

College Planning Tips and Recommendations

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grade 6

Emphasis on reading and maintaining college aspirations is just as important in middle school as it was in elementary school. You can also prepare for college early by following these tips:

When your child registers for middle school, make an appointment with a counselor to discuss your family's college aspirations and to make sure your child is enrolled in the classes that offer the best preparation for high school. Ask what resources and extracurricular activities support such aspirations in the middle school.

Because they may move between classes and have to meet the expectations of five or more teachers, middle school students often juggle more complex schedules than they did in elementary school. Teach your child to use an hourly calendar to account for his or her time each day. Make sure to pencil in the fun stuff, too.

Peer pressure becomes an issue in middle school, but it can often be positive. Encourage your child's friendships with other children who have college aspirations. Offer to host a study group before a test or encourage your child to work with another student on a project at your home. If your children always have friends over to your house, you will not have to worry about them being at other homes.

Keep setting a good example for your children by pursuing additional education or training for yourself. If you are not familiar with a subject that your student is studying, ask them to explain it to you. Not only will you show that you're interested in learning, but teaching the material to you, will deepens your child's understanding of that material. Or, ask your child to help you research a topic you're interested in at the local library.

Grade 7

Talk to teachers and counselors about your child's achievement in math. The strongest schedule for university preparation is to take Algebra in the 8th grade and Geometry in the 9th grade; strong math achievement in 7th grade is necessary for your child to be prepared for this plan.

This grade is considered by experts to be the most socially difficult for children. Be aware of any problems your child may be having with classmates and contact counselors for support if these problems are affecting your child's academic performance or enthusiasm for school. The hope is that the avenues of

communication that you established with your children in elementary school, will allow for open communication of difficult subjects in middle and high school.

Remember to discuss the "difficult" topics, and to find resources (counselors, teachers, family members) that might make these conversations less difficult.

Research has shown that middle school students who believe they have a variety of career options have higher self-esteem and do better in school. Notice what your child likes to do and research related careers that your child may not have considered before (for example, children who like sports might be interested in a career in sports medicine, sports equipment design, or as an agent, a newscaster/journalist, etc.).

Explore summer enrichment programs offered by the city or a university. Apply early in the spring and if cost is a barrier ask about financial assistance.

Grade 8

This last year before high school is a crucial academic year since all future grades will be considered in college admission and scholarship awards. Encourage your child to aim for all As and Bs this year. If necessary, make sure your child attends summer school to catch up before entering high school.

Attend college information sessions to make sure you have current information about entrance requirements and different forms of financial aid, or arrange to visit a local university.

Research at least two or three colleges of interest (libraries, school counselors, and the internet are good sources of information). Find out what the entrance requirements are; what areas the school is particularly strong in; what facilities, clubs or other resources related to your child's interests are available; how much it costs to attend and what types of aid are available. Help your child make a chart comparing these options.

Take your child with you to work for a day, or help them arrange to shadow a professional in a field they are interested in for a few hours.

College.

It's not a dream. It's a plan.

To keep your options open and plan for college, you should take these courses in high school:

English	4 years
Math	4 years
Lab Science	3 years
Social Studies	2 years
Foreign Language	2 years
Fine Arts	1 year

Get started now! Explore different opportunities for college with your counselor. Be sure to ask about specific admissions requirements at the college of your choice.

Don't let the cost of a college education scare you away. Many types of financial aid are available. Visit your counselor to discuss how to finance your college education.



Early Academic Outreach

IT STARTS WITH U
GET THE KNOWLEDGE TO GO TO COLLEGE

Early Academic Outreach
P.O. Box 210158
Tucson, AZ 85721-0158
(520) 626-2300
eao@u.arizona.edu

