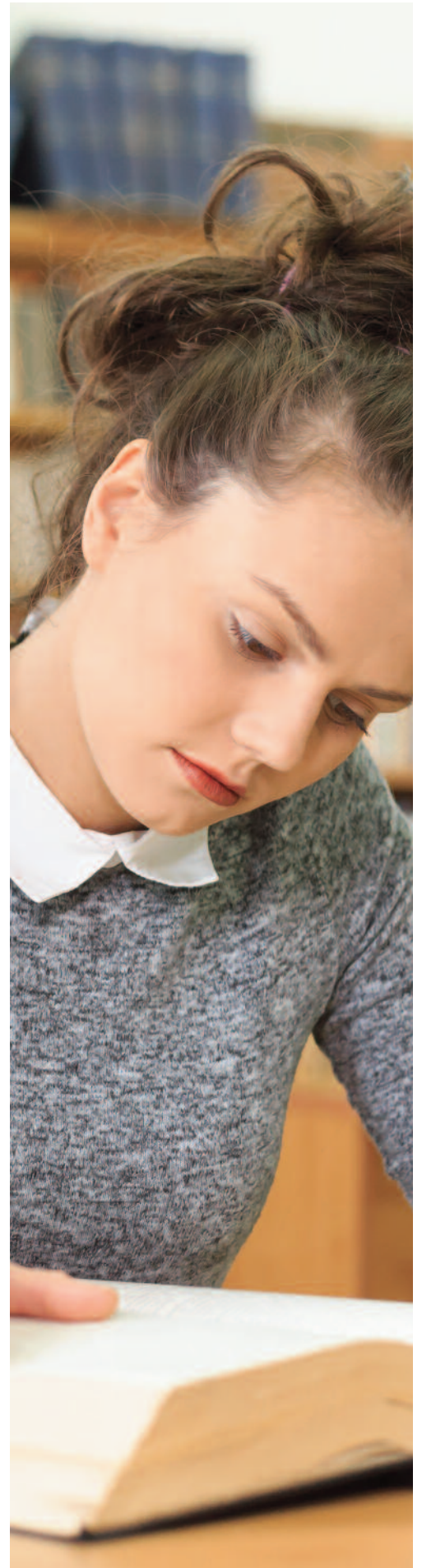
Making a decision regarding what to do after high school is often the first big decision in a young person's life. Not surprisingly, this can lead to some distress and anxiety. To begin your college search, start by creating a list of priorities. Ask important questions about yourself such as:

- Name three values that are most important to you.
- What is your favorite thing to do?
- What inspires you?
- What makes you happy?
- What are the first words that come to mind when asked to describe yourself?
- Are you a morning or night person?
- Do you like peace and quiet or hustle and bustle?
- What are you known for in your family?
- Which teacher do you have an important relationship with and why?
- What has been your greatest challenge in high school?
- What are your weaknesses academically?
- What subjects have you excelled in?
- Do you prefer a large lecture class or a small discussion group?
- Is it important to you to have close relationships with your teachers?
- Why are you going to college?
- Is there a career you are intent on pursuing?
- If you took a year off before college, what would you do?
- What balance of study, activities and social life are you looking for?
- Is there an activity you insist on pursuing in college?
- Are you ready to live far from home?
- Do you like being around people like yourself or do you prefer a more diverse community?



## TIPS:

Think about the “why” of each of your answers. Actually write out your responses to the questions and be sure to distinguish between wants and needs. Notice the trends in your responses to the questions above, and search for schools that match those priorities.





## There are many factors to consider in the college search process:

### **Location:**

Do I want to live at home? If not, how far away from home do I want to go?

### **Size:**

Do I find a large school exciting – or frightening?  
Do I find a small school comfortable - or confining?  
Larger schools can usually provide a wider range of experiences. Smaller schools can usually provide more personal support.

### **Programs:**

Am I looking for a wide-ranging liberal arts experience, or am I more focused on a specific course of professional study? Does the school offer special programs that interest me—honors, special seminars, internships, study abroad? Can this school provide the academic experiences I'm looking for?

