

Frequently Asked Questions

These questions were compiled from the parent evaluations submitted at previous parent information nights:

Q: What do colleges look for when accepting students?

A: Colleges want to know that a student is able to be successful at the college level. They look for the level of courses a student has taken; they consider the rigor of the chosen curriculum. They look at consistent grades along the three years of high school; the junior year is the last year to increase the GPA. They look at how well a student performs on the SAT (Critical Reading and Math scores are considered) or the ACT. They consider a student's involvement in community service &/or extra-curricular school activities.

Q: When should I take the SAT? Should I take the ACT?

A: Take at least one SAT in early spring of the junior year. All juniors will be administered the ACT at Apex High School at no charge in March 2015. Once students review their scores and determine their attitude about each test, they will be able to decide which test is best for them to repeat a second time. If they do very well on their first, wait until the fall to take the second. If they don't do so well in the early spring exam, it would be best to take the second one later that spring and one more the fall of their senior year. Consider three exams as the maximum number of administrations.

Q: What opportunities are available for the "average" student?

A: Resources abound! Use the CFNC website to research a possible major and to look at colleges; both 4-year schools and community colleges are available; take the ASVAB(Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) it's an excellent tool for discovering skills and to help give you direction. Community Colleges do not require an SAT/ACT. These schools give students a placement test upon admission for appropriate college classes.

Q: What are the strategies my child should employ for college admission?

A: The best strategy is to be as competitive as possible; take challenging courses, maintain high grades, have good SAT/ACT scores, be involved in school activities and have community outreach and interest.

Q: How does the year a course is taken effect admission?

*A: The final grades in ninth, tenth and eleventh create the cumulative GPA used for college applications so taking challenging courses during those years can improve your GPA. **Remember**, when applying to college, there will be no senior year grades recorded until late January. Colleges will only be able to see three years of grades and the courses scheduled for senior year. Be sure to select courses to which you will **commit** for senior year. Colleges expect you to continue at the same level of achievement for senior year.*

Q: When should I make a college visit?

A: The best time to begin visiting colleges is in the spring of junior year during times the colleges are in session. Speak to admissions' officers, professors, especially in the area in which you plan to study and college students. Determine if there are courses for which you should register senior year based on your interests or major.

Q: How can my child choose a major &/or career?

A: Career assessment tools exist online through the CFNC website Bridges (check website resource sheet); we strongly recommend that students take the ASVAB. Check the AHS website for date, location and how to sign up.

Q: What is the math sequence for college bound students?

A: The Future Ready Core requires four math credits for a student to graduate; Algebra 1/Math I, Geometry/Math II, Algebra 2/Math III and an advanced level math. This is the same minimum requirement for admission to a four year college/university.

Q: What is the foreign language requirement for college bound students?

A: The minimum requirement for admission to a four year college/university is two levels of the same foreign language.

Q: Why do you only discuss schools in North Carolina? There are a number of schools outside of the state we may want to consider.

A: We prepare our students for admission to UNC System schools because the graduation requirements fulfill the minimum admission requirements for our college system. Each state's university system may differ just as graduation requirements may differ state to state. For those schools to which you feel you may apply outside of the UNC system, please be sure to determine that your courses, grades, etc. meet the requirements as put forth by that university system.

Q: What is the difference between weighted and unweighted GPA's?

A: Weighted grades means that the extra quality points for honors or advanced placement classes are included in the calculation. For an unweighted GPA, the extra quality point is not included in the calculation. Example: The 'A' in an honors course is added in as 5 points when calculated for the weighted grade but the 'A' is added in as 4 points for the unweighted grade.

Q: I need more help with financial aid.

A: Financial aid can seem daunting but we will offer a special presentation solely on financial aid in November of senior year. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) cannot be completed until January of the students' senior year. We also have a financial aid advisor on campus during the fall and spring. This person (387-2215) will be happy to meet with you and discuss all your concerns starting in mid-October.