

CAREER PLANNING TIPS



LITTLESTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

*Littlestown High School
Guidance Department
www.lasd.k12.pa.us*

SUGGESTED CAREER PLANNING TIMETABLE

IF YOU ARE UNSURE OR SURE OF WHAT YOU WANT TO DO - SEE YOUR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING A CAREER PLAN

Spring of your Junior Year OR Before

- ___ 1. Take the PSAT in October that is offered at the high school.
- ___ 2. Register to take the May or June SAT Reasoning Test or ACT admissions tests – you may do this online at collegeboard.com or actstudent.org.
- ___ 3. Start preparing for the SAT – go to collegeboard.com/satonlinecourseschool and enter the school code : 392305. District funded – free and convenient.
- ___ 4. Make individual conferences with your counselor to review your senior courses.
 - Examine and review with counselor your needs, interests, and abilities.
 - Begin to identify the schools which could satisfy your preference and which are compatible with your academic qualifications.
 - Parents should set up a meeting with the counselor to discuss specifics.
- ___ 5. Watch for Open House or summer events at colleges that interest you. Attend the Adams County College Fair at Gettysburg College in October. These programs offer activities and information that will help you make your decisions about colleges/careers.
- ___ 6. Plan to spend some time exploring colleges on the internet. Plan actual visits to the institutions – speak with school personnel to answer your questions. Speak to college representatives when they visit the high school.
- ___ 7. Explore websites: collegeboard.com-pheaa.org-fastweb.com-bls.gov-petersons.com-gownetwork.com

Fall of your Senior Year

- ___ 1. Set up a calendar for the year with due dates and deadlines.
- ___ 2. Sign up for SAT Reasoning Tests (and/or SAT Subject Tests if appropriate), ACT Tests or more specific testing that your institution requires.
- ___ 3. Complete college applications (online preferably). Notify the Guidance Office of your intentions. Keep track of what you need from each college. APPLY EARLY.
- ___ 4. Gather letters of recommendation, applications and transcripts and bring to the Guidance Office so that all materials can be mailed in one single envelope – free of charge. Guidance will record these transactions.
- ___ 5. Complete FAFSA (Financial Aid) Application (after January 1). Doing so online is more timely and accurate. Must be completed for ANY chance of financial aid (federal, state or local) – (www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- ___ 6. Check Guidance files, the school website (www.lasd.k12.pa.us) and listen for school announcements concerning scholarships. Be sure to apply for the local scholarships in April. The guidance counselors will enter the 12th grade English classes in early April to assist you in applying for these scholarships.

TYPES OF SCHOOLS

College – an institution that offers educational instruction beyond high school level in a two-year or four-year program.

University – an academic organization which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree-granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism, or agriculture). It is composed of a number of “schools” or “colleges,” each of which encompass a general field of study.

Liberal Arts College – Four-year institution that emphasizes program of broad undergraduate education. Pre-professional or professional training may be available but is not stressed.

Teachers’ College – almost all public teachers’ colleges have become liberal arts “state colleges” or “state universities” offering majors in the field of education.

Community College – two year institutions of higher learning which provide vocational training and academic curricula.

Terminal Course: Academic program is complete in itself. A student who completes it may not apply to a four-year college for further study without completing additional course requirements.

Engineering or Technological College – independent professional schools that provide four-year training programs in the fields of engineering and the physical sciences. They are often known as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.

Technical School – a two-year institution which offers terminal occupational programs intended to prepare students for immediate employment in fields related to engineering and physical sciences. These schools may also offer one-year certificate programs in certain crafts and clerical skills.

Nursing School – there are two kinds of nursing schools. At schools affiliated with hospitals, students receive R.N. degrees upon completion of their training. At schools affiliated with four-year colleges, students receive both a B.S. degree and an R.N. and have possibilities of entering the field of nursing administration.

Military School – federal military academics prepare officers for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. These institutions (West Point, Annapolis, and Air Force Academy) require recommendation and appointment by members of Congress. Private and state supported military institutes; however, operate on a college application basis. They all offer degree programs in engineering and technology with concentrations in various aspects of military science.

Business School – business schools fall into two categories. At some colleges it is possible to specialize in business administration or in a two-year secretarial course in conjunction with supplementary liberal arts courses. Other institutions offer predominantly the business or secretarial courses and may or may not be regionally accredited.