### **Atmosphere:**

It is not just about academic studies—a great deal of the college experience is what happens outside of the classroom. Some campuses are very social. Some emphasize religion and morality. Some campuses are more politically active than others and may be liberal or conservative. Some campuses emphasize sports and other extracurricular involvement.

### **Competitiveness:**

Students often ask, "Can I get into [College X]?" People respond differently to challenge. Do I want to start off as one of the smartest students in my class? Do I rise to a challenge and seek to be surrounded by students who find learning easier than I do? Do I do my best work when I start off near the middle of my class?

### **Public or Private:**

Public schools tend to be larger and less expensive. Private schools tend to be smaller, with smaller class sizes, and more personal support. The expense difference can become a complicated calculation, depending on individual family circumstances.

### **Admissions:**

Though not the most important factor, at some point a student needs to be realistic about admission standards. Don't give up on a school automatically because you don't think you will be admitted. If the school meets all of your other criteria, but you think you won't be admitted, discuss it with your Career and College Specialist or counselor.

# Factors in the Admission Process

## 1. Academics:

There are a number of factors that colleges take into consideration in the admission process. The most important component is the student's academic record. The high school courses a student took and their grade point average are top factors in the college admission decisions. The high school transcript shows a college whether a student is likely to succeed if admitted. The basic requirements for admission to college include:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of Social Studies
  - This may not be the case for all 4 year colleges. Be sure to check with the specific colleges you are applying to regarding this requirement.
- 3 years of Math – minimum completion of Advanced Algebra
  - Some selective colleges or competitive programs will require a 4th year of math including some of the colleges within the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities system. Be sure to check with the specific colleges you are applying to regarding this requirement.
- 3 years of Science – 1 year Physical Science, 1 year Biology, 1 year additional physical science with a lab (*i.e. Chemistry or Physics*)
  - Some selective colleges or competitive programs will require a 4th year of science including some of the colleges within the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities system. Be sure to check with the specific colleges you are applying to regarding this requirement.
- Special consideration
  - 2 years of a single World Language – This may not be the case for all 4 year colleges. Be sure to check with the specific colleges you are applying to regarding this requirement.

*\*The more selective the college you are considering, the higher the admission requirements will be and the more rigorous the curriculum the college will expect you to have taken.*

## 2. Testing:

Students are encouraged to test during the spring of their junior year. However, it may be beneficial for some students to begin testing earlier. Talk with your Career and College Specialist or counselor to determine a timeline that is right for you. You may take either the ACT or SAT; colleges will accept both tests. Both are different tests and it will be best to do your research to figure out which test is the right test for you.

Both tests will require you to upload a photo of yourself to their website; make sure you have a headshot with a white background ready to upload when you go online to register. When registering for the test you will need your CEEB code which is:

### CEEB CODES:

Andover	240070
Anoka	240080
Blaine	240256
Champlin Park	240419
Coon Rapids	240537

**ACT:** The ACT is made up of 5 sections:

- English – 45 minutes
- Math – 60 minutes
- Reading – 35 minutes
- Science – 35 minutes
- Writing – 30 minutes (Optional, but highly encouraged)

Students register for the ACT online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). When registering for the ACT, please keep in mind that it can take about 30 minutes. The first step in the registration process is creating a username and password. Make sure you write this information down for future reference. It is important that the student register for the test as there are questions that only he/she will be able to answer. It may also be helpful to have your transcript handy to answer the questions about classes taken and grades earned. The ACT has an interest inventory to help assess students' potential career interests and filling out this inventory is optional. If you have questions regarding registration you can contact ACT at 319-337-1270.

Performing well on either the **ACT or MCA** may exempt a student from taking a college placement exam. See your counselor for details.



- SAT:** The SAT contains 4 sections:
- Reading – 65 minutes
  - Math – 80 minutes
  - Writing & Language – 35 minutes
  - Essay – 50 minutes (optional)

Students register for the SAT online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). You can reach SAT at 866-756-7346. A new SAT was released in the spring of 2016.

