



College & Career Center Newsletter

August/September 2019

Welcome back Viper students for another Fabulous Year. My name is Mr. Navarro the College & Career Specialist. The Career Center is up and running and I look forward to helping you answer all questions pertaining to 'college and careers'. The College & Career Center is located on the second floor next to the Reading Room. Please stop by and introduce yourself so we can get your college and career plans started. Deadlines are already approaching, so please don't waste an-other minute in getting started!

All Students College & Career Ready

Senior.... Your To Do List!

- ***Don't miss deadlines!***
- ***Do Volunteer Service.***
- ***Apply to at least 3 colleges.***
- ***Do personal visits of the campus of your choice. Take your parents along.***
- ***Keep a copy of everything you send in your "Senior" file.***

So how does one prepare for their future while in high school and gain the skills that will last a lifetime? Follow this simple plan.

- 1. Explore career choices.** By the end of your junior year, try to narrow down what truly interest you. This will be helpful in selecting post-high school training.
- 2. Take rigorous classes.** This will give you a better chance of keeping doors open to selective colleges if you choose to go in that direction. Also, dual credit, IB, and AP courses add additional points to a person's GPA. We all know that GPA determines class rank.
- 3. Do well in classes.** Nothing prepares a student better for post-high school training than learning the material "the first time." Don't be one of the college students who has to take a remedial course for no credit before taking the "real" classes.
- 4. Explore training options/college.** If you are going to college, have at least three possible colleges in mind that offers the major you want.

Have this done by the end of your junior year. Choose colleges that are a "fit" for you. One way to discover this is to do a campus visit. Take your parents; they can add some valuable insight. So in the fall of your senior year, apply to 3-5 colleges that you would be willing to attend. This will give you choices, especially in terms of affordability.

5. Do community service. More scholarships and colleges are looking to what you have given back to your community. Some scholarships are strictly based on a person's community service.

6. Be involved. Be active in student organizations, sports, music, drama; whatever it is, there is a place for you. However, don't become involved in so many activities that your grades suffer. Choose a few and do them well. Keep a list of your activities.

7. Make a Resume/Portfolio. From your list of activities, make a resume that you can give to those who will be writing letters of recommendations. Hand them your resume, and they will have plenty to include.

8. Take the ACT or SAT by the end of your junior year. This will give you scores to send to colleges and scholarship early in the fall. Those on free and reduced lunches can get two fee waivers their junior and/or senior years.

9. Start scholarship searches now. See the Career Center page on Verrado's Web-Site. Seniors: Now is the time to be asking teachers, coaches, employers, and others to write non-confidential letters of recommendations for you. You will need these letters when applying for scholarships. Remember to tell them to write how you make a difference in the classroom, sport, etc.

How to Apply to College

While applying to college may seem easy, getting in can be tough! When you apply for college, you will have to be honest with yourself and do a bit of research to find the right fit. This section is about how to apply to college, and the three steps to take when applying to colleges for the best



chances at getting into the best college for you. While an education from [Harvard University](#) may seem ideal, it isn't the right fit for everyone, only a select amount of elite students get admitted each year (**Harvard University rejects 93% of applications.**) When you apply to college you need to pick a school that aligns with your interests and academic profile, and that can meet your education goals and needs. To do this, you need to make a list, then by looking at admissions statistics, including the test scores and GPA of students admitted the previous year, get a feel for a school's selectivity and whether or not you would get in. **Here is the**

applying to college process broken down into three easy steps:

Step 1: Making A List Of Colleges To Apply To

With over 6000 colleges in the United States, the first step in applying to college is to do some research and make a college list. This process will be different for everyone. Some students have schools in mind, some know the state they want to live in, and others have no clue where to start. Visit the College & Career Center at Verrado for tips on how to start searching for colleges, and, once you have compiled a list, take a [tour](#) of as many of these colleges as possible. Read on to learn about choosing which colleges to apply to from your college list. The number of colleges you apply to can vary, from applying to 1 school (not recommended) to 30 schools (not recommended), each applicant can choose how many colleges they apply to. Many limit the number because applications are accompanied by a fee. College application fees can range, but will on average cost around \$60. So, while it is important to apply to more than one college - just in case - applying to over 10 is really up to the individual.

Step 2: Splitting The List Into Target, Reach and Safety Schools

You will need to take your list, and now decide which are your top picks, which are attainable for you academically, which are affordable for you only with aid (don't discount a school because of price, but if this is a factor have a backup plan), and refine your broad list into a group of schools that gives you the best chance for success. Come to the Career Center if you have questions about this.

What is a Target School?