FACTORS INFLUENCING COLLEGE CHOICE

- General geographic location
- Size of student body
- Cost
- Reputation of the college
- Concept of self-responsibility
- Location in relation to home
- Financial aid offer
- Quality of faculty
- Social regulations
- Atmosphere of the college
- Library and research facilities
- Student/faculty ratio
- Quality of students
- Athletic facilities
- Physical plant and campus
- Social facilities
- Fraternities or other social groups
- Innovative attitude of the college
- Extracurricular emphasis
- Social/Cultural activities available
- Curriculum offerings
- The arts – their importance and accessibility on campus
- Intellectual and academic
- Atmosphere
- Flexible academic requirements
- Social and/or political activism
- Graduate school preparation
- Friends' recommendation
- Family tradition
- Diversity of academic programs
- College vs. university
- Size of library
- Preparation for future occupations
- Parents' approval
- Intellectual and academic challenge
- Intercollegiate sports programs
- Location: rural vs. urban
- Size of classes



RESEARCHING COLLEGES

The chart on the next page is for your use in summarizing information as you research colleges. Each column is headed by a topic of importance to most potential college students. By filling in the information or checking the appropriate column, you will gain an overview of several different colleges.

The next step is to compare your credentials with those of the colleges that you have researched. This will enable you to gain a realistic estimate of where you have a good chance of being accepted. Then, contact the colleges that you have selected and request an application, catalog and financial aid information.

In evaluating your accumulated information, you want to keep these things in mind:

1. Most colleges accept students above and below the stated average SAT or ACT scores as reported in their school profiles.
2. Some colleges are de-emphasizing SAT and/or ACT results. Much emphasis is placed on course selection/rigor, extra-curricular involvement and community service participation.
3. You should not let the cost of a college deter you from applying.
4. Many expensive colleges develop a strong financial aid package for students based on their credentials and the information obtained from various financial aid forms.
5. Remain patient. This is a lengthy process that takes time to unfold. Things will eventually fall into place and everyone will be OK in the end.

College Name			
Location			
Enrollment			
Accredited			
Study Body Type			
Test & Score Required			
Tuition Costs			
Room & Board			
Interesting Majors			
Courses Needed to Meet Admission Requirements			
Other Info			

COLLEGE VISITS

Importance of College Visits in Process of College Selection

1. You wouldn't buy an automobile without first driving it.
2. You wouldn't undertake a project without learning its specifications.
3. You will be living and studying there for two to four years and should become familiar with the environment and atmosphere before entering.

Mechanics of Arranging a Visit

1. Letter/phone call/email to Director of Admissions or Admissions Counselor
2. Transportation arrangements
3. Timing
 - a. Spring of junior year, summer preceding senior year or fall of senior year
 - b. Best while classes are in session
4. Suggested activities
 - a. Visit classes
 - b. Speak with students and professors
 - c. Stay overnight with friends in dorms



Preparation Prior to Visit

1. Read the catalog and/or visit the website
2. Know what questions you want to ask
3. Be prepared to answer questions such as:
 - a. Why do you want to attend this college?
 - b. Do you have a career direction in mind?
 - c. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?

Areas to Investigate

1. Geographic area
 - a. Community surroundings
 - b. Cultural and religious opportunities
 - c. Local transportation
 - d. Recreational and entertainment opportunities
2. Housing
 - a. Proportion of single to double rooms and cost differential, if any
 - b. Furnishings the student would need to provide for his/her room
 - c. Study/Library facilities
 - d. Dining facilities/costs
3. Student organizations
 - a. What are the social groups on campus?
 - b. What kinds of social activities are offered?
 - c. Is there a council of students involved in the determination and enforcement of college rules?
 - d. Is there an activity fee?

4. Library
 - a. Is it used?
 - b. Is it adequate?
 - c. Is it comfortable?

5. Types of programs available
 - a. Independent study in your field
 - b. Seminars for underclassman
 - c. Work-Study opportunity or fieldwork

6. Advisory programs
 - a. Students
 - b. Faculty
 - c. Professional counselors

7. Infirmary facilities and college hospital and medical insurance

8. Students
 - a. Attitudes
 - b. Socio-economic status
 - c. Interests

9. Student-faculty relationships
 - a. Are faculty members accessible?
 - b. Are any faculty members directly related to living/dining units?