**Sending Scores** – You will need to have your test scores sent directly to the colleges you are applying to from ACT and SAT as these scores are not listed on your transcript. At the time of registration, you may select up to 4 schools to send your score reports to. If you did not request that scores be sent when you registered to test, you can request that scores be sent by going to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) (there will be a fee).

### 3. Essay:

Many college applications require a student to submit one or multiple essays. The essay is your chance to make a personal impression – make it a good one! Short answer essays are just as vital as the longer essay; don't just assume because an essay is short answer that it isn't important. You may find it helpful to show your rough draft to a trusted teacher and/or other readers to get input. Make sure your final copy is carefully checked for grammar and spelling.

#### What Colleges Want to See

- Can you write? – Colleges look to see if your writing ability meets the academic standard of the college. Are you able to take a thought and develop it into a well-organized and clear essay?
- Who are you? The essay is your chance to express yourself and who you are to the admissions officers. They are looking to get a sense of your values, passions, and beliefs and want to hear about those through your own voice. Above all, they are trying to learn how you are going to impact their community. Will you make their school a better place by attending?

#### Selecting a Topic

- Some colleges may give you freedom in what you choose to write about while others may provide a specific question or prompt for you to answer.
- If you are required to address one of the college's assigned questions
- Do your research - go to the library, use the internet, ask others what they know about the topic.
  - Organize your thoughts and opinions before you start.
  - Draft an outline of points you want to cover and list some

- supporting ideas.
- Have an idea of what your conclusion will be.
- Be sure you answer the question.

#### Sample Essay Prompts

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
- Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that

marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

If you can choose your own topic:

- Your essay should reveal your true self in your own voice.
- There is no single "right" topic.

#### Creating Drafts

- Now that you have selected a topic, start writing. The first draft is not meant to be perfect, so just write everything that comes to mind down on the page. It might be helpful to set a timer for twenty minutes and not stop writing until it goes off.
- Finished writing? Now don't look at it again until tomorrow.
- Next, re-read your essay. Do you feel good about the topic? Is the essay about you? Is it truly your voice? The essay should address the "who, what, why, and how" of you.
- Review your essay. How is the structure? Does the beginning grab the reader?
- Get some constructive input from teachers, parents or peers. However, be sure the essay still sounds like you after any revisions.

## 4. Letters of Recommendations:

Not every college requires a letter of recommendation. You can find out which colleges require letters by visiting the college's admission webpage. Colleges typically like to see letters of recommendations from core subject area teachers (10th & 11th) and usually do not require more than one or two letters. Teachers and counselors should be allowed at least two weeks to write your letter. If a deadline may be a problem, point out the date on the request form and make sure they will be able to complete their reference on time. Your request date of completion should not be the same date as your college admission deadlines – remember the Counseling Office needs 10 days to process your paperwork once we have received the letters. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to follow up with their recommenders to be sure deadlines are being met.

### Counselors

If your application requires a recommendation from your counselor, you should request this information within Naviance and then complete a "teacher recommendation form" (available in the Career Center/Counseling Office). This will help your counselors write a comprehensive recommendation. Complete the form fully and carefully, and schedule a meeting with your counselor if necessary.

### Teachers

**If the college requires** a recommendation from a teacher, request a letter of recommendation within Naviance and then complete a "teacher recommendation form" (available in the Career Center/Counseling Office). This will help your teachers write a comprehensive recommendation. If you are using the Common Application, this must be noted to the teacher on the request form. The teacher will upload your recommendation to Naviance. These letters are considered confidential, so the counselor cannot show them to you.

To check to see if your letters of recommendation have been turned in you will need to log-in to Naviance.

1. Go to the "Colleges" tab,
2. Click "Letters of recommendation" and it will show the teacher's name and the status of your request.

## 5. Extracurricular Activities:

There is no perfect mix of extra-curricular activities that a college is looking for. Colleges do not require a specific amount of community service hours or that you belong to a set number of student clubs. What colleges do look at is consistency, how long have you been a member of a club, and if you have taken on a leadership role or increased your commitment to the group as time has gone by. Colleges like to see that students are involved outside of the school day as it shows a student has strong time management skills. It also shows a student will engage in their college and make an impact on the college community both inside and outside of the classroom.

