

Starting the College Process

What you and your Sophomore need to know
about planning for college



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St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

+ Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy.

Amen +



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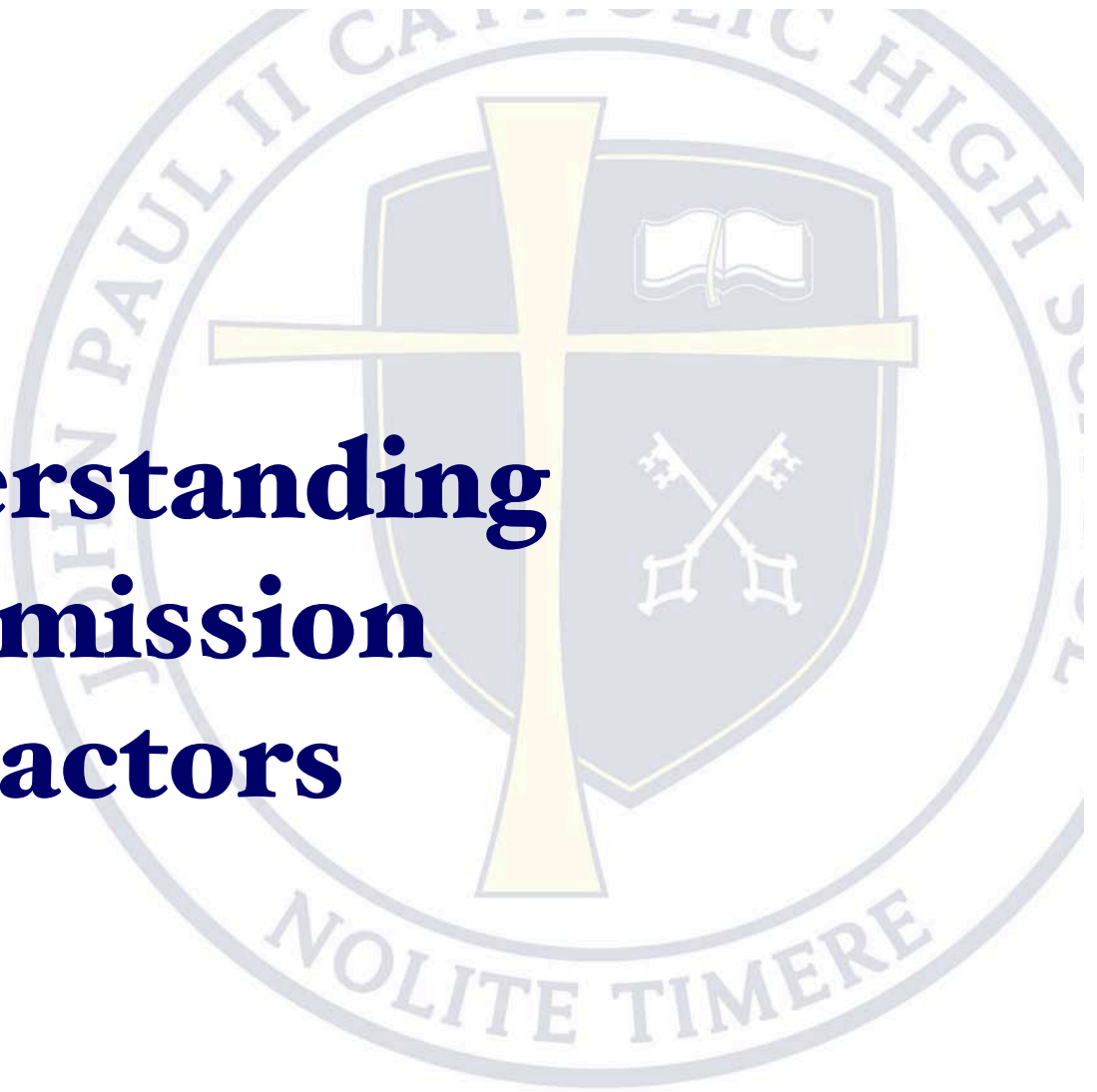
Beginning the College Planning Process

1. Understanding admission factors
2. Exploring college options
3. Visiting colleges
4. Attend college discussion panel series next year!



