

## FOR FRESHMEN ONLY

When should I start planning for my child's higher education? NOW!!! Here's how...

It is never too early to start considering your child's plans and goals for after high school. Here are some key areas you can start considering now.

**HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE:** Believe it or not, we are already starting the scheduling process for our students for next year. This process begins with the recommendations of their current teachers for what levels and classes they believe your child is best suited for. These recommendations are now viewable through the Genesis Student Portal. Read these recommendations carefully and discuss them with your child. If you would like your child to strive for a higher level than what is being recommended, there is still time for students to put the extra effort in to prove themselves and their interest to their teachers. If they are able to raise their level of success, it may be possible for the recommendation to be changed. They may also submit an appeal of placement form to their guidance counselor for approval by the department supervisor.

We want our students to strive to be placed at the highest level they can succeed at. This is important for three reasons. One, the higher the level of course work, the more favorably a college admissions officer will credit the student's transcript at the time of consideration for acceptance. Two, the more rigorous the classes a student takes, the better preparation they are getting for college level course work in the future. Encouraging your child to take the highest level of classes possible, within their capabilities, is an important way to ensure they are getting the best education possible, while building the strongest transcript possible to maximize their college options. Lastly, the best preparation for both the SAT and ACT is to take demanding courses in a strong curriculum.

**COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTING:** The SAT and ACT are standardized tests designed to predict a students' potential for success in college. Although colleges and universities also consider other factors in their review process, these test scores are still used as a screening device when determining a student's fit for their institution. There are two tests offered to help underclassmen gain experience in this test taking format, as well as to give them and their parents an idea of where their aptitude and achievement stand.

\* The PLAN test is a precursor to the ACT. The PSAT is a precursor to the SAT. We absorb the cost and administer the PSAT to all Freshman, Sophomores, and Juniors as a means to prepare for the SAT.

\* The actual SAT and ACT are usually taken in the Spring of a student's junior year and then again, if needed, in the Fall of their senior year.

There are several SAT preparation options for students to consider once they are upperclassmen. High Point offers an SAT prep course available to students through our Adult Education Program. This runs on Wednesday afternoons so students may attend and use the late bus to be transported home. There are other courses also available through various private prep programs, as well as on line services, both free and for a fee. Lastly, there are SAT and ACT prep books/CD's available at book stores and libraries.

**THE COLLEGE SEARCH:** During your child's sophomore year, the guidance department will take the students through the college search platform of our Naviance Program, which will use answers the students provide on a detailed inventory to determine possible vocational options that match their interests. Along with desires your child may already be expressing for their professional goals, you can use this information to start a dialog about how they can achieve their aspirations and what kind of college experience they may be interested in to get there. A big university or a small private college, a rural setting that feels like home or an opportunity to try the "city life", some place within driving distance or a location that offers them the chance to experience a different part of the country; starting to consider these things is the beginning of the process of a college search. To assist you in this process, High Point runs the "Pathways to Your Future" program every Fall, which incorporates a mini-college fair with several topic specific informational sessions to provide a well rounded and very valuable experience for high school students of all grades and their parents. Other high schools in the county also offer college fairs as additional opportunities to meet college representatives and have access to a wide variety of schools. There are also many college search websites that allow a student and their parents to narrow the multitude of college choices by logging in their preferences in areas such as size, location, price, and available majors. The guidance web site at [hpregonal.org](http://hpregonal.org) has links to many of these sites.

**SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:** The High Point Guidance Department posts scholarship opportunities continually to the Naviance platform. You can access these through your student's Naviance account. Some of these are available to students of all grades so it is never too early to check them out.

Although many of the steps outlined above are geared to upperclassmen, having an idea of some of the things you can start to consider now, as well as a plan as to when it is appropriate to embark on each new step, can increase awareness and decrease anxiety as you begin this incredible new journey with your child.

*Best of Luck to You! Lisa Frisbie, Freshman Counselor*