## 6. Successful Completion of High School:

Admissions decisions by colleges are contingent upon successful completion of senior year. It is important to maintain your GPA and continue to challenge yourself through high school. Looking to change your schedule? Be sure to communicate this potential change with the college you will be attending prior to making any final decisions. When admission decisions are made, they take your senior year courses into consideration. Making changes can lead to your admission being rescinded. Make sure you watch for housing, scholarship and financial aid deadlines. Before graduation, seniors are required to fill out a final transcript request form.



# Application Process

Junior year is the ideal time to conduct your college search as the application process begins early in the fall of your senior year. Be sure to be actively checking your school email, listening to announcements, and paying attention at class meetings as important information regarding the application process will be communicated. There is no magic number of schools to apply to – three is often too few and doesn't cover your bases; eight is often too many making it difficult to know the schools well. Make sure you have a variety of schools in terms of cost and selectivity on your list. You will also want to ask yourself, "Can I picture being happy at all of the schools on my list?" and "Do I really want to attend this school?" When you have finalized the list of schools you plan to apply to, it is important to be aware of deadlines – from the college side and the high school side. Colleges rarely make exceptions for late applications and the Career Center/Counseling Office requires 10 days to process your transcript request.



You will also want to ask yourself, "Can I picture being happy at all of the schools on my list?" and "Do I really want to attend this school?" When you have finalized the list of schools you plan to apply to, it is important to be aware of deadlines – from the college side and the high school side. Colleges rarely make exceptions for late applications and the Career Center/Counseling Office requires 10 days to process your transcript request.

## To request a transcript:

1. Request your transcript online through Naviance Family Connection. Contact your counselor or the Career and College Specialist if you are having trouble logging-in.
2. After adding the request to Family Connection, visit the Career Center or Counseling Office to **pay the fee of \$3.00/transcript** and to fill out and **sign an authorization form**. The transcript(s) will then be sent either electronically (to those schools who accept them) or via US mail.



## Important tips about the application process:

- Complete your own application. You are the one applying to college.
- Fill out the application completely; do not leave questions blank.
- Students should call the college if they have questions about the application or process.
- Read over the application for errors. Have someone proofread your application before hitting the submit button online.
- Remember to write a nice thank you note afterward to those individuals who wrote letters of recommendation on your behalf.
- Allow 10 school days for the Career Center/Counseling Office to process your application materials.
- Have your ACT scores sent directly from ACT to the colleges.
- If you get a note from the college saying that part of your application is missing, DON'T PANIC. In all likelihood, it is at the office and simply hasn't been entered into the system yet. Check Naviance to see when your materials were sent and give the colleges a few days to sort the mail before requesting we send a second set of documents.
- Confused? Stop into the Career Center or make an appointment with your school counselor.

## NCAA Eligibility Requirements

Student athletes who want to participate in Division I or II athletics during their first year of enrollment in college must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will determine a student's eligibility by the student's grade point average in core classes and college entrance exam scores. Students should register online by the end of their junior year at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org). Upon registering students must request a transcript and official ACT score to be sent to the NCAA. This will be sent your junior year and then again after graduation your senior year.

# Timeline

Below is a brief summary of activities to keep in mind each year.

## Freshman Year

Freshmen should begin the process of self-discovery, including their learning style and identifying their strengths. Much of this work will occur during advisement time using Naviance.

- Take challenging classes in core academic subjects.
- Develop an understanding of your cumulative record and its importance.
- Get involved in school or community based activities that interest you or let you explore career interests.
- Start to use the resume feature in Naviance. Keep track of your awards, honors, paid and volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. Continue to update this throughout high school.
- Get to know the resources within your school, including your counselor, career and college specialist, assistant principal, and others.

## Sophomore Year

Sophomores should continue exploring career options and start considering possible pathways to these careers. Much of this work will occur during advisement time using Naviance.