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Understanding Admission Factors



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What Colleges Consider

The first part of planning for college is understanding what factors colleges consider when looking at a student profile.



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Primary Factors

- Quality & Rigor of Academic Courses
- Academic Performance & Grades
- Test Scores
 - SAT, ACT
 - SAT Subject Tests
 - AP[®] courses
 - Dual Credit



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Grades & Coursework

The high school academic record is one of the most important factors in college admission. Colleges will look at a few aspects:

- *Course selection:* Challenging rigorous course load and high-level classes, including AP, dual credit, or honors courses.
- *Grades:* Every year counts.
- *GPA trends:* Improvement through every grade.



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Choosing Curriculum

Continue to encourage your student to take a rigorous selection of courses.

In 2011-2012,

- AP Language & Composition
- Dual Credit Foreign Language



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Background Information

Class Rank _____ Class Size _____ Covering a period from _____ to _____.
(mm/yyyy) (mm/yyyy)

The rank is weighted unweighted. How many students share this rank? _____

How do you report class rank? quartile _____ quintile _____ decile _____

Cumulative GPA: _____ on a _____ scale, covering a period from _____ to _____.
(mm/yyyy) (mm/yyyy)

This GPA is weighted unweighted. The school's passing mark is _____.

Highest GPA in class _____ Graduation Date _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Percentage of graduating class immediately attending: _____ four-year _____ two-year institutions

How many courses does your school offer:
 AP _____ IB _____ Honors _____

If school policy limits the number a student may take, please list the maximum allowed:

AP _____ IB _____ Honors _____

Is the applicant an IB Diploma candidate? Yes No

Are classes taken on a block schedule? Yes No

In comparison with other college preparatory students at your school, the applicant's course selection is:

- most demanding
- very demanding
- demanding
- average
- below average

How long have you known this student and in what context? _____

What are the first words that come to your mind to describe this student? _____

Ratings Compared to other students in his or her class year, how do you rate this student in terms of:

	No basis	Below average	Average	Good (above average)	Very good (well above average)	Excellent (top 10%)	Outstanding (top 5%)	One of the top few I've encountered (top 1%)
Academic achievement								
Extracurricular accomplishments								
Personal qualities and character								
OVERALL								

Evaluation Please provide comments that will help us differentiate this student from others. Feel free to attach an additional sheet or another reference you've prepared for this student. We especially welcome a broad-based assessment and encourage you to consider describing or addressing:

- The applicant's academic, extracurricular, and personal characteristics.
- Relevant context for the applicant's performance and involvement, such as particularities of family situation or responsibilities, after-school work obligations, sibling childcare, or other circumstances, either positive or negative.
- Observed problematic behaviors, perhaps separable from academic performance, that an admission committee should explore further.

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Additional Factors

- Positive recommendations from educators and mentors
- Personal statement & essay(s)
 - *Demonstrates writing ability and self-expression*
- A “demonstrated interest”
 - *Shows enthusiasm for the colleges to which you’re applying*



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Additional Factors

- Extracurricular activities
 - Participation in sports, performing & visual arts, service etc.
 - Leadership!
- Community involvement, part-time work or internship
- Interview (if applicable)



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Starting here...

- College search should match college with likely admissions.
- Getting into highly selective programs is just that: highly selective and challenging.



