

GETTING READY for the COLLEGE PROCESS

What do colleges want?

- Grades that are consistently good or that steadily improve
- High standardized test scores (SAT, SAT subject tests, ACT and APs)
- Challenging academic courses (honors and APs)
- Commitment to school and community
- Strong and consistent extra-curricular activities (clubs, teams community service and jobs)
- Well-developed writing skills and compelling college essays

What can students do to prepare for the college selection process?

- Take the most challenging schedule that is appropriate and available
- Work to improve grades, using extra help and tutoring if needed
- Study for the SAT or ACT consistently, starting as early as the 10th grade
- Join clubs and stay with them to achieve leadership roles
- Develop relationships with teachers who will write recommendations
- Keep a journal of experiences as preparation for writing the college essay
- Have meaningful summer experiences (jobs, volunteer work, summer classes, etc.)

When should families begin?

- It is never too early to develop good habits
- The high school transcript begins with the 9th grade, and Freshman year grades carry the same weight as Junior year grades in the GPA
- Garden students take their first PSAT in the 10th grade and their first SAT in May or June of the 11th grade

Is it ever too late?

- Students can always exhibit potential and growth
- Courses and grades count through the Senior year
- For clubs and activities to be truly meaningful, they should start no later than Junior year