- Continue work on your cumulative record; keep your GPA up or try to raise it.
- Sign up to participate in a career fair, industry tour, or job shadow in the Career Center.
- Thoughtfully consider courses for registration based upon career interests, including AP/CIS/IB, PSEO, elective courses, and course offerings at STEP.
- Prepare for the ACT. Take a practice test in the fall and use Naviance Test Prep throughout the school year and summer.

## Junior Year

Juniors should begin seriously examining their post-secondary options and planning accordingly. Juniors should take college entrance exams, make college visits and begin searching for scholarship.

- Continue to use MnCIS and Naviance to help with college planning and ACT test preparation.
- Attend a college fair.
- Consider taking the PSAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in October.
- Consider taking the ASVAB if interested in the military.
- In the spring, take the ACT or SAT.
- Submit the NCAA Eligibility Center form if you plan to participate in a Division I or II sport in college.
- Visit colleges you are interested in, meet with a military recruiter or union representative for apprenticeship opportunities.

## Senior Year

Senior year is when everything comes together and you get to see the results of your hard work and planning.

- Request letters of recommendation (if required) and transcripts.
- Complete college applications.
- Check out scholarship opportunities on the Career Center web page and/or Naviance.
- Complete the FAFSA after October 1st.
- Visit colleges again.
- Make your final decision!
- Take appropriate placement exams if required (i.e. Accuplacer, ASVAB, other college specific exams)
- Sign up for housing if you plan to live on campus, attend orientation, and register for classes.

# Resources for Conducting a College Search

Naviance is a web-based service designed especially for students and parents. Family Connection is a comprehensive website that you can use to help in making decisions about courses, colleges, and careers.

## Logging in to Naviance

Go to your school's specific Naviance Family Connection site:

**Andover:** [Connection.naviance.com/ahsmn](http://Connection.naviance.com/ahsmn)

**Anoka:** [Connection.naviance.com/anokahs](http://Connection.naviance.com/anokahs)

**Blaine:** [Connection.naviance.com/blainehs](http://Connection.naviance.com/blainehs)

**Champlin Park:** [Connection.naviance.com/champlinphs](http://Connection.naviance.com/champlinphs)

**Coon Rapids:** [Connection.naviance.com/coonrhs](http://Connection.naviance.com/coonrhs)

**Students:** You will only need to enter the front portion of your school email. For example, *stude\_exam456*. Do not include the [@ahschools.us](mailto:@ahschools.us). Your password is your student ID number.

**Parents:** If you have logged in before you will have created your own username and password. If you have not logged in before or are having trouble logging in, please contact the Career and College Specialist or your student's counselor.

## What will you find on Naviance?

### ■ College Lookup and Visit Schedule

Students can look-up information on a specific college as well as view when college representatives will be visiting your high school. These visits can be viewed online by clicking on the "College" tab and then selecting "view all upcoming college visits" link, or by viewing the page for a particular college.

### ■ College Search

Enter criteria such as size, location, cost, availability of specific majors or athletic programs; students can then produce a list of colleges that meet their criteria. Try using the College SuperMatch to help narrow your choices!

### ■ Scattergrams

A graphical view of application outcomes (accepted, denied, waitlisted) at a college for your high school's recent applicants, using GPA and ACT or SAT scores. Students can gauge their chances of acceptance by comparing personal GPA/ACT numbers with those of successful applicants.

### ■ Transcripts

You will be able to view when your transcripts/applications were sent to the colleges for which you applied. (Select the "College" tab and then click on the "transcripts" link on the left-hand side).

### ■ Letters of Recommendation

You will be able to view when a letter of recommendation you requested from a teacher has

been uploaded into Naviance. Select the "College" tab and then click on the link that says "Colleges I'm Applying To." If you scroll down the page you will see a Teacher Recommendations heading. The teacher's name and the word "completed" will appear if the letter has been uploaded.

### ■ My Resume

This link gives students an easy way to develop a resume. The screen will provide boxes for students to enter information and, in turn, transforms the information entered into a resume.