FACTORS INFLUENCING COLLEGE ADMISSION

I. Preparation for Higher Education

- A. High school program
 - 1. Graduation requirements of high school
 - 2. General indication of optional but desirable courses in various areas of study
- B. Grade point average
- C. Rank in class
- D. Types of classes
 - 1. Academic or Advanced Placement courses
 - 2. Innovative programs (Distant Learning, Independent Study)
 - 3. Summer session enrichment programs
 - 4. Community Service/Job Shadowing – Graduation Project
- E. Special talents or abilities
- F. Personal characteristics
 - 1. Initiative, perseverance
 - 2. Appearance
 - 3. Reliability
 - 4. Creativity
 - 5. Conscientiousness
 - 6. Integrity
 - 7. Maturity
 - 8. Leadership
 - 9. Consideration for others
- G. Attendance record
- H. Test Scores
 - 1. SAT and/or ACT Test Results
 - 2. PSSA Test Results
 - 3. ASVAB Results



II. Transcripts

- A. Lists all the classes you have taken, the grade, and the number of credits earned. Also reports your GPA, class rank and SAT/ACT scores
- B. Procedure for requesting transcript – contact the Guidance Secretary
- C. Students must request transcripts/applications/recommendations in timely manner to assure the information is sent before the deadlines occur.

III. Application Guidelines

- A. Watch deadlines
- B. Follow directions explicitly
- C. Make answers legible
- D. Do not hesitate to ask for help, but do all writing yourself
- E. OMIT NOTHING
- F. Submit application fees (non-refundable)

IV. Some Specific Questions to Prepare for

- A. Activities
 - 1. List offices held and any recognition gained
 - 2. List only those activities in which you have made a significant contribution
- B. What is your anticipated career?
- C. Why do you want to attend the college?
 - 1. No philosophical discourse.
 - 2. Simple, straightforward statements.
 - 3. Any particular aspects of the college, which interest you.
- D. Autobiographical account
 - 1. Purpose: to see how well the student expresses himself/herself
 - 2. Content:
 - a. no dull chronological listing of events
 - b. students' attitudes and aspirations
 - c. particular experiences, or people who have influenced the student's life and plans
 - d. student's plans and goals for the future.
- F. References
 - 1. Whom to ask:
 - a. people who know you well
 - b. people who know you in different contexts - i.e., teacher, coach, etc.
 - c. people who express themselves well
 - 2. Ask individual before submitting his name.



Littlestown High School Information Sheet

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Junior Year Courses:

Senior Year Courses Requested:

Academic Awards or Honors:

Colleges You are Considering:

Possible College Major:

Possible Career Plans:

Hobbies and Special Interest:

Extracurricular: Activities (include clubs, sports, student government, etc.)

9th Grade:

10th Grade:

11th Grade:

12th Grade:

Special Programs :(Camp Counselor, Peer Counselor, Summer Workshop Programs, Etc.):

Top Websites for College Exploration Help

Resource	On-Line Address	Comments
College Board	www.collegeboard.com	Information about the SAT & college searches financial aid, scholarships
Federal Student Aid	www.finaid.org	Free comprehensive guide to sources of federal student aid & scholarships
Scholarship Search	www.fastweb.com	Free financial aid scholarship search service
Prepaid College Trust	www.collegesavingsmd.org	Information on saving for college and reducing student loans
Pennsylvania Higher Education	www.pheaa.org	Information on state scholarships & grants, colleges, & career training
NCAA Clearinghouse	www.ncaaclearinghouse.net	Information about athletic eligibility for students entering Division I, II and III colleges and universities
Scholarship Resource	www.gocollege.com	Free scholarship and college search. SAT & ACT tips
National College Ranking Service	www.usnews.com	College rankings by one of the most influential publications
College Planning	www.collegeanswer.com	Planning Guide to College: selecting, applying, paying
College Tips	www.colegeview.com	A very good source of career, college, and financial aid
Princeton Review	www.princetonreview.com	Information on hundreds of colleges from a reliable source
Financial Aid Info	www.salliemae.com	Financial Aid information for parents
Petersons	www.petersons.com	Great database from a reliable company. College search, test prep, financial aid
College Express	www.collegexpress.com	Advice for students and their parents on all aspects of college
Virtual Tours	www.campustours.com	If you can't go there in person
College Net	www.collegenet.com	Scholarship search, College application help
College Planning	www.collegeplan.org	All aspects of college planning can be explored
Trade Schools	www.trade-schools.net	Technical & Trade school search
FAFSA on the Web	www.fafsa.ed.gov	FAFSA on the Web, provides multiple FAFSA related options
PIN	www.pin.ed.gov	Allows students & parents ability to obtain their Department of Education PIN (electronic signature)
Links	www.students.gov	Offers links to other student-oriented governmental web sites
Federal Student Aid	www.studentaid.ed.gov	Provides information on federal student aid programs and access to a variety of student aid publications and resources
NSLDS Info	www.nsls.ed.gov	Allows student to view their NSLDS information, provides loan service contact information with respect to the loans a student has received