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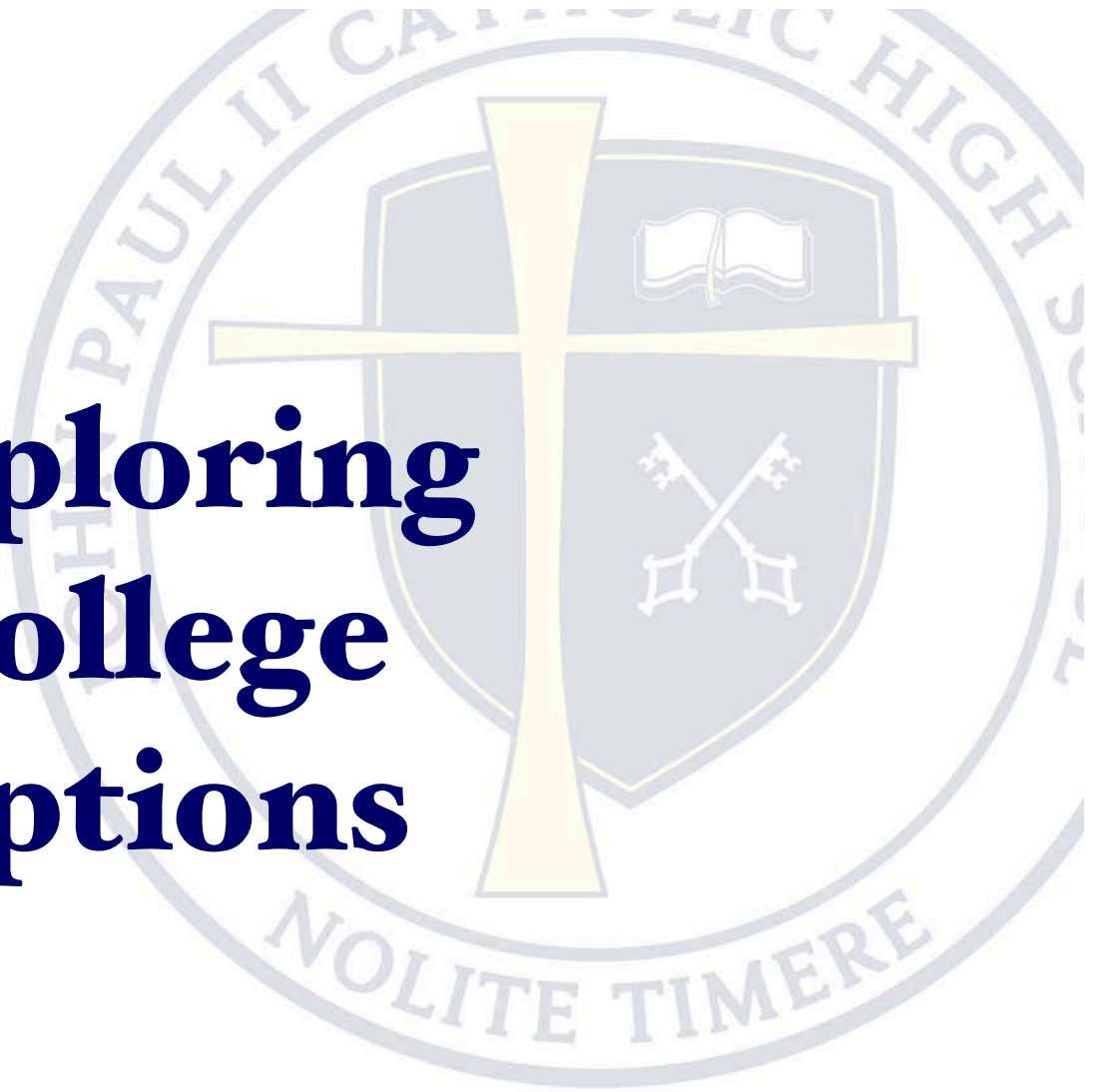
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- There are a multitude of programs and placements and schools and places and times...
 - All in good time, all when ready...
- “Persevere in prayer!”
- Graduate schooling is the new undergraduate schooling...



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Exploring College Options



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Timeline: the next 15 months

- Research colleges based on your child's need and your family's needs
- Visit colleges.
- Discern the path for your child.
- ARRIVE at July 2012 with the list.



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Make your long list soon!

- That research should begin soon.
- Five or more schools to visit and consider.
- Some students know already. Most don't.
 - Even if you know, have comparison schools



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What to Consider

- ✓ Size and diversity of student body
- ✓ School & campus culture
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Academic programs
- ✓ Campus life — Activities, housing
- ✓ Graduation and retention rates



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Above All...