### ■ My Game Plan

A series of questions that are designed to help the counselor work with each student to develop a game plan for achieving their goals after graduation. Answers to these questions can be changed at any time and answers are not shared with anyone other than the counselor.



# Minnesota Career Information System (MnCIS)

<http://mncis.intocareers.org>

The Minnesota Career Information System (MnCIS) is a computer-based system that combines a wealth of career and educational information into one comprehensive, easy-to-use, career exploration tool.

## Login Information:

Andover HS: Username = Andover  
Password = huskies

AHS: Username = Anoka  
Password = tornado

BHS: Username = Blainehs  
Password = bengals

CPHS: Username = Champlin  
Password = rebels

CRHS: Username = CRHS  
Password = cardinal

STEP: Username = STEP  
Password = careers

## Three Main Components:

1. Occupations and Employment – You can search by career cluster or by specific career title to find: general work activities, helpful high school courses, skills and abilities, physical demands, interests, knowledge, hiring practices, wages, employment and outlook.
2. Education and Training – You can find information on: programs of study, Minnesota colleges, colleges throughout the U.S., undergraduate and graduate school sort (by major, degree, location, size, etc.) and financial aid.
3. Assessment Tools – There are a variety of assessments available that measure your interests (IDEAS and O\*Net Interest Profiles), skills (SKILLS – matches careers to skills you like/possess), values (O\*Net Work Importance Locator) and career preference (Career Cluster Inventory).



## General College Search Websites:

Braintrack  
[www.braintrack.com](http://www.braintrack.com)

Cappex  
[www.cappex.com](http://www.cappex.com)

College Atlas  
[www.collegeatlas.org](http://www.collegeatlas.org)

College Board  
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>

College Confidential  
[www.collegeconfidential.com](http://www.collegeconfidential.com)

College Prowler  
[www.collegeprowler.com](http://www.collegeprowler.com)

College Greenlight  
[www.collegegreenlight.com](http://www.collegegreenlight.com)

College View  
[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

Colleges that Change Lives  
[www.ctcl.org](http://www.ctcl.org)

Fast web  
[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

Get Ready for College  
[www.getreadyforcollege.org](http://www.getreadyforcollege.org)

Go College  
[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com)

In Like Me  
[www.inlikeme.com](http://www.inlikeme.com)

National Center for Education Statistics  
[www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

Peterson's  
[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

Princeton Review  
[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)

Students.gov  
[www.students.gov](http://www.students.gov)

U-Can (Private, nonprofit college information)  
[www.ucan-network.org](http://www.ucan-network.org)

Unigo  
[www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com)

Resource Guide for Students with Disabilities  
<http://goo.gl/WmSvcl>



## Campus Visits

Visiting a college campus is a great way to access information as well as to get a feel for the overall atmosphere of a particular school. Schools may feel very different than what is conveyed through their literature and on their website. Therefore, it is very beneficial for prospective students to make a campus visit. A good visit will often include a tour of the campus, a meeting with the admissions staff, and a meeting with the financial aid office. You may want to have lunch in the school dining hall or even spend the night on campus. Pick up a campus calendar or newspaper to see what events and hot topics are taking place. After visiting, write down some notes immediately. Once you visit several schools, you might find that you may get the schools confused with each other. Use your list and try to evaluate how well the school matched up with your personal criteria. Try to imagine yourself being a part of campus life.

### Tips for Setting Up A Campus Visit

- It can be very beneficial to visit a college or university when school is in session. You want to get the feeling of what the campus is like with students there.
- When setting up a visit to a college or university, it is important to make arrangements at least two weeks in advance. Surprise visits are usually not productive visits for you or the college.
- For many schools, you can schedule a campus visit online through their website. YOU can also call the admissions office to schedule a visit.
- Before you contact the school you plan to visit, check out their web page and see if there are certain areas of campus that you are especially interested in seeing, for example: the work-out facility, library, student center, etc.
- Ask if you are able to meet with a faculty member in the area that interests you or attend a class.
- Find out if it is possible to stay overnight in one of the residence halls.
- Find out if lunch is provided during your campus visit. Remember, you are going to be at this college/university for a while so you want to make sure the food is edible!