Most schools will accept a range of test scores and GPAs, and will clearly list other requirements on their website. If your test scores are in the average range of accepted scores, and you meet other necessary requirements, this is a target school. Also consider selectivity. If you meet most of the criteria, but selectivity is high (meaning they only accept a very small portion of the applicant pool),

this college may fall closer to the reach category and you will want to make sure you also apply to a backup (or safety) school. Remember to take into account that colleges consider all application materials and extracurriculars in addition to test scores in their decision. Also, the state you live in can be a factor. State schools will often favor in-state students, so you may need to exceed requirements in order to consider an out-of-state school as a target (or safety).

What is a Safety School?

For a safety school, you should feel that you meet and exceed their requirements. Your scores should fall on the high end (or exceed) what they list. You may also want to consider a safety in terms of price, so in addition to academic criteria being met, your safety school, or one of them, should be affordable, if price is a family concern. You should have some interest in your safety school, but many don't feel as strongly about their safety as it is not their primary choice. It is not necessarily the best fit, though you should consider it to provide a quality education and the majors you are interested in. It may be an okay fit, but not your dream school - that's okay. Many choose a state school or local community college as their safety. Having a safety school is important so that you have a fallback plan if you don't get in to other schools.

What is a Reach School?

A reach school is somewhere you choose to apply to, but you knowingly fall short of some requirements. It can still be worth it to apply, because you may have some outstanding qualities that will see you through. **Fact: 100% of students that do not apply to Harvard, do not get into Harvard.** Keep your hopes in check when applying to a reach school, but you can't get in if you do not apply. If your reach school is really selective you can expect to have stiff competition. To be clear, schools are labeled as safety or reach based on academics, but financial situations can warrant these labels too. Remember there are many [ways to pay for college](#) if your family does not have the money, but you need ask for it by [filling out the FAFSA](#), requesting aid from the school, and possibly taking on the responsibility to pay for school later in the form of student loan debt. College tuition costs do not have to be tied to your decision on where to apply, students will often pay less than the "sticker" price after scholarships, federal aid or merit aid are added in.

Step 3: Completing and Sending Applications to Colleges

Once your list is complete you are ready to apply to college by completing and sending in applications! Remember, the list you create in Step 1, and refine into to include target, safety and reach colleges in Step 2, needs to be ready by December your senior year if you are applying at the regular deadline, or October senior year if you plan to apply [early decision or early action](#). Regular applications are due early January, and early action / decision are due early November, you will need a month (or more) to prepare your applications before sending them.

College applications take time to complete - you may have to write essays, or ask for recommendations and get test scores sent to schools - so stay organized! All colleges will require these types of application materials, so start thinking about these items well before October or December. Once you complete and send them, then you have successfully applied to college.



Earlier Date for Filing Fafsa Form for College Aid

<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Changes for the 2020–21 FAFSA®

The 2018–19 *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) season will begin earlier than previous FAFSA application cycles. Beginning on Oct. 1, 2019, your students will be able to fill out the FAFSA for the 2020–21 school year. (In the past, they had to wait until January 1). In addition, applicants will no longer need to estimate income and tax information and will be able to retrieve their data directly from the IRS, right from the first day the FAFSA is available. Students also will have information about their Expected Family Contributions earlier, helping them as they're going through the college application and selection process.

Mark your Calendar: **OCTOBER 1ST**

Fill Out 2020-2021 **FAFSA**



Year Student attending College	When a student can submit a FAFSA	Year for Income Tax Info
July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021	October 1, 2019–June 30, 2020	2018

The ACT Test Dates - 2019-2020 <http://www.act.org/>

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
September 14, 2019	August 16, 2019	August 17, 2019
October 26, 2019	September 20, 2019	Sept 21, 2019
December 14, 2019	November 8, 2019	November 9, 2019
February 8, 2020*	January 10, 2020	January 11, 2020
April 4, 2020	Feb 28, 2020	Feb 29, 2020
June 13, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 9, 2020
July 18, 2020	June 19, 2020	June 20, 2020

**No test centers are scheduled in New York for the February test date.*

Basic ACT Registration NO WRITING	\$50.50 Late fee \$30
Basic ACT Registration PLUS WRITING	\$67.00 Late fee \$30

The SAT Test Dates - 2019-20 <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat>

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Reg. Deadline)
October 5, 2019	September 6, 2019	Sept 7, 2019
November 2, 2019	October 3, 2020	Oct 4, 2019
December 7, 2019	November 8, 2019	Nov 9, 2019
March 14, 2020*	February 14, 2020	Feb 15, 2020
May 2, 2020	April 3, 2020	Apr 4, 2020
June 6, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 9, 2020

**No SAT Subject Test*

(Deadlines expire at 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time)

SAT Registration	\$49.50 Late Fee: \$29
SAT Registration with Essay	\$64.50 Late Fee: \$29
VHS School Code 030029 – VHS Test Center Code 241210	

References

<https://sat.collegeboard.org/>

<http://www.actstudent.org/>

<http://www.alvinisd.net/>

<http://www.howtogetin.com/apply-to-college/>