Think about where your child will be happy and successful in his/her college life!

Think about where your child can continue to grow in faith and fulfill his/her calling.



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Visit College Campuses

Get to know a school
from the inside:

When is the best time to visit?



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Visit College Campuses

Get to know a school from the inside:

- ✓ Take a campus tour.
- ✓ Speak with an admissions counselor.
- ✓ Ask about financial aid opportunities.
- ✓ Sit in on a class of interest.
- ✓ Read the student newspaper.
- ✓ Talk to students and faculty.

✓ Eat at the Dining Hall!!! 😊



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Lots of Special Sessions

- Aggie & Longhorn Spring Day
- Find out what the admissions department has as their special events.
- Always look to talk with people other than just the admissions staff.



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College Summer Programs

Are college summer programs and experiences really worth it?



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Getting a list of colleges

- Make the list using:
 - Collegeboard.com
 - Collegeview.com
 - Cappex.com
- Review the *Newman Guide to Choosing a Catholic College*



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Newman Guide

“Colleges are places where students are able to find God or to have God hidden from them.”

- *The Newman Guide* presents Catholic universities that are true to the Catholic identity of their schools.



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Newman Guide

- Recognize that not a university saying it is Catholic (or Christian) is not a guarantee that it is living up to that ideal.
- That said, cost, fit, and distance are factors for the schools on the *Newman* list.



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Locality, type, size, & experience

- San Antonio; Texas; Southwest; Midwest...
- Catholic; public; small liberal arts; large state...
- Under 2000; 2000-15,000; 15,000+...
- Small close knit; large community; historic alumni feel; rural; urban...



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College Planning Resources

COUNSELORS FAVORITES

- ◆ www.collegeconfidential.com
- ◆ www.collegeboard.org
- ◆ www.cappex.com
- ◆ www.collegeview.com
- ◆ www.commonapp.org



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End-of-Year Preparation

- High School Resume Writing Workshop
- Making the most of Summer Break
- Junior Year College Prep Overview



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College Planning Discussion Panel Series: 2011-12

- ✓ Applying to College
- ✓ Paying for College
- ✓ Scholarships
- ✓ Campus Life
- ✓ Alternatives to 4-year colleges



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College Admissions Panel Series

2011-2012 (as a part of earlier panels)

- ✓ Texas A&M
- ✓ University of Texas
- ✓ Texas Tech
- ✓ University of Dallas
- ✓ Baylor University



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Questions?



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Rank vs. No Rank

- In speaking with admissions counselors, we have decided not to rank our students beyond the top ten percent.
- This will force colleges to place students in a percentile generically, based on GPA, SAT scores, quality of coursework, etc.
 - It is in the interest of our students to do this.



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Getting into Texas A&M

- **Top 10% Admits (50%)**
- **Academic Automatic Admits (25%)**
- **Review Admits (25%)**

- Total # of apps in 2010 = 23,407
- Total acceptances = 16,130
 - *Average SAT score of enrolled = 1210*



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A&M: Academic Auto Admit

- Rank in top 25% of class (MyRANK system)
- SAT of 1300 (600 min in either) OR Composite ACT of 30, with 27 min. in Math and English.
- Complete minimum degree program



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Getting into Texas A&M

- Applications open 1 August.
- Apply as early as possible.
- Prompts for essay will change this summer, then likely stay the same for three years.
- San Antonio Admissions office on Loop 410 near mall is College Station.
 - *Has financial aid office there, too.*



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Getting into Texas A&M

- Texas A&M-Galveston: only satellite school.
- Blinn College is not.
 - **Blinn Team** exists, but cannot be requested.
- No legacy admits since 2000.
- Get admittance to A&M means (mostly) getting into major college desired.



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Getting into Texas A&M

- Apply in September; get word within 3 weeks possibly if automatic admit.
- November or December admittance, if really high on charts.
- January or February admittance, if not as high (scores on entrance tests).



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