## Virtual Tours

If you are unable to visit one of the colleges you are considering, see if they have a virtual tour on their website or through one of the websites below:

- Campus Tours [www.campustours.com](http://www.campustours.com)
- eCampus Tours [www.ecampustours.com](http://www.ecampustours.com)

# Questions to Ask

Before visiting the college, it is important you make a list of questions to ask. Ask questions of your tour guide, but also of students walking around campus. You will most likely have your own list of questions, but here are some questions to get you started.

## Admissions

- What impresses you the most in a student's application?
- What kind of student does well here?
- What kind of student doesn't do well here?
- What do you think your school is best known for?
- What changes do you see taking place on campus in the next five years?
- Do you superscore the ACT?
- How do AP/CIS/IB/PSEO/concurrent enrollment courses transfer?

## Financial Aid

- What types of financial aid does the college offer and how do I apply?
- What is the average amount of debt a student has when they graduate?
- What kinds of campus jobs are available to students?
- Is there a priority deadline for FAFSA?
- What merit scholarships are available? Other scholarships?

## Student Population

- What is the gender and geographic breakdown of your students?
- How diverse is your school community?
- What do students like most about your school? Least?
- What is your retention rate from freshman to sophomore year?

## Campus Life

- Ask students questions about what they like and don't like about the college.
- What type of extra-curricular activities does your college offer?
- What do students do for fun? What do students do on the weekends?
- Is housing guaranteed? Where do most students live?
- What activities and services are available to help students transition from high school to their freshman year of college?

## Academics

- Do professors teach classes? Does your college use teaching assistants?
- What is the professor to student ratio? What is the average class size?

- What type of advising program do you have for your students?
- What type of academic assistance is available?
- What types of support services are available to students?
- What percentages of students study abroad and what types of programs are available?
- What percentages of students graduate on time (2 years, 4 years)?
- What types of career preparation and placement services are offered to students?

## Financial Aid

The majority of financial aid is based on demonstrated financial need. Financial aid is awarded by each college to which you apply, and may include a combination of the following:

- **Scholarships and Grants:** money that does not have to be repaid. (Note: not all scholarships/grants are created equal. Some are given as a "one-time" gift, while others are renewable if students meet certain criteria.)
- **Loans:** money that can be borrowed by students and/or parents. (Note: not all loans are created equal. Some loans are subsidized by federal or state programs, which can reduce the interest rate and/or defer payments for a length of time. Compare the total costs of each loan.)
- **Work-Study:** schools may offer work on campus as a type of financial aid. (Note: not all work-study is created equal. A job in the food service may pay the same as assisting in the laboratory, but students should consider that work on campus could provide career-related experiences.)
- **Other:** students have other opportunities to supplement their educational finances. Participating in the military, ROTC, AmeriCorps, and other programs can provide funds or forgiveness of educational loans. (Note: TANSTAFU – There Ain't No Such Thing as a Free Lunch. Many of these "other" sources will provide financial assistance but there are also obligations; it is always important to read the fine print.)





# Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

All colleges require that you file the FAFSA in order to be considered for financial aid. Students planning to enroll in college can begin completing FAFSA after October 1 their senior year. Each college and university has a different deadline, so contact the school to find out their exact deadline date. The FAFSA can be found by visiting [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Remember, you should never pay to complete the FAFSA.

## Before Beginning Your FAFSA

1. Request a FSA ID number for both student and parent at <https://fsaid.ed.gov/> This will serve as your electronic signature.
2. Gather the documents you need. Start with your Social Security Number, driver's license, income tax return, bank statements and investment records.
3. Print a FAFSA on the Web worksheet. Write in your answers and gather your parent(s) information then transfer the data to the FAFSA on the web application.
4. Note important deadlines.

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education has a website with Tips for Completing the FAFSA: [www.ohe.state.mn.us](http://www.ohe.state.mn.us) College Goal financial aid nights are also offered at each school.

## After Completing Your FAFSA

After you submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a Student Aid Report (SAR) will be sent to you:

- If a valid e-mail address is on file for you, you will receive an e-mail, within 3 to 5 days, with instructions on how to access an online copy of your SAR.
- If a valid e-mail address is not on file, your SAR will be mailed to you via postal mail within 7 to 10 days.
- The colleges that you listed on your FAFSA will have access to your information electronically one day after it is processed. However, depending on their own process and workload, they might not retrieve your information immediately.
- If your application is complete, an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) will display on your SAR. If your application is incomplete, your SAR will not include an EFC, but it will display text that specifies any issues that need to be resolved.
- If your FAFSA is incomplete:
- Make corrections to your FAFSA by clicking Login on the home page to log in to FAFSA on the Web using your FSA ID. Click Make FAFSA Corrections, and add or correct the information that caused your FAFSA to be incomplete. Submit your corrections.
- Add or correct information on your paper SAR, sign it, and mail it to the address provided.
- If your FAFSA is complete:
- The EFC that displays on your SAR is a calculation based on the information that you reported on your FAFSA.
- Your college uses the EFC to determine the amount of federal grants, work-study, and loans for which you may be eligible.
- Your college will send you a financial aid award letter that details the financial aid you are eligible to receive.

Your EFC is not the amount of money your family will have to pay for college nor is it the amount of federal student aid you will receive. It is a number used by your school to calculate the amount of federal student aid you are eligible to receive.

*\*\*Your school, your state, or Federal Student Aid may ask you to verify the accuracy of the information you provide on the FAFSA.*

For more information, please visit: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/next-steps>

# Resources

The Career Center has several resources about types of financial aid available to students and families. Students and families are encouraged to stop by and take handouts and brochures that will assist in their financial planning process.

The US Department of Education offers families an online tool to estimate their expected family contribution (EFC) before filing an official FAFSA. The FAFSA4caster takes about 30 minutes and be completed at any time. You can find this resource at [www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov)

## CSS Profile

Some selective colleges will require that you complete a form known as the CSS Profile. Check with the colleges to which you are applying to see if they require this form. For more information visit <http://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>

## Scholarships

As scholarships come into the Career Center/Counseling office they will be posted to Naviance and or the Career Center webpage.

Scholarship Searching in Naviance –

Use the Sallie Mae National Scholarship Search tool built into Naviance to find scholarship options that might be available to you.

Scholarship List –

a listing of scholarships posted by the Career Center or Counseling Office. Please note that some of the information may be for the previous year, so the student must confirm current year details. All scholarships stay active on the site to allow for students/families to plan ahead.

Community Scholarships –

Check with the Career Center/Counseling Office for more information.



## Beware of Scholarship Scams

Almost 95% of all student aid comes directly from the federal and state governments or the school itself using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Be wary of any financial aid search company that charges a fee to match students with sources of financial aid. There are no guarantees that the company will find any aid that you can't find yourself.

Proceed with caution if a company:

1. Uses excessive hype and claims of high success rates.
2. Requires up-front money for applications fees.
3. Has typing and spelling errors on the application.
4. Lists no telephone numbers for the business.
5. Suggests its influence with scholarship sponsors.
6. Pressures you to respond quickly.
7. Requests personal information (bank account, credit card, or social security numbers)

## Reciprocity

From the MN Office of Higher Education Website

Minnesota has agreements with neighboring states to provide lower tuition for Minnesota residents to attend public colleges and universities in those states. First, apply for admission to the participating reciprocity college or university. You do not have to apply for reciprocity at the same time. The online reciprocity application is designed for Minnesota residents attending certain public colleges and universities in Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota and Manitoba.

The online reciprocity application is the easiest way to apply for reciprocity benefits:

<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/ssl/reciprocity/apply1.cfm>. Minnesota residents attending public technical colleges in South Dakota or Wisconsin should apply directly to the technical college for tuition reciprocity benefits because those colleges do not use this web-based application.

Private colleges do NOT participate in the tuition reciprocity programs because they do not charge non-resident tuition rates.

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NOTES:

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